

# Zencity + Dallas

May 2026



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# Executive Summary

Dallas, TX  
Reimagined Government Center Pulse  
May 2026



# Executive Summary

**Goals for data collection:** Gather resident input to inform decisions about the future location, design, and function of Dallas City Hall.

**Most residents rarely engage with City Hall in person — and those who do face real friction.**

59% of Dallas residents have visited City Hall only once or twice ever, or never at all.

Among those who have been, parking (44%) and long wait times (32%) top the list of obstacles.

Younger and lower-income residents report the most friction, pointing to equity dimensions in the current experience.

**Residents want City Hall to stay downtown — but are open to a better version of it**

61% of residents prefer a downtown location, but are split nearly evenly between staying near the current site (32%) and moving to a downtown location with better parking and transit access (29%).

Those who cite parking as a barrier skew more heavily toward the latter option (42%).

**Accessibility, resilience, and a more welcoming plaza top residents' wish list for a reimagined City Hall**

Inclusive, accessible design is residents' top building priority (84% very or fairly important).

Open-text responses add a clear secondary signal: many residents (6%) want the I.M. Pei building repaired and preserved rather than replaced, alongside a greener, more activated plaza.

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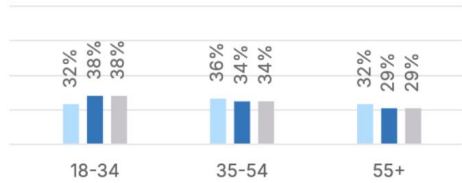
# Methodology & Sample

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# Zencity Sampling & Methodology

2,130 respondents were recruited online from Dallas between **April 9th and May 5th, 2026** using targeted ads on various platforms (e.g., social media, apps for Android and iOS) as well as online survey panels.

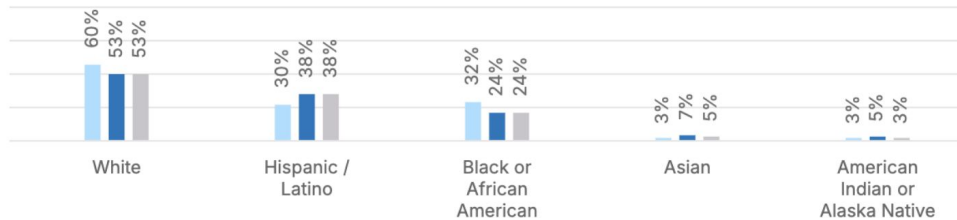
## Age



## Gender



## Ethnicity



Zencity's sampling methods are designed to ensure data reliability and representativeness by using advanced weighting techniques that account for the demographic composition of Dallas, based on national statistical databases. Our representative approach ensures a balanced and comprehensive view of resident sentiment, enabling more nuanced insights to support data-driven decisions.

- **Unweighted demographics** - What we collected, without adjustments.
- **Weighted demographics** - Our sample, adjusted to be representative of the population.
- **Population demographics** - The demographics of the 18+ population.

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# Current Experiences at City Hall

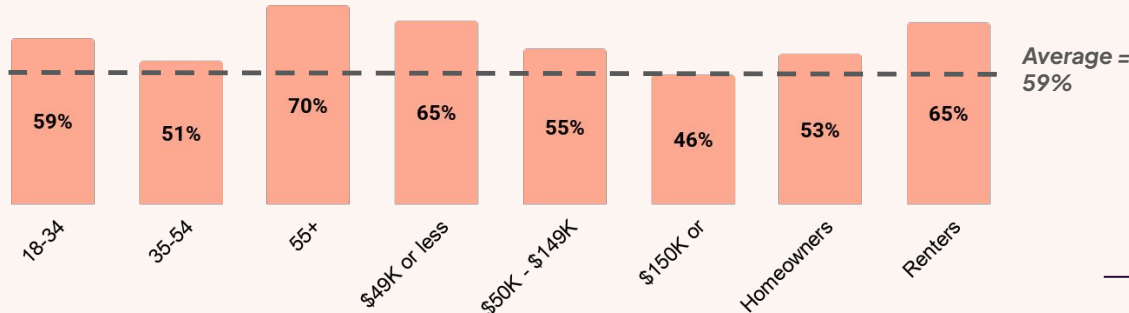
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# One-third of Dallas residents have never set foot in City Hall

**Q1: How often do you visit Dallas City Hall?** [single select, N=2130]



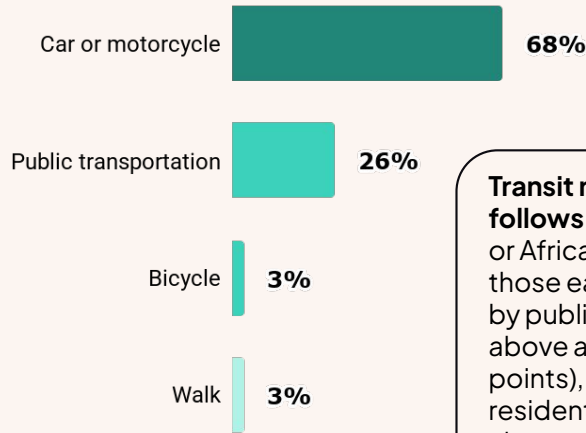
**Q1: How often do you visit Dallas City Hall?** Response: Once or twice ever or never



**Visitation is lowest among older and lower-income residents — the groups most likely to depend on in-person services.** Residents earning \$150K or more are the most regular visitors; those 55+ (70%) and renters (65%) are the least likely to have been more than once or twice. City Hall is not equally accessible to all Dallas residents today.

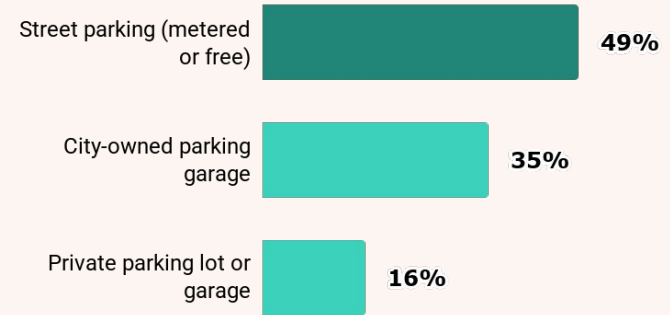
# Most residents drive to City Hall — but Black and lower-income residents rely far more on transit

**Q2: When you visit City Hall, what mode of transportation do you typically use?** *[respondents who have been to City Hall before, single select, N=1387]*



**Transit reliance at City Hall follows income and race.** Black or African American residents and those earning under \$49K arrive by public transit at rates well above average (+15 and +12 points), while higher-income residents drive at a rate 12 points above average. Any location decision that reduces transit access will fall unevenly on lower-income and minority residents.

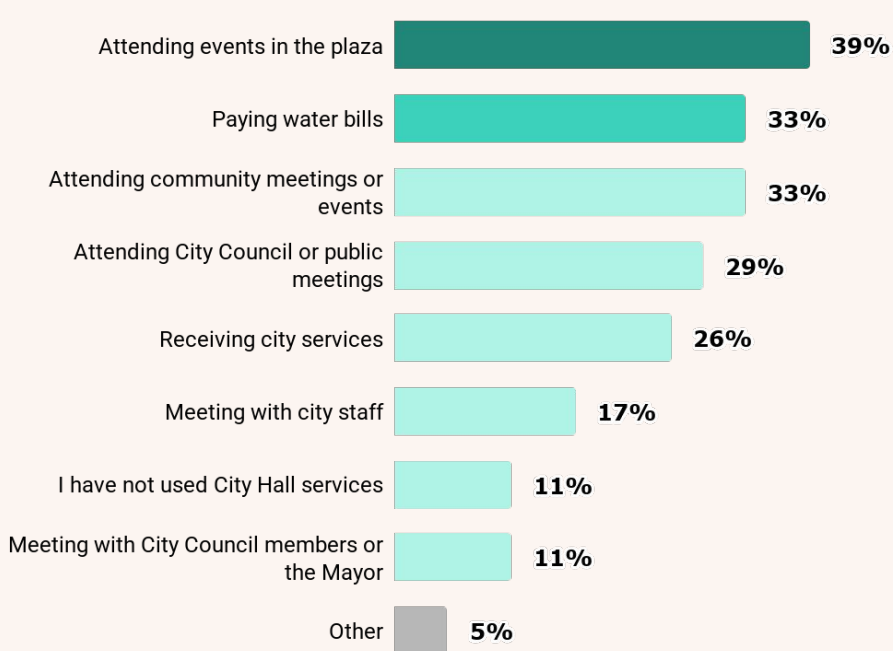
**Q3: Where do you park when you visit City Hall?** *[respondents who have been to City Hall before and arrive via car or motorcycle, single select, N=922]*



Group	Car or motorcycle	Public Transportation
Black or African American	52% (-16)	41% (+15)
\$49K or less	56% (-12)	38% (+12)
\$150K or more	80% (+12)	12% (-14)

# City Hall's civic life skews toward property owners — renters are largely missing from it

**Q4: What services do you use at City Hall when you visit?** [respondents who have been to City Hall before, multi select, N=1385]



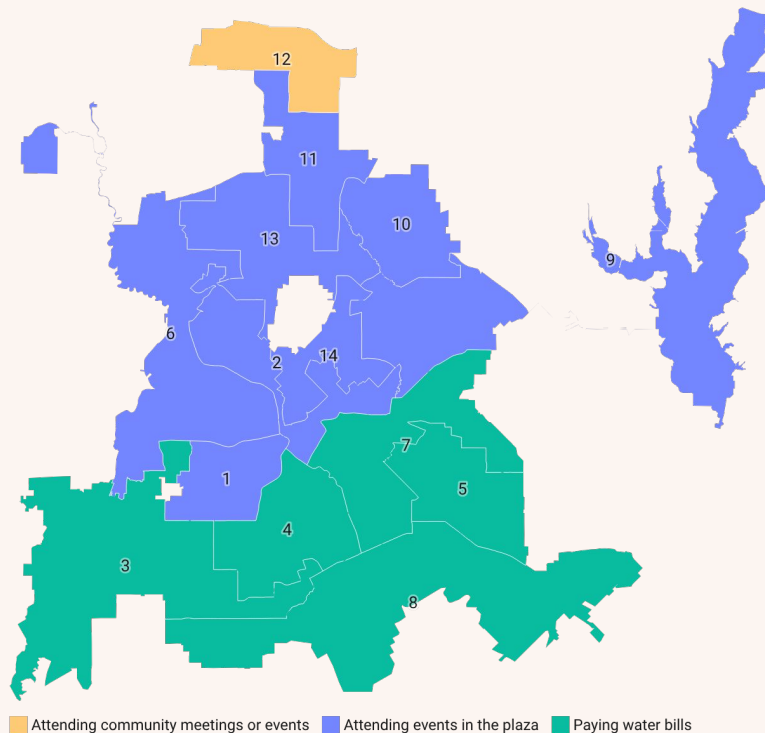
Residents earning **\$150K or more** (49%), and residents with a **higher education degree** (44%) were more likely to attend events in the plaza, while **Black or African American** (45%), **Hispanic/Latino** (43%), and **lower-income** (37%) residents were more likely to visit City Hall to pay water bills.

Residents who **own their own home** are more likely than **residents who rent** to attend community events (39% vs. 28%) and City Council or community meetings (34% vs. 21%).

**The plaza outranks every city service as the top reason residents visit (39%)** — and civic participation skews toward homeowners. Homeowners are more likely than renters to attend community events (39% vs. 28%) and Council meetings (34% vs. 21%). The current building is not reaching renters as civic participants.

# Southern districts pay bills; northern districts attend events — geography shapes how residents use City Hall

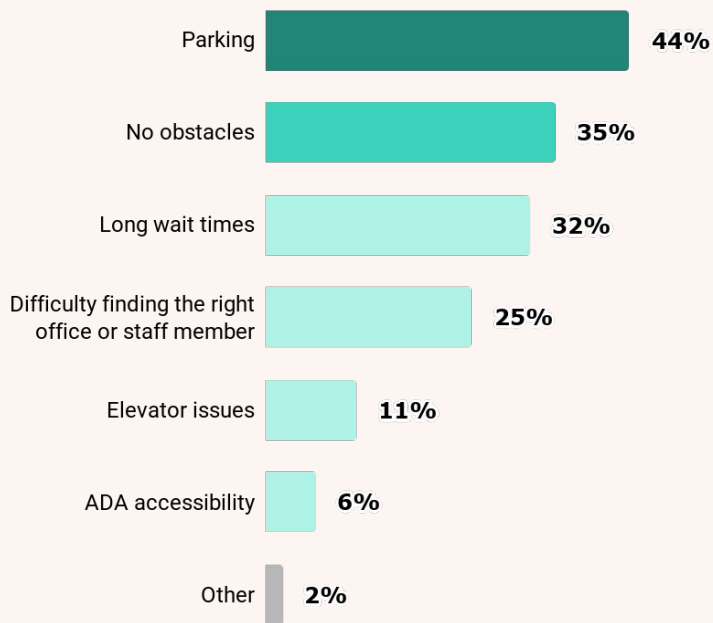
**Q4: What services do you use at City Hall when you visit?** *[respondents who have been to City Hall before, multi select, N=1385]*



Southern districts' heavy reliance on water bill payment is evidence that in-person transactional services are not equally substitutable with online alternatives for all residents; northern and central districts come for plaza events; District 12 drives community meeting attendance. These geographic patterns should inform both programming decisions and outreach strategy as planning moves forward.

## Parking and wait times define the in-person experience

**Q5: What obstacles have you encountered while visiting Dallas City Hall?** [respondents who have been to City Hall before, multi select, N=1385]



**Younger residents face the most friction:** parking (+10 points above average) and wait times (+12 points) are both sharply elevated for the 18–34 group. Residents 55+ report the fewest obstacles — but they also visit the least, so smoother experiences may simply reflect lower engagement rather than a better-functioning building.

Group	Parking	No obstacles	Long wait times
18–34	54% (+10)	24% (-11)	44% (+12)
35–54	42% (-2)	34% (-1)	34% (+2)
55+	31% (-13)	50% (+5)	15% (-17)

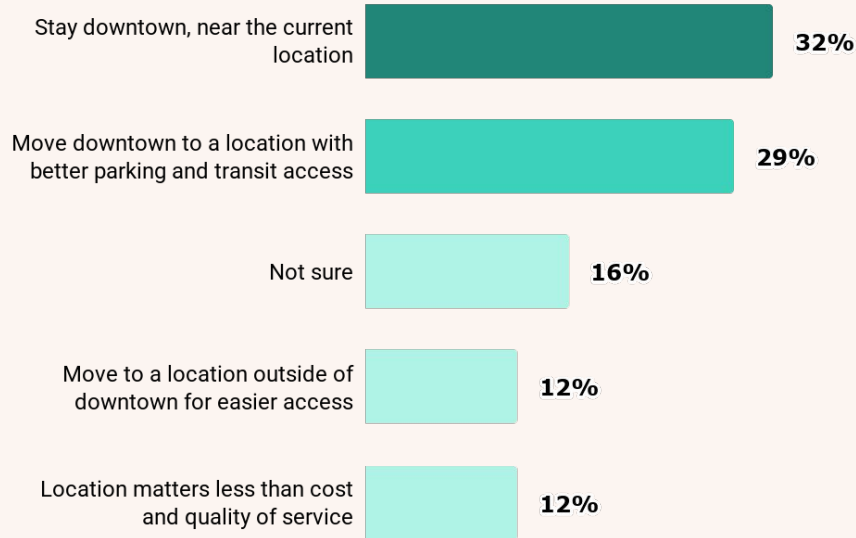
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# Location and Building Design Preferences

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# 61% prefer downtown — but they're split on what that means

**Q6: If Dallas City Hall moved to a new location, which option would you prefer?** [single select, N=2130]

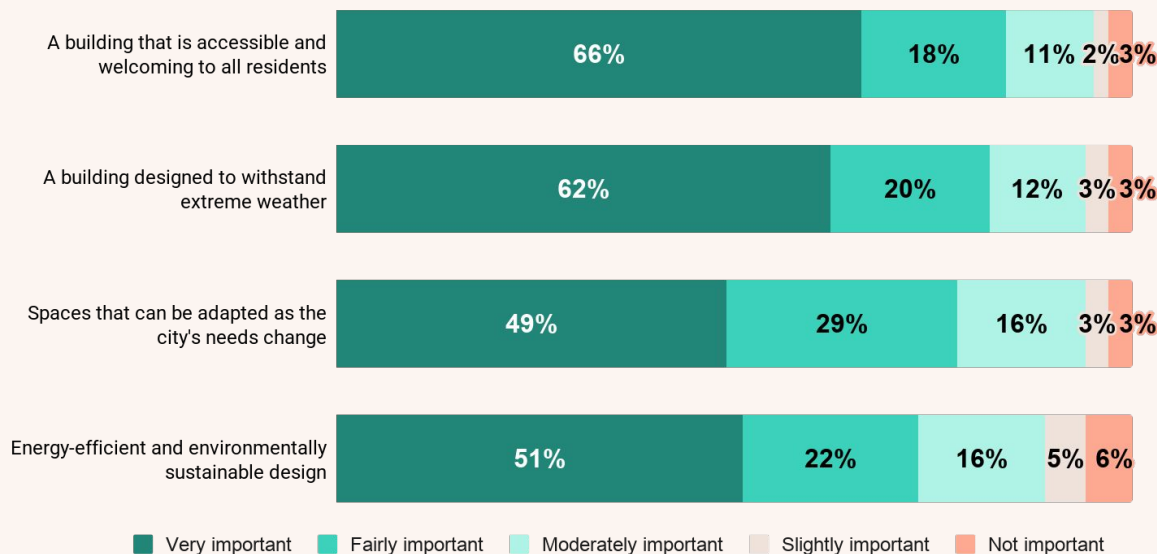


Residents who cite **parking as an obstacle** when visiting City Hall are less likely to want City Hall to remain **downtown near the current location** (29%) and more likely to want it to **remain downtown but with better transit access** (42%).

**Downtown has a clear mandate — but the current site does not.** Residents who cite parking as their biggest obstacle strongly favor a downtown move with better access (42%) over staying put (29%). The 16% who are undecided are genuinely persuadable, not passively satisfied.

# Accessibility and climate resilience are non-negotiables — adaptability and sustainability follow close behind

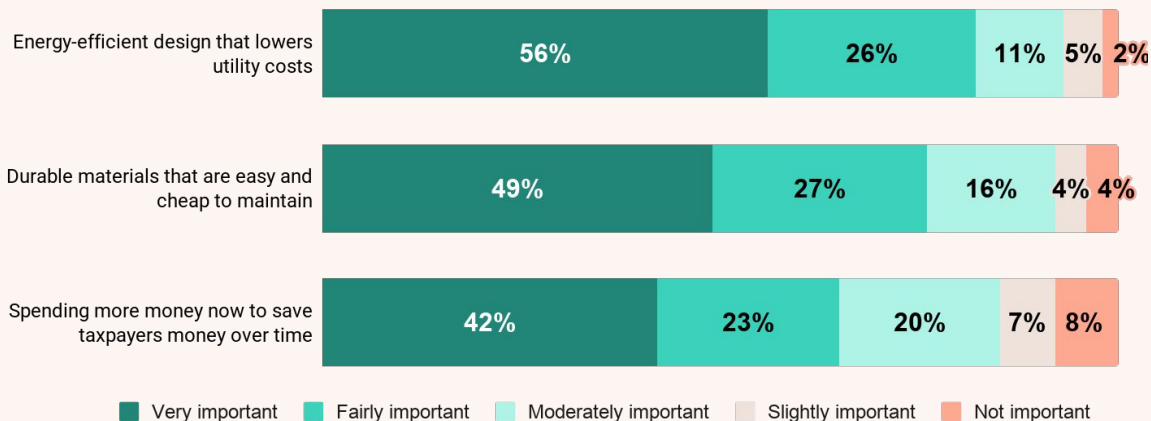
**Q7: How important are each of the following design qualities in a future City Hall?** [single select, N=2130]



**Accessible, welcoming design** (84% very/fairly important) and **weather resilience** (82%) are the clear top priorities — treat them as baseline requirements, not options. Adaptable spaces and energy efficiency follow with strong majority support and align with long-term operational cost goals.

# Residents back energy efficiency and durability most strongly — and a solid majority accepts upfront investment to cut long-term costs

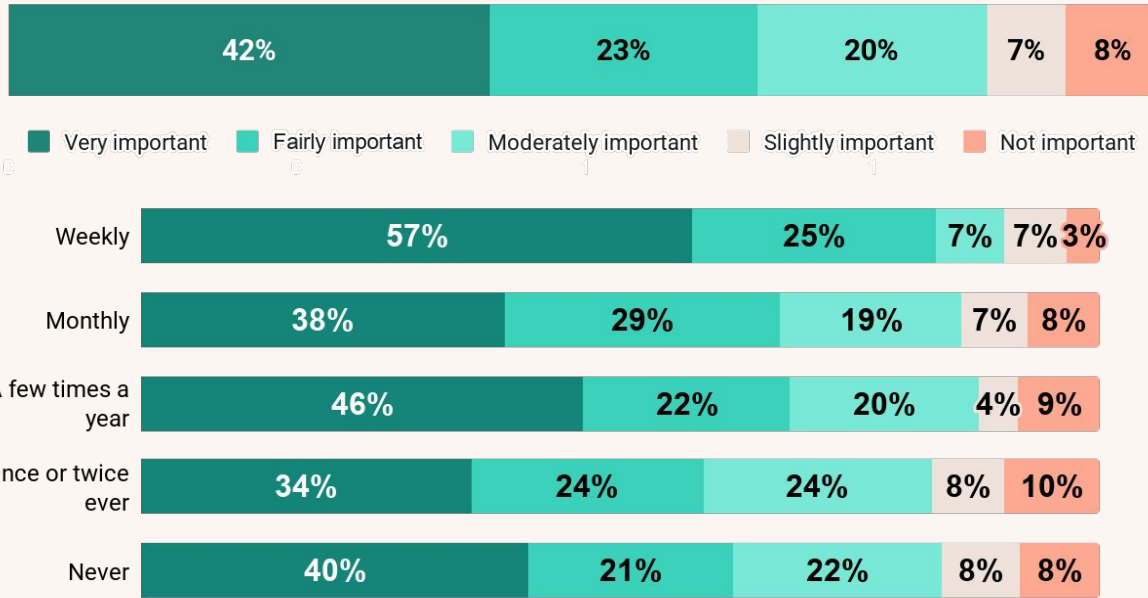
**Q8:** How important are each of the following cost and maintenance considerations in a future City Hall? [single select, N=2130]



**Residents support fiscal prudence in design**, with energy efficiency leading (82% very/fairly important) and durable, low-maintenance materials close behind (76%). Support for spending more upfront to save long-term is solid at 65% — but roughly 1 in 7 residents is skeptical, an audience worth addressing directly in public communications about project value.

# The residents who visit the building often are most willing to pay for a better one

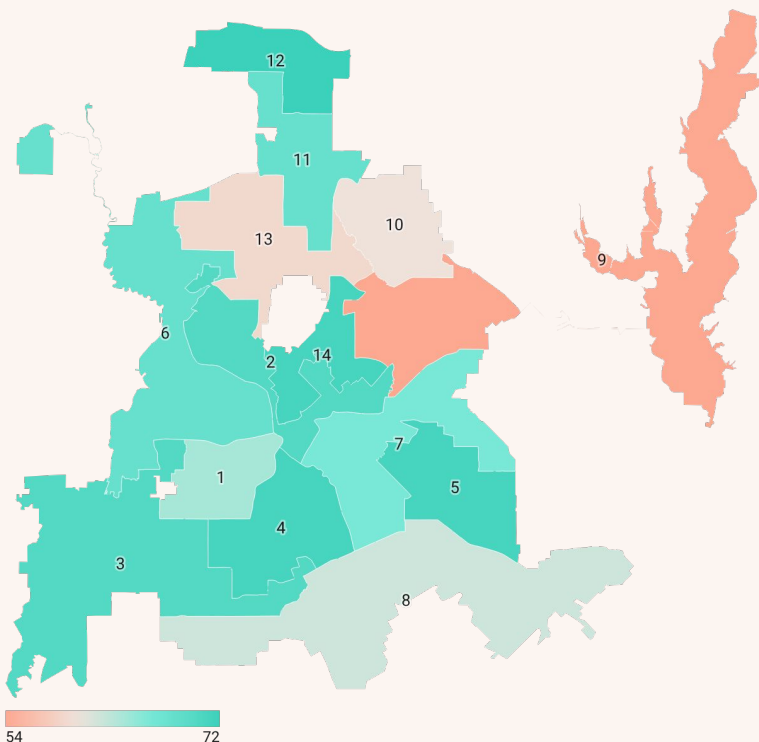
**Q8 Consideration:** Spending more money now to save taxpayers money over time [single select, N=2130]



**The residents who use City Hall most are its strongest supporters for investment.** Weekly visitors back the upfront-spending trade-off at 57% very important — 15 points above average. Even residents who have never visited support it at 40%, suggesting broad public acceptance of the long-term value case.

# Support for long-term investment is a majority position in every district — but Districts 9, 10, and 13 are the most skeptical

**Q8 Consideration:** Spending more money now to save taxpayers money over time [single select, N=2130]

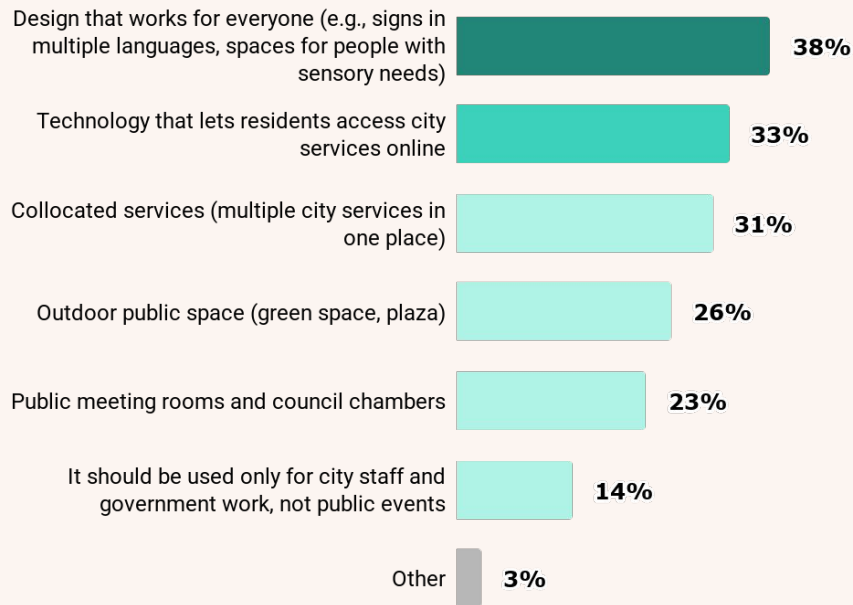


District	Very or fairly important
1	64%
2	70%
3	70%
4	71%
5	71%
6	68%
7	66%
8	62%
9	54%
10	60%
11	68%
12	72%
13	59%
14	71%

District 9 is the clearest outlier at 54% — the only district below 60% — with Districts 10 and 13 also trailing the citywide average. Every district clears a majority, but the 18-point spread from lowest to highest signals that **the long-term savings argument will land unevenly across Dallas.**

# What matters most: Inclusive design, online access, and collocated services — in that order

**Q9: What is most important to you in a City Hall building?** [multi select, N=2130]



Residents **18–34** are more likely to prioritize **design that works for everyone** (50%) than those **55+** (27%).



**Higher income (\$150K +)** and **Asian residents** were the most likely to prefer increased online access to city services (40% and 41%, respectively)

**Inclusive design is the top priority (38%)** — and the age gap is significant: residents 18–34 are nearly twice as likely as those 55+ to name it first (50% vs. 27%). Online service access (33%) signals that many residents would prefer not to visit in person at all. Only 14% want City Hall reserved exclusively for government operations — a clear minority view.

# Residents want a greener, more activated plaza — and a vocal share want to repair and preserve the existing building rather than replace it

**Q10:** What would make City Hall feel more welcoming to Dallas residents? [open text, N=1916]

## Most Common Topics

1272 labeled responses out of 1916

21% Positive Environment

21% Design

11% Transparency

9% Parking

9% Accessibility

8% Public Spaces

7% Public Events

6% Inclusivity

6% Resources

6% Sustainability

6% Wayfinding

5% Welcoming Staff

Residents see the current plaza as wasted civic space and want it transformed — greener, shaded, activated with programming year-round. On the building itself, opinion is divided: a substantial share\* want the I.M. Pei structure repaired and preserved rather than replaced. That voice will need to be addressed directly in any public engagement around the redesign.

*\*111 out of 1916 responses*

“ Make the plaza into a greener space rather than a giant slab of concrete. — Female, 55+, District 9

Activating the plaza with everyday life, like weekly markets, organising frequent shows, pop-up services. — Male, 35–54, District 14

SAVE City Hall! Repair and restore. — Female, 55+, District 9

Interior design that doesn't make it look institutional — Female, 55+, District 10

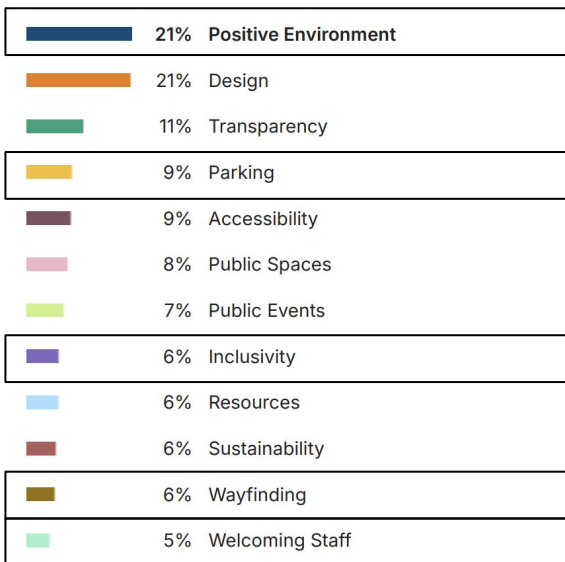
More shade, greenery, seating and community activities that make it feel like an open, comfortable public space rather than a formal government building. — Male, 35–54, District 6

# Many residents call for friendlier staff, clearer wayfinding, and free or easier parking

**Q10: What would make City Hall feel more welcoming to Dallas residents?** [open text, N=1916]

## Most Common Topics

1272 labeled responses out of 1916



Staff responsiveness and wayfinding are as important to the experience as the physical building. Residents consistently described feeling lost (6% wayfinding) and unwelcomed (5% friendly staff) on arrival. Free or validated parking was the single most requested practical change — a low-cost signal that the City values residents' time.

“Having someone welcome you when you walk in and give assistance to help you get to where your going so you don't have to try to figure it out and get lost. — Female, 55+, District 12

The signage directing where to enter is non-existent. It's enter in this door at this far end... then exit at the opposite end and hoof it to your vehicle. — Male, 55+, District 6


Staff that greets you in a friendly manner and has correct information. Free parking as well. — Female, 55+, District 7

Better parking, shorter waits, clear signs, online appointment. — Male, 35-54, District 14

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# Findings Recap

Dallas, TX  
Reimagined Government Center Pulse  
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A stylized graphic in the bottom right corner of the slide. It features several white outlines of buildings of varying heights and widths, creating a city skyline. In the center of this skyline is a stylized tree with a rounded, cloud-like canopy and a simple trunk.

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# What Dallas Residents Are Telling Us

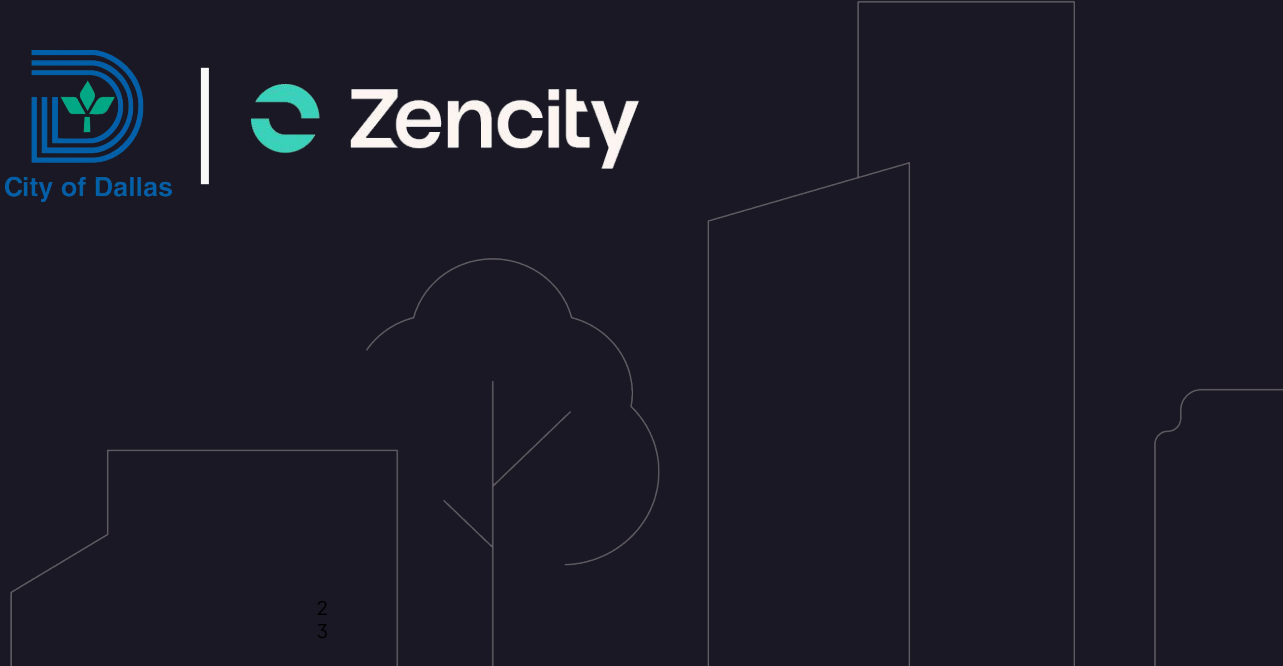
## Dallas Reimagined Government Center Pulse

**City Hall isn't reaching everyone.** Most residents rarely or never visit, and those who do face real barriers — parking, wait times, and poor wayfinding. Access gaps fall hardest on lower-income residents, renters, and transit-dependent communities.

**Downtown has a mandate. The current site doesn't.** 61% want City Hall to stay downtown, but residents are nearly evenly split between the current location and a downtown site with better parking and transit access. The question isn't whether to stay downtown — it's how.

**Build it for everyone, and build it to last.** Accessible, inclusive design and weather resilience are the top priorities by a wide margin. Residents broadly accept upfront investment to reduce long-term costs, with support holding across all 14 districts.

**The plaza is an opportunity — and the building has defenders.** Residents want a greener, activated public space, not a concrete slab. On the building itself, a substantial share (6%) want the I.M. Pei structure restored rather than replaced. That perspective will need to be addressed directly as planning moves forward.



# | Questionnaire

[Link to Questionnaire](#)