

Full name: Lance Boehmer

Office running for: Traverse City Commissioner

Current position/occupation: Director of Enterprise Sales, Motive; Board Member, Bay Area Transportation Authority

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

- Current BATA Board of Directors Member and Secretary
- Former Neighborhood Association President, Bates-Hendricks (Indianapolis)
- Former Board Member, Southeast Neighborhood Development Corp (SEND)
- Volunteer with TART Trails and organizer of the Annual Rainbow Run fundraiser
- Traverse City Complete Streets Ad Hoc Member
- Grand Traverse Safe Streets Alliance (GTSSA) Member
- Volunteer Pilot and Search and Rescue Team with Civil Air Patrol - since my teens

Why are you running for office?

Traverse City is my home. My husband and I have built our life here, and I want to make sure this community stays a place where people of all ages and incomes can live, work, and thrive. I'm running because we face real challenges - housing, transportation, and infrastructure - and I believe the city can lead with solutions that work for everyone.

Briefly describe your campaign strategy

I'm focused on building strong, personal connections with voters - listening to what they need, not just talking at them. That means knocking on doors, showing up at neighborhood and business meetings, and having honest conversations about what's working and what's not. I'm also making sure to partner with organizations and people who care deeply about housing, because that's at the heart of keeping our community healthy.

Why do you think you will win?

Because I'm a collaborator and have strong leadership skills. I've built strong working relationships with county officials, city leaders, business owners, and leaders in surrounding townships, and that matters when we're talking about issues that don't stop at city limits - like housing and transportation - and our future growth. People know I follow through, get results, and that I'll work across boundaries to get results.

How many votes do you need to win?

Roughly 3,000-3,200.

Are REALTORS® actively helping with your campaign?

Not yet - but I'd love to have your support, both in helping shape housing solutions and financially, so we can reach more voters.

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

We should start with the basics: safe, well-maintained streets and sidewalks, and modern utilities. Then we need to invest in housing initiatives that help meet our projected need of 1,000 new rental units and 1,200 homes in the region by 2027. Parks, trails, and our waterfront also deserve steady funding - they're part of what makes people want to live here in the first place.

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?

Absolutely. We can't meet this need without the city leading the way and working closely with Garfield, East Bay, and Silver Lake Townships, Grand Traverse and Leelanau Counties, housing nonprofits like Goodwill, and the private sector. I support using the new Michigan Attainable Housing Facilities Act to encourage conversions of short-term rentals into long-term housing. We can also streamline permitting, provide incentives for developments that include year-round rentals and affordable ownership, and use tools like TIF and land partnerships to make projects viable.

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?

I support zoning updates that create more housing choices while protecting the character of our neighborhoods. That means allowing ADUs, encouraging mixed-use buildings in the right places, and adding density near transit routes. I'm against one-size-fits-all restrictions that block needed housing, but I believe every change should involve robust neighborhood input.

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

Local governments should have the authority to set balanced rules that protect neighborhood stability while respecting property rights. That might mean caps on non-owner-occupied short-term rentals in certain areas and incentives - like those in the Michigan Attainable Housing Facilities Act - to encourage owners to rent long-term instead.

Do you support renewal of TIF?

Yes, as long as TIF dollars are invested in projects that benefit the whole region. Our downtown is used by residents and visitors from all over, and maintaining it should be a shared responsibility. Without TIF, the cost would fall harder on city taxpayers, leaving less for housing, transit, and other priorities. That being said, TIF now must go to the ballot, and I will support a ballot initiative to use TIF in creative ways if it is beneficial to providing more attainable housing and facilities for those who live and work here, not just tourism.

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

You're on the front lines of our housing market, and that perspective is invaluable. I'd seek your input on zoning proposals, housing incentives, and ways to balance growth with the charm that makes Traverse City special. Your expertise will help ensure the policies we pass are workable for builders, buyers, and the community at large.