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Page 1: Government Affairs Committee - Candidate Selection Survey

**Q1**

Full Name

Paula Ramaley

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**Q2**

Preferred phone number

952-836-9162

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**Q3**

Preferred email address

paula@paula4minnetonka.com

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**Q4**

Office Sought

Minnetonka City Council, Ward 3

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**Q5**

Town of Residence

Minnetonka

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**Q6**

How long have you lived in your community?

40+ years

**Q7**

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Are you a Homeowner or Renter?

Owner

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**Q8**

Do you own other real property (e.g. Business, Cabin, Investment, or Rental Property)? If so, which?

Investment

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**Q9**

Describe your civic and/or community engagement.

Typical parent/community volunteering as a working parent (classroom, foodshelves, etc.); Board officer for several organizations dedicated to international citizen diplomacy and aid (Siberian Bridges; East-West Connections, others); Community advocate and campaign volunteer (all levels from school board to president); Founder of a Giving Circle that raises volunteers and funding for MN state legislative candidates. Member of Better Angels, a national organization founded in MN with a mission to help people bridge political (& cultural) divides through civil, respectful conversations and engagement.

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**Q12**

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

So far I have one formal endorsement (Susan Carter, former At-Large Minnetonka City Council Member) but others are in process and I can share after they have been formalized.

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**Q13**

What are the most important housing challenges facing your community?

Affordable Housing (median home price in Minnetonka is now \$496k) and the need for 'Smart Growth' in our development approach

**Q14**

The Twin Cities Metro 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 residents of your community?

- By supporting 'smart' growth - encourage more hubs of mixed retail/higher density developments that are on/near public transit, trails and greenspaces and connected to each other.
  - Review codes governing lot sizes, acceptable ADUs, etc. potential for duplexes, etc. Minnetonka, especially Ward 3 where I live, is majority larger single-family lots and this needs to be revisited to make home ownership and rentals more plentiful, accessible, and affordable
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**Q15**

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 home ownership gap?

- Ensuring that Fair Housing laws are properly enforces
  - Incentivize/require new & redevelopment projects include more affordable housing units at various levels (from 30-80%AMI)
  - Minnetonka has a first-time home-buyer loan program just created in addition a new 'Welcome to Minnetonka' program to help lower-income home-buyers. I would support the continuation and, as fiscally possible, the expansion of these programs
  
  - Continue/strengthen Minnetonka's work with 'Homes Within Reach'
  
  - Look to successes elsewhere. For example, increasing numbers of housing officials and advocates are looking at Vienna's very successful, self-sustaining public housing system (over 100 years old) in which residents pay 10% or less of their income in rent and remain in their units even after they exceed income qualification thresholds (promotes mixed income/more diverse neighborhoods).
  
  - In addition, Minnetonka as a community is doing yet can do even more to make people of all races, ethnicities, orientations, and abilities feel welcome, respected and that they have the opportunity to thrive in our community.
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**Q16**

How do you think the city can best balance the rights of tenants and property owners to effectively manage rental housing?

As someone who worked in affordable housing compliance/training space for a number of years, I know that this is a difficult question.

Property owners absolutely must fulfill their lawful obligations to tenants (and in my view, should go beyond and fulfill 'moral' obligations as well - in terms of sustainability and common care and decency). They also should be able to realize a reasonable profit (if they are a for-profit entity) but not gouge or subject tenants to drastic/unwarranted rent increases.

At the same time, while tenant rights absolutely must be enforced, so should their responsibilities - including paying rent (or making arrangements/notifications if they must be late because of an emergency), being a considerate tenant and neighbor, taking appropriate care of their own unit and common areas. One gray area that this has been problematic, for example, is when women (mostly) who are abuse victims are evicted from their housing due to problems (noise, violence, damage, etc.) caused by their abusive partner.

The city should ensure that current laws/codes are followed and endorsed and also periodically review city codes and policies are adequate to protect all parties

**Q17**

What are your views on property tax rates in your community? Do you have concerns related to the city's property tax rate? If so, how would you address those concerns once elected?

We have relatively high tax rates in Minnesota in general -- including Hennepin County and in Minnetonka.

This effects me personally as I live in my childhood home, a small cottage on Lake Minnetonka. As middle-class folks, our property taxes are particularly high - and many of our middle-class and retired neighbors have sold their homes for this reason.

However, as someone who has lived in various places in the US and abroad, I take the Oliver Wendell Holmes view that 'taxes are the

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price we pay for a civilized society.' To me, 'civilized society' means good city/public infrastructure, schools, services and amenities - plus working to implement/improve sustainability, climate change adaptation and inclusion in our community. Taxes should help us as a community realize the adage 'we all do better when we all do better.'

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**Q18**

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

Website: [www.paula4minnetonka.com](http://www.paula4minnetonka.com)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100095271964141>

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