

Linea Michelle Hitchin Palmisano (aka Linea Palmisano)

Candidate for: 13th Ward Minneapolis City Council

How long have you lived in your community?

22 years

Please list any notable supporters or groups of supporters for your campaign

DFL-Endorsement, Minneapolis Building Trades, SEIU, AFSCME Council 5, Teamsters, DFL Senior Caucus, Minneapolis Firefighters local 82, State Rep. Jamie Long, State Rep. Frank Hornstein, State Sen. Scott Dibble, College Democrats, WomenWinning.

Minneapolis is facing a housing shortage unlike any we have experienced in recent history. What will you do to increase the number of homes available to Minneapolitans?

I will continue to support the development and preservation of affordable housing and mixed income housing as I have for the past 7 years. We need to continue to invest heavily into our Affordable Housing Trust Fund to help finance projects that are geared towards building permanent affordable housing and preserving NOAH properties. We need affordable housing and supportive housing in every corner in our city, and I am committed to bringing more affordable units to Southwest Minneapolis. One way to get there is to build out our commercial and transit corridors to provide more housing near where folks work and play, while also strategically building out density in a sustainable and amenity rich manner. I worked hard to be a connector between neighborhoods, developers, and the business community to usher in new development that both listens to the community and works to achieve our density goals. I am also supportive of incentive programs like our 4d Affordable Housing program that provides property tax assistance for developers and landlords who list their units under affordable guidelines. I believe we should build on the success of programs like this and work to create win-win programs for renters and housing providers.

***Minnesota has one of the largest homeownership gaps between Whites and Blacks, Indigenous, and People of Color. This is one of MAR's primary concerns. What would you propose at the local level to close this homeownership gap?**

I am a strong advocate for eliminating the homeownership gap between white residents and residents of color in our city. In order to get there we need a multi-faceted approach that both puts resources into the pockets of Black and BIPOC communities and lowers the barriers to entry at the same time. In order to get there we need leaders who are willing and capable of working with our business partners to collaborate on these issues. One way to do that is to establish and build out downpayment assistance programs in our city. While some already exist, with such a hot housing market we need to modify these programs to help make the recipients more competitive to sellers. That's where the collaboration can be most impactful. We also need to ensure that residents of all housing types are able to withstand unexpected financial shocks. Too many people are living paycheck to paycheck and that leaves them both incredibly vulnerable and makes it almost impossible to build the kind of wealth needed to transition to homeownership. Providing safeguard programs that can help residents be more resilient to unexpected financial burdens would go a long way to providing the stability needed to make that jump. Finally, building off that same approach we need to shift our focus to foreclosure prevention programs. It's not enough to get people into homes, if they remain financially unstable. This is even more important as we face down the end of the eviction and foreclosure moratorium that is set to expire.

How do you think the city can best balance the rights of tenants and property owners to effectively manage rental housing? Specifically, please speak to your positions on Rent Stabilization, Inclusionary Zoning, Rental Subsidies, and/or Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act.

I believe that one of the most important tools of government is to protect the rights of all residents and step in to provide protection resources where they are needed most. I agree that a balance needs to be struck as we work to protect some of our most vulnerable populations from predatory and historically racist practices while also acknowledging the vital role housing providers fill. That is why I am supportive of a rent stabilization ordinance that is targeted at the most predatory landlords. I know well that most housing providers are well under 5% annual increases, but I do believe that renters who are being preyed upon on the fringes (at the double digit increases) deserve protections. I remain a strong supporter of our inclusionary zoning ordinance as a tool to incentivize affordable housing development through TIF assistance. We need affordable housing in every corner of our city, and I believe offering financing support coupled with this requirement is a good balance. I am even more supportive given the variety of options our policy provides for in lieu fees, off-site and various affordability levels of the units. I also believe that no policy is perfect and we can and should always look into how to build upon and improve programs like this as the needs of our city grow and shift. While I find the Tenant Opportunity to Purchase proposal to be an interesting tool in theory, I do not support it in practice in Minneapolis. My understanding of the proposal is that in order to provide this option for residents the City would need to allocate millions of dollars a year annually to education, legal assistance, program assistance and interpersonal assistance for every group interested in utilizing the program. On top of that the folks that implemented the program in D.C. did so coupled with financial incentives that were necessary to see most of the units purchased. Altogether this would require an enormous financial investment by the city to get this program up and successful. I believe those same resources could be better spent in our Affordable Housing Trust Fund or direct payments to renters to provide more housing and housing assistance, leading to more stability.

Do you support the current Public safety charter amendment and why?

No I do not. Transformational change in policing is important to me and something I have been working on my entire time in office but I do not believe this is the right path to get us to a better place. Fact is, we can do many of these proposed changes with a change to the City Charter. And I do not believe that this proposal increases transparency or accountability for police or for elected officials, in fact it decreases these ideals in our government.

Do you support the current government structure charter amendment to enact a strong mayoral system and why?

Yes I do. I wish you would not use the "frame" of the opposition (i.e. strong mayor) to characterize this amendment, however. I do not see it that way. I see this amendment as an important modernization in our city government, that will help the public to know more about our work and who/how decisions get made. When we talk about rooting out institutional racism, I see this as one logical step we can take to make local government more clear. Also I have direct experience of what it is like when colleagues cannot agree and this flat structure becomes highly dysfunctional in times of critical need. This keeps every elected in their lane of effective decision-making and accountability is more clear.

Please provide links to all social media accounts connected to you or your campaign if any.

I am not a big social media user. Twitter is @LineaPalmisano, Facebook is Linea Palmisano and/or Neighbors For Linea.