



Maricopa County Recorder's Office

QUARTERLY REPORT

January 1 - March 31, 2021

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Letter from the Recorder

Dear Maricopa County:

A newly elected President is said to have a 100-day honeymoon period before entering a routinely chaotic and combative political arena. I'd hoped the same courtesy would extend to a newly elected Recorder.

It did not.

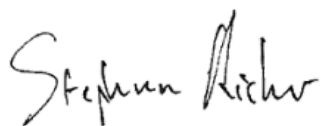
On my third day in office – January 6 – I sent staff home due to protests and security concerns. On my seventh day, I received a subpoena at 4:00 PM demanding my appearance at the State Capitol the next morning. On my eighth day, I received my first death threat. In my third week, I presented a budget request for the entire following fiscal year. In my sixth and seventh weeks, I helped oversee and scrutinize the work of the two independent firms evaluating county ballot tabulation equipment. In my ninth week, we successfully concluded the City of Goodyear election. In my tenth week, I was accused of shredding ballots for an election that I didn't run, that were securely stored in a continuously videoed internal room I don't have access to, and that, but for legal disputes, would have ordinarily been long gone by the time I took office. Ostensibly I did all of that to cover up for my political opponent, whom I'd spent the last 12 months criticizing.

Amidst this chaos and craziness, however, I've come to love both an office and a staff. It is truly a privilege to be here. The work we do at the Recorder's Office and Elections Department is fundamental to our economic liberties (through the recordation of property interests) and our civil liberties (through the registration of voters and administration of elections). The staff boasts many talented professionals who are passionate about the subject matter. Quite a few have been with the office for over 20 years and have developed an unbelievable library of knowledge. I learn from them every day.

Also amidst the chaos and craziness, we've notched successes and launched exciting new projects. The remainder of this letter provides details.

Moving forward we'll provide similar quarterly updates. Additionally, at the end of the second quarter we will assemble two advisory boards – one for recording, and one for voter registration and elections – with whom we will share our report in order to solicit feedback from a broad range of industries, groups, and philosophies.

Thank you for the opportunity.



Stephen
Maricopa County Recorder

Mission

I do not see the Recorder's Office as a political office. Our success will not be measured by the political outcomes of the processes we administer. Instead, we will measure our success on our ability to competently, lawfully, and fairly execute our statutorily defined responsibilities.

We also aim to build confidence. Build confidence in our elections. Build confidence in our voter registration database. Build confidence in our public records. Build confidence in Maricopa County.

Recording Statistics

Between January 1, 2021 and March 31, 2021, the Office recorded 362,988 documents. This represents a 30.26% increase from the first three months of 2020 (278,650 documents). The vast majority of documents are now recorded digitally – 93.6% through the first three months.

Last year the Office recorded 1,301,085 documents. The following categories accounted for the majority of the documents:

- Deed of Trust
- Deed of Release & Full Reconveyance
- Warranty Deed
- Release
- Special Warranty Deed
- Medical Lien
- Financing Statement
- Quit Claim Deed

For more statistics on recording, please see [Appendix A](#).

Voter Registration Statistics

The voter registration department remains busy as large numbers of voters continue to move to Maricopa County and new housing developments are mapped into districts. Between January 1 and March 31, we received 35,869 new voter registrations.

We've also seen a lot of changes since the new year to partisan affiliation, addresses, and permanent early voting list (PEVL) status, some of which require processing by the voter registration team. For example, between January 1 and March 31, we received 28,459 party changes.

For more voter registration statistics, see [Appendix B](#).

Goodyear Election

The Recorder's Office continues to partner with the County Board of Supervisors in the administration of elections as outlined by Arizona law. It is a valued partnership, and both entities agree that election administration should be as apolitical as possible and that our joint success will not be determined by the victory of one party or another, but on whether the election is competently, lawfully, and fairly executed. The partnership between the Recorder's Office and the Board of Supervisors is currently governed by the Elections Operations Agreement, executed in October 2019. Together, the two entities jointly administer elections through the Elections Department.

On March 9, the Department concluded the Goodyear Jurisdictional Election. Pursuant to law, and at the request of our partners at the Goodyear City Clerk's Office, we sent out ballots to the 57,326 registered voters on 10 propositions (Propositions 451-460). All of the propositions passed. They included things such as a mayoral pay raise and if the city could continue to elect its councilmembers at large rather than by district.

Before tabulating ballots in any election, the Department must perform a logic and accuracy test to make sure the tabulation equipment correctly reads the ovals as filled out on the ballots. The test is conducted by voting mock ballots that mirror the format of the actual ballots used. Those test ballots are then run through the tabulators to make sure the tabulators match the pre-determined results. For federal elections, the Secretary of State oversees this mandatory process. For local elections, such as the Goodyear election, the Department oversees this process, and the city or town clerks are invited. The recognized political parties are invited to all logic and accuracy tests.

The Elections Department conducted the logic and accuracy test 15 days before Election Day, such that we could begin tabulating (but not reporting) returned ballots 14 days (as allowed by law) before the last day of the election.

However, just one week before Election Day, we had to take the tabulation equipment off-line and box it up for delivery to the Arizona Senate. We then flew in emergency tabulators, scheduled and conducted a new logic and accuracy test on March 8 (the day before Election Day), and had the machines ready for tabulation without delaying the results.

I am proud of the team's ability to change plans at a moment's notice. We still managed to conduct a "boring" election (at least from an administrative standpoint), which is exactly what I aspired to achieve. I am also grateful for the excellent partnership of the City of Goodyear.

Deputy Registrar Program

The previous administration created the deputy registrar program to train and certify volunteers to assist the Office with various tasks, such as voter registration drives. We plan to continue the program to help with a wider array of functions related to elections and the voter registration database. Trainings and certifications are set to restart, digitally, in April. We greatly appreciate the volunteer efforts of our deputy registrars.

Audit

Prior to taking office in January, I heard from hundreds of voters, watched tens of hours of YouTube videos, listened to many members of the legislature, and attended hearings and panels, all presenting questions about the November 2020 election. The significant majority of questions related to the Dominion Voting Systems ballot tabulation hardware and software used in Maricopa County. For this reason, I advocated for a lawful, reasonable, and scientific analysis of the tabulators. Fortunately, the Board of Supervisors—which has statutory control over the tabulators—wholeheartedly agreed. Together, we designed an analysis that enlisted two highly-professional elections technology companies—neither of which has any employees previously employed by Dominion, and neither of which has any contracts with Dominion—to do *everything needed to*:

- Analyze hacking vulnerabilities of both the tabulation hardware and software
- Verify that no malware had been installed to the tabulators
- Determine if the tabulators had connected to the internet at any point before, during, or after the election
- Assess if any vote switching had occurred as a result of the tabulators

The assessment took almost three weeks. The entire process was livestreamed, and we had representatives from the Arizona House, the Arizona Senate, and the Secretary of State's Office in regular attendance. Speaker Rusty Bowers of the Arizona House attended himself one day.

I don't believe anyone who attended the audits and spoke with the auditors found them to be anything short of professional and thorough.

The auditors found no problems with the equipment, no manipulation of the software code, no malware, and no connection to the internet.

This finding is consistent with the battery of tests that the tabulation equipment underwent prior to, and after, the November election.

Maricopa County has used Dominion or Dominion-controlled hardware and software since 1996. During that time, the county has never had a instance where the machine count did not closely match the hand count.

The county entered into a lease agreement for the current software and hardware in June, 2019. Prior to being used by the county, the current software underwent a series of certification tests by the United States Election Assistance Commission ("EAC"), a body that reports to the President of the United States. The EAC certification tested the software's protections against "intentional manipulation," "changing calculated vote totals," "introducing data for a vote not cast by a registered voter," "preventing access to vote data," "changing, or preventing the recording of, a vote," and other security topics (see page 113 of the EAC's [Voluntary Voting System Guidelines](#)). The Arizona Secretary of State also certified the current software.

The county has run seven election cycles with the current software and hardware: November 2019 jurisdictional, March 2020 jurisdictional, March 2020 Presidential Preference Election, May 2020 jurisdictional, August 2020 Primary Election, November 2020 General Election, and March 2021 jurisdictional.

In each of these elections, the required pre-election logic and accuracy tests have matched completely, the hand count audits have matched the machine tabulations, and, with the exception of the November 2020 General Election, nobody has questioned the functionality of the tabulation equipment.

Regarding the November 2020 General Election specifically, the county performed a pre-election logic and accuracy test, a post-election logic and accuracy test, and a hand count audit, all of which matched 100%. The pre-election logic and accuracy test is required by law and is overseen by the Secretary of State, and, should they choose, the recognized political parties. For this test, the Secretary of State pre-marks over 1,300 mock general election ballots with known results. Those ballots are then fed into the tabulation machines to see if the machine count matches the already-known marked count. It did. Though not required by law, the county conducted another logic and accuracy test after the election of over 8,000 ballots and 1.2 million votes to determine if the machines had somehow recalibrated during the election such that they would no longer accurately read ballots. The results of that post-election test also came back 100% accurate.

Most importantly, the county performed a hand count audit in the days after November 3. To do this, the county had many teams of bipartisan volunteers—all appointed and provided by the political parties—hand count approximately 47,000 votes. The results as determined by those bipartisan volunteers were then compared with how the machines tabulated the same votes. They matched 100%.

As a result of all of the above—and as somebody who came at this afresh, with no role in the selection of the tabulation equipment or in the administration of the 2020 election—I can say with a very, very high degree of confidence that the tabulators accurately counted the 2.1 million ballots cast in the November 2020 election in Maricopa County, and that the tabulators did not manipulate the vote total in any manner.

The report produced by [SLI Compliance is available here](#).

The report produced by [Pro V&V is available here](#).

A summary of the process is [available here](#).

Senate Audit

The Arizona Senate is also conducting an audit. In response to a Senate subpoena on January 12, 2021, the Recorder's Office and the Elections Department produced over 11.32 gigabytes worth of material on January 16, 2021 that the Senate will use to conduct that audit, together with items produced by the Board of Supervisors. We have no role in the Senate's audit, but we will continue to produce any documents sought under the subpoena, and we wish the Senate the best in its audit.

Public Records Requests

At the beginning of the year, the Office had a backlog of 44 public records requests. Despite an uptick in requests since the beginning of the new year, the outstanding log now stands at seven.

Personnel

Since January we've made numerous personnel changes, but we have also benefitted from the many excellent team members we inherited from the previous two administrations. I am exceptionally proud of the team we're assembling.

Policies and Training

We have adopted many previously absent human resources policies recommended by County Human Resources and are in the process of rolling those out to staff. The Office also had not done any trainings within the past two years on important topics such as harassment, bias, security, or management. With the assistance of the County Attorney's Office, the Office of Enterprise Technology, and County Human Resources, we have already required training on harassment for all managers and supervisors; we have had an office-wide security training, and many team members have participated in a personality assessment training aimed at self-awareness and working with others. Currently, the staff is training on the online evaluation tool offered by Maricopa County. Utilizing the software program will allow our team members to align personal goals with Office's mission.

Internal Audit

With the assistance the of the county's internal audit team, we have begun reviewing various aspects of the Office in an effort to improve practices and save taxpayer dollars. For example, the internal audit team found that in 2020, the Recorder's Office paid for 504 cellular lines that it did not use. We are also looking at the Office's inventory process, the budget, and use of physical space.

STAR Center

The STAR Center is a shared call facility among the Treasurer's Office, the Assessor's Office, and the Recorder's Office. It is overseen by the STAR Director and has 38 staff members. It serves as the front line for the three offices and is immensely important in providing quality customer service to county residents.

In 2020, the Treasurer, Assessor, and Recorder met only once to discuss the STAR Center. Thanks to the leadership of new Assessor Eddie Cook and his team, we are now meeting monthly to discuss the status of the Center and how we can make sure our front line provides excellent customer service. To this end, we conducted a nationwide search for a new director for the center, and we recently hired a leader with many years of private-sector call center experience, who was also very well-liked by the Center's current staff.

Both Assessor Cook and newly-elected Treasurer John Allen have been excellent partners.

Other County Partners

I am blessed to be part of the Maricopa County family. From the human resources department, to the budget department, to the audit department, to the Office of Enterprise Technology, county employees have been incredibly welcoming and intent on helping us achieve our goals.

I am particularly grateful this quarter to County Attorney Allister Adel and County Sheriff Paul Penzone whose teams have spent many hours over the past three months assisting and advising the Recorder's Office.

Bigger Projects

- **Voter registration database.** The voter registration database currently runs through a software the Office created in 2002. Though the software has since been updated and is still functional, it is a critical component of the Office that could benefit significantly from an overhaul. We have begun the process for that overhaul.
- **Recording Kiosks.** Maricopa County has long had the reputation for being an innovator in recording. The county was among the first to allow for digital recordings, and, in 2010, the county introduced recording kiosks—terminals that allowed customers to record in person, by video, without having to drive to the downtown office. Since coronavirus took root, those kiosks have been closed. We are using this pause in service to envision and build the next iteration of satellite recording.
- **Poll worker training.** We will soon launch our premium poll worker training for poll inspectors and judges. It is an intensive two-day training that will strengthen our ability to serve voters at poll locations. We aim to have at least one premium trained poll worker at every voting location in the 2022 elections.
- **Website.** The current website for the Recorder’s Office and Elections Department dates back to the early 2000s. While it is functional and has all required information, it is not easy to locate information. We plan a website overhaul.
- **Voter Outreach and Information.** This is a priority of both the Office and the Board of Supervisors. We hope to launch informational campaigns beginning this summer.

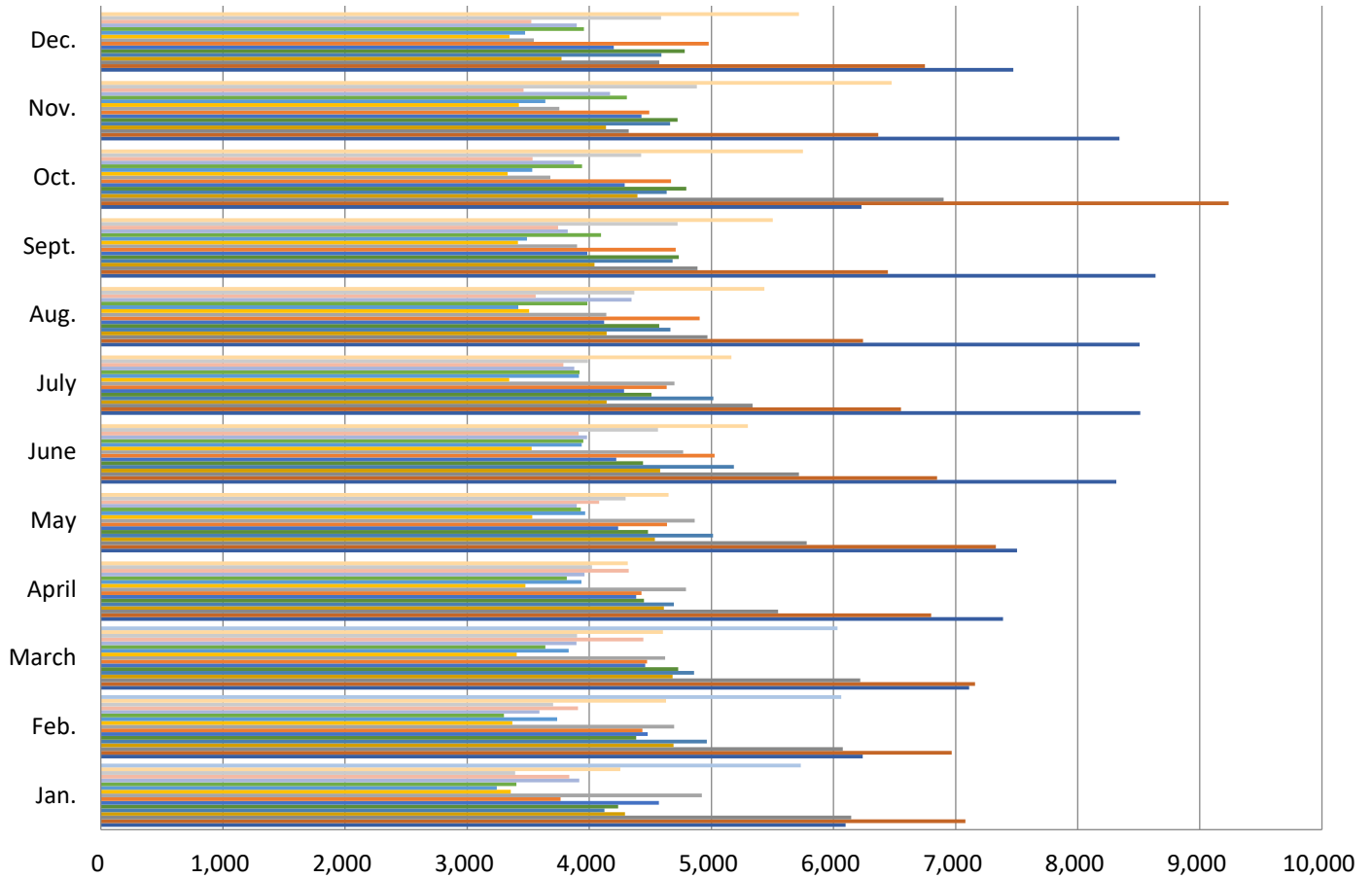
Again, thank you for the opportunity to be part of this wonderful organization. I promise to work as hard as possible to competently, lawfully, and fairly administer this Office and build confidence in Maricopa County.

If you have any questions, please contact us at voterinfo@risc.maricopa.gov.

Appendix A – Recording Services Statistics

Chart 1

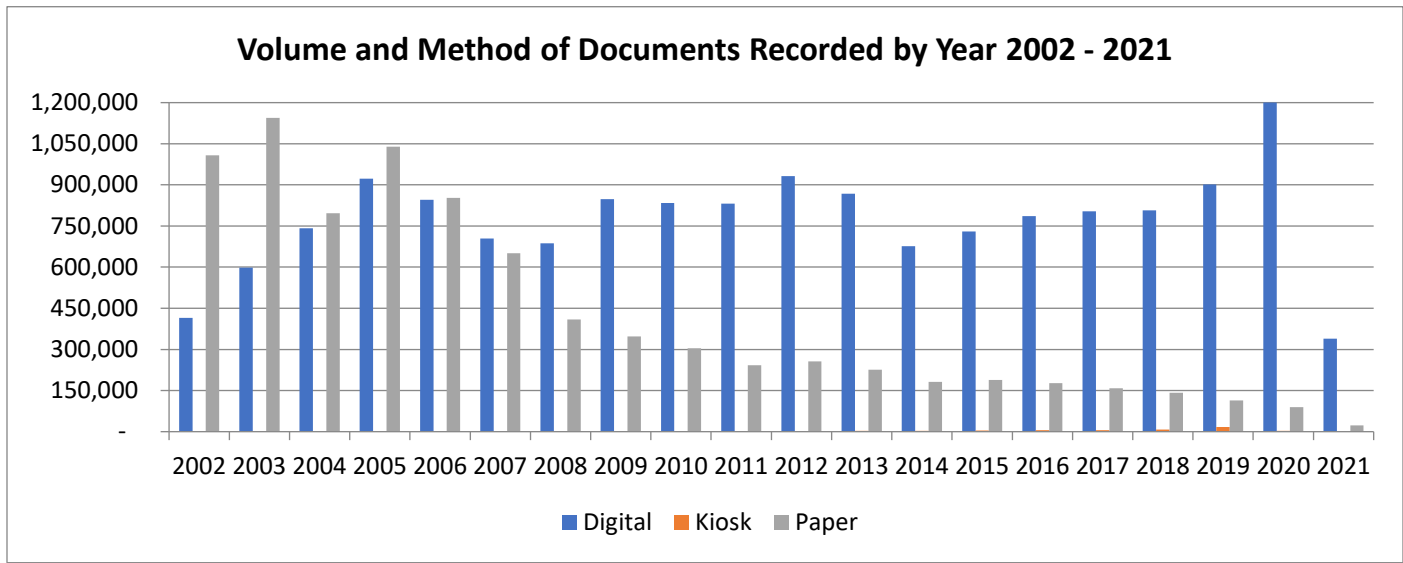
Daily Recording Averages by Month: 2005 - present



	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
2021	5,733	6,063	6,033									
2020	4,254	4,629	4,603	4,315	4,649	5,298	5,164	5,434	5,503	5,749	6,475	5,716
2019	3,393	3,705	3,900	4,023	4,298	4,563	3,990	4,370	4,723	4,424	4,881	4,587
2018	3,837	3,907	4,443	4,324	4,082	3,912	3,787	3,562	3,745	3,536	3,461	3,526
2017	3,919	3,591	3,895	3,962	3,897	3,981	3,876	4,346	3,824	3,875	4,171	3,898
2016	3,403	3,301	3,639	3,815	3,930	3,951	3,920	3,984	4,096	3,942	4,309	3,956
2015	3,242	3,736	3,832	3,935	3,966	3,939	3,916	3,418	3,489	3,532	3,639	3,474
2014	3,358	3,369	3,405	3,477	3,533	3,527	3,345	3,507	3,415	3,331	3,423	3,347
2013	4,922	4,695	4,621	4,791	4,863	4,768	4,698	4,139	3,899	3,680	3,754	3,546
2012	3,764	4,436	4,474	4,427	4,636	5,027	4,634	4,905	4,708	4,670	4,490	4,977
2011	4,569	4,479	4,457	4,385	4,236	4,222	4,285	4,122	3,985	4,290	4,427	4,200
2010	4,236	4,384	4,729	4,447	4,482	4,439	4,509	4,572	4,733	4,795	4,722	4,782
2009	4,124	4,962	4,857	4,692	5,014	5,184	5,015	4,665	4,682	4,634	4,663	4,590
2008	4,293	4,691	4,682	4,611	4,537	4,580	4,141	4,142	4,042	4,394	4,138	3,772
2007	6,144	6,075	6,220	5,545	5,780	5,716	5,336	4,967	4,887	6,901	4,323	4,572
2006	7,079	6,968	7,159	6,801	7,329	6,849	6,552	6,243	6,446	9,235	6,366	6,749
2005	6,100	6,238	7,110	7,389	7,502	8,316	8,512	8,506	8,636	6,230	8,342	7,472

Appendix A – Recording Services Statistics

Chart 2



	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
D	415,432	597,829	742,091	922,186	845,068	703,858	687,370	847,848	834,351
K									125
P	1,007,549	1,144,321	796,072	1,039,290	852,251	650,318	408,966	346,804	303,880

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
D	831,941	931,603	867,254	676,986	730,131	785,778	809,953	806,563	901,377
K	1,369	2,193	2,732	3,348	4,497	5,051	5,706	7,376	16,591
P	241,985	256,015	226,464	181,259	188,810	176,883	158,593	141,825	114,225

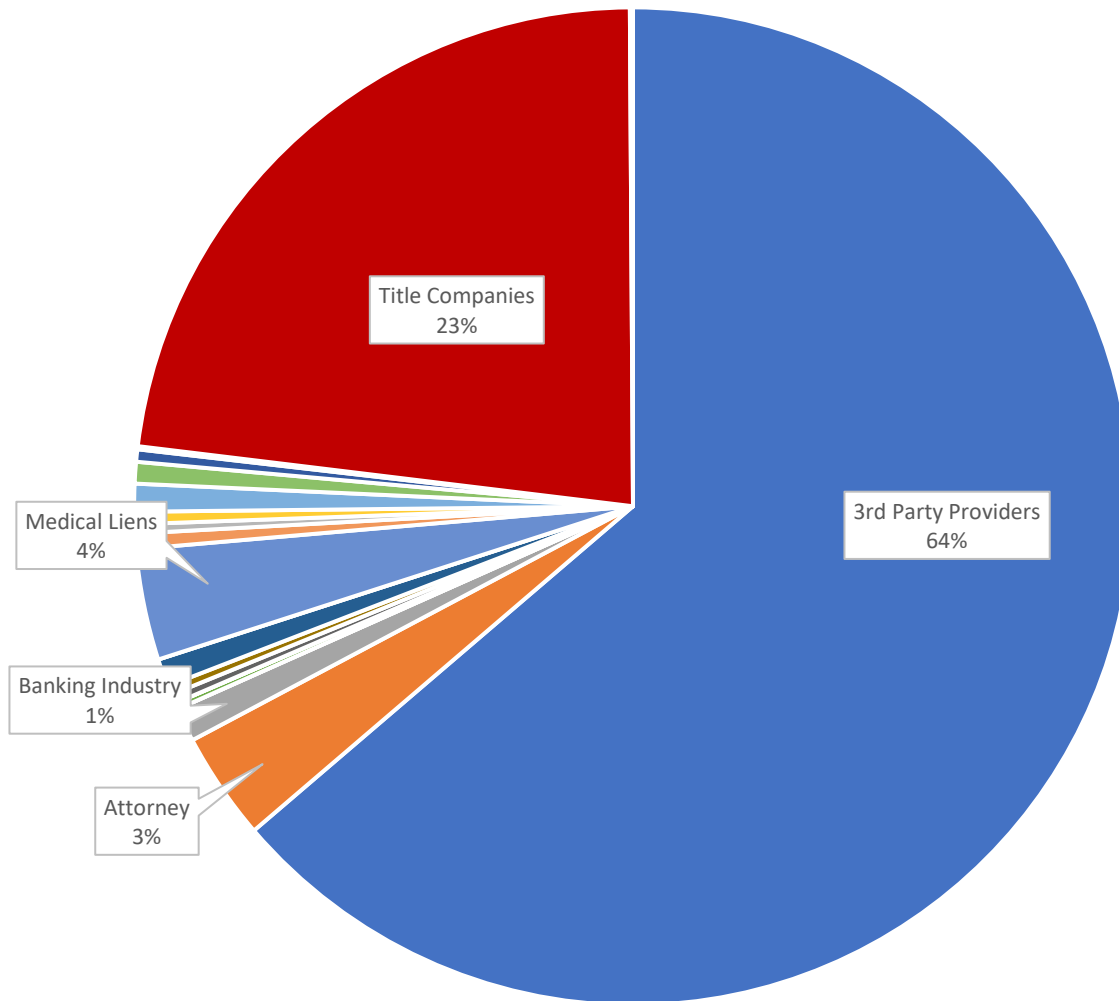
	2020	2021
D	1,207,465	339,662
K	3,438	-
P	89,689	23,223

Appendix A – Recording Services Statistics

Chart 3

Top Customer Account Type by Sales Volume

Updated as of March 31, 2021



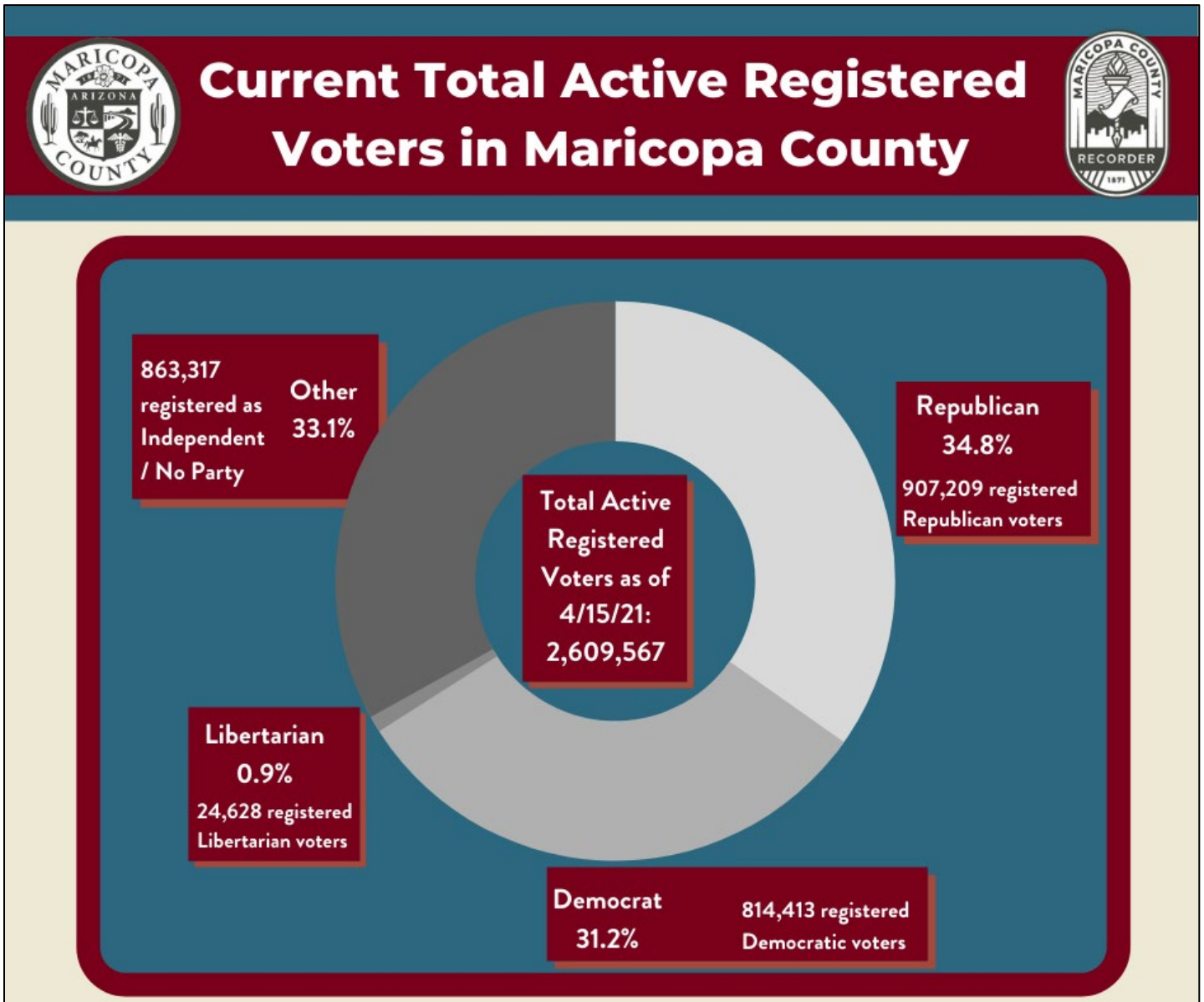
Examples of top 3rd party provider accounts include Simplifile, CSC, and eRecording Partners Network. These accounts capture a wide array of documents recorded by the Office including Deeds of Trust, Deeds of Release & Full Reconveyance, Warranty Deeds, Liens, Financing Statements, and Quit Claim Deeds.

Appendix B – Voter Registration Figures

See Voter Registration totals updated in real time [on our website](#).

Infographic 1

Totals of active registered voters by party in Maricopa County as of April 15, 2021.

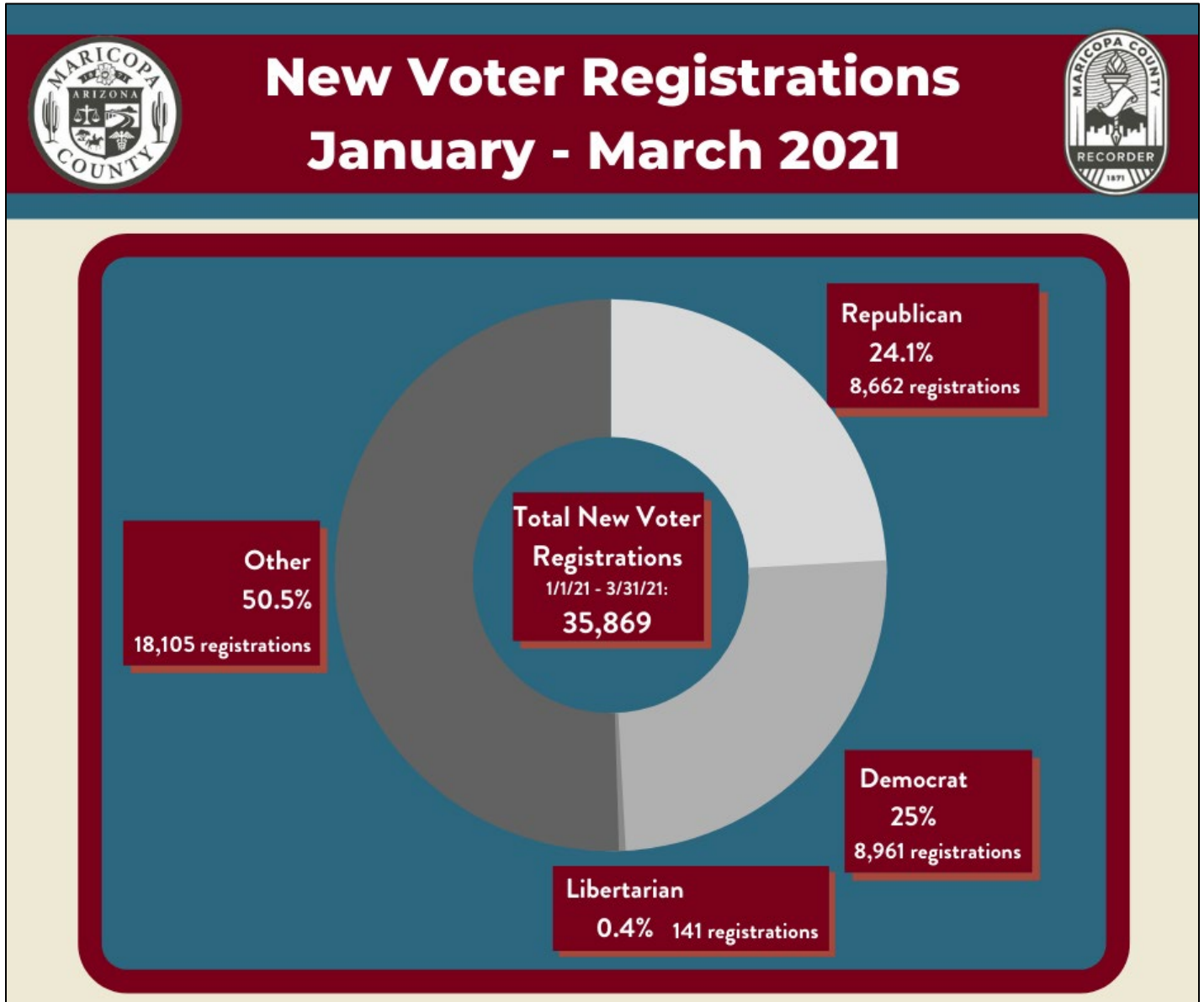


**Data retrieved April 15, 2021. Voter registration figures may fluctuate in real time due to ongoing voter list maintenance*

Appendix B – Voter Registration Figures

Infographic 2:

Totals of newly registered voters by party in Maricopa County between January 1, 2021 – March 31, 2021.



*Data retrieved April 15, 2021. Voter registration figures may fluctuate in real time due to ongoing voter list maintenance

Appendix B – Voter Registration Figures

Infographic 3:

Political Party Voter Registration changes in Maricopa County from January 1, 2021 – March 31, 2021.



*Data retrieved April 15, 2021. Voter registration figures may fluctuate in real time due to ongoing voter list maintenance