

WHERE WE STAND

Thank you, Supervisor Sellers, Supervisor Hickman, and Supervisor Gallardo. We have been through a lot together over the past two years and it has been my privilege to serve alongside you. To see your integrity. To see your determination. To see your guts.

Supervisor Galvin, thank you for joining our team and for your commitment to the truth. You will be a great representative of your constituents and the entire County.

Being Chairman of this Board is my honor.

I would like to thank my family.

Pam, my rock and the love of my life. What a blessing you've been in these difficult months.

My three daughters, Corynn, Emily, and Natal. You keep me grounded. You remind me of why I do this.

So much has happened since then. To our family, and to the American family.

I could never have imagined, just two years ago when I passed the gavel to Supervisor Hickman, the ways our community would be tested.

Tested by a novel virus that has not just threatened our health, but our compassion for one another.

Tested by an uncertain labor market and rising prices.

Tested by the greatest single challenge to our democracy in my lifetime and likely yours.

It was only a year ago that I watched in complete shock as people climbed walls, broke grass, shoved police out of the way, and stormed the halls of the U.S. Capitol, many with the belief that their acts would save their country from what they were told was a stolen election.

It broke my heart... and made me worry about the world my daughters will inherit.

Our quality of life depends on the quality of our democracy.

The quality of our democracy is directly tied to the strength of our democratic institutions.

And right now, those institutions... including Maricopa County government... are at risk... because of widespread misinformation.

Too many people in positions of power have joined in or turned a blind eye.

They've told a loud few... what they want to hear.

That's the easy thing to do.

But we don't do what's easy here; we do what's right.

So we're going to keep telling the truth.

ELECTIONS

Polling continues to show a significant number of Americans believe there is widespread fraud involved in our elections. Some of them believe the Senate's audit of Maricopa County's 2020 election found proof.

I'm hear to tell you—again—it did not.

Our Elections Department has spent the last few months looking deeply into every accusation leveled by Senate contractors from envelopes to signatures to voters who moved.

The Cyber Ninjas claimed there were more than 53,000 questionable ballots cast in 2020.

Our expert analysis found less than 100... out of 2.1 million... with no systemic issues identified... and no impact on the outcome of races.

Later today, in my first major act as Chairman, I will preside over a hearing where we will discuss, in detail, the County's 100-page response to the Ninjas' false allegations. I hope it is the final word on the subject. You can watch it live on our YouTube channel, or read the report later at [JustTheFacts.vote](https://www.justthefacts.vote).

The attempt to undermine democratic elections puts at risk everything else we take for granted in a free country—speech, security, economic progress.

And that's why the County has not been silent... and will not be silent... in the face of lies.

We've seen what happens when people are falsely told than an election has been rigged or stolen. They storm a Capitol building. They threaten to hang or shoot election workers. They call fellow Americans... traitors.

The American family cannot stand for it. I will not stand for it.

Over the past five years, this Board... in partnership with Recorder Richer... former Recorders Fontes and Purcell... and countless dedicated staff... have made a strong elections operation even stronger.

In 2022, I am asking our team to run the most TRANSPARENT elections this county as ever seen... with proactive communications to reach diverse populations... videos... mailers... livestreams... explanations of laws and processes... publicly-available election plans... public hearings... a non-partisan voter outreach team... and much more.

And while our elections system is secure and not connected to the internet, we know that threats evolve... so we will add technology to make a secure system even safer...that includes special cages around our equipment to block any type of electromagnetic signal from getting in or out.

Running safe, secure elections is my #1 priority in 2022.

COVID-19

Another issue testing our American family is the ongoing fight against COVID-19.

We've lost too many members of that family... to a deadly and changing virus.

We've seen too many lives and livelihoods... disrupted.

We've seen too much over two years... and yet we are not done with the pandemic.

I want to express my sincere appreciation and awe for the health care workers who, for the past two years, have been fighting a battle on two fronts... one against a novel virus... and the other against reality itself.

I encourage everyone who's eligible to get your recommended vaccines and boosters.

I'm proud that Maricopa County has played an important role in limiting the number of bad outcomes due to COVID-19. Our team has made sure personal protection equipment, vaccines, and testing are available to meet the needs in the community. That they are distributed equitably. And we have provided data-driven information about how COVID spreads in our community and what the potential impacts are. I'm grateful for Public Health staff, volunteers, and partners involved in this effort. I truly believe your work is saving lives. Thank you.

You have my commitment... that this Board will continue to support Public Health efforts... as long as it takes... to end this pandemic.

ARPA FUNDS AND NEW REACH

An effective pandemic response is not just about protecting people's health, it's about protecting their livelihoods. We've done that. Thousands of businesses got loans... thanks to Maricopa County programs. Thousands of homeowners got a helping hand to stay in their homes... thanks to Maricopa County programs. Schools across our region... got computers and wi-fi hot spots that kept learning going while kids were stuck at home... thanks to Maricopa County programs.

Clint and Jack, you led the way on this effort. Thank you.

Now, with a new round of funding through the American Rescue Plan Act, our potential to help those who truly need it... will be greater than ever.

Already, we are targeting these federal dollars to the issues that matter to Maricopa County residents.

We have a nursing shortage during a pandemic and so some of this money is going toward a program that puts trained nurses directly from schools into hospitals where they can get the experience they need to join their chosen profession and save lives.

We have an affordable housing shortage and so we're taking \$30 million dollars to work collaboratively on housing initiatives that benefit low and moderate income families... because a six-figure salary shouldn't be the only path to a clean home in a safe place.

We have a growing issue of people living on our streets... and so we are targeting dollars toward programs that can get roofs over heads... that get people into stable work situations... that get folks the health and mental health care that can help them move beyond their current circumstance. Maricopa County has been a leader on this front for years, and just last month, the Board approved the largest investment the county has ever made to combat homelessness.

Steve, thank you for your advocacy on this issue.

You can find help at [Maricopa.gov/Rescue](https://maricopa.gov/Rescue) or track how we are spending federal dollars by visiting [Maricopa.gov/RescueFunds](https://maricopa.gov/RescueFunds).

SMART GOVERNMENT

I want Maricopa County government to feel like a partner, not an adversary...

Our focus should be helping people get things done—with low taxes, fewer regulations, and less red tape—so we create an environment where families and businesses can thrive.

That's why we're going to cut property taxes in 2022 for the second year in a row.

We can do that responsibly... so people have more money in their pockets... without a negative impact on the service they get from us.

In fact, that service needs to keep getting better.

I envision a place where you can apply for a permit at your computer, in your pajamas, one morning... and get approved to start your project by the next day.

A place where you can click any place on a map of our county, and in an instant, report an abandoned vehicle or excess trash.

Where call centers are replaced or augmented by live online chats.

Where government performance and spending are on display... in real-time.

Folks, this is not some distant dream.

These are efficiencies we've already put into place here at Maricopa County- and it's just the beginning.

During my last Chairmanship, I said we should leverage the data we have, the technology we have, the partnerships we have to create a SMART GOVERNMENT focused on exceptional customer service.

That's what we've done.

So when the pandemic led to an unexpected and record surge in building projects, our team identified the trend early on.

When the common wisdom in those uncertain early months was to put a hiring freeze in place... having the data at our fingertips.. hearing about the crushing demand for permits ... allowed county leaders to make an informed decision to staff up at Planning and Development.

As a result, contractors who wanted to get to work... could.

Projects that might have stalled out... got completed instead.

I believe all of our departments- should track their strategic goals in this manner.

Over the next year, we will approve a new countywide strategic plan—free of government speak—specific and directly related to customer service and economic development.

And I would go further.

I want departments that are tracking their strategic goals to not only develop dashboards for internal use, as many departments have already done... but also for the public to see on Maricopa.gov.

Everything from wait times in customer service areas- to records requests met- to public health outcomes.

In everything we do, we should make it timely and make it transparent.

COUNTY STAFF MESSAGE

Two years ago, life in America changed as a pandemic hit our shores.

One year ago, it changed again... as insurrectionists stormed our most hallowed halls.

Through it all, public servants from Maricopa County have done what's right and what's necessary... to protect the American family.

To the 13,000 who serve Maricopa County- thank you for being part of our family and for doing work that really matters.

I can't promise the critics will get quieter or the spotlight will get any less intense.

I can't promise that anyone outside the county complex will thank you for that process improvement, that extra mile of customer service, that late night making sure each eligible ballot is counted as it was cast.

I *can* promise that you are part of something that matters... and that simply by working hard at your chosen job each day... you are standing up in defense of democracy... and shoring up the institutions that make this country work.

I want Maricopa County government to be known as a place where you can do what's right and be rewarded.

Because the reality is... we are a place people want to live and work.

200 people a day move here... according to Census data.

4.5 million people call this desert oasis home.

Our reach, as public servants, has never been greater.

And neither has our responsibility.

As the fourth largest county in America, as one of the largest employers in Arizona, let's set the bar for how governments serve...

Let's be transparent and timely in what we deliver.

Let's fight distrust and disinformation...

Our county... and our country... and the American family depend on it.

Thank you.