

# MEDA IN ACTION

Annual Report for FY 2018-19



Maricopa Economic  
Development Alliance



**Letter from MEDA Chairman/CEO and Mayor**

**August 2019**

Greetings Maricopans,

Maricopa is burgeoning, and the prospects for our future have never been brighter! Fiscal Year 2018-19 has brought positive, pivotal change and progress for our great city and our citizens.

National name brand retail stores and restaurants have located new facilities in Maricopa. Apex Motor Club broke ground on its motorsports country club. Our Copper Sky Commercial Complex and Estrella Gin Business Park soon will be breaking ground. La Quinta Hotels announced it will be building a hotel in our city. Ak-Chin Harrah's Hotel and Casino completed its three-year, multi-million dollar renovation and expansion, and marked its 25th anniversary.

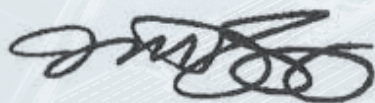
Our local economy is stable and growing responsibly, and the Maricopa City Councilmembers are committed to ensuring that Maricopa's business and investment environment supports quality enterprises and jobs.

All Maricopans are rightfully proud of this wonderful community they call home. Our residents and businesses have made invaluable contributions to the Maricopa of today – a city that offers an unparalleled, outstanding and safe quality of life; a vibrant spirit of community service, and strong public-private partnerships in which citizens, business, government and education work together to build a strong and diverse local economy and community.

The Maricopa-MEDA partnership is a critically important cornerstone to our economic vitality and sustainability. Through the Maricopa Economic Development Alliance, the City of Maricopa and business and education leaders join forces to identify and support promising economic development opportunities. We also work vigorously to identify and address how Maricopa can become even more competitive for business and industry. We invite you to learn more about MEDA and its progress in this annual report.

Thank you for your continued commitment and engagement in shaping Maricopa – where we all take pride in our storied history and are excited about the bountiful opportunities ahead.

Sincerely,



John D. Schurz  
Chairman and CEO  
MEDA



The Hon. Christian Price  
Mayor  
City of Maricopa

# Table of Contents

## SECTION 1: 4 ABOUT MEDA

---

## SECTION 2: 7 PROGRESS REPORT FOR FY 2018-19

---

Priority Area 1: Image Building and Marketing for Maricopa 7

Priority Area 2: Relationship Development 20

Priority Area 3: Regional Infrastructure Solutions 21

Priority Area 4: Organization Development 22



## SECTION 1: ABOUT MEDA

MEDA is a public purpose, nonprofit charitable organization whose charter is to improve economic and employment opportunities in the City of Maricopa. As such, the organization is prohibited from soliciting members; however, the organization is able to raise funds from the private and public sectors, as well as foundations and other sources of grant funding, to support the fulfillment of its public purpose.

MEDA is funded through public and private sector funds with performance contracts with the City of Maricopa that are based on specific functions, performance metrics and private sector matching contributions.

### **Mission Statement:**

*MEDA champions strategies and solutions that foster economic growth and prosperity in the City of Maricopa.*

### **Value Proposition:**

*As Maricopa's private-public partnership for economic development, MEDA achieves its mission by bringing together the business, government, education and the civic communities to identify and advance forward-looking policies, strategies and solutions necessary to facilitate investment, growth and workforce development.*

### **Our Board of Directors**

MEDA's Board is comprised of the leading private and public sector executives of Maricopa's major economic and institutional sectors, representing expertise and experience in utilities, finance, development, health care, retail, education and government. Central to this private-public partnership is the active engagement and participation of Maricopa Mayor Christian Price on the MEDA Board of Directors, as well as that of Maricopa City Councilmember Marvin L. Brown, City Manager Ricky Horst and (former) Economic Development Director Denyse Airheart.



## Board Officers



**Chairman – John D. Schurz**  
*President/General Manager  
Orbitel Communications, LLC  
and Western Broadband*

John Schurz is the President and General Manager of Orbitel Communications and Western Broadband, Schurz Communications, Inc.'s Arizona broadband properties. These broadband systems serve the communities of Maricopa, Sun Lakes, SunBird, Robson Ranch, SaddleBrooke and SaddleBrooke Ranch.

Mr. Schurz is a fifth-generation executive of Schurz Communications, a privately held family owned and operated business founded in 1872. He began his career with the firm in 1988 and has worked in cable, radio, newspaper and television at eight of the company's facilities. Currently, he serves on the Schurz Communications Board of Directors and the Governance, Audit and Finance, and Acquisition Committees.



**Secretary – James F. Kenny**  
*President, El Dorado Holdings,  
Inc.*

Jim Kenny joined El Dorado Holdings, Inc. in 2007. As president, he directs activity on existing investments and locates new investment opportunities in multiple real estate sectors with a focus on properties where El Dorado can bring its market knowledge and experience to increase value for investors. El Dorado is a leading master planned community developer that has created communities of distinction. The firm was the visionary for the City of Maricopa, beginning with the acquisition of the El Dorado Ranch, once owned by John Wayne. Today, El Dorado is one of Arizona's largest private land owners with assets of more than \$1 billion.



**Treasurer – D. Brett Benedict**  
*CEO and General Manager  
Electrical District No. 3*

D. Brett Benedict was appointed CEO and General Manager of Electrical District No. 3 in October 2018 and assumed the mantle in January 2019. He is a solutions-focused senior executive and financial strategist with more than 25 years of success spanning agriculture and utilities. Prior to his appointment as CEO and General Manager, Brett served as Electric District No. 3's CFO and Assistant General Manager.

Throughout his executive career, Brett has held leadership positions with Pinal County, the Maricopa Stanfield Irrigation & Drainage District, Benedict Feeding Company, Monument Farms, and Chickasha Cotton Oil. He previously served for 14 years as the Managing Partner of Monument Farms, a 1,600-acre farming operation, during which time he successfully found and negotiated leases for over 7,300 acres, developing the land and maintaining profitability while overseeing all relations with banks and government entities.

## Our Board Members



**Mr. Michael Adams**  
Group President  
Great Western Bank



**Dr. Tracey Lopeman**  
Superintendent  
Maricopa Unified School  
District 20



**Mr. Daniel Wolf**  
District Manager/Division  
Operations  
Southwest Gas Corporation



**The Honorable  
Marvin L. Brown**  
Maricopa City Council



**The Honorable  
Robert Miguel**  
Chairman  
Ak-Chin Indian Community



**Advisory Board Member  
Mr. Dan Weinman**  
System VP Strategy &  
Planning  
Banner Health



**Mr. Ron L. Fleming**  
President and CEO  
Global Water Resources



**The Honorable  
Christian Price**  
Mayor  
City of Maricopa



**Advisory Board Member  
Ms. Lisa Russell**  
Branch Manager II  
Great Western Bank



**Mr. Ricky Horst**  
City Manager  
City of Maricopa



**Mr. Mike L. Richey**  
President  
Maricopa Ace Hardware



**Dr. Ioanna Morfessis**  
Senior Advisor to the MEDA  
Board  
President, IO.INC



**Mr. Ryan Hutchison**  
Senior Planner  
Banner Health



**Mr. Adam Saks**  
President and Chief  
Operating Officer  
Dynamic Entertainment  
Group  
UltraStar Multi-tainment  
Centers



**Mr. Timothy Kanavel**  
Economic Development  
Director  
Pinal County, AZ





## SECTION 2: PROGRESS REPORT FOR FY 2018-19

### Key Focus Areas for MEDA

In 2017, the MEDA Board of Directors identified four key focus areas for its strategy and workplan over the next five years. Those focus areas are:

- ◆ **Image Building and Marketing Maricopa**
- ◆ **Relationship Building**
- ◆ **Regional Infrastructure Solutions**
- ◆ **Organization Development and Alignment**

Several of the key priority areas represent the continuation and expansion of already existing MEDA priority action items, while others represent entirely new initiatives. For FY 2018-19, MEDA proposes to achieve the goals and objectives presented below.

### Priority Area 1: Image Building and Marketing Maricopa

#### **1. Engage a professional marketing/communications firm to develop and execute a more business oriented program beginning in the new fiscal year (2018-19).**

Working closely with the City of Maricopa Economic Development Department, a great deal of time and intellectual capital was invested into developing and refining its overall marketing and communications plan. With the benefit of a full three years of marketing and communications for image building and economic development purposes, it was clear that in addition to the MEDA – Maricopa joint marketing/communications work, the economic development department itself needed to use some of its resources to market directly to site selection consultants and others who directly influence the business location decision-making process.

Additionally, in anticipation of having new office space coming on line with the Copper Sky Commercial Complex and the Estrella Gin Business Park, it was clear that both MEDA and the City had to “up their game” to reinforce the pivot of marketing and communications initiatives to business decision makers and site selectors.

With significant participation by City senior staff, a division of labor was decided upon: it was determined that the City Economic Development Department would serve in the lead role of certain marketing and advertising deliverables, and likewise, MEDA would serve in the lead role of other marketing and communications vehicles.

## Image Building and Marketing Maricopa

### **Annual Marketing Plan for Maricopa's Economic Development – Goal Achieved.**

---

For the first time, MEDA was given the blessing to move forward in development the City's annual marketing plan for economic development. Working closely with the City's Economic Development Director and other stakeholders, MEDA in concert with Pat Davis Design Group (PDDG) – MEDA's creative ad and marketing agency – and with input from HMA Public Relations – MEDA's PR firm, a comprehensive and aligned economic development marketing plan was developed. The MEDA Board of Directors approved this plan at its May 2019 meeting.

### **Ad Plan for Maricopa's Economic Development – Goal Achieved.**

---

In addition and equally important, MEDA charged PDDG with the task of creating an ad plan, including digital and more traditional advertising, all geared toward decision makers and influencers of the business location process. This plan was also approved at the May 2019 MEDA Board of Directors meeting.

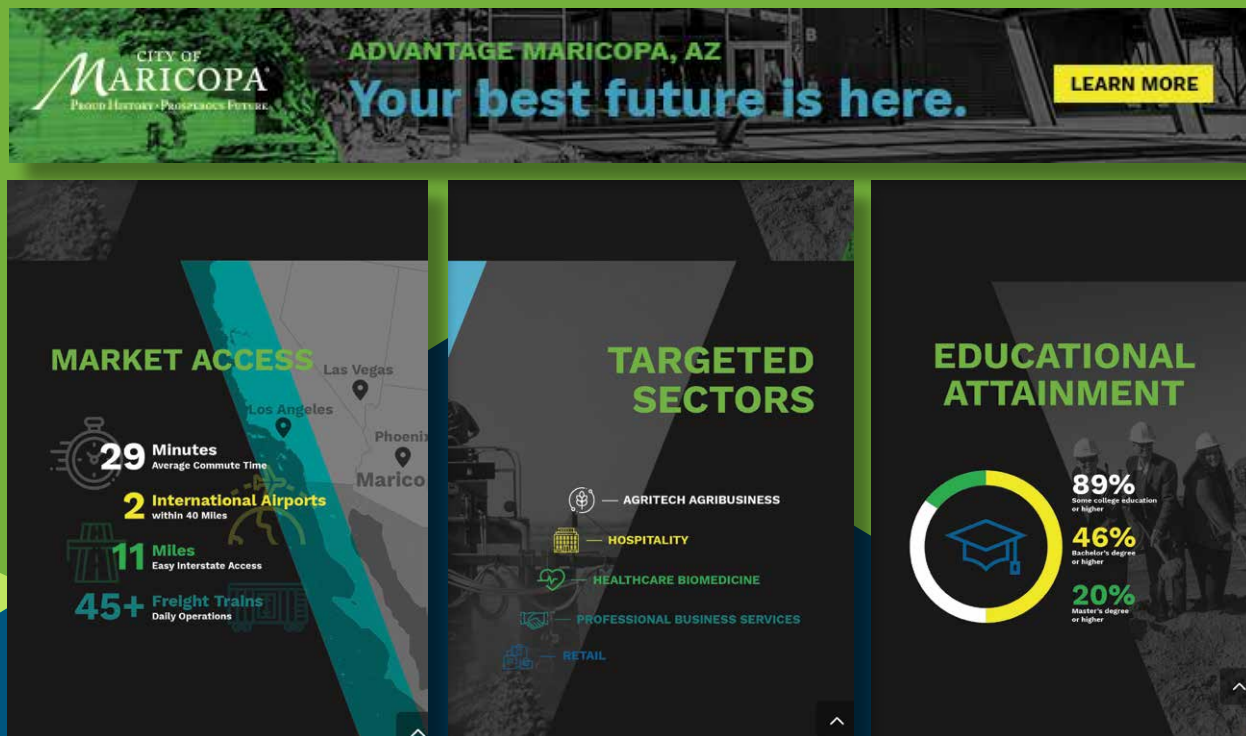
### **MEDA Marketing Committee – on-going.**

---

MEDA's Marketing Committee, chaired by MEDA Board member Ron Fleming, worked diligently in the past year to ensure that the organization's marketing and communications initiatives were in alignment with City and MEDA expectations. The Marketing Committee convened a worksession with PDDG to discuss marketing messages and the positioning of the City of Maricopa as a business location. The insights and perspectives from the MEDA Board members are invaluable to the impact of MEDA's marketing activities.







### Advertising - Digital Media – Goal Achieved.

PDDG, with direct input and guidance from MEDA, developed creative materials to implement an 11-week digital/online advertising campaign, running from April 15 through June 30, 2019.

- ◆ **Campaign Purpose:** By creating highly visual and engaging digital advertising assets, this campaign targeted C-Suite executives and top-level decision makers when it comes to business relocation to consider Maricopa as a suitable home for their business. The campaign sought to capture those individuals considering possible relocation and/or expansion of their existing business.
- ◆ **Geographic Reach:** The digital advertising campaign specifically targeted the Greater Los Angeles region, Orange County, and Southern California; omitting the San Diego region.
- ◆ **Advertising Approach:** For the purposes of this campaign, PDDG leveraged their trusted, long-standing relationship with American City Business Journals (ACBJ) to secure digital/online placement for a series of advertisements. The goal of both the messaging and visual elements of these advertisements was to not only reach the correct audience, but to also secure a high level of trust from the target audience members.
- ◆ **Campaign Goals:** This campaign sought to achieve a minimum of 500K impressions delivered across the following online assets:
  - » Display ads on two of the ACBJ media websites:
    - Los Angeles Business Journal – <https://www.bizjournals.com/losangeles/>;
    - ACBJ Primary Site – <https://www.bizjournals.com/>;

- » Display ads in daily (5 times per week, every other week) news update emails sent to existing LA Biz subscriber list;
- » Display ads delivered to the same demographics on an extended network of 500+ vetted, brand-safe news sites.

*Note: ACBJ operates a network of newspapers in 43 cities nationwide, including the online publication LA Biz. This news site's readers are predominantly (73%) C-Suite executives, partners, owners, or decision makers.*

- ◆ **Digital Asset Specifications:** The digital ads were created for maximum sizing and utilization across the proposed channels as follows: ACBJ + Extended Network – Leaderboards, Islands, and Mobile Banners – 728x90, 300x250, 320x50; and ACBJ Daily Newsletter/Email – Upper Leaderboards – 728x90
- ◆ **Campaign Testing:** To ensure the digital advertising campaign was top-performing and effectively reaching the desired target audience, PDDG performed an A/B test by using one set of creative assets for the first seven weeks of the campaign and a completely different set of creative assets for the following four weeks of the campaign. Each set of creative assets was unique both in messaging and visual components. In addition, each set of creative assets was hyperlinked to a completely unique, customized website landing page (see “MEDA Website Landing Page for Digital Media” below).
- ◆ **Campaign Results:** The digital advertising campaign was successful, exceeding industry standards for similar online campaigns implement by ACBJ.





**560,788**

Impressions Delivered  
Across All Digital Ads

**0.08%**

CTR for Ads on ACBJ  
Website (4x National  
Average)



**263**

Clicks (0.05% Click-  
Through Rate [CTR])

**0.04%**

CTR for Ads on Retargeted  
Websites (4x National  
Average)

**33,893**

Impressions Delivered  
Via ACBJ LA Biz  
Weekly E-Newsletter

**69**

Clicks (0.20% CTR)



**137**

Hours of Brand  
Awareness Viewing

**11.88**

Seconds Average Viewing per  
Ad (2x National Average)

**1,402**

Visitors to MEDA  
Website Digital Ad  
Landing Page

**557**

(39.7%) Visitors Driven  
Directly by ACBJ  
Website/Digital Ads



**171**

(12.2%) Visitors Driven  
Directly by Google Ads  
and Partner Ads

**142**

(10.1%) Visitors Driven  
Directly by Retargeted Ads

**289**

(21.0%) Visitors  
Located in Michigan  
(East Landing,  
Okemos, Detroit, and  
Rockwood)

**216**

(15.7%) Visitors Located  
in California (Los Angeles,  
Hemet, San Diego, Orange,  
and Palmdale)

**199**

(14.5%) Visitors  
Located in Kansas

**139**

(10.1%) Visitors Located in  
Virginia (Reston, Richmond,  
Dumbarton, Roanoke,  
Arlington, Ashburn, and  
Harrisonburg)



## **MEDA Website Landing Page for Digital Media – Goal Achieved.**

MEDA already had planned and budgeted to update its website (see Social Media and Digital Communication below). At the request of the City Economic Development Director, MEDA developed a landing page for the respondents to all digital ads. The landing page was directly linked to all digital ads so that members of the target audience would click the digital ad and be directed to a customized page on the MEDA website that offered high-level, relevant content for site selectors, business owners, and interested parties. The landing page, along with the full MEDA website, are all tracked extensively via Google Analytics, allowing for customized reports to be generated about website user behavior, location, browser, device, and more.

In addition to the customized landing page used as part of the digital ad campaign, MEDA's website also received an update in early 2019 to reflect more current City projects underway, community demographics, infographics, contact information, and the new Board of Directors. This update was done as a compliment to the major redesign of the MEDA website completed late last year.

## **Advertising – Mainstream Economic Development Advertising – Goal Achieved.**

During FY 2018-19, MEDA identified the most important and impactful site selector magazines in which to place customized ads about Maricopa as a prime business location. Following is a summary of these ad placements. The list below provides a recap of these placements.

- ◆ **Business Xpansion Journal (BXJ), May/June 2019:** A full-page, a full-color ad was placed for the publication's special focus on agritech/agribusiness. BXJ, with 23 years of solid economic development reach, has a combined print and digital distribution of 75,000, and a particular focus on C-Suite executives in the largest industry sectors in the U.S. MEDA's ad featured key talking points on available City resources and was accompanied by a no-cost two-page editorial, by-lined by Mr. Steven E. Naranjo, Center Director Arid-Land Agricultural Research Center and Mr. Vincent Thacker, Facilities Management Assistant Director of the University of Arizona Maricopa Agricultural Center. The editorial highlighted the many assets of Maricopa in this sector and highlighted the important work of these two institutions in agritech/agribusiness.
- ◆ **AZ Big Media, AzBusiness Magazine, Pinal County Supplement, May/June 2019:** A full-page, full-color ad was placed in the Pinal County supplement, Wide Open Opportunity Market Report 2019. 78% of Az Business Magazine's readers are either owners or presidents of their respective companies, and the publication has a statewide distribution of 25,000 copies. MEDA's ad focused on the Apex Motor Club "success story," with a message provided by Jason Plotke, President and Co-Founder of Apex.
- ◆ **Site Selection Magazine, May 2019:** A full-page, full-color ad, plus a bonus, no-cost one-third page ad were both placed in this publication. Site Selection is the preeminent, internationally circulated magazine for relocation, corporate real estate, and economic development, with a qualified





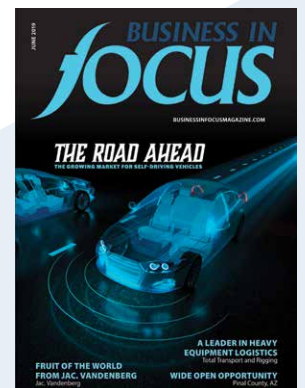
circulation of 48,700. MEDA's full-page ad focused on key value propositions for the City's educated and skilled workforce, affordable housing and plentiful amenities, and multi-modal access. The one-third page ad focused on the City Council and the City's pro-business model.

- ◆ **Phoenix Business Journal (PBJ), May 31, 2019:** A full-page, full-color ad was placed in the publication's special supplement, Growing Arizona. PBJ is the prominent business newspaper in the Greater Phoenix region, reaching over 13,000 weekly subscribers, of which 86% influence purchasing decisions and 66% are owners/managers. MEDA's full-page ad focused on key value propositions for the City's educated and skilled workforce, business-friendly and ready climate, multi-modal access, and affordable housing and plentiful amenities.
- ◆ **Business in Focus Magazine, June 2019:** A full-page, full-color ad was placed in the publication's economic development and tourism section. Business in Focus, based in Canada, reaches over 468,000 business leaders throughout all of North America, of which 26% are senior managers. MEDA's ad focused on key value propositions for the City's educated and skilled workforce, business-friendly and ready climate, multi-modal access, and affordable housing and plentiful amenities; and, was accompanied by a no-cost half-page editorial. The editorial featured MEDA's Chairman/CEO, Mr. John D. Schurz, and touted Maricopa's highly educated workforce.
- ◆ **AZ Big Media, AzBusiness Magazine, GPEC Special Section, January/February 2019:** MEDA developed a "native advertising" editorial page for placement in this special section, with the by-line from MEDA's Chairman/CEO, John Schurz. The content focused on positioning Maricopa as a vital part of the Maricopa-Pinal County region, underscoring Maricopa's current and future growth and the abundant opportunities for business locations and expansions.

### **Collateral Publications/Materials to Promote Maricopa – Goal Achieved.**

MEDA increasingly is developing and producing collateral materials that help Maricopa make a "business case" to companies about the advantages of locating in the City. In FY 2018-19, MEDA produced the following:

- ◆ **About Education in Maricopa 2019, published July 2019:** Maintaining its historic commitment to championing and support education in Maricopa, MEDA updated and published its About Education in Maricopa 2019 brochure. This publication is utilized by the City in its economic development presentations. Producing this brochure is a highly collaborative enterprise, involving the direct participation of the Maricopa Unified School District, the University of Arizona Maricopa Agriculture Center, the USDA Arid Land Agricultural Center and Central Arizona College.
- ◆ **Golden Corridor Living Magazine Maricopa Prospectus, March/April 2019:** In the spring/summer of 2018, MEDA worked in collaboration with the ROXCO Media Group, which owns this and other magazines, to develop a "Special Section" insert



on Maricopa. MEDA Board members were invited to participate as sponsors by purchasing a full-page ad, which also would offer them (and all advertisers buying a full-page ad) to one additional page of editorial. This special insert was produced at zero cost to the City, and to MEDA, only the cost of the City of Maricopa's economic development ad is its only expense; said ad is part of the MEDA advertising budget for FY 2018-19. The total in-kind contribution of MEDA's Board members for this Maricopa Prospectus is \$15,000.00.

The piece was published in the Golden Corridor Living Magazine's March/April 2019 issue, which focused on health care and wellness. The magazine featured an extensive interview with City Manager Ricky Horst, and also featured other Maricopa-related events. 5,000 copies were provided to the City of Maricopa/MEDA on a gratis basis, and the City is distributing these as an Economic Development Guide to businesses and other development related individuals and firms.

## Public Relations and Communications

### Wall Street Journal article on Maricopa, March 26, 2019

Mayor Christian Price was contacted by the Wall Street Journal's Senior Housing Reporter, Laura Kusisto, who was working on an article that would "revisit" what had been written about Maricopa 10 years earlier.

MEDA's Senior Advisor worked extensively with Mayor Price and other City officials as well as directly with the Wall Street Journal reporter to identify and arrange for her visit and tour of Maricopa. Working in close collaboration with the City, MEDA arranged for the reporter to meet with and interview Mayor Price and new residents of Maricopa. A major story that featured Maricopa's "comeback" since the Great Recession of 2008 was featured in the March 26, 2019 issue of the Wall Street Journal.





# THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

---

## A Decade After the Housing Bust, the Exurbs Are Back

Home buyers, often millennials, are looking farther away for affordable housing, even if that means a long commute

By Laura Kusisto March 26, 2019 10:32 a.m. ET

MARICOPA, Ariz.—The exurbs, the engine of the American housing market, are back.

A decade ago, the sight of new homes under construction in Maricopa, an enclave of tidy cul-de-sacs 35 miles from downtown Phoenix, was almost unimaginable. Four in five homeowners were underwater, with their outstanding mortgages worth more than their properties, according to housing data tracker Zillow. Neighbors felt compelled to cut the hedges and clean up garbage at empty houses.

Last year, Maricopa issued permits for nearly 1,000 new homes. In the depths of the housing downturn, in 2010, it issued just 110.

(This article can be accessed at [https://www.wsj.com/articles/a-decade-after-the-housing-bust-the-exurbs-are-back-11553610771?mod=hp\\_lead\\_pos5](https://www.wsj.com/articles/a-decade-after-the-housing-bust-the-exurbs-are-back-11553610771?mod=hp_lead_pos5))



*'Nobody thought we'd still be here,' says Maricopa Mayor Christian Price. Photo: CONOR RALPH for The Wall Street Journal*

### Thought Leadership

---

Thought-leadership is a primary focal point of MEDA's public relations/communications initiatives. The positioning of Maricopa public and private leaders to garner "earned media" is a foundational building block for advancing the City as a leading community in the Maricopa-Pinal County region. MEDA's endeavors in this regard include developing content for Mayor Christian Price as the Chief Elected Official of Maricopa (CEO), as well as representatives of the MEDA Board of Directors. Following is a recap of these initiatives for FY 2018-19.

- ◆ **InMaricopa, June 2019:** The Mayor, having recently returned from the International Conference of Shopping Centers conference, shared on his Facebook page about the experience, detailing what he learned about the "lifecycle of a city." This post was updated and sent as an opinion piece to InMaricopa; it was published online in June. <https://www.inmaricopa.com/maricopa-mayor-price-business-location/>

- ◆ **Thought Leadership - Laying the Foundation:** Developed and placed a thought-leadership piece from Mayor Price entitled “Laying the Foundation”. The article appeared on AZBigMedia.com on November 21, 2018. <https://azbigmedia.com/business/economic-development/city-of-maricopa-lays-the-foundation-for-a-smart-future/>.
- ◆ **AZ Big Media, Az Business Magazine, May 2019:** A bylined thought leadership piece for Mayor Price, entitled Quality of Life: Mission Critical to Community Success, was written and published in April by AZ Big Media. The article was revised and appeared in the June 13th issue of The Arizona 100, an e-letter produced by HMA Public Relations that is circulated to public and private leaders across Arizona each month. <https://azbigmedia.com/business/consumer-news-news/quality-of-life-mission-critical-to-community-success/>.
- ◆ **AZ Big Media, Az Business Magazine, May 2019:** A thought leadership piece was prepared for the by-line of Jim Kenny about the importance of public-private sector collaboration in building a community’s economy. <https://azbigmedia.com/business/economic-development/opinion-investment-in-organizations-like-meda-and-gpec-is-critical/>.
- ◆ **AZ Big Media, Az Business Magazine, May 2019:** One of Maricopa’s targeted economic sectors is agritech/agribusiness. MEDA has connected with both the University of Arizona Maricopa Agriculture Center and the USDA Arid Land Agricultural Center to ensure that these two outstanding assets are included in both MEDA’s and the City’s marketing and communications.
- ◆ **Capitalizing on Mayor Price’s Election as President of the League of Arizona Cities and Towns:** The Mayor’s role in this statewide capacity provides MEDA and the City of Maricopa with the opportunity to position the City on a regional and statewide platform. In addition to placing the announcement of his position in the Business Journal, both print and online, MEDA and HMA also wrote and placed a letter to the editor that was tied to the start of the 2019 Legislative Session. The theme of the letter is cooperation and working in partnership with the Mayors from across the state to advocate in front of the Legislature. The letter appeared in the January 10, 2019 issue of InMaricopa, <https://www.inmaricopa.com/price-mission-of-league-of-cities-and-towns-more-important-than-ever/> and in the Arizona Republic print edition on January 15, 2019.
- ◆ **AZ5Cs Online News Portal:** A new online news portal debuted in early 2018 called AZ5Cs. The site pays tribute to Arizona’s original 5Cs, while asking community leaders to develop a new set of “C’s” for our state. Mayor Price was the first elected official to be profiled on the site. The story appeared online in November 2018: <https://az5c.com/stories/maricopa-building-a-new-american-city/>



## Promoting Maricopa Regionally

---

- ◆ **Promoting Maricopaville:** HMA reached out to local television stations in support of Maricopaville – the City’s Small Business Saturday event. HMA was able to secure one television station and provided b-roll video for their newscast. However, the station did not air the segment.
- ◆ **Copa Shorts Film Fest:** MEDA is continuing its tradition of support of the Copa Shorts Film Fest (CSFF) by extending the services of its PR agency as an in-kind contribution (MEDA also is a sponsor of the event). Working in cooperation with Shelley and Roger Gillespie, HMA will be pitching some story ideas to a select group of media outlets. HMA secured a television segment for the Copa Shorts Film Festival on AZTV. Shelley Gillespie, event producer, along with one of the filmmakers was featured. The segment aired the week of February 18, 2019: <https://www.aztv.com/posts/copa-shorts-film-festival>
- ◆ **Valley Business Radio X:** HMA secured a segment on Valley Business Radio X for Maricopa Economic Development Director Denyse Airheart to discuss “what is economic development?” and “how cities attract business.” She was joined for this 45-minute segment with a representative from the City of Scottsdale’s economic development department and WESTMARC. The segment aired on March 6, 2019: <https://businessradiox.com/podcast/valleybusinessradio/lori-collins-phoenix-denyse-airheart-maricopa-brad-vynalek-quarles-brady/>
- ◆ **MEDA Communications:** MEDA’s chairman has changed for the first time in seven years. HMA PR wrote and disseminated a news release regarding the appointment of new MEDA officers. The story appeared in the following publications:

Business Journal (online/print), November 15, 2018: [https://www.bizjournals.com/phoenix/potmsearch/detail/submission/6460638/John\\_Schurz](https://www.bizjournals.com/phoenix/potmsearch/detail/submission/6460638/John_Schurz)



HMA Public Relations Newsroom, November 16, 2018: <https://hmapr.com/client-news/john-schurz-elected-chairman-maricopa-economic-development-alliance/>

Maricopa Monitor, November 16, 2018: [https://www.pinalcentral.com/maricopa\\_monitor/news/meda-announces-new-chairman-board-members/article\\_6a73e952-ba79-5258-a39e-e27df74eca47.html](https://www.pinalcentral.com/maricopa_monitor/news/meda-announces-new-chairman-board-members/article_6a73e952-ba79-5258-a39e-e27df74eca47.html)

AZ Big Media, November 21, 2018: <https://azbigmedia.com/business/business-leaders/newsmakers/on-the-move-at-landsea-homes-maricopa-economic-development-alliance/>

In Maricopa, November 27, 2018: <https://www.inmaricopa.com/orbitel-president-elected-meda-chairman/>

## Media Relations

---

Media relations is another pillar of MEDA's marketing and communications strategy to promote the City of Maricopa with the intent of elevating awareness of the community among regional – and eventually national and international decision makers. Following is a recap of MEDA's media relations for FY 2018-19.

- ◆ Mike Richey and the team at Maricopa Ace Hardware ranked #9 in the country for funds raised for Children's Miracle Network hospitals, one of which is Phoenix Children's Hospital. As such, Maricopa Ace Hardware donated \$42,441.45 to PCH as a result of in-store fundraising, the store's nomination by PCH for Ace Retailer of the Year, and the store's top 10 finish. MEDA's PR firm, HMA, staffed the donation event, took photos and sent out the photos following the event.
- ◆ February is Girl Scout cookie season and College Times newspaper did a story on what women executives learned from their time selling Girl Scout cookies. As a former Girl Scout, Maricopa's former Economic Development Director, Ms. Denyse Airheart, was featured in the story.
- ◆ Ms. Denyse Airheart also participated in a panel on Valley Business Radio X, a business podcast. Joined by a representative from the City of Phoenix economic development office and a Board member from Greater Phoenix Economic Council, Denyse shared great insight into the role of economic development director and how a city like Maricopa grows and prospers through focused economic development efforts.
- ◆ Ak-Chin Tribal Community Chairman Robert Miguel was elected to the MEDA Board of Directors. HMA placed the story in the People on the Move in the Business Journal and disseminated a news release to local area media.
- ◆ HMA secured a television segment for the Copa Shorts Film Festival on AZTV. Shelley Gillespie, event producer, along with one of the filmmakers was featured.





- ◆ HMA secured a story in the Arizona Business Magazine with the working title, Outliers, focusing on business leaders outside of Maricopa County. Board chair John Schurz was featured as part of this story that ran in the June issue of AZ Big Media.
- ◆ Links to the above news stories here: <https://bit.ly/2G0PjID>
- ◆ Harrah's Ak-Chin Casino celebrated the grand opening of The Events Center at Harrah's, the completion of a multi-million dollar expansion and the kickoff of its 25th anniversary. Mayor, City Council and MEDA Board members were in attendance at the event. The Arizona Republic ran an online story on May 26, <https://www.azcentral.com/story/money/business/economy/2019/05/25/harrahs-ak-chin-casino-celebrates-25-years-180-million-renovation/1197274001/>. The article appeared in the Valley/State section on June 23. The Mayor was interviewed for the story, highlighting the relationship between the City and the Ak-Chin Indian Community.
- ◆ APEX Motor Sports: MEDA has maintained a positive working relationship with its co-founder and principal, Jason Plotke, and worked energetically to support APEX's groundbreaking in April.

### **Social Media/Digital Communication**

---

- ◆ **Mayor Price LinkedIn:** Utilizing the strength of LinkedIn to further reinforce our strategy of positioning Maricopa and its public and business leaders as thought leaders, MEDA arranged to have a Mayor's LinkedIn site developed (last fiscal year). It has been almost dormant up until recently. MEDA's public relations/communications firm, HMA Public Relations, began monitoring and publishing Maricopa business and economic development-oriented content to his profile.

### **Developing a Deal Generating Pipeline of Qualified Business Leads and Prospects**

---

In economic development, having a strong network of professionals who can refer desirable commercial, employment and retail projects to the City is critical to growing an economy. Competition for these types of quality projects has never been more intense. At the heart of MEDA's image building and marketing goals is to help catapult Maricopa onto the business locations "radar screen". Maricopa has been somewhat disadvantaged in this regard, as it has lacked a basic requirement: shovel ready sites for employers and other commercial uses.

Now, with the anticipated finalization of development plans and agreements for the Copper Sky Commercial Complex and Estrella Gin Business Park – both City owned properties that can accommodate employers along with other uses – it is imperative that the City cultivate sources who can provide qualified leads and prospects for a potential location in Maricopa.

### **1. Participate in the City's commercial-industrial broker/developer visitation program.**

Developed by MEDA, this program is designed to increase the awareness of Maricopa as an important business location in the Greater Phoenix region, and to begin to develop the City's own deal-generating pipeline. Working in close cooperation with the City Economic Development Department, MEDA targeted one-on-one visits with the managing director of 10 of the leading brokerage firms with whom Maricopa does not have a relationship. MEDA developed the framework for this strategy, and prepared a letter from Mayor Price to the principals of these firms. It is anticipated that these visits will be fully launched in FY 2019-20.

### **2. Assist the City with its Development Plans and Agreements**

MEDA reached out to one of the leading development experts to assist Maricopa on a pro-bono basis to obtain their assistance in reviewing existing City/developer development agreements. The purpose of this request was to ensure that Maricopa had the benefit of a highly knowledgeable and successful commercial development expert who could provide ideas to help Maricopa achieve better outcomes for City owned developments. In addition, this individual also introduced Maricopa to a leading national developer who builds very high-quality projects in the Phoenix and other U.S. markets.

## **Priority Area 2: Relationship Development**

### **1. Continue to cultivate relationships with regional business leaders and executives on Maricopa's behalf.**

- ◆ MEDA continued to cultivate, prepare letters, e-mails and arrange meetings as well as follow up on the executives of the following firms in FY 2018-19:
  - » Arizona Grain;
  - » Beem Biologics;
  - » Great Western Bank;
  - » Bank of America.

### **2. Continue to work with Pinal County and obtain a formal and firm commitment to have a county official sit on the MEDA Board. Goal Achieved.**

- ◆ Mr. Tim Kanavel, Pinal County's Economic Development Director, now serves on the MEDA Board of Directors as a representative of Pinal County Government as of June 2018.
- ◆ MEDA's Senior Advisor maintains frequent and close contact with Mr. Kanavel, and also has provided expert advice and information for the Pinal County Manager in addition to its Economic Development Director.



## Priority Area 3: Regional Infrastructure Solutions

At its October 2017 strategic planning session, the MEDA Board had identified regional infrastructure solutions as a major focal point for its work. The purpose is to support the City's and region's efforts to secure the type of financial commitments that are essential to ensuring that Maricopa and the broader community receive the resources and infrastructure necessary to enable the community to function and grow. Over the past several years, the Maricopa City Government, Ak-Chin Indian Community, Pinal County Government, State of Arizona and a broad network of coalitions and collaborations have thus far yielded positive results, as evidenced by the SR 347 overpass, progress on addressing flood plain issues and other key areas. Even with all of the progress that has been collectively achieved, more work needs to be done and sensitivity to the processes of governmental approvals needs to be brought to bear in the collective quest to obtain the commitments and funds that are needed to pay for these improvements.

**MEDA Infrastructure Workshop, September 2018:** At its September 2018 Board meeting, MEDA staged a ½ day workshop on infrastructure. Working with Mayor Price, former Economic Development Director Denyse Airheart and several MEDA Board members, an agenda was developed. MEDA invited the entire Ak-Chin Indian Community Tribal Council, and several Tribal Council members, including Chairman Robert Miguel attended, as did staff members from the community.

**MEDA Support of I-11, April-May 2019:** At its April 2019 Board meeting, MEDA received an in-depth presentation from Mr. David Maestas, Maricopa's Transportation Policy Manager, on the recently published I-11 Tier 1 Environmental Impact Study. MEDA private sector Board members each weighted in with the Arizona Department of Transportation and its consultant to support the Recommended Corridor in the Maricopa Planning Area. In addition, MEDA's Board approved a letter of ardent support of this alternative to ADOT, and the letter was sent in May 2019.



## Priority Area 4: Organization Development and Alignment

### 1. Continue to expand MEDA's Board of Directors to encompass more businesses, thereby increasing the private sector funding base for the marketing program – on-going.

- ◆ In FY 2018-19, MEDA achieved an unprecedented level of private sector and non-city funding: \$99,000. This achievement was due to the highly focused, determined work of our Board members and our Senior Advisor. Equally important, having the Maricopa Mayor, City Manager and Economic Development Director participate so actively in the MEDA organization as well as business visitation and outreach contributed enormously to this record achievement.
- ◆ MEDA's Board members continue to exemplify extraordinary generosity to the organization in support of its mission and purpose on behalf of the City of Maricopa. In addition to the outsized financial support that is garnered through MEDA's individual Board member firms, many also provide expansive in-kind contributions:
  - » At least one-third time of Lisa Sjöberg, Executive Assistant and Marketing Coordinator of Electrical District No. 3;
  - » Gratis annual income tax returns by Henry and Horne, Electrical District No. 3's certified public accounting firm;
  - » Administrative and accounting services by Mrs. Beth Huerta, Global Water's Community Services Director, for the MEDA State of the City work.

### 2. Continue to maintain close collaboration and cooperation with the City Government – elected officials and professional staff – to ensure that the organization is fulfilling its mission and realizing its goals.

- ◆ **Maricopa City Councilmembers Communication:** Working with Mayor Christian Price and City Manager Ricky Horst, as well as directly with some members of the Maricopa City Council, a joint workshop/meeting with the entire Maricopa City



Dr. Tracey Lopeman and Mike Richey



The Honorable Christian Price, Mayor City of Maricopa and The Honorable Robert Miguel, Chairman, Ak-Chin Indian Community





Mr. Daniel Wolf, District Manager, Southwest Gas Corporation



The Honorable Julia Gusse, Maricopa City Councilwoman, observing a presentation about Maricopa's water supply



The Honorable Vice Mayor Henry Wade, Maricopa City Manager Ricky Horst and MEDA Senior Advisor Dr. Ioanna Morfessis



Council and MEDA Board was planned and held on January 9. During the fall and winter of 2018, MEDA worked diligently to develop an agenda and to obtain input and ideas from the Mayor, City Manager and members of the City Council.

MEDA will continue to request at least once-annual updates before the Maricopa City Council to ensure that all members are fully informed and kept up to date on key activities and issues.

- ◆ **Maricopa State of the City 2018:** This fiscal year, the City of Maricopa asked MEDA to serve as its fiscal agent/marketing partner for the State of the City event. MEDA worked closely with the City's Director of Administrative Services and the Mayor's/ Council's Executive Assistant. All MEDA Board members were sponsors for this year's event, and the financial goals were achieved and exceeded. Global Water generously extended the assistance and support of its Community Services Director, Ms. Beth Huerta, to assist in the administrative and financial matters related to the 2018 State of the City on an in-kind basis.
- ◆ **Assist the City with Key Issues:** MEDA's Senior Advisor and the City's Economic Development Director work very closely together on a broad range of issues, ranging from ideation for marketing and outreach, to input into City programs, RFPs, projects, etc. The relationship is built on mutual respect and trust, and communications is very frequent in addition to in-person meetings.

- ◆ **MEDA – City of Maricopa Economic Development 2.0:** At their December 2018 strategic planning retreat, the City of Maricopa City Council and City Manager discussed the potential to have MEDA assume more directly economic development functions and responsibilities that had previously been handled 100% by the Maricopa Economic Development Department. Since that time, working closely with the Maricopa City Manager Ricky Horst, MEDA has conducted substantial due diligence, significant research and developed a detailed game plan and requisite documents to help effectuate this transition. It is anticipated, subject to Maricopa City Council approval, that MEDA's role will be significantly expanded in FY 2019-20.
- ◆ **Contribute to a strong Ak-Chin Indian Community – Maricopa Relationship:** MEDA worked to obtain sponsorships for the Arizona Association of Economic Development's Tribal Symposium that is being hosted at the Ak-Chin UltraStar Multi-tainment Center in August 2019. Tribal leaders from throughout the state as well as the entire economic development ecosystem – economic developers, commercial-industrial developers, brokers, architects, engineers, utilities, etc. will be attending this symposium. To demonstrate MEDA's commitment to supporting the Ak-Chin Indian Community, MEDA's Senior Advisor enlisted sponsorships from the City of Maricopa, Pinal County Government, Central Arizona College, and of course, MEDA's own sponsorship.
- ◆ **Maricopa Community Foundation:** MEDA's Senior Advisor worked closely with the City's consultant on examining the potential of a community foundation to be established in the city to augment and elevate Maricopa's ability to harness philanthropy and channel it inwardly to fund and support local charities and causes. In addition to providing review and input to the City's consultant, MEDA also reviewed the potential of serving as the "host" 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation for the start-up of the Maricopa Community Foundation. It was determined that this would be difficult to achieve, largely due to the added functions that would be forthcoming from the City Government. Since the conclusion of the consultant's work, MEDA's Senior Advisor has continued to assist the City and the organizing Board in their efforts to form such a community foundation, and has agreed to serve on the





inaugural Board. In addition, two MEDA Board members also have agreed to serve on the inaugural Board of Directors for the Maricopa Community Foundation.

- ◆ **Strengthen the MEDA Board and Organization:** MEDA is a small organization without full-time staff. Its Senior Advisor does function in some capacity as Executive Director, albeit on a part-time basis. With the active involvement of the City's Economic Director and the assistance of Electrical District 3's Executive Assistant, significant time and focus is given to the fundamental functions required to keep an organization functioning at a high-performing level, delivering efficient and effective services on behalf of the City of Maricopa:

- » Creating an annual budget and program of work;
- » Creating metrics that have meaning;
- » Identifying and requesting contributions from new contributors;
- » Monitoring financial statements and cash flow;
- » Preparing for and following up on MEDA Board of Directors meetings.

- ◆ **Administrative Issues:**

- » Preparing invoices to private sector contributors;
- » Reviewing and preparing scope of work and progress reports for the City of Maricopa – MEDA annual contract;
- » Following up on phone calls to MEDA for information and troubleshooting;
- » Conferring with MEDA Chairman/CEO on multiple matters;
- » Helping to prepare for and implement the transition of former long-time chairman to the new MEDA Chairman/CEO and for the installation of a new Board Treasurer;
- » Preparing and delivering communications and updates to MEDA Board members on timely issues germane to MEDA's work;
- » Working with MEDA's bank to transition signatories for the MEDA checking account.

### **3. Ensure accountability and transparency; document and publish periodic and annual progress reports.**

- ◆ MEDA's annual progress report was completed and distributed in August 2019.
- ◆ MEDA's Senior Advisor to the Board prepares monthly activity reports.
- ◆ MEDA prepares detailed activity reports every six months as required by the City-MEDA contract.



## Why Invest in MEDA?

Why should businesses, entrepreneurs and individuals invest in MEDA? Investing in the MEDA partnership helps to advance the economic growth and prosperity of Maricopa. Firms, institutions and individuals who contribute to MEDA realize many benefits by supporting this vital partnership:

- ◆ Private-public partnership between business and government that is proficient with issues that impact business growth and success.
- ◆ Strong relationships with the top public, private and community leaders whose positions and work directly impact how Maricopa grows and prospers.
- ◆ Experienced local industry leaders invested in Maricopa who are ready to champion and lead change to strengthen the city's business climate and operating environment.
- ◆ The “gateway” to understanding the economic and business dynamics that define Maricopa.
- ◆ A pro-growth organization with the ability and standing to expedite development of commercial and residential projects in the community.
- ◆ Consistent, long-term private sector leadership that operates independently of partisanship or terms of office to lead on issues and projects that impact the bottom line.
- ◆ Ability to quickly address infrastructure needs with the city's utility executives “at the table” and committed to solutions.
- ◆ Champions for building Maricopa's competitiveness for business, industry and entrepreneurship.







# MEDA

Maricopa Economic  
Development Alliance

Maricopa Economic Development Alliance  
PO Box 1703, Maricopa, AZ 85139

[info@MaricopaEDA.com](mailto:info@MaricopaEDA.com)  
(520) 424-0419

Special thanks to Pat Davis Design Group, Inc. for  
their generosity in making this publication possible.



PAT DAVIS DESIGN GROUP, INC

[www.pddesign.com](http://www.pddesign.com)