

Aspire North 2023 Traverse City Candidate Questionnaire

Full name:

Amy Shamroe

Office running for:

Mayor

Current position/occupation:

City Commissioner/ Book Awards Director

List previous campaigns, elected office(s), boards, commissions, etc.:

- City Commissioner since 2015, Mayor Pro-Tem since 2016
- TC Light & Power Board Member (2015-present)
- Board of Traverse Area District Library Friends (2013-present)
- Board AAUW of Traverse City- various positions (2009-2019, 2021-present)
- Board AAUW of Michigan- various positions (2015-present)

Why are you running for office?

Over the last eight years I have worked on City issues from stormwater management to building out a utility fiber network. For six of those years, I have been Mayor-Pro Tem and part of leadership as we address these issues. With a new City Manager coming on board and a lot of structural changes needed in the City, as well as all the issues that will arise in the coming years, my experience and consistency will be a benefit to the City.

Briefly describe your campaign strategy

My strategy is to listen and learn, as well as focus on the issues the City faces in the long term. With only one other candidate running for office with City Commission experience it will be important to remind people of the wide-breadth of issues the Commission as a whole faces rather than perhaps being distracted by current issues that will not be issues in the near future.

Why do you think you will win?

My experience and commitment to the City Commission over the years has shown people I care about the City today and its future and am always willing to listen to all parties during the important conversations.

How many votes do you need to win?

City elections can be difficult to predict, but it would be the majority of probably 4,000 votes.

Are REALTORS actively helping with your campaign?

Not at this time.

Traverse City goes through an annual budgeting process. What do you think budget priorities should be?

Right now, we need to step up our funding of infrastructure projects and staff. Issues like stormwater and I&I will only continue to get worse and add to the already large price tag we are looking at if we don't start taking action. Traverse City is a world class place, but we have not applied the city's growth mindset to our own staffing. We need to take care of our employees to ensure recruit and retain the best professionals to ensure the City continues to be proactive about everything from planning to economic development.

The shortage of housing inventory is a big topic among our Aspire North membership and the community at large across our area. Does local government have a role to play in this realm? If so, what do you think a local government can reasonably do to address housing supply concerns?

First, I am very excited about the new ordinance we will be introducing to allow for the new PILOT rules to be applied in Traverse City. That is going to be a huge step towards opening up some spaces that already exist and, hopefully, incentivizing development that will look to that tax break to create new inventory. The City is relatively limited in what it can do to create inventory. I think we will continue to look at city owned property for potential development partnerships. I also believe we can continue to look at zoning for ways to create inventory opportunities when properties are available.

Land use continues to be a highly debated issue, including those elements centered around planning and zoning. Are there specific policies or zoning restrictions you support or oppose?

We are tackling a lot of potential zoning changes right now that have mixed support. As a whole I trust Shawn Winters to bring us zoning changes and manage what we need in his expertise.

Should local governments use zoning to prohibit the rental of a residential property on a short-term basis?

I think STRs, if allowed, need to be limited to places where zoning makes sense (e.g.- commercial districts)

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) has been described as a regional taxation tool used by the Traverse City DDA to fund infrastructure repairs and improvements required by intense regional use of our downtown core. Do you support renewal of TIF? If not, who would/should ultimately pay for those required costs/repairs?

I support TIF and appreciate how this question was asked. I do not see any way the City can afford to lose \$2 million dollars in funding from taxing entities, the only way we get any support from surrounding jurisdictions. I am looking for it to contain some cost-sharing though as we look to the future.

How and on what issues would you utilize Aspire North's input?

Housing is a crisis and Aspire North has to be at the table for any conversations looking for both a complete picture of inventory and trends and helping to find solutions to the issues of housing inventory and development.