

Aspire North 2022 Candidate Questionnaire

Full name: Ashlea Walter

Office running for: Grand Traverse County Commission District 3

Current position/occupation: City of Traverse City Commissioner, Marketing

Director of Honor Bank

List previous campaigns, elected office(s), boards, commissions, etc.: City of TC Commission, Joint Rec Authority, Brown Bridge Advisory, Arts Commission, Empire Village Council

Why are you running for office? With my work with the City Commission, I have learned that many of our critical issues are regional issues and we have a void of County Leadership on critical issues. I will continue to work to better the lives of our local people and small businesses by providing much-needed leadership on our urgent regional issues: affordable housing, childcare, mental health, and face a crumbling infrastructure that threatens our environment we hold sacred.

Briefly describe your campaign strategy: I have been listening to as many people, businesses and community leaders as possible about our regional issues to be poised to understand the complexity of our challenges, and how we can bring people together. My campaign is using multiple channels to get our word out through canvassing, texting, digital advertising, print advertising, and direct mail.

Why do you think you will win? I have experience and broad community support as shown in my City Commission race and my Primary in which I won almost 75%

of the vote. People are ready for change on the County Board, to return honor and integrity to our local public leadership.

How many votes do you need to win? This is a complex question based on it being a 3-way race. One more than the other two is the short answer and a large mid-term vote is predicted, more than in the past. With no reason absentee, the landscape has changed and it's difficult to grasp the real numbers without a couple more cycles of activity.

Are REALTORS actively helping with your campaign? Several have donated to my strong fundraising numbers.

What are your thoughts on the Grand Traverse County's municipal budget? Budget cuts, increases, or funding initiatives you support? Service you believe could be delivered more efficiently? We need to bring back the County planning budget, create a strategic plan for the County's most pressing issues and I support looking into a possible County-wide housing millage for affordable housing. _

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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? Yes, I believe government does have a role to play in our housing supply issue, with particular emphasis on affordable and workforce housing. The County can be a leader in bringing together other local municipalities so we're not all competing for the same MSHDA funds, use PILOTs, advocate for more local use of PILOTs at the State level, and use our Land Bank Authority more to develop housing initiatives.

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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? Currently the County does not deal much with zoning or planning and I would like to bring back the County Planning

Department in order to sustainably plan for our future with other municipalities._

Should local governments use zoning to prohibit rental of a residential property on a short-term basis? Yes, I believe that local governments know best about its needs, not broad policies to rule on this at the State level.

Should the government be allowed to require a property owner to bring something up to code as a condition of property transfer? No, but it needs to be disclosed. There are many, many old homes in our County, mostly in the City and this would be prohibitive. I am in favor, however, of septic systems being inspected before transfer or sale to further protect our watershed.

_ How and on what issues would you utilize Aspire North's input? Aspire North has its finger on the pulse of local housing needs and I would look to Aspire North for the data to help put together a strategic plan for housing needs.