

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Opinion: Join me in voting YES on Question 5

Carl Diedrich

Maricopa Resident and Councilmember

In 1979 things were bad. Real bad. Oil prices and gas lines were both huge. The stock market indexes were lower than they were a decade earlier and the Cold War was going the Soviet Union's way. Experts were claiming the end of a democratic economy was looming. Some even suggested the stock market was history. The funny thing is, people didn't listen and chose to invest in America. In just 3 short years, the stock market started an unprecedented Bull Run that propelled us into the 21st century. Those who invested in the early 80's ended up reaping the benefits of their vision and understanding that you have to stay ahead of trends. Investment was the answer. It is also the answer on Election Day. I am voting YES on Question 5.

Critics, by only focusing on the cost side of Question 5, fail to recognize the most important part of the equation - investment in our city and the future. My family is in the same situation as most other families in Maricopa. We struggle everyday with the economy, gas prices, the cost of food and childcare, and escalating utility bills. We have cut back on entertainment spending and do things on a smaller scale; we visit our park and library more often. I think about these things every day. I also think about when we first moved to Maricopa. Life was grand. Our home value skyrocketed and every mortgage company from here to Virginia wanted to lend us 120% of our homes "value". Things were great, no doubt. Funny thing is, we sat around and talked about the "what ifs". What if we would have bought in 2003? How great would it have been to own the farmland where Basha's is? The list is endless.

Hindsight speculation is always 20/20. But hindsight also gives us a looking glass. We know that the best way to secure our future is to learn from the past and understand where we are headed. Failing to improve our community through investment in Parks, Recreation and Library initiatives is one way to ignore what we know. The expense of repaying bonds is a small price to pay for the benefits to everyone, especially the youth in our community.

We all had an idea of what Maricopa was going to be; a place to raise our families and enjoy life in a new and growing community. This hasn't changed. Even in the face of desperate economic issues and the housing crisis, Maricopa continues to be near the top when it comes to new build permits in Arizona. The awesome vision of Maricopa continues to entice people. Some have left our fine city, but many are making a go of it. It is those people investing their lives into Maricopa that deserve more than just basic city services. In fact, they want more.

Respected data company Raymond Turco and Associates completed a "Citizen Attitude Survey" recently. This survey was different than the demographic studies done before. This survey wanted to know if people were happy living in Maricopa and what was important for the future of their community. The results are not surprising if you love Maricopa the way that my family does.

"Better than four of every five (83%) residents sampled were satisfied (60%) or very satisfied (23%) with the quality of life in their community."¹

"Nearly half the residents sampled (49%) believed that in the last two years, as a community, Maricopa has improved. A third (32%) graded the community as having stayed the same."¹

As you can see, Maricopans like it here – ALOT! This survey wasn't done a year, or even six months ago. It was done in August. Residents were asked many questions about what was important to them. When asked about city initiatives, here some of the things considered most important and the rates of positive responses received¹:

- Community Center 92%
- Widen 347 92%
- Library Construction/Expansion 90%
- Youth Baseball Fields 90%
- Large Multi-use Parks 87%
- Football Fields 82%
- Aquatic Facility 82%
- Multi-use Trails 80%

As you can see Question 5 is not a disconnect or something outside the bounds of what Maricopans want. It is aligned with the expectations and desires of the community and offers a method for these initiatives to take place. As satisfied residents I am asking for you to help keep Maricopa a desirable place to live. Vote YES on Question 5.

I am very fiscally conservative. I have voted to not spend money on what I believed weren't necessities. I have questioned purchases and ask tough questions when the city is looking to spend money. It is not always about the price tag, however. The most important piece of information that I use to make these decisions is the return on investment. I am willing to vote to spend money if the benefits exceed the costs. Question 5 has a great ROI. It is structured correctly so the city won't be burdened with the entire amount at one time and it gives the city some purchasing power so that we can invest taxpayer money into land and development that will give residents both tangible and intangible benefits for far more than just 20 years. We are at a point in our city's young history where we have to make a bold move. We must be flexible and we cannot let our current economic environment fool us into believing that it is better to wait out this downturn instead of taking advantage of the opportunity that exists.

Won't it be nice to sit around and talk about how we, as Maricopans, took the initiative to invest in our future? I know my son will thank me for it as he grows up; and he is worth every penny.

Sincerely,
 Carl Diedrich
 Resident and Councilmember

¹ – "Citizen Attitude Survey": Raymond Turco and Associates, August 2008

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