



# **Albemarle County, Virginia Courts Location Operations Impact Review Executive Summary**

## **Final Report**

### **December 6, 2017**

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This document was prepared for Moseley Architects and Albemarle County, Virginia Board of Supervisors and County Executive staff. The National Center for State Courts (the Center, the National Center, or NCSC), a public benefit corporation targeting the improvement of courts nationwide and around the world, was commissioned to assess and provide court operational impact information regarding the location of Circuit and General District Courts within the County. The points of view and opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors as agents of the National Center and do not represent the official position or policy of Moseley Architects, Albemarle County, judges of the involved courts, nor review participants from involved public and private agencies or individuals. NCSC grants Albemarle County a royalty-free, non-exclusive license to produce, reproduce, publish, distribute or otherwise use, and to authorize others to use, all or any part of this report for any governmental or public purpose.

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## Executive Summary

Moseley Architects, a Virginia based architectural firm, working for Albemarle County, Virginia engaged the services of the National Center for State Court (NCSC) to review the impact on county court operations should the Circuit Court (Circuit Court) and the Albemarle General District Court (District Court) be physically separated from the Charlottesville Circuit and General District Court and the Combined Albemarle and Charlottesville Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court. While the County and City General District Courts are not a combined court, they currently function this way because of proximity.

Two court location options have been identified by the county as possible:

- 1) **Option 1 – The current historic Court Square and vicinity (the Downtown/Levy Expansion).**  
Keep the courts at the Court Square location by renovating the Levy Opera House, demolishing existing structures and constructing a new three story General District Court (GD) facility on the Levy site to accommodate two court sets for the County, one court set for the City and one court set for the County’s future expansion. Also renovate and modernize the existing Albemarle Circuit Court complex for expanded operations and associated court functions.
- 2) **Option 5 – A new county location within the Charlottesville/Albemarle urban ring.**  
Relocate the Circuit Court and the County General District Court for Albemarle County to a separate county location in the urban ring. The 16<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Albemarle Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court (J/DR Court) would remain in the current Court Square location. Construct a new Courts complex in the County assuming construction on county owned property or on a development partnership opportunity. Assumes a new ~85,000 SF building to accommodate the Circuit Court with two Court Sets, a General District Court with two court sets and all associated operational needs in modern up-to-date facilities. Provides 250 public parking spaces plus 100 staff/judge secure spaces.

Under each option, the Charlottesville Circuit and General District Courts and the combined J&DR Court would remain in the current Charlottesville location.

In conducting the impact study, the NCSC consultants worked with county officials and with staff and officials from Moseley Architects and Stantec Company. The NCSC consultants interviewed court stakeholders in focus groups to learn their views of the impact of either option on court and stakeholder operations and to hear their views of the benefits and challenges associated with each option. The NCSC consultants also administered surveys soliciting benefits, challenges and comments on each option

from stakeholders and the public. This executive summary highlights what the NCSC consultants learned and observed from those interviewed and surveyed.

The NCSC consultants learned from the stakeholder focus group discussions that other than the Sheriff, the Commonwealth Attorney, and the Director for Court Services, stakeholders were generally not concerned that the move of the county courts would require additional personnel and incur operational costs. Court caseloads numbers typically drive court operations and personnel costs rather than court locations.

Stakeholder groups indicated a general opinion that a court move would require additional funding for technology software and hardware as well as security related equipment and personnel. However, technology and security enhancements are needed no matter where the facility is located. Facilities may affect the cost of technology and security due to decisions that might be made as to what is needed and where it can be placed. The cost and use of technology and court security are based on levels of enhancement, overall operational needs, funding availability, and court management policy decisions, not necessarily the court's location. Though location may affect infrastructure costs in general, there may be offsets such as a newer building or an older location that already has some infrastructure in place.

Due to scope requirements and project timelines, the information summarized in this report is presented as it was received from the stakeholders and the public without bias. The NCSC consultants are not making a recommendation for either location option. The NCSC consultants do include remarks related to benefits and challenges of each location option. The NCSC consultants also includes their views on how the negative operational impacts of each location can be overcome, based on experience with similar court operations, successful work practices, the use of technology, and similar sized court locations.

For more detailed summary information, please refer to the main body of the report and sub-reports for stakeholder and public survey results.

## Stakeholder Interviews and Focus Groups

The NCSC consultants interviewed 32 officials and representatives from 16 court stakeholder offices and agencies and conducted twelve stakeholder focus group sessions. (See main report Appendix No. 1 for stakeholder groups and participants.) Based on those interviews and focus group sessions, the NCSC consultants have determined that there are benefits and challenges for each location option. (For a detailed listing of stakeholder concerns see main report sections III and IV.)

- **Consultant determined benefits associated with Option 1**
  - Judges and lawyers can conveniently cover respective peer needs in nearby located courtrooms thereby limiting court continuances.
  - Public transportation is readily available to the Court Square location.
  - The current court location provides a public service benefit for several centralized judicial and court services.
  - Centralized courts effectuate convenient communication between attorneys, court services, and public parties thereby assisting with early case disposition negotiations and compliance with court ordered rehabilitative efforts.
  - The Circuit Court appellate and review process regarding District Court and Juvenile/Domestic Relations Court rulings is conveniently determined within the centralized court campus.
  - The secure transport of pretrial and convicted criminal case defendants is easily achieved with one court location.
  - The current court location has a significant historical community image.
  - Attentive modern renovation and construction design would address court space and security needs.
- **Consultant determined challenges associated with Option 1**
  - Adequacy of parking needs for the public, court staff, and law enforcement need to be addressed.
  - Current wayfinding and directional signage is currently inadequate.
  - Jurisdictional boundaries between the city and county will make law enforcement response to the current court campus confusing, if not addressed.
  - Court security concerns regarding in-custody transport, court hearing monitoring, and entry screening need to be reviewed and addressed.
- **Consultant determined benefits associated with Option 5**
  - Sufficient parking space would be provided to the public, law enforcement, and court staff.

- Modern infrastructure design would accommodate installation and enhanced use of court technology as well as address necessary ADA accommodations.
- New architectural design would allow for construction of improved court security space with separate hallways for in-custody movement, a secure sally port for in-custody transports, and increased space for security screening operations.
- Modern design would allow for construction of improved court space with more functional courtrooms, attorney/client waiting rooms, jury assembly room, jury deliberation rooms, and increased public waiting areas.
- Court operational areas such as clerk of court offices could be located within a well-designed combined space.
- In separating the county district court from the city district court, Albemarle County would achieve a more prominent public image
- **Consultant determined challenges associated with Option 5**
  - Public transportation to the proposed urban ring is viewed as inadequate.
  - The Commonwealth Attorney, the Sheriff's Department, and Court Services believe that moving court operations to a separate site will result in increased manpower needs. (No other stakeholders reported that splitting court locations would require additional manpower resources.)
  - The Sheriff's Department indicated that court security costs for operating two court locations would increase because of additional security screening, in-custody transport, and in-court monitoring.
  - The loss of convenient, daily interaction between the Commonwealth Attorney, Public Defender and private attorneys could cause court delay and cost increases in attorney fees.
  - Conflicts caused by attorneys scheduled to appear at the two separate court locations at the same time will result in delayed case resolution.
  - The ability for attorneys and judges to cover for one another within a centralized court campus will be reduced.
  - The public could become confused about whether to appear at the downtown complex or the urban ring complex. (Improving and increasing information in paper and online court notices to appear will help dispel confusion.)

## Stakeholder Interviews

- **Stakeholders identified the following general concerns associated with the Option 1**
  - Land may not be available in the current land footprint if the Court expands beyond what is currently planned.
  - Any renovation plan for existing facilities must include modern technical support infrastructure.
  - To accommodate court operations, adequate temporary court spaces would need to be designed and fiscally supported throughout an extensive renovation.
  
- **Attorney Concerns**
  - Criminal defense attorneys report that being able to conveniently interact with prosecuting attorneys throughout their daily court appearance times in the same court location provides a benefit in achieving early case terminations. This type of legal community opportunity was also expressed by civil and domestic attorneys. The grouping of courts in one campus enables attorneys of all practices to conveniently contact the court and their adversaries within one location often resulting in case negotiations that reduce time and client money spent on dispute resolutions.
  - Legal aid attorneys, private defense attorneys, and the Public Defender assert that the availability of centralized or nearby court services such as probation offices, drug treatment resources, restorative justice operations, and pre-trial evaluations is a major factor in assisting defendants to comply with court ordered requirements and rehabilitative behavioral changes. This assertion is correct. Such services associated on the same campus as courts are very convenient for defendants and their families. A decision to go forward with Option 5 would require that steps be taken to address access to court services. (See Court Services section below.)
  - As described by the Commonwealth Attorney, early case terminations are more likely to happen if the defense attorney can conveniently walk into his office to review prosecution case files and to discuss the outcome of a case. Early case terminations can reduce in-custody supervision days and related costs and can save court time and case related costs in attorney time and fees.
  
- **Commonwealth Attorney Coverage**
  - The Commonwealth Attorney reported a need for two additional Assistant Commonwealth Attorneys (ACAs) should Option 5 be selected as a new court location. The Commonwealth



Attorney reported that the first year annual cost for two new ACAs would be approximately \$170,000.

- While the sharing of electronic case discovery information may mitigate the impact of having two Commonwealth Attorney office spaces, the need for face-to-face discussions involved in plea negotiations will remain an effective means of resolving criminal cases. Due to court jurisdiction levels, it is likely that more ACA time could be spent at the new facility should Option 5 become a reality.
- Court calendared case negotiation time could assist in maintaining the needed attorney face-to-face case termination discussions.

- **Court Services Availability**

- Any time a defendant can walk out of court and go to a nearby agency or office that provides a rehabilitative service, the more likely the defendant will avail him/herself of the court ordered service. Having adjacent courts and court services reduces “no-show” rates and increases the opportunity for defendants to adopt rehabilitative behavior. Court services seek compliance with court ordered treatment programs and decreases in criminal recidivism. Fewer arrest warrants are likely to be issued, resulting in cost savings for law enforcement and detention operations.
- Should the County go forward with Option 5, consideration should be given to having additional satellite space for various court services on site at the new court complex. The adding of space does not necessarily require the adding of staff. Metropolitan and rural based courts with multiple locations often have space available for visiting staff from a headquarters unit.
- To provide court services to two court sites, the Court Services Director indicated that an additional full to half time staff member would be needed. The first year annual cost provided by the Director for a half time court services officer was \$35,000.
- The sharing of court services, should there be two court campuses, is vital to assisting defendants and victims in receiving assistance intended by the court. It will be necessary to follow this issue closely in that rehabilitation and community assistance are becoming more common expectations of court operations through general jurisdiction courts and specialty courts.

- **Interpreter Use**

- Interpreter resources were also cited as a concern under Option 5. There is a need for Spanish interpreter services, described as the most common non-English language across the Circuit and District courts. Currently, the courts share a qualified Spanish interpreter

who assists the courts to meet their needs by being present on short notice and covering multiple courtrooms on any given day.

- A typical challenge for courts is that they are often unaware of language interpretation needs in advance of the initial appearance in criminal cases. Having an interpreter that can be available on short notice and move quickly between court facilities prevents the need for these cases to be continued to a later date. If Option 5 is selected, consideration should be given to having additional interpreter resources available at each of the court locations for the most common language needs to prevent delays and continuances.
- Some alternatives to in-person interpreter resources worth considering include telephone and video enabled interpreter services. Depending on the type of hearing, use of these technologies can serve as a high quality yet lower cost alternative to live, in-person court interpreters.
- **Court Calendar Coordination**
  - Calendar organization to accommodate two court locations with different levels of jurisdiction requires joint court cooperation. Currently, through calendar coordination, attorneys covering county court cases often cover city court cases on the same date and attorneys who cover Circuit Court cases cover the J/DR Court cases. Generally, calendar coordination can be managed by clerks of court through the designation of specified days on which attorneys need to report to specific courts to hear a specific type of case. This type of advanced date calendaring, already in place for some case types in each court, could be expanded under the two-court location option.
  - Attorney focus group participants spoke of likely higher attorney fees for private clients because of additional travel time between law offices and two separate court locations. This could be mitigated if the Circuit and District Court Clerks make a concentrated effort to coordinate court schedules and calendars between the two court sites. Such advance scheduling can also be utilized to schedule various court services and personnel, such as interpreters, probation risk assessment staff, and OAR personnel.
  - Calendar coordination will also assist in identifying potential judge coverage needs due to vacations, conflicts, extended trials, out of county coverage, attending to specialty courts, and absenteeism due to sickness or family obligations. Under calendar coordination, judges are often asked to plan vacations in advance so that coverage needs can be anticipated. The Circuit Court has the services of retired judges to assist with coverage concerns. The county and city District Court operations often depend on existing active judges to cover for one another. Knowing an out of county or city judicial obligation in advance would allow for internal coverage under both location options.

- **Public Access**

- The availability of public transportation to the courthouse impacts access to justice and court services. Public transportation is reported to be sufficient in Option 1. The county is aware that additional public transportation may be necessary if it chooses Option 5.
- Parking is currently inadequate at the Court Square complex. Option 5 would alleviate the problem. Should the courts remain at Court Square, additional parking for the public, court staff, and court attending law enforcement is needed. The procurement of additional parking space at the Court Square complex would require the county and the city to work together to ensure that the elevated concern for adequate parking is addressed.
- Various concerns were expressed regarding the need for improved wayfinding signage at the Court Square location. Not knowing to which building to report can be a real problem. A concerted effort to review current signage and determine which new signs are needed can assist with reducing building location confusion.
- Stakeholder focus groups discussed whether separating Albemarle county court operations from Charlottesville city court operations could assist the public in finding the right court to which to report. Location separation could somewhat achieve this goal. With the passage of time, county court facilities would develop somewhat of an independent image from city court facilities thereby assisting the public in understanding which court to report.
- Online and direct mailing notices produced in plain language with adequate maps and/or directions will assist the public in reporting to the right court building regardless of the physical location. As one example, it would help persons ordered to appear in court for a traffic citation if the form citation includes clear directions to the courthouse and courtroom. Special attention should be given to those reporting to jury service so that trials are not delayed because potential jurors were lost.

- **Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court Impact**

- The Clerk of the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court expressed concern that separating the Circuit Court from the J/DR Court will likely cause appearance conflicts on the part of attorneys and will delay the process of a Circuit Court judge hearing appeals from the J/DR Court. Having to travel to an urban ring court location to conduct an appeal which could possibly be heard the same day at the current court location will cause case continuances and potentially impact the lives of those involved in family court matters.
- The J/DR court currently works with paper case files. Technology implementation that would enable electronic case filing and storage would assist current and future court clerk's office operations as well as the public's access to court records, regardless of court location.

- Because the J/DR Court Clerk serves both the city and county J/DR Courts, it would be very difficult to remove cases and court staff from the Charlottesville located court without long term advance-planning. If the intent is to eventually move the J/DR courts to the urban ring site, if selected as a second court location, future land site needs and court design considerations for growth should be reviewed. Moseley Architects is aware of these concerns and certainly capable of addressing them.
- **Court Technology Assistance**
  - The use and expansion of electronic court files and court technology in general would assist judges and attorneys at both location options. Electronic court files can reduce the amount of time attorneys need to spend in court facilities and can assist attorney adversaries in conveniently sharing case information. Attorney travel time and expense could be reduced with the use of electronic records and the development of secure electronic case filing portals for both criminal and civil cases.
  - Regardless of the selected location, modern court design should include sufficient space for technology supported courtrooms and clerks' offices. Costs to equip and install court technology can be mitigated by savings in time for judges, court staff, attorneys, and the public seeking access to court records and information. In providing electronic case filing via a modern computer based case management system, a court can essentially establish a remote 24-hour court operation seven days a week allowing attorneys to file case matters and review records at any hour of the day.
  - The use of video conference equipment would also make it easier to function in two court locations. Video conference hearings are now conducted throughout the nation at all levels of jurisdiction but primarily in county and municipal courts. The use of video conferencing and expanded use of interactive court websites can reduce the need for public visits and attorney travel as courts allow for more business and record searches via web and internet services.
- **Court Security**
  - Court security concerns were commonly reported by stakeholders at all levels, but particularly by law enforcement officials. Under Option 5, security improvements such as segregated hallways for in-custody pretrial and sentenced defendants could be designed into a new facility as well as sufficient space for entry security screening, holding cells, and a secure segregated sally port for external in-custody transports. Adding security spaces in Option 1 as renovated space can certainly be achieved but may be restricted by existing historical space.

- The Sheriff's Department reported the need for at least five additional deputies to conduct security screening, prisoner movement, and internal courtroom security in a second court location. The first-year annual costs provided by the Department for five additional deputies are estimated to be \$565,590. Such costs could be mitigated with the use of virtual teleconferencing for defendant appearance hearings between the Regional Jail and both court locations or by transport to only one location with VTC connectivity to the second court location. The Sheriff's Department reported current vehicle counts should be consistent to cover a second court location. In-custody management between two court locations can also include the expanded use of risk assessments to assist in determining early release and bonding policies.
- Some focus group participants identified the current concern about whether the county or city has jurisdiction over incidents occurring on the central Court Square court campus. This jurisdiction problem could be resolved if the county were given sole jurisdiction at the second county court site as proposed in Option 5 and at the Court Square site via an interoffice agreement between the County and City of Charlottesville.
- Option 5 would also require additional Sheriff's Department office and holding areas to assist with internal day-to-day security.
- **Court Design Space**
  - Regardless of the selected location, modern court design should include sufficient space for technology supported courtrooms, attorney/client conferencing, jury assembly and deliberation rooms, sufficient public waiting areas, ADA access for the disabled and modern work space for possible combined usage of court clerk functions. Moseley Architects is aware of court space requirements and is qualified to design such space in either a new or renovated facility.
  - Concerns about conducting court while renovating existing court buildings as planned in Option 1, can be done with planning, staging, and safety precautions. Preserving historic buildings through renovation efforts is always a challenge. Though difficult to do, it can be very successful through continued involvement of all stakeholder agencies and officials.
  - The continued use of historic property at Court Square has some value and should continue to be considered as a site benefit for the purposes of community image and historic court dignity. The issue of "land lock" for future court space is a concern. Use of advanced court technology such as virtual courtrooms and online mediation could eventually mitigate the lack of land for future court facility expansion.
  - Development of the urban ring site through the location of a court facility has merit in that government and private enterprise have an opportunity to work together to design both

- public service and private investment amenities. The opportunity to design a modern court facility and campus is also very appealing as court space can be constructed that would address many of the concerns noted in this impact study.
- Many courts strive to centralize court operations in one location due to the benefits mentioned in this report. However, the need for court facility space and growth of population centers often requires the consideration of a second court location for modernization purposes and improvement of public court access and services.

## Stakeholder and Public Surveys

The NCSC conducted two separate surveys to gather feedback from court stakeholders and the general court-using public regarding the impact on court operation of the two options under consideration. While the number of stakeholders who responded to a particular question varied from those responding to the public survey, both groups identified several of the same factors as very important when considering the location of future courts.

## NCSC Concluding Observations and Comments on Surveys

- **Option 1 Considerations**

- Of the 96 stakeholder survey respondents, most were in favor of maintaining court services at the current centralized court campus. Eighty (80) stakeholder respondents were not supportive of Option 5, while 61 stakeholder respondents were extremely supportive of Option 1.
- Most important operational factors to stakeholder survey respondents were the central location of the current court campus and access to other courts and related services (i.e., attorney's office). This level of rated importance could be viewed as an indicator of the overall public convenience of a collective or centralized court campus as utilized by the public and those who work with courts.
- Most important factors for court user respondents associated with considering Option 1 were parking convenience, project cost, efficiencies associated with nearby located court services, and availability of public transportation.
- The greatest negative impacts of visits to the current downtown courts were the lack of available parking for stakeholders and court-users, city traffic congestion, and confusion on where to report. Wayfinding signage improvement at Option 1 would be helpful regardless of the decision to move certain courts. The lack of available parking has been a common concern identified in both surveys and in stakeholder focus group discussions. Should additional parking not become available in the Court Square area, developing a court

campus at the urban ring site with sufficient parking could become a primary factor in location determination.

- **Use of Electronic Court Records**

- A large majority of respondents, 73.7% agree that the use of electronic court records will increase the efficiency of court operations. This level of response coincides with the nationwide movement in courts adopting electronic records. It indicates that through the acceptance and use of e-filing and e-storage, courts and attorneys can file and retrieve court file information from any court location supported by an electronic case management system capable of sharing electronic imaged documents.
- Closely aligned with the use of electronic records is the effective use of a court's website. Both court and involved case parties benefit by a court conducting business via its website and thereby assisting a party in possibly not having to make a physical court appearance. A review of the website of the Circuit and District Courts could lead to expanded use of website resolutions to pending cases. Depending on the issues of a case, many courts are moving toward website resolutions reducing actual appearances and saving time for the court and the public.

- **Option 5 Considerations**

- **Travel Time.** Stakeholder survey respondents feel that travel time between the two court locations will be a major impact (Q8). Stakeholder focus groups also raised attorney travel time between two court locations is a real concern. The impact of travel time between the two courthouses on court operations could be reduced by staggering and standardizing court calendars with prearranged court schedules on when attorneys are to appear in each court on a given date. For example, by establishing standardized scheduled criminal and civil calendars in specific courts in advance of hearing dates, attorneys can more easily schedule appearances in different located courts. This is a common practice of case management which the Circuit and District already use and could expand should Option 5 be adopted for implementation.
- **Transportation and Parking.** Transportation and parking were often mentioned as concerns by stakeholder respondents. Obviously, Option 5 may best address parking concerns but the acquisition of parking facilities through cooperative agreement with the City of Charlottesville could address parking problems near Court Square. Parking concerns were not limited to public parking in that law enforcement officials reported multiple concerns regarding the need for adequate parking for officers appearing as witnesses and providing overall court security.

- **Public Transportation.** Public transportation concerns were primarily mentioned in relation to Option 5. In discussing these concerns in follow-up meetings with county officials, NCSC consultants were informed that the county has plans to address public transportation needs if Option 5 is selected as the new court location. Assurances that public transportation would be available at a new county location could generate additional public support.
- **Historic Significance.** Stakeholder respondents did not think that their clients would be concerned with the loss of historical symbolism should the courts move out to the proposed Rio Road location. Thirty-three (33) of 97 court-user respondents felt that historic symbolism was important. In contrast, some focus group stakeholders felt more strongly about preserving the historic symbolism of the current site. The issue of historical significance of the current facilities and grounds will be a matter that the county will likely continue to have to consider when it comes to leaving and/or preserving Court Square.
- **Additional Considerations**
  - Regardless of the location option selected, the county is advised to continue to consult with court leaders and justice system stakeholders. The public's access to court and court services should not be impeded. The transition from a current court location to a new location or the need to conduct court in a heavily active construction zone will take continued communication and teamwork between the court, stakeholders, and the county.
  - The court and the county should work together to create wayfinding signage, website instructions, and directions on notices of hearing that are clear and ensure that person coming to court can find the correct courthouse and courtroom. Helping a person understand to which court he or she should report will aid in reducing confusion and possible court delay resulting in a case continuance and the need to have the person come back to court.
  - To obtain a full understanding of the public's opinions of both options, the Board of Supervisors is urged to review the individual comments associated with Q10 and documented in the public survey sub-report. These comments include:
    - The downtown site is only convenient for lawyers.
    - There is a need to maintain a centralized full-service court location.
    - The county's public image should be separate from that of the city.
    - Why should the county discriminate against those who cannot easily travel to the location of new court?



## NCSC Concluding Observations and Comments: General Summary

Most stakeholders favored leaving the courts in their current centralized Court Square location (Option 1). The availability of co-located judges to cover for judges and attorneys to cover for attorneys was identified as having a positive impact on court operations by reducing the need and number of court continuances that cause overall delay. Legal aid attorneys, private defense attorneys, and the Public Defender identified the availability of centralized or nearby court services as an important factor impacting the degree to which defendants will comply with court ordered requirements and rehabilitative actions. These services include probation officers, drug treatment resources, restorative justice, and pre-trial release determinations.

If the County goes forward with Option 5, consideration should be given to:

- Creating additional satellite space for various court services on site at the new court complex.
- Making a concentrated effort to coordinate court schedules and calendars between the two court sites - to assist with judge and attorney coverage concerns.
- Coordinating court calendars to assist the scheduling of case negotiation times between attorneys and to accommodate the travel times between two court complexes.

Criminal defense attorneys also reported that being able to conveniently interact throughout their daily court appearance time and the convenient location of law offices within Court Square greatly assisted with interactions with prosecuting attorneys and therefore was a benefit in achieving early case terminations. Loss of the ability to conduct early case terminations could lead to increased incarceration time in that in-custody pre-trial time periods could lengthen if case resolutions are delayed.

The numerous concerns over the need for additional parking may be best addressed through the design of a new court facility (Option 5) or the procurement of additional parking space at the Court Square location (Option 1). Wayfinding signage can be improved at the Court Square location as can the availability of public transportation at the urban ring site. Online and direct mailing notices produced in plain language with adequate maps will assist the public in reporting to the right location.

The use of electronic filing and electronic files and the extended use of technology in general would assist judges and attorneys in each of the location options. Regardless of the selected location, modern court design should include sufficient space for technology supported courtrooms, attorney/client conferencing, jury assembly and deliberation rooms, as well as areas for combined usage of court clerk operations. Electronic files can reduce the need to travel to file pleadings on a case as well as to review files for case preparation. Leveraging court technology could certainly play a role to help mitigate travel concerns expressed in opposition to Option 5 in terms of work conducted by attorneys outside of the courtroom.

No additional personnel costs other than those reported by the Sheriff, the Commonwealth Attorney, and the Director for Court Services were reported during stakeholder focus group discussions. The salary amounts were reported independently by each office official.

Likely cost impacts as to increased attorney fees were reported by attorney focus groups and were primarily related to additional travel time between law offices and two separate court locations. Additional fee costs were also mentioned as the result of not having an opportunity to meet and discuss cases in one location, often in “path crossing encounters” with opposing colleagues. The convenient location of courts and attorney offices is a definite advantage to early case negotiations and reducing time from case filing to disposition. It would be likely that the loss of opportunity for daily contact with one’s adversary could increase attorney time on individual cases, in that per chance discussions that now occur at the same court location could be limited by attorney appearance at a different court location. As stated previously, advanced development of court calendars to schedule attorney appearances via standard appearance times and dates could assist with sustaining attorney-to-attorney contacts, particularly in criminal cases.

Law enforcement stakeholder voiced a general level of support for two separate court locations (Option 5) citing the ability to provide enhanced court security through better designed court screening space. Secure prisoner movement via separated hallway space within a modern designed court facility was also cited as a major security improvement as well as the use of a secure sally port for external in-custody transports. If the County selects Option #1, court facility renovation design should include public and in-custody separation within court buildings as well as sufficient space for entry screening functions.

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As reported by the Clerk of the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court, separating the Circuit Court from the J/DR Court will likely cause appearance conflicts on the part of attorneys as well as delay the process of a Circuit Court judge hearing appeal matters from the J/DR Court. Having to travel to an urban ring court location to conduct an appeal which could possibly be heard the same day at the current court location will cause case delay and potentially impact the lives of those involved in family court matters. Because the J/DR Court is somewhat of a combined court hearing both county and city jurisdictional cases, it would be very difficult to remove cases and court staff from the Charlottesville located court without long term advance-planning.

Obviously, there are a variety of opinions about each option and the overall benefits that each location can provide to the public as well as to those who work in the court process and frequently within the legal system. The primary concern in considering the benefits and challenges with each location option is at which location can the public conveniently and safely obtain access to the protections and safeguards of the justice system. This level of responsible decision making is definitely a leadership challenge. The NCSC consultants appreciate the opportunity to assist Albemarle County with this extremely important project. The help and support provided by county officials and staff, along with the assistance and guidance from Moseley Architects, is greatly appreciated.



**Albemarle County, Virginia  
Courts Location Operations Impact Review  
Appendix 1**

**Final Report**

**December 6, 2017**

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This document was prepared for Moseley Architects and Albemarle County, Virginia Board of Supervisors and County Executive staff. The National Center for State Courts (the Center, the National Center, or NCSC), a public benefit corporation targeting the improvement of courts nationwide and around the world, was commissioned to assess and provide court operational impact information regarding the location of Circuit and General District Courts within the County. The points of view and opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors as agents of the National Center and do not represent the official position or policy of Moseley Architects, Albemarle County, judges of the involved courts, nor review participants from involved public and private agencies or individuals. NCSC grants Albemarle County a royalty-free, non-exclusive license to produce, reproduce, publish, distribute or otherwise use, and to authorize others to use, all or any part of this report for any governmental or public purpose.

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## I. Introduction and Background

Moseley Architects, a Virginia based architectural firm, working for Albemarle County, Virginia engaged the services of the National Center for State Court (NCSC) to conduct a review study of the impact on county court operations related to court facility location. Of special interest is the impact on internal users (e.g., judges, court staff), justice system stakeholders (e.g., attorneys, law enforcement, public agencies involved in court business), and the public users making an appearance in court or seeking court information.

In conducting the project review, the NCSC consultants provide the following report generated as a fact finding based information reference for consideration of the Board of Albemarle County Supervisors in their effort to determine a future court location site. The review study consisted of gathering information from court stakeholders (e.g., judges, court officials, attorneys, and justice related agency officials) and public. Summarized informational comments and statements reflecting the opinions and concerns from these groups is provided to Albemarle County officials for their consideration in evaluating court location sites. Due to review time limits and scope restrictions, the summarized narrative and data information is reported as provided by interview and survey participants in an unbiased project report without indication of a recommendation or level of approval for either location option.

The courts involved in the impact review are the Circuit Court (Circuit Court) and the Albemarle General and District Courts (District Court). Although technically not a combined court, the County and City General District Court work in a combined court manner having shared jurisdictional authority in each level of General District Court. Each court is currently located in the historic “Court Square” area of Charlottesville, Virginia. As indicated by the Albemarle County website, courts have been operating in the Court Square area since 1762. Former Presidents of the United States who practiced in the initial located court included Thomas Jefferson, James Madison and James Monroe.

In consideration of the need for current and future court space, Albemarle County’s Board of Supervisors (BOS, Board) is reviewing two options for court facility expansion. The two location options under consideration were determined by the Board of Supervisors as the most viable after considering five potential court site locations.

Option 1 would maintain operations of the Circuit Court and General District Court within the Charlottesville Court Square vicinity utilizing existing court buildings in addition to construction. Option 5 would relocate the Circuit and District Court to a county site outside the City of Charlottesville. Under both options, City General Circuit and District Courts and the Combined City/County Juvenile & Domestic Relations Court (J&DR Court) would remain within the vicinity of the Court Square. The Federal U.S. District Court is also located in the general proximity of Court Square.

Each option under consideration is described on the report pages that follow with key factors and cost estimates as published in October 2016 and placed on the public website of Albemarle County. The descriptions of each option are currently under review for updating, cost revisions, and other needed modifications. This Impact Review Report includes summary report sections containing stakeholder focus group comments, stakeholder survey results and public survey results.

**Option 1: Downtown/Levy Expansion**

<p><b>Description:</b> Renovate Levy Opera House, demolish existing structures and construct a new three story General District Court (GD) facility on Levy site to accommodate two court sets for County, one court set for City and one court set for the county’s future expansion. Also renovate and modernize existing Albemarle Circuit Court complex for expanded operations and associated court functions.</p>	
<p><b>Key Factors:</b></p> <p>Maintains courts in central, historic downtown location adjacent to other 16th District Court operations</p> <p>High cost option – involves premium cost associated with construction due to constrained site, unknown conditions, historic renovations, demolition costs</p> <p>Requires construction of expansion space in advance of need; does not allow for phasing.</p> <p>Limited/uncertain parking conditions and ultimate cost to meet long term needs</p> <p>Involves partnership/contribution from City for construction and parking accommodations</p> <p>Most convenient for downtown attorneys/judges/Commonwealths Attorneys</p> <p><b>Total estimated net cost to the County - \$39.7 M</b></p>	<p><b>Financial Information:</b></p> <p>Estimated Costs: \$30.3 M* <i>General District Courts</i></p> <p>Estimated Costs: \$16.8 M <i>Circuit Court</i></p> <p><b>Estimated Total \$47.1 M*</b></p> <p>Offset: (\$6.9 M) <i>City Share</i></p> <p>Offset: (\$0.5 M) <i>Sale of Joint County/City Properties (Jessup)</i></p> <p><b>Total Deductions: (\$7.4 M)</b></p> <p><b>Total Net Project Cost to the County - Option 1: \$39.7 M*</b></p> <hr/> <p><i>*Numbers adjusted as of October 21, 2016 to reflect more precise cost comparison related to phasing between options one and four.</i></p> <p><i>*Description is being reviewed for updated cost and key factor revisions.</i></p>

**Option 5: Relocation of County General District & Circuit Courts to County Site**



**Description:**

Construct new Courts complex in County assuming construction on county owned property or development partnership opportunity. Assumes a new ~85,000 SF building to accommodate Circuit Court - two Court Sets, General District Court - two Court Sets and all associated operational needs in modern up-to-date facilities. Provides 250 public parking spaces plus 100 Staff/Judge secure spaces.

**Key Factors:**

Relocates County Court operations from the City to a County location

Initial phase relocates General District and Circuit Court operations

All County government and School operations remain in COB McIntire

Opportunity for County to sell existing County Courthouse to City for its future court needs

Resolves parking constraints

Creates optimal economic development/ community revitalization opportunity by investing entire construction budget in the county

Provides for future expansion of courts and opportunity for modern, state of the art facilities

Allows phasing of future Court facilities, if needed, beyond 15 years in the new complex

Advances the County’s strategic priorities related to revitalization/redevelopment and urban place making

More initial uncertainty in schedule while securing appropriate development partner to maximize investment

**Total estimated net cost to the County - \$30.9M**

**Financial Information:**

Estimated Construction Costs: \$34.0 M  
*Based on 85,000 sf\**

Offset: (\$3.1 M)

*Sale of Joint County/City Properties  
(Jessup, Levy & 7th St. Market Parking)*

**Total Net Project Cost to \$30.9 M  
the County - Option 5:**

*\* Cost revised from original estimate based on more recent market data and similar scope project in Hanover County.*

***\*Description is being reviewed for updated cost and key factor revisions.***

**Population:** The U.S. Census Bureau estimates the 2017 population of Albemarle County is 106,878. The County’s Community Development Department forecasts the 2020 population to be 115,642 while the

2030 population forecast is 134,196. In addition to the population of standard residents, the County and City of Charlottesville also has an annual influx of approximately 20,000 students attending the University of Virginia.

**Caseload:**

- Albemarle County Circuit Court is located at the 16<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit. 3,743 cases were filed in the Circuit Court in 2015. In 2016, 3,777 cases were filed; there were fewer civil case filings in 2016 than the previous year and more criminal case filings than the previous year. 2,393 were filed by the end of July 2017, 5% more than were filed by the end of July 2016.
- 22,547 cases were filed in the 16<sup>th</sup> District Court in 2015. 23,759 cases were filed in 2016, a 5% increase. Case filings through July 2017 totaled 16,547.
- City General District Court case filings in 2015 totaled 14,002. In 2016, City General District Court filings amounted to 15,416 indicating a 10% increase. End of July 2017 year to date filings were 10,467.

<b>Court</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>End of July 2017</b>
County Circuit	3,743	3,777	2,393
General District County	22,547	23,759	16,547
General District City	14,002	15,416	10,467

**Court Staffing:**

- The 16<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit currently has five judges who can assist as needed throughout the 16<sup>th</sup> Circuit. Two judges are assigned primarily to hear Albemarle County cases. One judge is designated as the resident judge for the County and serves as the chief judge for the 16<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit. The Court has the support of a designated Clerk of Court.<sup>1</sup>
- Though separate designated court operations, the 16<sup>th</sup> Judicial District’s County and City General and District Courts typically work in a combined court manner, with shared county and municipal jurisdictional authority. The 16<sup>th</sup> District Court currently has four assigned judges supported by two distinct Clerks of Court.<sup>2</sup> As caseload filings continue to increase, so will the need for an additional judge.

In preparation for the location impact study review, County officials, Stantec representatives, Moseley Architecture representatives, and project principals from the NCSC conducted telephonic conference calls and corresponded on various topics. Project planning involved collective teleconference discussions concerning the overall scope of work to be performed by the NCSC, review objectives, expected outcomes, the use of stakeholder and public surveys, and the conducting of site visit interviews with key justice system stakeholders. Planning conferences culminated in a project kick-off conference on July 25, 2017.

<sup>1</sup> Virginia Judicial System public website, Circuit Court listing.

<sup>2</sup> Virginia Judicial System public website, General District Court listing.

Stakeholder and public surveys were then conducted and a site visit to interview justice system stakeholders was held during the week of August 21, 2017.

## II. Methodology for Stakeholder Focus Group Interviews

NCSC consultants and County officials collaborated on identifying and scheduling key justice system stakeholders for interviews and discussions during the site visit week of August 21, 2017. A total of twelve focus group interview sessions were scheduled to include interview debriefing meetings with County officials. Thirty representatives from the following justice system related agencies or organizations were scheduled to meet with the NCSC consultants and a Moseley Architecture representative.

- Judges from the Circuit and General District Courts
- Clerk of Court and staff from the Circuit Court
- Clerk of Court and staff from the General District Court
- County facilities manager
- Albemarle County Police Department
- County Department of Social Services
- Albemarle County Commonwealth Attorney
- Charlottesville-Albemarle Bar Association
- Public Defender
- Legal Aid Justice Center
- Private attorneys
- Central Virginia Legal Aid Society
- Clerk of Court for Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court
- Albemarle County Sheriff and staff
- Court Services
- Office of Aid and Restoration

A copy of the focus group schedule and participants is attached as [Appendix A](#).

Stakeholder focus group interview and discussion topics were primarily concerned with the potential impact on court operations and judicial services of locating the court pursuant to Options 1 and 5. Topics that were raised included:

- Efficiency of court operations at each location
- Potential for court delay due to location
- Convenient parking availability
- Effective use of judges and court staff

- Court security concerns
- General accessibility to court services and required appearances
- Available public transportation
- Attorney travel and coverage
- Sufficient court and public waiting space
- Historical context
- Wayfinding public signage
- In-custody transport access
- Shared spaces for court functions and operations
- Use of and accommodation of increased court technology
- Jury assembly and deliberation space
- Adjacency of other public and justice services
- Impact on stakeholder staff and general agency operations
- Potential cost impact on stakeholder and court operations
- Impact on J/DR court

A copy of the agenda for site visit stakeholder interviews is attached as [Appendix B](#). Summaries of stakeholder group feedback are included in the Stakeholder Summaries section below.

The NCSC consultants also used the site visit to physically walk through current court facilities and the present-day court campus. The County facility manager accompanied the NCSC consultants and the Moseley representative during the afternoon of August 22<sup>nd</sup>. The NCSC consultants' resulting observations:

- Current facility has limited public waiting areas and attorney conference rooms.
- Clerk's office personnel and services were disparately located throughout the building.
- There is limited available street parking near the court facilities.
- The age of these facilities creates significant physical challenges for:
  - handicap accessibility
  - secure inmate transfer.
- The size, number and placement of signs on the exterior of the court facilities is insufficient to clearly distinguish names and physical addresses of the various court facilities.
- Street signage identifies parking spaces reserved for the judges, creating a security concern, as pointed out to county authorities during the on-site debrief meeting.

Throughout the site visit week, NCSC consultants were available to provide updated information and feedback on site visit topics and interviews.

### III. Stakeholder Focus Group Interview Responses

The following summary charts reflect the results of interviews and discussions conducted with identified justice system stakeholders. Reported positions and opinions are grouped as advantages, disadvantages, impacts, and opportunities associated with each court location option and the potential for additional court operational space under each option.

Listed information was derived from comments and opinions expressed by various participants during scheduled stakeholder focus group interview sessions. Focus group comments were collected and noted by NCSC consultants. Comments and opinions are reported without a determined value but should be considered in concert with frequency of similar reported information from other stakeholder focus groups as well as stakeholder survey responses. Common reported information from each source are included in the report summary sections and adds to the validity of expressed opinions and/or concerns.

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Stakeholder/Agency: Albemarle County District and Circuit Court Judges	
Date of Interview: August 22, 2017	
Option 1 (Downtown Location)	Option 5 (Urban Ring Location)
<p><b>Advantages Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The public does not have to travel outside of the centralized court area to find the correct court to which to report.</li> <li>• The historic context of courts being on the current site carries a certain significance that is currently recognized and respected.</li> <li>• Court expansion plans can be accomplished through the efficient use of current buildings and land sites thereby maintaining the efficiency of a centralized court location.</li> <li>• Keeping the Circuit and District Courts in proximity to the J/DR Court and current area justice support agencies allows for easier public access to all courts and related services.</li> <li>• Public transportation is available.</li> </ul> <p><b>Disadvantages Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current court facility buildings and space can be inadequate in size.</li> <li>• Older buildings need to be updated with modern technology, efficient infrastructure, and improved security to include secure, segregated prisoner movement.</li> <li>• Parking access on the current judicial campus is limited.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Advantages Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional parking needs could be addressed.</li> <li>• Modern technology and facility infrastructure could be better accommodated.</li> <li>• Court security could possibly improve but at an additional manpower cost.</li> </ul> <p><b>Disadvantages Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The availability of sufficient public transportation is questionable.</li> <li>• The splitting of courts would cause the need for additional manpower for the Commonwealth Attorney and the Sheriff’s Department.</li> <li>• With the current General District Court jurisdictional operations of an Albemarle Court branch and a separate Charlottesville branch, the public will be confused as to where to report.</li> <li>• Albemarle County would have to continue to maintain County owned buildings on the current court square site.</li> </ul>

## Stakeholder/Agency: Albemarle County District and Circuit Court Judges

### Operational Impacts Identified – Option 5:

- Co-located Circuit and General District Courts allow for efficient judicial and justice system stakeholder coverage on a centralized judicial campus site.
- There is less possible delay in court cases in that attorneys can cover all jurisdictional levels of courts sharing interpreters, easy access to court services (e.g. specialty court services, clerk services, probation and restoration services) and finding available judge coverage in one central location.
- Travel between two court sites and the confusion of different court campuses are likely to cause case and trial delays, additional no-shows of defendants and witnesses, and more arrest warrants issued with additional in-custody jail time.
- Not being able to walk between individual centrally located courts will result in more parties not appearing in court on time or not at all causing more arrest warrants and potentially jail days of pre-disposition incarceration.
- Attorneys may have to charge more hourly fees by having to drive between two primary court locations at various times during the same day.
- The availability for judges to provide coverage on conflict or extended court matters between two major court locations would be reduced.
- Prisoner transport logistics and related court security operations could become more complex and costlier.
- Separating the General District Court into two different court locations will reduce overall court and attorney coverage and lengthen the time for the public to resolve pending court cases.
- With the J/DR Court remaining in Charlottesville on the current court campus, double services will be required to ensure court security, interpreters, prosecution efforts, and defense efforts.
- Hearings involving combined sentencings would become harder to accomplish with additional resources spent in conducting separate sentencing and combined case negotiations.

**Stakeholder/Agency: Albemarle County District and Circuit Court Judges**

**Opportunities Identified – Option 1:**

- Current building use could be remodeled and modernized to obtain additional court space, improved infrastructure, additional technology, and enhanced court security.
- Collaboration between the County and the City of Charlottesville would need to continue particularly in the areas of parking and court square jurisdictional determination.
- Remodeling and adding new building space would allow for increased jury space, conference rooms, and additional courtroom space.

**Stakeholder/Agency: Albemarle County & City of Charlottesville Clerks**

**Date of Interview: August 23, 2017**

<b>Option 1 (Downtown Location)</b>	<b>Option 5 (Urban Ring Location)</b>
<p><b>Advantages Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Judges share workload in the General District Courts.</li> <li>• Judges routinely cover conflict cases for one another.</li> <li>• Courts can accommodate sharing of courtroom space on short notice.</li> <li>• Attorneys handle cases in multiple courts in a single day.</li> <li>• Interpreter services are handled efficiently across courts.</li> <li>• Court Reporter resources are shared across courts<sup>3</sup>.</li> <li>• Historical significance of the Circuit Courtroom is important and promotes dignity and respect for the courts.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Advantages Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional parking needs would be addressed.</li> <li>• Modern facilities would more easily accommodate accessibility requirements.</li> <li>• Provides an opportunity to proactively plan for advances in court technology.</li> <li>• Adequate jury holding space would be provided.</li> </ul> <p><b>Disadvantages Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The lack of available public transportation is a concern.</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> Due to time and scope constraints, NCSC did not validate this statement.



**Stakeholder/Agency: Albemarle County & City of Charlottesville Clerks**

**Disadvantages Noted:**

- Access to adequate parking is a concern.
- Older buildings need to be remodeled to provide adequate space, accessibility and security.

- The public would be further confused about where to report for court.
- Hearings will be delayed due to people reporting to the wrong court and the need to travel between downtown and urban ring facilities.
- The ability for judges to assist one another with calendars and conflict cases will be diminished.
- Attorney fees will likely increase due to increased travel.
- Interpreter services may not be available when needed due to current sharing of resources within Court Square facilities.
- Historic buildings still need to be maintained and is costly.
- Leaving J& DR courts in the city will create confusion, delays and resource constraints.

**Operational Impacts Identified – Option 5:**

- Travel between two court sites and the confusion of different court campuses are likely to cause case and trial delays, additional no-shows of defendants and witnesses, and more arrest warrants issued with additional in-custody jail time.
- Judges routinely assist one another with heavy calendars, reducing wait time for the parties and litigants. This also promotes consistency in sentencing for like crimes, increasing the public’s trust and confidence in the courts. These benefits would be diminished if the courts were located at separate campuses.
- The ability for judges to provide coverage on conflict or extended court matters between two major court locations would be reduced
- Parties do not read correspondence. As a result, people appear in the wrong court each day. Not being able to walk between individual centrally located courts will result in more parties not appearing in court on time or not appearing at all, causing more arrest warrants and potentially increase jail days of pre-disposition incarceration.
- Some criminal offenses cross jurisdictional lines and are combined for sentencing and probation violation hearings. These combined jurisdiction cases make up between 5 -10% of the annual criminal caseload (excluding Drug Courts) and provide efficiencies for the courts and parties in terms of reducing the number of hearings required.
- Interpreters are used in all courts daily. The ability for interpreters to cover multiple courtrooms in a single morning or afternoon calendar session would be diminished if courts were physically separated, resulting in increased costs and possibly more hearing continuances if interpreters are not available.

## Stakeholder/Agency: Albemarle County & City of Charlottesville Clerks

- Title Examiners are shared between the City and County. Annexation records dating back to 1803 are located at both City and County court offices. Title searches often include utilizing land records in both offices. If additional travel is required for title examiner staff to complete title searches, increased costs incurred will be passed on to customers and the time required to complete title searches will increase.
- Police departments have joint tasks and are shared court resources. Law enforcement officers are able to quickly move between the courts today as needed to appear as witnesses or provide security. These opportunities would be greatly diminished if the courts were physically separated resulting in hearing delays and increased operational costs.
- Emergency protective orders denied in the J/DR courts can be immediately appealed to the Circuit Court. Physical separation of the courts will result in increased time to accomplish emergency protective order appeals and could become an access to justice/ public safety concern.
- Fewer attorneys may be willing to take court appointed cases due to increased costs and time spent traveling between court facilities if the courts were physically separated. Public Defender resources are already stretched.
- Meetings among stakeholders would be more difficult to schedule and accommodate outside of the centralized court campus. (Example: defendant progress reviews including Drug Court Board, Evidence Based Decision Team (EBDT), and Fatality Review Team.
- Programs and services for offenders are currently conveniently and centrally located in the downtown area. Accessibility and compliance would be diminished if these services were not allocated in proximity to the courts.

### Opportunities Identified – Option 1:

- Current building use could be remodeled and modernized to meet additional court space, improved infrastructure, additional technology, and enhanced court security needs.
- Collaboration with the City of Charlottesville to provide additional parking options in the downtown Court Square area is achievable.

<b>Stakeholder/Agency: Albemarle Co Police, Dept. of Social Services, Region 10 &amp; PCASA</b>	
<b>Date of Interview: August 23, 2017</b>	
<b>Option 1 (Downtown Location)</b>	<b>Option 5 (Urban Ring Location)</b>
<p><b>Advantages Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current downtown location for courts is convenient for the public providing “one stop shopping” for most if not all court related services.</li> <li>Prisoner transport is shorter distance.</li> </ul> <p><b>Disadvantages Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parking in current location is insufficient. Police Department and Department of Social Services must pay the City for parking. In FY 16, the Police Department paid \$3,206.75 for parking spaces within the court square area. DSS cited an average annual parking cost of \$2,460.75 associated with parking for court purposes.</li> <li>Wayfinding public signage is unclear and insufficient. Court facilities are not clearly identified.</li> <li>Current court waiting spaces are too small.</li> <li>Inside city traffic can be high volume.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Advantages Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased parking and elimination of parking fees.</li> <li>Reduced concerns regarding most of security-related jurisdictional questions.</li> <li>Space size deviancies could be addressed with new construction.</li> <li>Proposed site easier to access for Police Department.</li> <li>Public signage concerns could be mitigated.</li> </ul> <p><b>Disadvantages Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to public transportation may need to be increased.</li> <li>Travel and law enforcement services to J/DR Court would continue to be required.</li> <li>Jurisdictional questions would continue to linger with the need to respond to security concerns at two major court locations.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Operational Impacts Identified – Option 1:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Court attending police officers are sometimes late to court due to unavailability of close in judicial campus parking spaces.</li> <li>Due to various areas of city and county jurisdiction on the downtown site, there is often confusion as to which law enforcement agency responds to emergency situations. The confusion and resulting hesitation to act can result in a dangerous situation.</li> </ul>	

**Stakeholder/Agency: Albemarle Co Police, Dept. of Social Services, Region 10 & PCASA**

**Opportunities Impacts Identified – Option 5:**

- Moving the Circuit and General District County Court to the proposed urban ring would result in a distinct Albemarle County court site leading to a physical separation County and Charlottesville services. Such a move could result in improved public “branding” of County operations and services different from those provided by the City.
- A newer judicial facility complex would provide improved court security space, access to attorney client conference space, and additional access to increased parking.
- Separate court campuses could assist with reducing court location law enforcement jurisdictional and reporting concerns.
- Travel and security services to J/DR Court would continue, resulting in increased travel costs in time and manpower.
- Prisoner transport logistics and related court security operations could become more complex and time consuming.

<b>Stakeholder/Agency: Albemarle County Commonwealth’s Attorney’s Office</b>	
<b>Date of Interview: August 23, 2017</b>	
<b>Option 1 (Downtown Location)</b>	<b>Option 5 (Urban Ring Location)</b>
<p><b>Advantages Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The scheduling flexibility for both judges and attorneys located in the downtown central court location is a major advantage in the timely addressing and resolving pending criminal and traffic cases.</li> <li>• Public transportation is more readily available with the city of Charlottesville.</li> <li>• The proposed buildout and renovation of current court space will address future courtroom and court space needs.</li> <li>• The current court campus is conveniently located within a very historic and functional area of the city and county.</li> </ul> <p><b>Disadvantages Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The City and/or the County would have to include additional parking space within court construction and renovation plans.</li> <li>• Improved wayfinding signs are needed.</li> <li>• Future growth for adequate court facilities and functions is urgently needed.</li> <li>• Law enforcement witnesses need additional secure waiting space.</li> <li>• In-custody defendants require separate secure facility transport space.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Advantages Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking concerns could be better addressed.</li> <li>• Court location jurisdictional boundaries could be better addressed.</li> <li>• Court security and secure court space could be enhanced in a new well-designed court facility.</li> </ul> <p><b>Disadvantages Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistant Commonwealth Attorney workload would increase in coverage of county courts, district courts, and the J/DR courts in different locations.</li> <li>• The need to conduct crucial conversations with defense attorneys now easily achieved through the central court location would become more difficult with the separation of courts.</li> </ul>

**Stakeholder/Agency: Albemarle County Commonwealth’s Attorney’s Office**

**Operational Impacts Identified – Option 5:**

- Dividing the courts between two major court campuses will increase public confusion as to which court to report.
- The beneficial use of “vertical prosecution”, assigning the same attorney to a specific case, will be jeopardized by the breakup of the current court campus. It will make it more difficult for both prosecuting and defense attorneys to engage in meaningful discussions regarding the goal of final and just resolution to individual cases.
- Defense attorneys will find it more difficult and less efficient to review open available prosecution files if such files were located in two separate office areas of the Commonwealth Attorney.
- Having a second office and court site located outside of the current court square will require the employment of at least two additional Assistant Commonwealth Attorneys to cover Circuit Court, two locations of General District Court, and the J/DR Courts. The current estimated annual cost of two additional attorneys is \$170,000 (\$85,000 each).
- Separate bond hearings and would be necessary with two major court locations within the County. In-custody transportation costs would increase.
- Resolving attorney and judge coverage conflicts would take additional time.
- Personal communications between prosecuting attorneys and defense attorneys would become less with length of pending cases becoming longer.
- Combined sentencing hearings for two jurisdictional levels of prosecution would become cumbersome and more difficult to negotiate and logistically arrange resulting in additional court hearings, more secure transportation issues for Sheriff staff, and overall less efficient in achieving early case resolutions.

**Opportunities Identified- Option 5:**

- Parking concerns would be addressed.
- Attorney/client conference rooms in a newly designed court facility would prove to be beneficial.
- Security screening and holding cells for in-custody defendants would be enhanced.
- Separately constructed and utilized hallway transport of prisoners would improve court security.
- Identifying Albemarle County court operations separate from Charlottesville court operations could assist with public understanding of government roles of each public entity.

<b>Stakeholder/Agency: CABA (Bar Association)/Private Attorneys</b>	
<b>Date of Interview: August 23, 2017</b>	
<b>Option 1 (Downtown Location)</b>	<b>Option 5 (Urban Ring Location)</b>
<p><b>Advantages Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efficiencies created by coordinating court appearances with other court -related work to help contain client costs.</li> <li>• Ability to maintain current court appointed caseloads and serve more clients in need.</li> </ul> <p><b>Disadvantages Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking may continue to be an issue.</li> <li>• Remodeling the current facilities may provide limited space for witness rooms and additional attorney conference rooms.</li> </ul> <p><b>Opportunities Identified</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keeping all courts co-located in Court Square will preserve the collegial effect created by the courts being close together.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Advantages Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new modern court facility could provide for better courtroom acoustics.</li> <li>• More witness rooms and attorney conference rooms could be accommodated in a new facility.</li> </ul> <p><b>Disadvantages Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in schedule conflicts due to the need to travel between court campuses.</li> <li>• Possible loss of collegial local legal culture.</li> </ul> <p><b>Opportunities Identified:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New modern court facilities could provide for better courtroom acoustics and technology.</li> <li>• New modern court facilities could accommodate an adequate number of witness and attorney conference rooms.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Operational Impacts Identified – Option 5:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To avoid conflict issues, the city prosecutor needs access to the Circuit Court judge for search warrants approximately 12 -24 times per year.</li> <li>• City attorneys routinely go to the Circuit Court Clerk’s Office several times per week to review files. The city and county courts being physically located in two different campuses miles apart would create operational inefficiencies for the City Attorney’s Office.</li> <li>• Clerks frequently adjust calendars to allow attorneys to appear in another court, calling their cases later upon return from a nearby hearing. These opportunities are expected to be diminished or eliminated if attorneys are required to drive between court locations to attend hearings.</li> </ul>	

## Stakeholder/Agency: CABA (Bar Association)/Private Attorneys

- Private attorneys accepting court appointed work are concerned about their ability to continue to accept the current number of appointments, particularly for those cases in which the defendant is incarcerated. It is anticipated that they may be unable to commit to attending same day bond hearings if other previously scheduled cases require their appearance at the other court campus.
- Not a matter of lawyers being unwilling to be inconvenienced; but rather service to the public. Court appointed attorneys are often double or triple booked on any given day with hearings scheduled in multiple courts. If some of those hearings require the attorney to drive to another location, bail hearings delays are anticipated. This could result in an extra 1 to 5 days of incarceration for some defendants and carry serious consequences for them such as loss of a job or lack of childcare.
- Experienced attorneys will not be willing or able to take court appointed cases. Criminal defendants will be represented by inexperienced lawyers.<sup>4</sup>
- Clients will miss court hearings due to appearing in the wrong location resulting in more non-appearance warrants and additional hearings.
- Federal Public Defender's Office frequently accesses county and city case records. Physically separating the courts in two different campuses would have an impact on their limited staff resources.
- The University of Virginia School of Law places students in city and county court criminal law clinics working with supervising attorneys. Physically separating the courts will impeded the opportunity for students to experience both courts. Many law students do not have transportation to get downtown let alone outside of the city where public transportation options are severely limited.
- Most private attorneys with offices currently located in the urban ring area do not support moving the courts out of the Court Square downtown area. Those with criminal defense caseloads regularly go to the Common Wealth Attorney's Office to look at discovery and read the file as well as to the police department if there is video. They currently coordinate these tasks while in the Court Square area for court appearances, which helps to contain client costs. In addition, if someone from their office can drop a document off while tending to other errands while in Court Square, the client will not be billed. Attorneys will have to bill clients for time spent traveling between courts.
- An increase in the number of continuances and scheduling backlog (due to schedule conflicts) is anticipated to result from physically separating the courts, increasing wait time for court dates and access to justice.
- Transportation for clients and witnesses is expected to be a challenge if the courts are moved to the urban ring location.
- There is a concern regarding loss of the collegial effect if all courts are not located close together. Located close together supports a collaborative and cooperative legal culture that could be disrupted by a physical separation of court campuses.
- Private lawyers often appear in court locations outside of Albemarle County and the City of Charlottesville. Separating the city and county courts in this jurisdiction will create another opportunity for scheduling conflicts for lawyers.

<sup>4</sup> This statement represents the opinion of the stakeholder group interviewed as a likely impact concern. Based on NCSC's understanding of the conversation, this statement is based primarily on an anticipated increase in travel time between court locations (under option 5), resulting in less time to handle cases.



<b>Stakeholder/Agency: Juvenile &amp; Domestic Relations Clerk</b>	
<b>Date of Interview: August 24, 2017</b>	
<b>Option 1 (Downtown Location)</b>	<b>Option 5 (Urban Ring Location)</b>
<p><b>Advantages Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to provide better, more convenient customer service for parties in need of documentation or services from another court.</li> <li>• Interpreter resources are frequently needed and shared with other courts<sup>5</sup>.</li> <li>• Court Services are conveniently located in or near Court Square.</li> <li>• The proposed buildout and renovation of current court space will address future courtroom and court space needs.</li> </ul> <p><b>Disadvantages Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited parking can cause parties to be late for court hearings.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Advantages Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking concerns would be alleviated.</li> </ul> <p><b>Disadvantages Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sending parties to Albemarle County Courts for certified copies of divorce proceedings or appeal bonds will be less convenient and cause delays.</li> <li>• Attorneys may not be as readily available to accept court appointed cases if required to travel between the urban ring and downtown court locations throughout the day.</li> <li>• Courts would be competing for professional service providers rather than sharing them.</li> </ul>

<sup>5</sup> This statement was noted by this stakeholder and the County and City Clerk stakeholder group as a likely impact concern. Of notable concern by both groups was resource availability of qualified interpreters for languages needed daily. For example, this includes Spanish interpreting and the ability to share resources on short notice and as needs arise. These interpreters were described as those who are willing to assist as needed for unplanned interpreter needs as well as those previously identified and scheduled.

## Stakeholder/Agency: Juvenile & Domestic Relations Clerk

### Operational Impacts Identified – Option 5:

- The City and County Juvenile and Domestic Relations Courts (J/DR) are statutorily combined courts and therefore operate differently than other Charlottesville City and Albemarle County Courts. Employee salaries and the operating budget of the J/DR court are apportioned between the county and the city, with certain services funded through the Virginia Supreme Court.
- Paper files are combined and contain all filings and pleadings based on family name.
- J/DR judges and clerks are concerned about attorney availability should the Albemarle County courts be moved outside of Court Square. Family court cases often require up to 5 or more attorneys based on the number of family members involved and unique family situations.
- Customer service would be negatively impacted should the Albemarle County District and Circuit Courts be moved to a location outside of the city as parties are often sent there to obtain a certified copy of a divorce decree once their case is transferred to the J/DR Court.
- If an appeal bond is needed from the Circuit Court, parties can quickly and conveniently obtain all necessary paperwork by walking across the street and hand-delivering the necessary documents. This occurs at least twice per week. Moving the Albemarle County Circuit Court outside of the downtown location would complicate this process for litigants and could potentially delay a bond or release hearing until the following day.
- As part of the 16<sup>th</sup> District, J/DR judges are cross-designated to hear General District Court cases and can assist with proceedings if additional assistance is needed. Courtroom space is also shared when need arises.
- Interpreter resources are needed at the J/DR courts daily. Interpreter services for the most common languages are shared with other courts in the downtown area. Qualified interpreters are willing to move between courts throughout the day, saving time and per diem costs.
- Several agencies that interact with the J/DR courts also work with the Albemarle District and Circuit Courts and would be impacted by courts located in two separate court campuses. These agencies include: Court Services, Social Services and Mediation Services, Offender Aid & Restoration (OAR), Juvenile Probation, Common Wealth Attorney's Office and the Public Defender's Office as well as private attorneys. Scheduling challenges would be anticipated for courts if these resources are required to divide their time attending hearings at separate court locations and spend time traveling between them.

<b>Stakeholder/Agency: Legal Aid &amp; Public Defender's Office</b>	
<b>Date of Interview: August 24, 2017</b>	
<b>Option 1 (Downtown Location)</b>	<b>Option 5 (Urban Ring Location)</b>
<p><b>Advantages Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to handle a high volume of cases due to proximity of courts.</li> <li>• Judges and lawyers assisting one another helps to manage caseloads and avoid hearing continuances due to conflicts or scheduling challenges.</li> <li>• The proposed buildout and renovation of current court space will address future courtroom and court space needs.</li> </ul> <p><b>Disadvantages Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The City and/or the County would have to include with in court construction and renovation plans additional parking space.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<p><b>Advantages Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking concerns may be alleviated in a new, expansive court site</li> <li>• Emerging court technology could be better accommodated in a new facility.</li> </ul> <p><b>Disadvantages Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transportation concerns for clients</li> <li>• Time spent traveling between courts would be significant</li> </ul> <p><b>Opportunities Identified- Option 5:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking challenges could be alleviated by a new court facility outside of the downtown area.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Operational Impacts Identified – Option 1:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City and County Court Judges consistently and willingly move back and forth to assist one another. This makes things easier for already over-stretched attorneys when conflicts or other scheduling challenges arise. It is also instrumental in avoiding conflicts for search warrant requests.</li> </ul> <p><b>Operational Impacts Identified – Option 5:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal Aid is already overstretched and therefore can only handle the most egregious cases. Clients will suffer if additional time is spent traveling between court locations.</li> <li>• Public Defenders routinely have cases scheduled in 3 courts at the same time. Given the current close-proximity and collegial culture of the courts, they have can serve multiple clients each day. If the courts are separated and they are required to drive throughout the day, fewer cases will be handled and some people will not have a lawyer.</li> </ul>	

### Stakeholder/Agency: Legal Aid & Public Defender's Office

- The Public Defender's Office currently has 781 open cases between 7 lawyers. They handle all types of cases from misdemeanors through felony rape and murder as well as all appeals from State courts. Current caseloads are about 50-50 in terms of city and county case jurisdiction. If this type of caseload remains typical as is expected, splitting the courts would result in a significant amount of time spent traveling between courts to serve clients. This is estimated to amount to up to 40 hours of attorney time per week spent traveling. There is no budget available to support a satellite office location for the Public Defender's Office.
- Reviewing files at the Common Wealth Attorney's Office is a large part of the investigative work required to prepare for a case. Separating court locations from the downtown Court Square area will make case preparation more challenging and time consuming.
- Limiting time for face-to-face conversations may reduce opportunities for the early settlement of cases.
- Drug Courts are an example of where city and county court cases are currently heard together. Plans are underway for a city/county partnership to handle the Mental Health docket as well. Physically separating the courts will have a negative impact on innovation and planning efforts invested in these critical program areas.
- A concern regarding the availability of qualified and experienced court interpreters (should the courts be physically separated).
- The UVA Hospital debt cases are heard in Albemarle Circuit and General District Court. Most of the defendants in these matters are indigent citizens living in the city without transportation. Often, they are eligible for programs but are unaware of the process to request or receive assistance. Instead, they fail to respond to a summons and end up with default judgments for hospital debt. It is anticipated that more default judgments would be awarded in these matters if the courts were moved to the urban ring area due to lack of transportation. Appeals are then filed in the Circuit Court, increasing caseloads and backlogs.
- Additional warrants for non-appearance or Order and Show Cause proceedings (for non-compliance) are anticipated due to lack of transportation should the Albemarle County Courts be relocated to the urban ring. This will result in more court process and consequences for those defendants arrested and held for appearance.
- The client population served by Legal Aid and the Public Defender's Office typically does not have valid driver's licenses and/or insurance. There is concern that moving the courts to the urban ring would compel some to drive to court when they should not due to the lack of public transportation options. The closest bus stop to the urban ring location (Fashion Square Mall) requires riders to cross 6 lanes of traffic on foot to get to the proposed courthouse location creating a safety concern.
- The historical significance of the Albemarle County Circuit Court is important to attorneys practicing there as well as for citizens accessing the courts. A new, fancy courthouse may be demoralizing and intimidating to the clients served by Legal Aid and the Public Defender's Office, exacerbating current access to justice issues.

<b>Stakeholder/Agency: Albemarle County Sheriff, Court Services (Juvenile Probation)</b>	
<b>Date of Interview: August 24, 2017</b>	
<b>Option 1 (Downtown Location)</b>	<b>Option 5 (Urban Ring Location)</b>
<p><b>Advantages Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central court location allows for all court and related court services to be accessible in one primary area of the city and the county.</li> <li>• Public transportation is readily available for both court service staff and the public.</li> <li>• Those ordered to report to court service agencies (community corrections, probation, pre-trial, restorative process, evidence based behavior screenings) can normally do so within the same campus area as the courts. This close adjacency assists with prompt reporting and few no-shows.</li> <li>• New court construction and renovated space should address existing court security needs to include improved in-custody transports from enforcement vehicles and within court facilities.</li> <li>• All court operations remain within one area that also includes the J/DR courts.</li> </ul> <p><b>Disadvantages Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposed downtown option needs increased access to parking for both the public and law enforcement officers serving as court security officers and witnesses.</li> <li>• Court attending law enforcement agencies should not have to pay for parking.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Advantages Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking concerns could be addressed.</li> <li>• Court security entry screening process could be centralized and restricted to one main area.</li> <li>• In-custody defendants could be more securely transported to a well-designed sally-port.</li> <li>• In-custody defendants could be more securely moved in a separately designed secure hallway.</li> </ul> <p><b>Disadvantages Noted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Separate court facility from current centralized campus will require additional law enforcement travel between the two court locations.</li> <li>• In-custody transport duties would increase with two different court locations.</li> <li>• Public transportation availability would need to increase.</li> <li>• Providing sufficient sheriff office areas, security posts, and waiting spaces would be necessary in option #5.</li> </ul>

**Stakeholder/Agency: Albemarle County Sheriff, Court Services (Juvenile Probation)**

- Any renovation of existing court facilities should include a more secure sally-port for in-custody transports.
- A modernized court facility should have sufficient holding cells, secure segregated in-custody transport hallways, and secure attorney/client interview areas.

**Operational Impacts Identified – Option 5:**

- Court services probation office and treatment based services would not be located at option #5 site. Defendants and family members would have to travel to current downtown site for such services. Such travel could increase no-shows for critical court authorized treatment and needed counseling.
- Transporting in-custody defendants between two court locations and attending an additional screening operation will necessitate the need for 5 additional deputy sheriffs. The cost of this addition is estimated to be \$565,590 for the first year and likely more for succeeding years.
- Separate court locations would likely increase the need for a quarter time to half time additional court services officer amounting to a first-year cost estimate of \$17,500 for a quarter time position to \$35,000 for a half time position. This cost would occur annually.
- Law enforcement officer witnesses and court security officers would be required for duty in two different court locations.
- Court trial and appearance calendars would need to be planned and established to accommodate the efficient delivery of in-custody defendants and the appearance of witnesses as well as lawyers in two different court locations.

**Opportunities Identified – Option 1:**

- A County identified site housing County identified court operations could reduce some confusion as to where the public reports to court.
- Jurisdictional concerns regarding law enforcement responses to two separate court campuses should be resolved.

## IV. Common Reported Stakeholder Focus Group Comments

### Stakeholder comments regarding the advantages of maintaining the centralized court location (Option #1):

- Abundant public transportation services make public and staff travel more convenient and less costly.
- Persons going to court have little confusion as to where to physically report.
- The current location for courts is convenient to other public services and private retail and restaurant providers.
- Centralized court operations provide “one stop shopping” for all court services from filing cases to researching court records.
- The central court location maintains a sense of historic presence and dignity of judicial services.
- Access to centrally located attorney offices within the vicinity of the centralized court locations is a benefit to the public and allows for increased court and attorney access.
- Centralized courts make it easier to communicate with all courts and court involved services.
- Co-located courts encourage and facilitate attorney conferences that enhance the overall efficient determination of case outcomes.
- The current centralized court location is within a legal community of attorneys and readily available court services making it very convenient for the public.

### Stakeholder comments regarding the advantages of moving county courts to a new separate location (Option #5):

- A newly designed court complex would create additional public, staff, and law enforcement parking and would enable judge access to secure parking.
- A newly designed infrastructure design of a new court facility could accommodate the efficient use of court technology inside office and courtroom spaces (e.g., electronic evidence displays, e-file access at courtroom bench and attorney tables, and electronic service areas for judges, clerks, attorneys, jurors, and the public).
- A modern designed court facility would allow for additional needed court operations space (e.g., adequate courtroom space, attorney/client conference rooms, combined clerk space, secure entry screening area, separate in-custody secure hallways, secure in-custody sally port, jury assembly and deliberation rooms, sufficient public waiting areas, and enhanced ADA accommodation space).
- A new court facility would provide a more environmentally comfortable location for judges, staff, and the public.
- A well designed new court facility would have adequate and helpful wayfinding public signage.

- County enforcement agencies could become the primary court security provider, resolving current issues regarding who has jurisdiction for law enforcement response efforts.
- The county would achieve a more prominent public image by separating county supported court operations from those supported by the city.
- The public would be less confused as to where to report to court.

**Stakeholder comments regarding disadvantages of maintaining the centralized court location (Option #1):**

- Current older court facilities would require extensive renovation to provide adequate court operations space. The present-day facility footprints may not allow for the expansion that would be needed to provide modern day secure court space.
- Renovation plans for the current court facilities would require extensive infrastructure modifications necessary to support the use of advanced court technology needed to implement electronic filings and files.
- Sufficient public and staff parking must be addressed and included within any renovation plan and cost estimate.
- The need for adequate directional, wayfinding and locational signs must be addressed.
- Temporary court space must be identified and adequately designed to provide secure public court services throughout the period of facility renovation.
- Clarification of jurisdiction over law enforcement response jurisdiction over the county and city courts would need to be addressed.
- Future court expansion may not be readily available.

**Stakeholder comments regarding disadvantages of moving county courts to a new separate location (Option #5):**

- There is a perceived lack of abundant public transportation at the proposed urban ring site.
- Any additional ongoing manpower needs of the Commonwealth Attorney, Sheriff, and Court Services would have to be addressed (i.e., these manpower needs could include two additional assistant attorneys at a first-year estimated cost of \$170,000; five additional deputy sheriffs at a first year estimated total cost of \$565,590; and one half-time court services officer at a first-year estimated cost of \$35,000).
- There would be additional daily transportation time and costs associated with in-custody transfers involving two court locations.
- There would be an additional cost for security screening equipment and manpower for the new separate county court operations.
- The public would likely be confused as to which court location to report, particularly with the J/DR court remaining at the city site.



- Albemarle County would have to continue to maintain the costs of upkeep to the current city located county court facilities.
- The loss of current judge and attorney coverage for hearing cases at the centralized court location would cause court delay and additional court continuances, resulting in the public needing to return to court for court settings.
- Attorney travel time and costs would escalate as attorneys cover court hearings several miles apart.
- The efficient use of interpreters, probation staff, clerk records, and program treatment options located within one judicial campus would be reduced.
- Scheduling court appearance conflicts between two court locations would impede case progress causing case continuances and further delay case resolutions.
- Two locations would reduce the daily interactions and collegial case negotiations between criminal defense attorneys and Commonwealth Attorneys, resulting in case termination delays and additional incarceration time and associated expense.

*NCSC Concluding Observations and Comments:*

Most stakeholders favored leaving the courts in their current centralized Court Square location (Option #1). The availability of co-located judges to cover for judges and attorneys to cover for attorneys was identified as having a positive impact on court operations by reducing the need and number of court continuances that cause overall delay. Legal aid attorneys, private defense attorneys, and the Public Defender identified the availability of centralized court services as an important factor impacting the degree to which defendants will comply with court ordered requirements and rehabilitative actions. These services include probation officers, drug treatment resources, restorative justice, and pre-trial release determinations

If the County goes forward with Option #5, consideration should be given to:

- Creating additional satellite space for various court services on site at the new court complex.
- Making a concentrated effort to coordinate court schedules and calendars between the two court sites - to assist with judge and attorney coverage concerns.
- Coordinating court calendars to assist the scheduling of case negotiation times between attorneys and to accommodate the travel times between two court complexes.

Criminal defense attorneys also reported that being able to conveniently interact throughout their daily court appearance time and the convenient location of law offices within Court Square greatly assisted with interactions with prosecuting attorneys and therefore was a benefit in achieving early case terminations. Loss of the ability to conduct early case terminations could lead to increased incarceration time in that in-custody pre-trial time periods could lengthen if case resolutions are delayed.

Interpreter resources were also cited as a concern under Option #5. This is especially a concern for Spanish interpreter services, described as the most common language need across the County and City Circuit and District courts. Currently, the courts share a qualified Spanish interpreter who assists the courts to meet their daily interpreter needs by being present on short notice and covering multiple courtrooms as needs arise on any given day. A typical challenge for courts is that they are often unaware of language interpretation needs in advance of the initial appearance in criminal cases. Having an interpreter that can be available on short notice and move quickly between court facilities prevents the need for these cases to be continued to a later date due to a lack of a qualified interpreter. If Option #5 is selected, consideration should be given to having additional resources available at each of the court locations for the most common language or alternatively to implement telephone and video enabled court interpreter services. For many types of hearing, use of these technologies can serve as a high quality yet lower cost alternative to live, in-person court interpreters.

The numerous concerns over the need for additional parking may be best addressed through the design of a new court facility (Option #5) or the procurement of additional parking space at the Court Square location (Option #1). Wayfinding signage can be improved at the Court Square location as can the availability of public transportation at the urban ring site (Option #5). Online and direct mailing notices produced in plain language with adequate maps will assist the public in reporting to the right location.

The use of electronic filing and electronic files and the extended use of technology in general would assist judges and attorneys in each of the location options. Regardless of the selected location, modern court design should include sufficient space for technology supported courtrooms, attorney/client conferencing, jury assembly and deliberation rooms, as well as areas for combined usage of court clerk operations. Electronic files can reduce the need to travel to file pleadings on a case as well as to review files for case preparation. Leveraging court technology could certainly play a role to help mitigate travel concerns expressed in opposition to Option #5 in terms of work conducted by attorneys outside of the courtroom.

No additional personnel costs other than those reported by the Sheriff, the Commonwealth Attorney, and the Director for Court Services were reported during stakeholder focus group discussions. The salary amounts were reported independently by each office official.

Likely cost impacts as to increased attorney fees were reported by attorney focus groups and were primarily related to additional travel time between law offices and two separate court locations. Additional fee costs were also mentioned as the result of not having an opportunity to meet and discuss cases in one location, often in “path crossing encounters” with opposing colleagues. The convenient location of courts and attorney offices is a definite advantage to early case negotiations and reducing time from case filing to disposition. It would be likely that the loss of opportunity for daily contact with one’s adversary could increase attorney time on individual cases, in that per chance discussions that now occur at the same court location could be limited by attorney appearance at a different court location. As stated

previously some modifications in court calendars to schedule attorney appearances via standard appearance times and dates could assist with sustaining attorney-to-attorney contacts, particularly in criminal cases.

Law enforcement stakeholder voiced a general level of support for two separate court locations (Option #5) citing the ability to provide enhanced court security through better designed court screening space. Secure prisoner movement via separated hallway space within a modern designed court facility was also cited as a major security improvement as well as the use of a secure sally port for external in-custody transports. If the County selects Option #1, court facility renovation design should include public and in-custody separation within court buildings as well as sufficient space for entry screening functions.

The concern over the need for additional parking may be best addressed through the design of a new court facility (Option #5) or the procurement of additional parking space at the Court Square location (Option #1). Wayfinding signage can be improved at the Court Square location as can the availability of public transportation at the urban ring site (Option #5). Online and direct mailing notices produced in plain language with adequate maps will assist the public in reporting to the right location.

The use of electronic files and extended use of technology in general would assist judges and attorneys in each of the location options. Regardless of the selected location, modern court design should include sufficient space for technology supported courtrooms, attorney/client conferencing, jury assembly and deliberation rooms, as well as areas for combined usage of court clerk operations.

As reported by the Clerk of the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court, separating the Circuit Court from the J/DR Court will likely cause appearance conflicts on the part of attorneys as well as delay the process of a Circuit Court judge hearing appeal matters from the J/DR Court. Having to travel to an urban ring court location to conduct an appeal which could possibly be heard the same day at the current court location will cause case delay and potentially impact the lives of those involved in family court matters. Because the J/DR Court is somewhat of a combined court hearing both county and city jurisdictional cases, it would be very difficult to remove cases and court staff from the Charlottesville located court without long term advance-planning.

## **V. Walkthrough of Current Court Facilities**

During a walkthrough of existing Court Square court facilities, NCSC consultants and a principal architect from Moseley architectural firm were accompanied by a county facility manager. It is the understanding of NCSC consultants that Moseley architects are providing a detailed analysis of existing court space as to areas that are inadequate and in need of renovation in conjunction with Option #1. The following general observations are reported in support of the need to provide adequate operational space within existing court structures.

- Public waiting areas within court facilities are often small and reported to be environmentally uncomfortable at times.
- The number of attorney/client conference rooms and witness waiting areas is inadequate. It was reported that attorneys and their clients often share the space of jury deliberation rooms with jurors or waiting witnesses. Court cases and pending motions are often resolved in attorney conference space rather than a courtroom resulting in earlier and more efficient case resolutions.
- Clerk's office personnel and services are disparately located throughout various court buildings. Being able to provide court services and information from a central clerk's office can be very efficient and prevents members of the public from being "bounced" from one area of service to another.
- Secure interior space for in-custody movement is not adequately separated from space utilized by the public and court officials and staff creating a major security concern. Separate in-custody movement corridors reduces the likelihood of in-custody or prisoner interaction with the public or court officials and staff.
- The current outside sally port through which the in-custody public is transported to court is difficult to access from the street. There were also concerns expressed about its overall separation from areas frequented by public visitors.
- The size of individual courtrooms is inadequate to effectively support some court hearings and necessary public seating.
- There is inadequate public parking space through the area of Court Square. Parking space is available in private or city owned garages but is often considered inconvenient particularly when needing to timely report to a court hearing.
- Parking for court attending law enforcement officers is not readily available. Efficient court security and emergency response concerns are best addressed by the early arrival and presence of law enforcement personnel. Having adequate "close-in" parking for enforcement officers is a security benefit. Street signage indicating reserved judge parking was also noted as a security concern and discussed with county authorities at an on-site debrief meeting.
- The stairways and the access to walkways in the current courthouse create significant handicap accessibility challenges.

## VI. Overview of Stakeholder and Public Survey Methodology

As part of the Albemarle County court location review project, the NCSC consultants conducted two separate surveys to gather feedback from court stakeholders and from the court-using community on options #1 and #5 for the future court locations and to understand their issues and concerns with the two options, their views on the impact on court operation of the two options and their thoughts on how to best address and solve any negative impacts of the two options.

The first survey was sent to specific court stakeholder directly involved in court functions: clerks, judges, interpreters, law enforcement, attorneys, and other integral officials and staff. The second survey was a broader public interest survey, allowing both the legal community and the public to provide professional and personal feedback on the court location options and interrelated issues.

Both surveys were designed and conducted to receive high-level information and general feedback to assist the NCSC to conduct its overall assessment. The surveys were neither designed nor intended to be the sole data-gathering venue for this project, but rather to provide neutral forums in which members of both populations — stakeholder and the public — could voice professional and personal opinions, and have their feedback quantified and considered in an unbiased and objective fashion.

The stakeholder survey was launched on August 2 and closed on August 14. During that time, 98 responses were received. After survey closure and prior to analysis, the NCSC consultants conducted a validation phase to further ensure the integrity of the data. The NCSC consultants determined that an individual stakeholder took the survey twice and provided identical answers each time. Therefore, one of the two cloned responses were removed for analytical purposes. All other reviewed responses passed a three-stage validation process. The NCSC consultants proceeded to compile, analyze and report on a total of 97 valid survey responses.

The public survey was launched on August 10 and closed on August 25. During that time, 519 responses were received from 412 unique IP addresses. A validation phase occurred after survey closure to ensure the integrity of the data. Validation efforts resulted in the removal of several test entries made by NCSC consultants and county officials and staff testing the survey's ability to detect IP addresses and browser settings. A total of 504 valid responses were retained for survey analysis.

Stakeholder and public surveys were developed by a consensus of County officials and project consultants with a goal of collecting general feedback information from court users and potential court users. The surveys were not designed to be extensively vetted scientific data gathering instruments. Nevertheless, NCSC consultants worked to enhance the security and validity of each survey to bolster client confidence in the results received.

Additional information regarding survey methodology and specific steps taken to help ensure validity are further described in the methodology, analysis, and comments of each survey sub-reports. Should the client opt to go further and seek to create a new scientific follow-up survey, once initial feedback has been reviewed, NCSC consultants have the resources to put that second project forward.

## VII. Stakeholder Survey Response Results

The following information summarizes common responses to each of the 14 stakeholder survey questions. For a more detailed analysis of the survey process and responses, please see the stakeholder analysis sub-report. A total of 97 qualified responses were received.

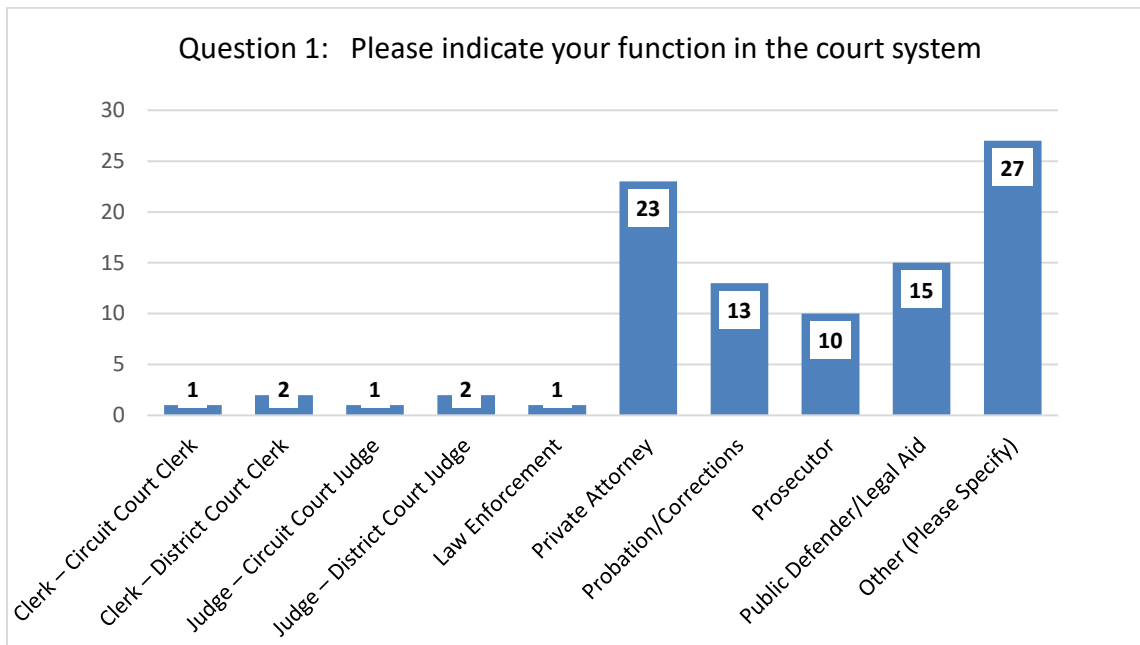
### Stakeholder Survey Responses at a Glance (Provided in Table and Narrative Formats)

Question	Most Common / Aggregate Response
<b>Q1:</b> Please indicate your function in the court system:	Other (Please Specify), 27 Private Attorney, 23
<b>Q1b:</b> Please indicate your jurisdiction(s):	Both (Albemarle County and City of Charlottesville), 67
<b>Q2:</b> How often does your work require that you physically visit the courthouse? (Please select one)	Daily, 48
<b>Q3:</b> How often do you have to move between more than one city and/or county court house in a single day? (Please select one)	A few times a week, 43
<b>Q4:</b> How would you rate the ease of access to the Courts' current location for first-time visitors for the following items? (This question asked respondents to offer a score between 1 and 5.) The options provided to respondents were as follows: [1] Very Easy, [2] Easy, [3] Neutral, [4] Difficult, [5] Very Difficult.	#1 Public Transportation, 2.30 (Aggregate Score on a 1.00-5.00 Scale)
<b>Q5:</b> How often do you experience a court case/action being affected by a member of the public showing up in the wrong court location? (Please select one)	A few times a month, 22 A few times a year, 22
<b>Q6:</b> How would you rate the ease of the public's ability to access our courts if the County's Circuit and General District Courts were moved to an urban ring/development area with adequate onsite parking and public transportation provided (presumed location: Route 29/Rio Road vicinity)? (This question asked respondents to offer a score between 1 and 5.) The options provided to respondents were as follows: [1] Daily, [2] A few times a week, [3] A few times a month, [4] A few times a year, [5] Almost never.	#1 Parking, 2.66 (Aggregate Score on a 1.00-5.00 Scale)

Question	Most Common / Aggregate Response
<p><b>Q7:</b> Under option 5, the Circuit and General District Courts would be co-located in an urban ring development area (presumed location: the Route 29/Rio Road vicinity); either in the same building or in separate adjacent buildings within a Courts Complex. Please rank the following attributes for this type of Courts Complex in terms of creating court docket efficiencies (with 1 being most important and 6 least important). (This question asked respondents to offer a score between 1 and 6.)</p>	<p>#1 Proximity to other courts/courtrooms, 2.09 (Aggregate Score on a 1.00-6.00 Scale)</p>
<p><b>Q8:</b> Under option 5, the Circuit and General District Courts would be co-located in an urban ring development area (presumed location: Route 29/Rio Road vicinity); either in the same building or in separate adjacent buildings within a Courts Complex. Please rank the following attributes for this type of Courts Complex in order of importance to you (with 1 being most important and 7 least important). (This question asked respondents to offer a score between 1 and 7.)</p>	<p>#1 Time spent traveling between cases, 2.07 (Aggregate Score on a 1.00-7.00 Scale)</p>
<p><b>Q9:</b> Option 5 would provide for a new Courts Complex, presumably in the Route 29/Rio Road vicinity. The design would be undertaken to provide an efficient layout and central location for the General District and Circuit Court. If this were the case, please indicate your level of support for the relocation option (Option 5).</p>	<p>Not at all supportive, 80</p>
<p><b>Q10:</b> Option 1 would provide for a renovated historic Courts Complex for the County’s Circuit Court/Clerk and a new construction addition/renovation project at the Levy property for the County’s General District Court/Clerk and Commonwealth Attorney’s office with the potential to co-locate the City’s General District Court/Clerk in the same building. The design would be undertaken to provide an efficient layout within the constraints of the existing building architecture, improved security and modernized facility. If this were the case, please indicate your level of support for the relocation option (Option 1).</p>	<p>Extremely supportive, 61</p>
<p><b>Q11:</b> The use of electronic records and court access technologies improve the operational efficiency of the courts.</p>	<p>Agree, 70</p>
<p><b>Q12:</b> In your opinion what are your three (3) biggest concerns for citizens and litigants if the Circuit and General District Courts are moved to an urban ring development area (presumed location: Route 29/Rio Road vicinity)? Check up to 3.</p>	<p>#1 Essential courts related services not located in proximity to court complex, 75 of 97 respondents</p>

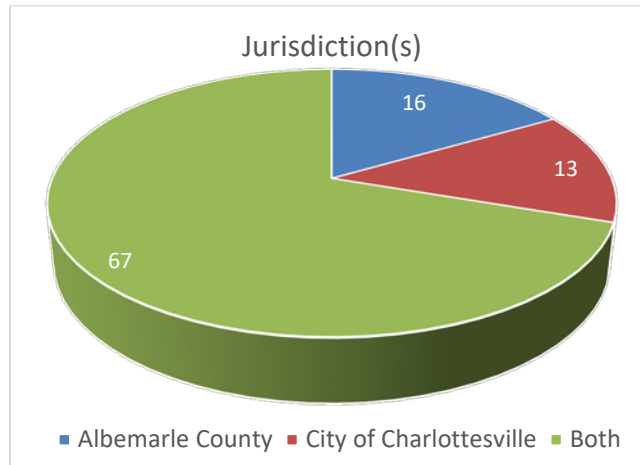
The results of the stakeholder survey are briefly summarized here. For full details, please refer to Albemarle County, Virginia Court Relocation Project, Stakeholder Survey Sub-Report Methodology, Analysis and Comments.

- **Question 1, concerning respondents' roles and functions in the court system:** The most common response was "Other (please specify)" with 27 respondents. Common specifications included Attorney (of various sub-disciplines), Real Estate Title Agent, and Title Examiner. The second most common response was "Private Attorney" (23). (Please refer to Analysis Sub-Report Sections 1-1 and 1-2 for further details.)



- **Question 1b, concerning respondents' jurisdictions:** The most common reply was that people work both in Albemarle County and the City of Charlottesville jurisdictions (67). Albemarle County (only) was second with 16 respondents, and City of Charlottesville (only) was third at 13. (Please refer to Analysis Sub-Report Section 2 for further details.)

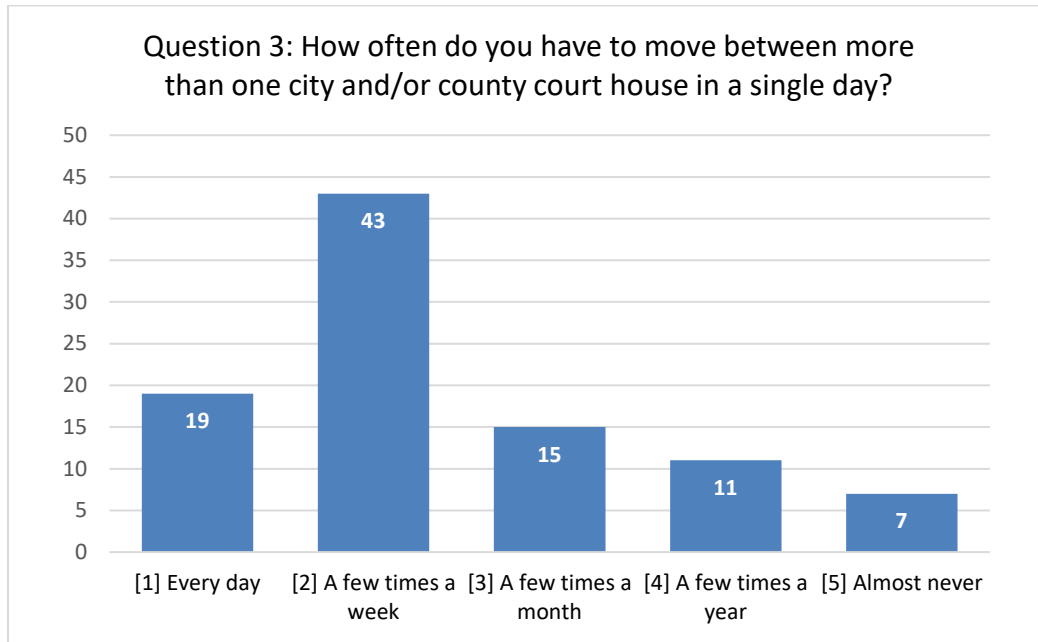




- Question 2, concerning respondents' frequency of visits to the courthouse:** One half of the respondents indicated "Daily," followed by "A few times a week" (28) and "A few times a month" third with 14 responses. (Please refer Analysis Sub-Report Sections 3-1 and 3-2 for further details.)

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Daily	48
[2] A few times a week	28
[3] A few times a month	14
[4] A few times a year	5
[5] Almost never	1
<b>Total*</b>	<b>96</b>

- Question 3, regarding visits between different courthouses in a single day:** The most common response was "A few times a week" (43), with "Every day" second (19), and "A few times a month" third (15). (Please refer to Analysis Sub-Report Sections 4-1 and 4-2 for further details.)



- Question 4, regarding perceived ease of court access for first-time visitors:** This question had three sub-elements, with ease of access rated from 1 (Very easy) to 5 (Very difficult). In the aggregate, the respondents felt that Public Transportation was the easiest aspect, rated 2.30 (between “Easy” and “Neutral”). Signage and Wayfinding were rated second easiest, at 2.75, while Parking was rated the most difficult at 3.02 (“Neutral”). Overall, most of respondents did not see significant difficulty for first-time visitors. (Please refer to Analysis Sub-Report Sections 5-1 through 5-4 for further details.)

**Parking**

- Very easy/easy 33
- Neutral 32
- Difficult/very difficult 32

**Signage/wayfinding:**

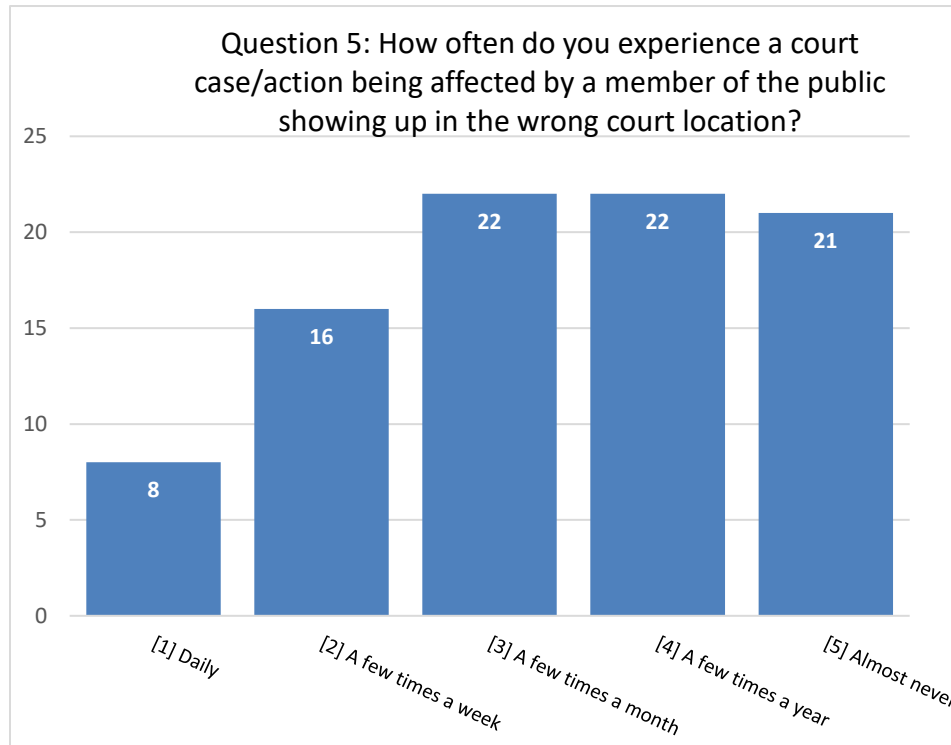
- Very easy/easy 44
- Neutral 26
- Difficult/very difficult 23

**Public transportation:**

- Very easy/easy 54
- Neutral 28
- Difficult/very difficult 10

- Question 5, concerning how frequently respondents observe court actions being affected by members of the public showing up at the wrong location:** The most common response was a tie (22 responses each) between “A few times a month” and “A few times a year.” Notably, the vast

majority of respondents noticed this occurrence being more frequent than “Almost never.” (Please refer to Analysis Sub-Report Sections 6-1 and 6-2 for further details.)



- Question 6, concerning ease of public access if the courts were moved to Route 29/Rio Road:** This question had three sub-elements, with ease of access rated from 1 (Very easy) to 5 (Very difficult). In the aggregate, the respondents felt that Parking at the new location would be the most convenient, rated 2.66 (between “Easy” and “Neutral”). Signage and Wayfinding was rated second easiest, at 3.22, while Public Transportation was rated the most difficult at 3.41 (between “Neutral” and “Difficult”). Responses to these questions can be compared to those for Question 5; respondents felt that parking would be easier at the new location, but other factors would not be easier. (Please refer to Analysis Sub-Report Sections 7-1 through 7-5 for more information.)

**Parking:**

- Very easy/easy 48
- Neutral 27
- Difficult/very difficult 22

**Signage/wayfinding:**

- Very easy/easy 21
- Neutral 38
- Difficult/very difficult 34

**Public transportation:**

- Very easy/easy 20
- Neutral 29
- Difficult/very difficult 47

- **Question 7, concerning the most important design attributes at the proposed Route 29/Rio Road location in relation to creating court docket efficiencies:** By averaging all received scores, NCSC consultants determined the following rankings to the proposed attributes: respondents felt that “Proximity to other courts/courtrooms” would have the most influence on efficiency, rated 2.09. In second place was “Proximity to courts related services,” in third place was “Proximity to law offices,” in fourth place was “Proximity to my individual office” and in fifth place was “Proximity to the jail.” (Please refer to Analysis Sub-Report Sections 8-1 through 8-8 for more information.)

The sixth attribute choice was “other,” which is not included in the following figures. Respondents ranked multiple attributes with the same rating, which is reflected in the following table where most important was disproportionately chosen.

The following chart compares the highest two (most important and second most important) and lowest two (fifth most important and least important) rating categories for each of the five attributes. Very high importance was placed on proximity to courts/courtrooms and courts related services (parts 1 and 3) followed by proximity to individual offices and law offices (parts 2 and 4). These stakeholders rated proximity to the jail less important.

Part	Question Topic	Mean Rating *	Relative Ranking	RATING					
				Most important [1]	2nd most important [2]	3rd most important [3]	4th most important [4]	5th most important [5]	Least important [6]
1	Proximity to courts	2.09	1 <sup>st</sup>	55	13	5	2	6	9
2	Proximity to individual office	2.82	4 <sup>th</sup>	35	14	14	4	8	16
3	Proximity to court related services	2.16	2 <sup>nd</sup>	48	18	9	3	4	9
4	Proximity to law offices	2.71	3 <sup>rd</sup>	33	15	17	8	7	11
5	Proximity to the jail	3.72	5 <sup>th</sup>	14	6	24	10	17	18

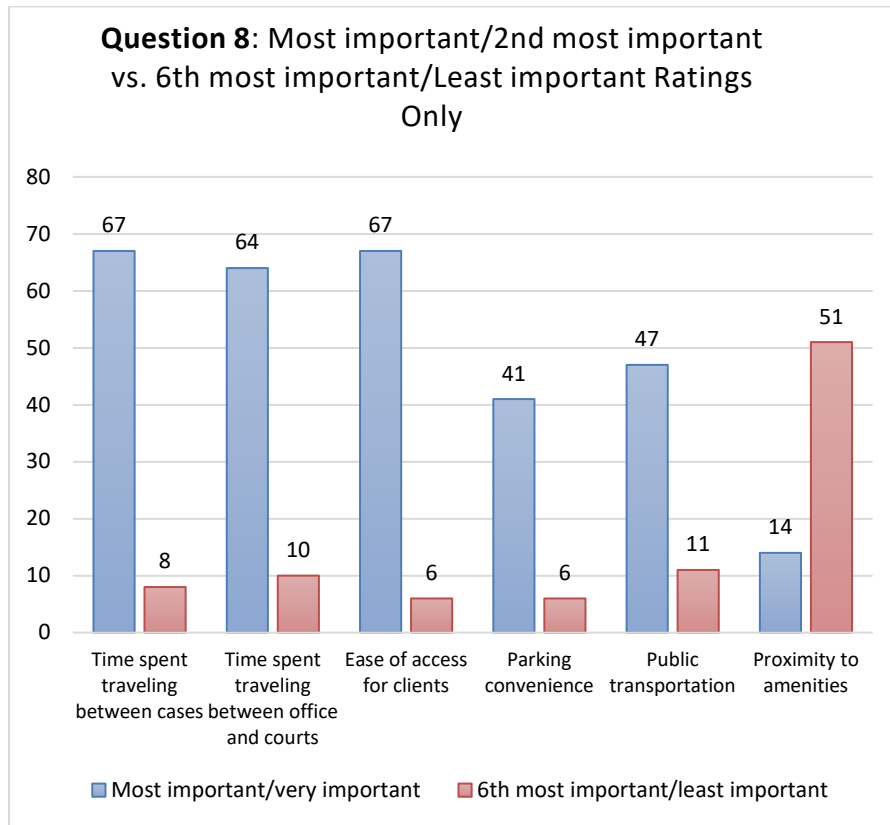
\*Lower mean rating score is higher importance.

- Question 8 asks the responder to rank six attributes in order of importance for the described type of Courts Complex on a scale of 1 to 7.** As in question 7, responders used the same rating for multiple attributes, from the high percentages ranked as most important (1). The “other” category was ranked also, but no specific attributes were identified so this category is excluded. The mean rating score reflected a rating of the second most important of the three attributes: time spent traveling between cases (2.07), ease of access for clients (2.11) and time spent traveling between office and courts. Parking convenience and public transportation were rated, on average, closer to third most important while proximity to amenities was ranked lower at fifth most important.

The highest two rankings (most important and second most important) and two lowest rankings (sixth most important and least important) are used for the graphical presentation in following table:

Part	Topic	Mean Rating*	Relative Ranking	RATING						
				Most important [1]	2nd most important [2]	3rd most important [3]	4th most important [4]	5th most important [5]	6th most important [6]	Least important [7]
1	Time spent traveling between cases	2.07	1st	55	12	9	6	1	2	6
2	Time spent traveling between office and courts	2.36	3rd	48	16	7	5	6	4	6
3	Ease of access for clients	2.11	2nd	46	21	7	5	4	3	3
4	Parking convenience	2.84	4th	25	16	16	22	5	4	2
5	Public transportation	2.86	5th	30	17	15	7	10	7	4
6	Proximity to amenities	5.04	6th	7	7	8	13	5	20	31

\*Lower mean rating score is higher importance.



- Question 9, regarding respondents' support for court relocation option 5:** The most common answer to this question was "Not at all supportive," with 80 respondents. The average weighted response was 4.60, between "Somewhat supportive" and "Not at all supportive." Please refer to Analysis Sub-Report Section 10 for more information.

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Extremely supportive	3
[2] Very supportive	4
[3] Neutral	5
[4] Somewhat supportive	4
[5] Not at all supportive	80
<b>Total*</b>	<b>96</b>

- Question 10, regarding respondents’ support for the historic court complex renovation and additional Levy construction cited in option 1:** The most common answer to this question was “Extremely supportive,” with 61 respondents. (Please refer to Analysis Sub-Report Section 11 for more information.)

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Extremely supportive	61
[2] Very supportive	18
[3] Neutral	5
[4] Somewhat supportive	4
[5] Not at all supportive	8
<b>Total*</b>	<b>96</b>

- Question 11, regarding court efficiencies enhanced by electronic records:** The most common response was “Agree,” with 70 respondents. The average weighted response was 1.39, between “Agree” and “Somewhat agree.” Notably, “Somewhat disagree” and “Disagree” responses only totaled three. (Please refer to Analysis Sub-Report Section 12 for more information.)

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Agree	70
[2] Somewhat agree	16
[3] Neutral	6
[4] Somewhat disagree	3
[5] Disagree	0
<b>Total*</b>	<b>95</b>

- Question 12, regarding the three biggest concerns that respondents have on behalf of citizens and litigants, in relation to the proposed relocation to Route 29/Rio Road:** By averaging all received scores, NCSC consultants determined the following rankings to the listed concerns: respondents believed that “essential courts related services not located in proximity to court complex” was the most significant concern, selected by 75 out of 97 respondents. In second place was “Confusion over correct court location” (52 out of 97), in third place was “Access by the public due to public transportation challenges” (45 out of 97), in fourth place was “Increases in failure to appear rates/bench warrants” (38 out of 97), and in fifth place was “Loss of historic and symbolic location for courts” (33 out of 97). (Please refer to Analysis Sub-Report Sections 13-1 through 13-3 for more information.)

Question Response	Respondents Who Selected This Concern	Respondents Who Did Not Select This Concern
Confusion over correct court location	52	45
Access by the public due to public transportation challenges	45	52
Essential courts related services not located in proximity to court complex	75	22
Increases in failure to appear rates/bench warrants	38	59
Loss of historic and symbolic location for courts	33	64
Other (please describe)	25	72

- Question 13, inviting further discussion and comment in relation to the potential court relocation endeavor:** This was an open text question, and it cannot be quickly summarized. (Please refer to Analysis Sub-Report Section 14 for full comments received.) Common concerns included confusion over the need for court relocation, worries over splitting the court away from court related services, distance and public transportation challenges, and the need for attorneys to be in multiple places on any given day. Most respondents used this question to reiterate their points of primary concern, as addressed earlier by various questions throughout the survey.

### *Concluding Observations and Comments*

Stakeholder survey responses essentially parallel comments and opinions reported in stakeholder focus groups. As with the focus groups, survey respondents were primarily in favor of maintaining court services at the current centralized court campus. Of the 96 responses received to Q9 and Q10:

- 80 stakeholder respondents were not supportive of Option 5; while
- 61 stakeholder respondents were extremely supportive of Option 1.

It is worth noting that a large majority of respondents, 73.7% (Q 11), agree that the use of electronic court records will increase the efficiency of court operations. This level of response coincides with the nationwide movement in courts adopting electronic records. It indicates that through the acceptance and use of e-filing and e-storage, courts and attorneys can file and retrieve court file information from any court location supported by an electronic case management system capable of sharing electronically imaged documents.



Closely aligned with the use of electronic records is the effective use of a court's website. Both the court and the involved case party benefit by a court conducting its business via its website and thereby assisting a court party to not need to make a physical court appearance. A review of the website of the Circuit and District Courts could lead to expanded use of website resolutions to pending cases. Depending on the issues of a case, many courts are moving toward website resolutions reducing actual appearances and saving time for the court and the public.

Survey respondents feel that travel time between the two court locations will be a major impact (Q8). Stakeholder focus groups also raised attorney travel time between two court locations as a real concern. The impact of travel time between two courthouses could be reduced by staggering and standardizing court calendars with prearranged court schedules on when attorneys are to appear in each court on a given date. For example, by establishing standardized scheduled criminal and civil calendars in specific courts in advance of hearing dates, attorneys can more easily schedule appearances in different located courts. This is a common practice of case management which the Circuit and District already use and could expand should Option 5 be adopted for implementation.

As reported in Q4 and Q6 public transportation and parking were often mentioned as concerns by stakeholder respondents. Obviously, Option 5 may best address parking concerns but the acquisition of parking facilities through cooperative agreement with the City of Charlottesville could address parking problems near Court Square. Parking concerns were not limited to public parking in that law enforcement officials reported multiple concerns regarding the need for adequate parking for officers appearing as witnesses and providing overall court security. The need for convenient close-in parking for jurors was also cited. Public transportation concerns were primarily mentioned in relation to Option 5. In discussing these concerns in follow-up meetings with county officials, NCSC consultants were informed that the county has plans to address public transportation needs if Option 5 is selected as the new court location.

In Q12, stakeholder respondents did not think that their clients would be concerned with the loss of historical symbolism should the courts move out to the proposed Rio Road location. In contrast, some focus group stakeholders felt more strongly about preserving the historic symbolism of the current site. The issue of the historical significance of the current facilities and grounds will be a matter that the county will likely continue to have to consider when it comes to leaving and/or preserving courts at the Court Square site.

The court and the county should work together to create wayfinding signage, website instructions, and directions on notices of hearing that are clear and ensure that persons coming to court can find the correct courthouse and courtroom. Helping a person understand to which court he or she should report will aid in reducing confusion and possible court delay resulting in a case continuance and the need to have the person come back to court.

Regardless of the location option selected, the county is advised to continue to consult with court leaders and justice system stakeholders. The public's access to court and court services should not be impeded. The transition from a current court location to a new location, or the need to conduct court in a heavily active construction zone will take continued communication and teamwork between the court, stakeholders, and the county.

## VIII. Public Survey Response Results

The following information summarizes common responses to each of the 11 public survey questions. For a more detailed analysis of the survey process and responses, please see the public survey analysis sub-report. A total of 504 qualified responses were received.

### Public Survey Responses at a Glance (Provided in Table and Narrative Formats)

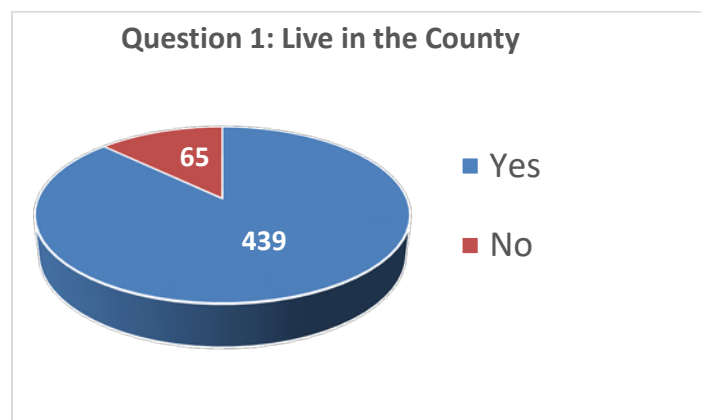
Question	Most Common / Aggregate Response
<b>Q1:</b> Do you live in the County?	Yes, 439
<b>Q2:</b> Are you part of the legal community and/or routinely work with the Court System?	No, 350
<b>Q3:</b> How important is the location of the County's courthouse to you?	Extremely important, 147
<b>Q4:</b> How often do you currently use the County General District Court and/or Circuit Court Complex? (Please select one):	Based on need, but less than yearly, 215
<b>Q4b:</b> My primary reason for going to the Courts is:	#1 Research/Records/Document Filing, 139 responses #2 Legal Issues/Court/Traffic/Trial, 116 responses #3 Jury duty, 39 responses (Highly variable responses received)
<b>Q5:</b> How convenient are the courts' current downtown locations for you?	Very convenient, 174 Very inconvenient, 133 (Highly variable responses received)
<b>Q6:</b> What is most important to you regarding the courts' current downtown location? (Please rank the following with 1 being most important and 5 being least important.) (This question asked respondents to offer a score between 1 and 5.) The options provided to respondents were as follows: [1] Most important, [2] Very important, [3] Important, [4] Not very important, [5] Least important.	#1 Centralized location to all parts of the County, 2.49 (Aggregate Score on a 1.00-5.00 Scale)
<b>Q7:</b> Which of the following conditions has a negative impact, if any, on your experience when going to the courts in the current downtown locations? (Please rank the following with 1 being the most impactful and 5 being least impactful.) (This question asked respondents to offer a score between 1 and 5.) The options provided to respondents were as	#1 Lack of available nearby parking, 2.31 (Aggregate Score on a 1.00-5.00 Scale)

Question	Most Common / Aggregate Response
follows: [1] Most impactful, [2] Very impactful, [3] Impactful, [4] Not very impactful, [5] Least impactful.	
<p><b>Q8:</b> The Courts Project will be one of most significant investments in a County facility in recent history. Please rank the following project considerations you believe are most important in deciding on the location options (with 1 being most important and 8 least important). (This question asked respondents to offer a score between 1 and 5.) The options provided to respondents were as follows: [1] Most important, [2] 2<sup>nd</sup> most important, [3] 3<sup>rd</sup> most important, [4] 4<sup>th</sup> most important, [5] 5<sup>th</sup> most important, [6] 6<sup>th</sup> most important, [7] 7<sup>th</sup> most important, [8] Least important.</p>	<p>#1 Parking convenience, 2.78 (Aggregate Score on a 1.00-8.00 Scale)</p>
<p><b>Q9:</b> Under “option 5”, the Circuit and General District Courts would be co-located in an urban ring development area (presumed location: Route 29/Rio Road vicinity); either in the same building or in separate adjacent buildings within a courts complex. How convenient would moving the County General District and Circuit courts from their current location be for you?</p>	<p>Very inconvenient, 190 Very convenient, 138 (Highly variable responses received)</p>

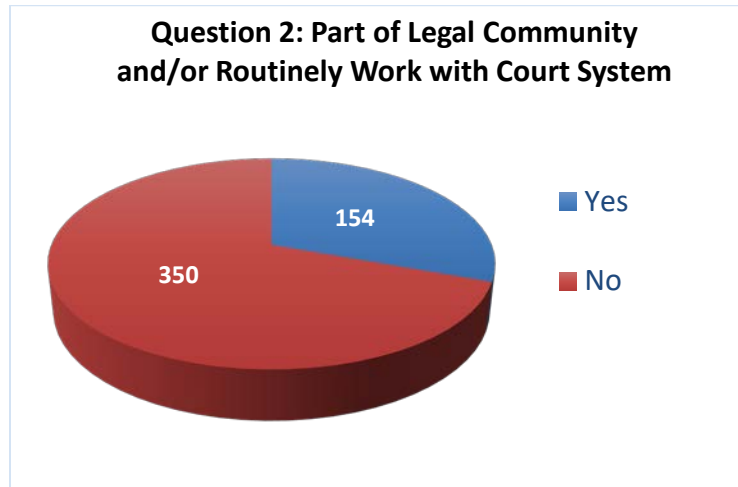
The results of the public survey are briefly summarized here. For full details, please refer to Albemarle County, Virginia Court Relocation Project, Public Survey Sub-Report Methodology, Analysis and Comments.

A total of 504 respondents answered the public survey.

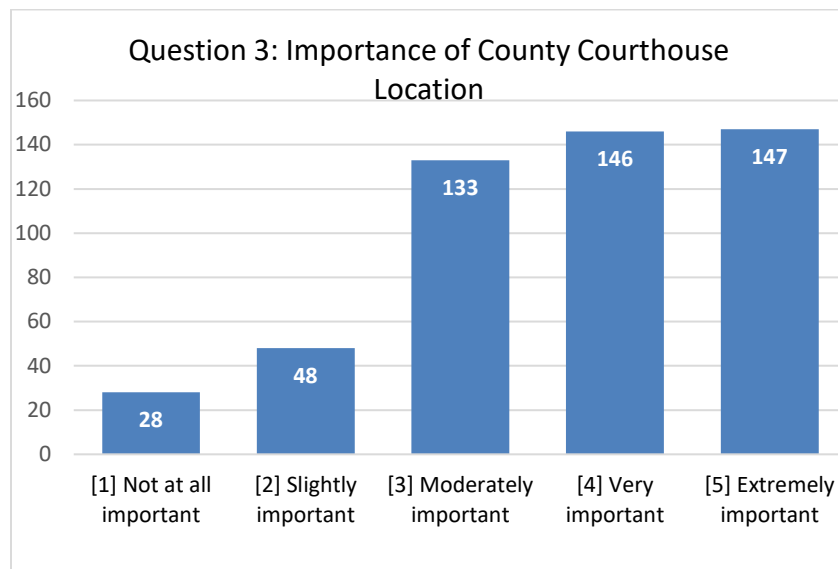
- Question 1, asking whether respondents live in the county:** The most common response was “Yes” (439 respondents). “No” responses therefore totaled 65. (Please refer to Analysis Sub-Report Section 1 for further details.)



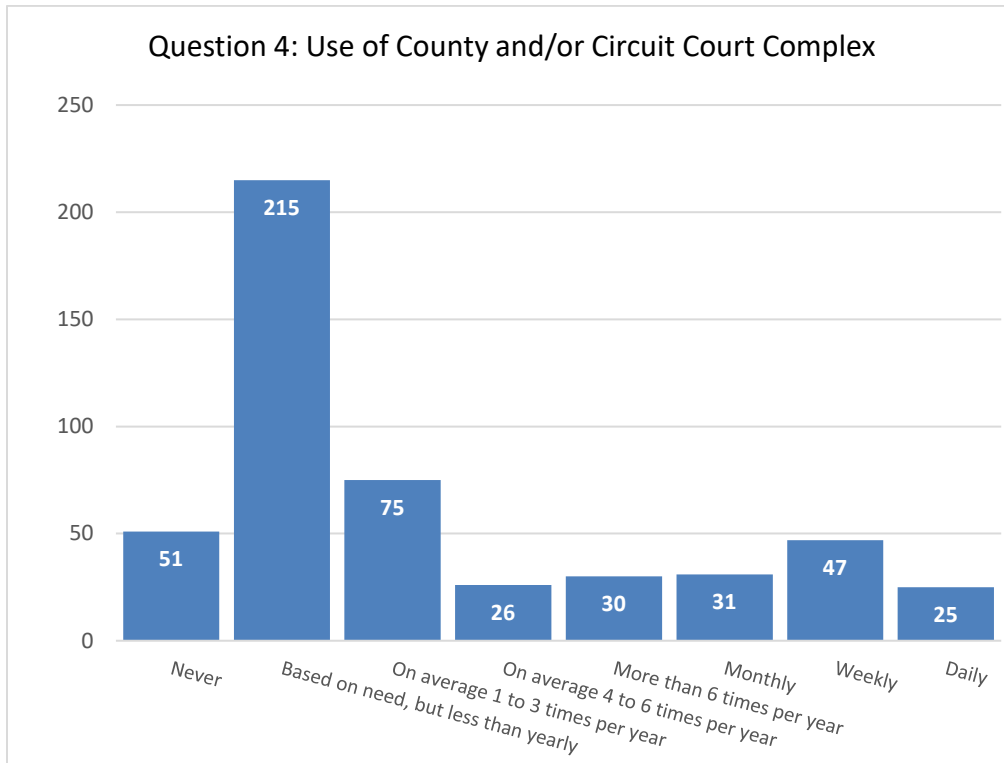
- **Question 2, asking whether respondents are part of the legal community or frequently work with the courts:** The most common reply was “No” (350). “Yes” responses therefore totaled 154. (Please refer to Analysis Sub-Report Section 2 for further details.)



- **Question 3, concerning respondents’ opinions on the importance of courthouse location:** The most common response was “Extremely important” (147), followed closely by “Very important” (146). The average weighted response across all respondents was 3.67, between “Moderately important” and “Very important.” (Please refer Analysis Sub-Report to Section 3 for further details.)



- **Question 4, regarding how frequently respondents use the District Court and Circuit Court complexes:** The most common response was “Based on need, but less than yearly” (215) with “On average one to three times per year” second (75) and “Never” third (51). (Please refer to Analysis Sub-Report Section 4 for further details.)



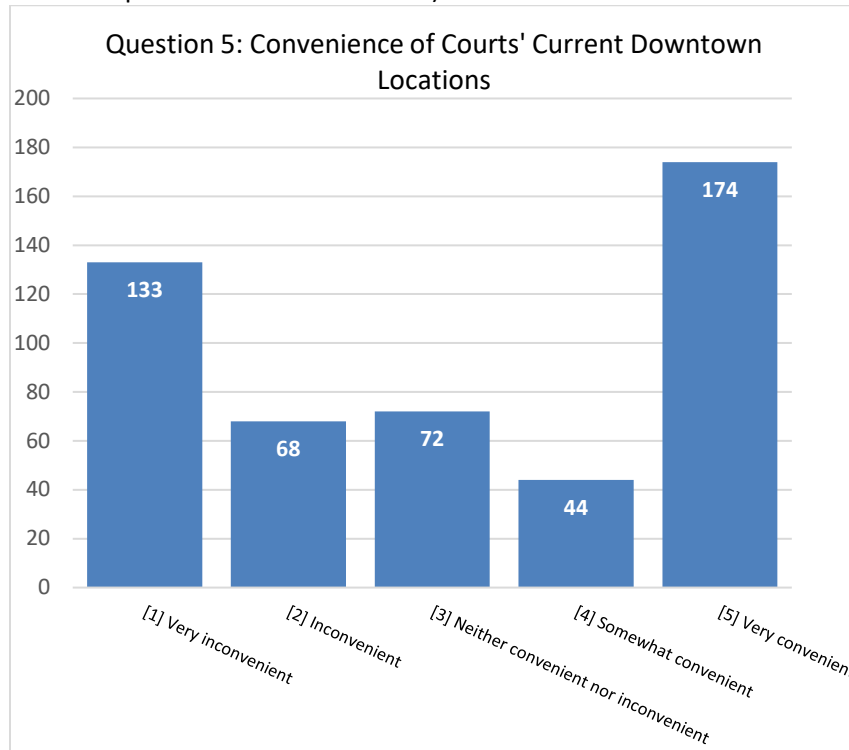
- **Question 4a., regarding users’ primary reason for going to the courts:** This was an open text question, and it cannot be quickly summarized. (Please refer to Analysis Sub-Report Section 5 for full comments received.) Common reasons included jury duty, research, work (employment), business, deed research, records, and being an attorney. (Please refer to Analysis Sub-Report Section 4 for further details.)

Common Answers Received to Question 4:

- **139 Responses:** Research/Records/Document Filing
- **116 Responses:** Legal Issues/Court/Traffic/Trial
- **39 Responses:** Jury duty
- **26 Responses:** Work
- **22 Responses:** Licensing/Permits
- **18 Responses:** Real estate

Although 433 of the 504 respondents appeared to provide a response to this question, many of these contained texts which indicated they do not go to the courts. Appendix C contains the detailed comment responses and should be read for further qualitative input.

- **Question 5, regarding the convenience of the courts' current downtown locations:** The most common response was "Very convenient" at 174 respondents. Second place however was "Very inconvenient" at 133 respondents. The average weighted response across all respondents was 3.12, between "Neither convenient nor inconvenient" and "Somewhat convenient." (Please refer to Analysis Sub-Report Sections 5-1 and 5-2.)



- **Question 6, concerning the most important perceived factors of the court's current downtown location:** This question had five sub-elements, with importance rated from 1 (Most important) to 5 (Least important). In the aggregate, the respondents felt that the "Centralized location to all parts of the County" was the most important aspect, rated 2.49 (between "Very important" and "Important"). "Access to other courts and related services (i.e., attorney's office)" was rated second most important, at 2.60; "Convenient to where I work or other locations I visit" was rated third most important, at 2.94; "Convenience or walkability to other amenities (bank, shops, restaurants)" was rated fourth most important, at 3.13; and "History of the courts" was rated fifth most important, at 3.17. (Please refer to Analysis Sub-Report Sections 6-1 through 6-7 for further details.)

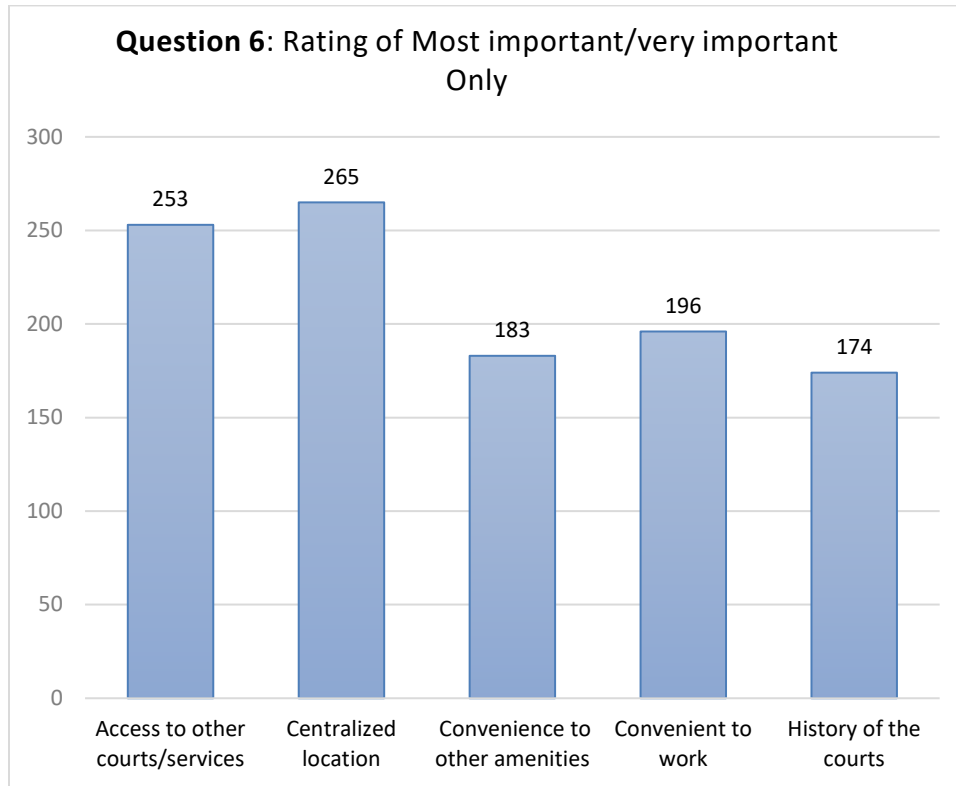
The following chart summarizes and compares the five different parts rated in question 6. The mean rating shown is a weighted average calculated by multiplying each rating category 1 thru 5

times the number of respondents for each rating category, summing the products, and dividing by the total number of respondents. A lower mean rating indicates a higher importance since 1 is the highest rating for most important. Based on the mean rating, the topic “Centralized location to all parts of the County” is ranked highest, closely followed by “Access to other courts and related services”.

Part	Topic	Mean Rating*	Relative Ranking	RATING				
				Most important [1]	Very important [2]	Important [3]	Not very important [4]	Least important [5]
1	Access to other courts and related services, (i.e. attorney’s office)	2.6	2 <sup>nd</sup>	153	100	95	81	64
2	Centralized location to all parts of the County	2.49	1 <sup>st</sup>	130	135	119	71	36
3	Convenience or walkability to other amenities (bank, shops, restaurants)	3.13	4 <sup>th</sup>	91	92	81	118	111
4	Convenient to where I work or other locations I visit	2.94	3 <sup>rd</sup>	116	80	102	94	95
5	History of the courts	3.17	5 <sup>th</sup>	125	49	79	86	148

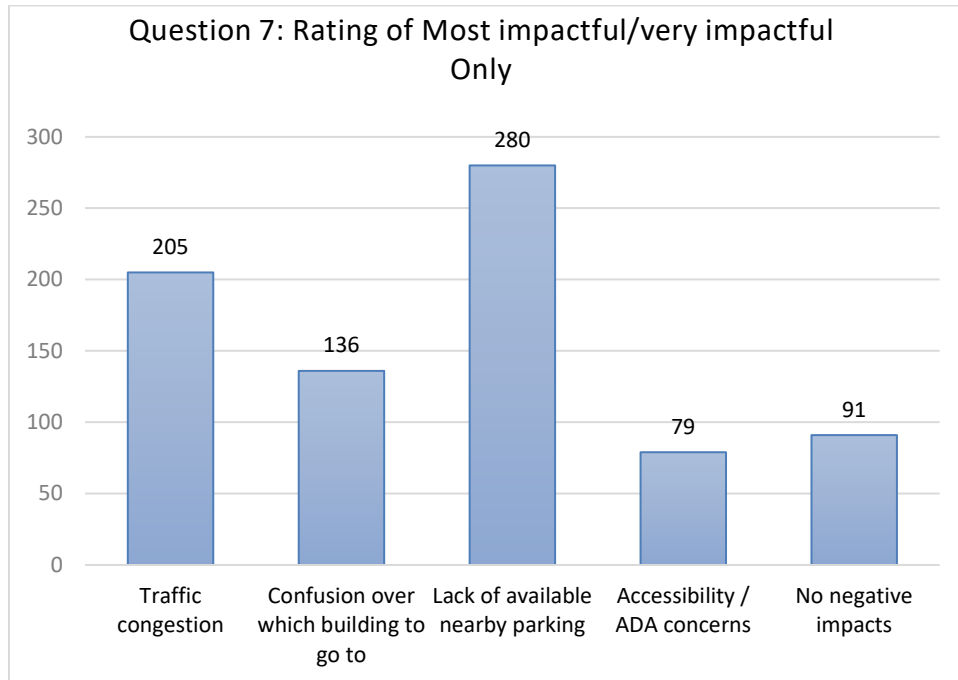
\*Lower mean rating score is higher importance.

The mean rating and ranking did not provide much contrast between the five topics; therefore the two highest ratings of “most important” and “very important” were combined and this graph is shown below. More than half of the respondents rated “Centralized location to all parts of the County” and “Access to courts and related services” as most or very important, compared to the other three topics which were ranked most or very important by 40% or less of the respondents. Topic descriptions have been abbreviated for display purposes in the following graph.



- **Question 7, concerning negative impacts on court users when visiting the current downtown location:** By averaging all received scores, NCSC consultants determined the following rankings to the perceived negative impacts: respondents felt that “Lack of available nearby parking” was the most worrisome, rated 2.31. In second place was “Traffic congestion,” in third place was “Confusion over which building to go to,” in fourth place was “No negative impacts,” and in fifth place was “Accessibility/ADA concerns.” (Please refer to Analysis Sub-Report Sections 7-1 through 7-8 for more information.)





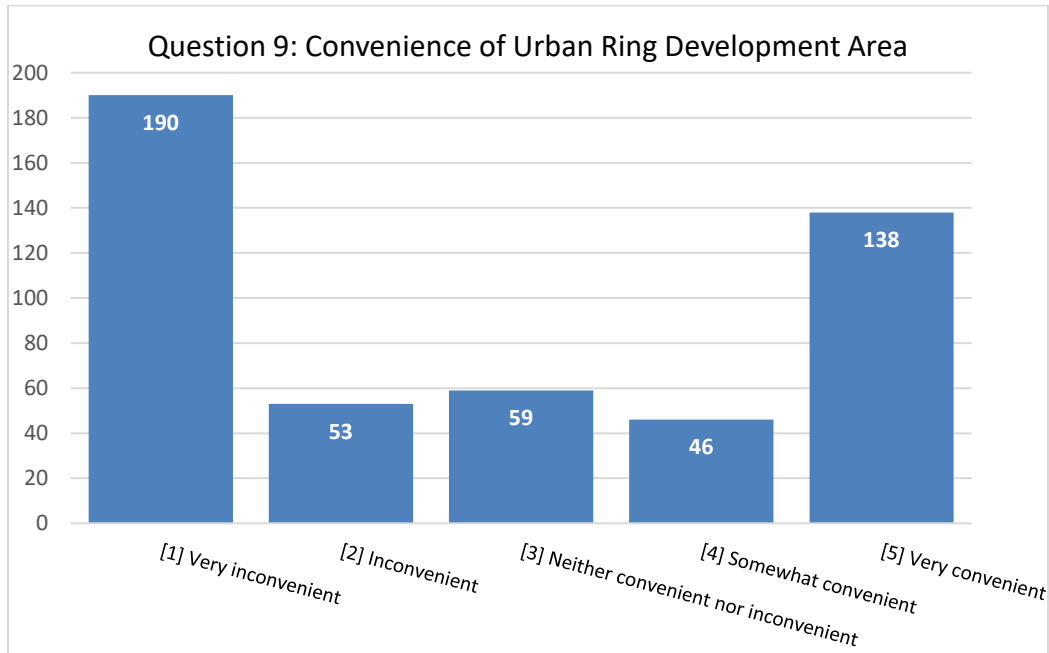
- **Question 8, regarding considerations that should be important when a decision is made on court location, or relocation:** By averaging all received scores, NCSC consultants determined the following rankings to the listed considerations: “Parking convenience” was regarded as the most important, rated 2.78. Second was “Project cost” at 3.23, third was “Maximize court operational efficiencies by locating near City Courts and other court services,” fourth was “Public Transportation,” fifth was “Traffic congestion,” sixth was “Potential for County economic development/revitalization,” seventh was “Preserve history of the County Courts,” and eighth was “Proximity to amenities (restaurants, banks, retail).” (Please refer to Analysis Sub-Report Sections 8-1 through 8-11 for more information.)

The following charts provide the mean (average) rating, relative ranking based on the mean scores, and the percentages for the eight rating levels.

				RATING							
Part	Topic	Mean Rating *	Relative Ranking	Most important [1]	2nd most important [2]	3rd most important [3]	4th most important [4]	5th most important [5]	6th most important [6]	7th most important [7]	Least important [8]
1	Preserve History of the County Courts	4.36	7 <sup>th</sup>	109	63	47	47	26	26	47	113
2	Maximize court operational efficiencies by locating near City Courts and other court services	3.43	3 <sup>rd</sup>	194	66	33	34	28	35	38	64
3	Project cost	3.23	2 <sup>nd</sup>	114	83	91	89	46	24	8	27
4	Proximity to amenities (restaurants, banks, retail)	4.7	8 <sup>th</sup>	58	42	63	66	54	51	53	84
5	Parking convenience	2.78	1 <sup>st</sup>	163	92	90	61	31	25	12	13
6	Potential for County economic development / revitalization	4.28	6 <sup>th</sup>	113	64	37	57	38	35	34	107
7	Public transportation	3.65	4 <sup>th</sup>	96	95	70	80	33	42	22	49
8	Traffic congestion	3.9	5 <sup>th</sup>	105	66	60	59	54	49	44	44
9	Other	2.8	n/a	34	5	1	1	0	2	0	11

\*Lower mean rating score is higher importance.

- Question 9, regarding perceived convenience of moving courts to the Route 29/Rio Road location:** The most common answer to this question was “Very inconvenient,” at 190 respondents. The average weighted response was 2.77, between “Inconvenient” and “Neither convenient nor inconvenient.” (Please refer to Analysis Sub-Report Sections 9-1 and 9-2 for more information.)



Forty-one responders provided additional narrative in this section. See Appendix H in the Public Survey Analysis Report for the detailed comments provided by survey responders. Similarly, the previous comment sections, no single issue was identified in the narrative provided and both positive and negative opinions were reflected.

- **Question 10, inviting further discussion and comment with relation to the court location/relocation endeavor:** This was an open text question, and it cannot be quickly summarized. (Please refer to Analysis Sub-Report for full comments received.) One hundred ninety-seven respondents provided additional comments in this section. Common topics were repeated in this section regarding parking, public transportation, safety, and convenience/inconvenience. Valuable insight into the responder concerns and attitudes is gained from all narrative responses provided in this survey.

Common comments indicated a tension between frequent users' (attorneys, court staff, etc.) concerns and uncommon users' concerns; frustration over negotiations between the City and the County; questions concerning funding and project motivation; and concerns over the impact of relocation.

### *Concluding Observations and Comments*

Of the total 504 valid public survey responses, 439 respondents reported they live in Albemarle County. Three hundred and fifty (350) respondents reported they were not part of the legal community and did not frequently work with the courts while 154 reported they were part of the legal community or frequently work with the courts. Responses to Q3 and Q4 indicate that a majority of respondents believe the current location is very important and that they go to court less than once a year. From these responses, one could surmise that the majority of the general public who are not part of the legal community and do not frequently work with the courts go to court less than once per year. Appendix B in the public survey analysis report compares the responses of the legal community (31% of the respondents) to those who were not part of the legal community (69%).

As noted in Q6, the central location of the current court campus received the highest response importance weighted rate (265 responses) with “Access to other courts and related services (i.e., attorney’s office)” receiving the second highest importance rate (253 responses). This level of rated importance could be viewed as an indicator of the overall public convenience of a collective or centralized court campus as utilized by the general public and those who routinely work with courts.

In rating negative impacts of visits to the current downtown courts (Q7), respondents rated the lack of available parking as the most negative impact (280 responses) followed by traffic congestion (205 responses) and confusion on where to report (136 responses). The lack of available parking is a common concern identified in both surveys and in stakeholder focus group discussions. Should additional parking not become available in the Court Square area, developing a court campus at the urban ring site with sufficient parking could become a primary factor in location determination.

As with the need for additional parking at the current location, the need for added public transportation at the urban ring site continues to loom large for both stakeholders and the public. Assurances that public transportation would be available at a new county location could generate additional public support for Option 5.

Q8 and its corresponding graphic provides an eight-level importance rating of eight primary location topics. Consideration of the importance ratings per number of responses for each topic will assist in comparing the benefits and challenges associated with each court location option.

Q9 asked respondents to rate the convenience of Option 5. One hundred ninety respondents (190) rate Option 5 as a “very inconvenient” location. Juxtapose that response rate with 138 respondents rating the location as “very convenient” and considering overall response ratings for convenience somewhat equalizes the location options as for convenience.

More than likely, convenience responses were impacted by residence or office locations. That being said, Option 1 is viewed as a convenient, centralized location for the most part and is popular because of the longevity and history of court operations at the Court Square site. This presents a public image concern for the county. Should the decision be made to go with Option 5, the county will need to engage in a public education campaign touting the operational and physical benefits of the urban ring site in an effort to secure public acceptance. Such a strategy is likely under consideration. Once a location decision is

made, regardless of the option selected, providing publicly stated justifications for the decision will certainly help in developing public support.

To obtain a full understanding of the public's opinions of both options, the Board of Supervisors is urged to review the individual comments associated with Q10 and documented in the public survey sub-report. These comments include such issues as:

- The downtown site is only convenient for lawyers.
- There is a need to maintain a centralized full-service court location.
- The county's public image should be separate from that of the city.
- Why should the county discriminate against those who cannot easily travel to the location of a new court?

Obviously, there are a variety of opinions about each option and the overall benefits that each location can provide to the public as well as to those who work in and work frequently with the legal process. While it goes without saying, the primary concern is at which location can the public conveniently and safely obtain access to the protections and safeguards of the justice system.

The NCSC consultants appreciate the opportunity to assist Albemarle County with this extremely important project. The help and support provided by county officials and staff, along with the assistance and guidance from Moseley Architects, is greatly appreciated.

## Appendix A: Focus Group Schedule

### FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS

#### TUESDAY, AUGUST 22, 2017

Date	Time	Event/Interview	Participants	Notes
8/22/17	7:30 a.m.	Meeting with Judges	Cheryl Higgins (Albemarle County Circuit Court) Robert Downer (Albemarle County and Charlottesville General District Court) William Barkley (Albemarle County General District Court)	501 E. Jefferson St - 3rd Floor Conference Room (1 hour)
8/22/17	9:30 a.m.	Meeting with Clerks & Chief Deputy Clerks – Albemarle County and City of Charlottesville	Jon Zug, Clerk & Kim Rouillard, Chief Deputy Clerk – Albemarle County Circuit Court Crystal Byers & her Chief Deputy Clerk – Albemarle County General District Court Liezelle Dugger & her Chief Deputy Clerk – Charlottesville Circuit Court Mary Trimble & her Chief Deputy Clerk – Charlottesville General District Court	501 E. Jefferson St – Conference Room by Albemarle County General District Court
		Focus Group Transition		
8/22/17	11:45	Lunch Break		
8/22/17		Debrief/Orientation/Tour/Staff Discussion	County Office Building Courts Tour Jerry Shatz (time TBD) Discussion regarding Option 5 location (Lee Time TBD)	<b>Executive Conference Room</b>

#### WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 23, 2017

Date	Time	Event/Interview	Participants	Notes
8/23/17	8:30	Meeting with ACPD, DSS, and possibly Region 10 and PCASA	Ron Lantz, Greg Jenkins, Phyllis Savides, and possibly Robert Johnson, Jessica Phipps, & Alicia Lenahan	Meet at COB-McIntire - Room 241
8/23/17	10:00	Focus Group Transition		
8/23/17	10:30	Albemarle County Commonwealth's Attorney	Robert Tracci	Meet at COB-McIntire - Room 241

8/23/17	12:00	Lunch Break		
8/23/17	1:30	Bruce Williamson's Group	TBD	Meet at COB-McIntire - Room 241
8/23/17	2:45	Focus Group Transition		

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 24, 2017**

Date	Time	Event/Interview	Participants	Notes
8/24/17	8:30	Meeting with J&D Clerk and staff	Stephanie Lawson and staff	411 E. High Street – Clerk's Office
8/24/17	10:00	Focus Group Transition		
8/24/17	10:30	Group from Legal Aid and Public Defender's Office	Palma Pustilnik - Central Virginia Legal Aid Liz Murtagh - Public Defender's Office Elaine Poon, Managing Attorney - Charlottesville Office of the Legal Aid Justice Center	County Executive's Conference Room – 228-B
8/24/17	12:00	Lunch Break		
8/24/17	1:30	Albemarle County Sheriff, ACRJ, OAR, Court Services (Juvenile Probation)	Chan Bryant, T. D. Layman – Albemarle County Sheriff Martin Kumer – ACRJ Pat Smith – OAR Martha Carroll or someone from her staff – Court Services Unit	Meet at COB - McIntire - Room 235
8/24/17	2:45	Focus Group Transition		

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 25, 2017**

Date	Time	Event/Interview	Participants	Notes
8/25/17				
8/25/17				
		Focus Group Transition		
8/25/17	11:45	Lunch Break		
8/25/17	1:15	Enter stakeholder focus group	TBD	

## Appendix B: Stakeholder Focus Group Interview Agenda

**National Center for State Courts  
Albemarle County Court Relocation Project  
Court Site Visit Interviews with Judicial Stakeholder Focus Groups  
August 22, 23, 24, and 25, 2017**

The National Center for State Courts (NCSC) is assisting Albemarle County officials and project representatives in the County's research and analysis of facility location options for the County's Circuit and General District Courts. The County has previously provided public information to its review of five location and relocation options. At this time, two options remain under active consideration. Option one includes construction of a new General District Court facility on the Levy Building site and renovation of the existing Circuit Court complex. Option five is the possible relocation of the County's Circuit and General District Courts to a central site within the County's Development Area outside of Charlottesville. Under each option, the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Courts would remain in their current facility locations.

The County recently conducted a survey of judicial stakeholders to ascertain potential stakeholder impact information associated with each court facility option. In a further effort to assist with the analysis of each option, the County has requested the NCSC conduct interviews with judicial stakeholders focus groups. The County will schedule stakeholder focus group interviews with NCSC consultants on the dates of August 22, 23, 24, and 25.

- Review potential impact of court location on court operations, stakeholder relations, public service (court access, convenience of location, efficiencies of operation related to facility adjacencies, access to stakeholder and public services, transportation, parking, etc.)
- Methods used include stakeholder survey, public survey, stakeholder focus group discussions, visit current and proposed location sites, travel, application of court location experience in other jurisdictions, best practices of court operations, etc.)
- Project report with findings, option comparisons, potential cost implications, convenient access, association with stakeholders, etc.

### Judicial Stakeholder Focus Group Interview and Discussion Agenda

- Discuss overview of judicial stakeholder survey responses.
  - Review purpose of survey
  - Outcome to be included in project report
  - Pros and cons of each option
  - Level of support for each option



- Discuss various concerns of each option as related to stakeholder operations and relations with stakeholder clientele and the public.
  - Impact of court separation from other court related services
  - Number of people reporting to courts (public, staff, in-custodies, stakeholders, etc.)
  - Areas of court and stakeholder operations that would be impeded by each option
  - Effective use of judges and staff
  - Wayfinding for public
  - Court delay
  - Judge coverage
  - Court security
  - Attorney case coverage
  - Other public services
  - Transportation/parking
  - Court caseload
  - Other public services
  
- Discuss benefits related to access to courts and judicial resources as offered by each option.
  - Efficiencies from adjacencies of each option
  - Number of people entering facility (public, staff, stakeholders, in-custodies, etc.)
  - Possibility of combining some dual functions of each involved court
  - Efficient use of shared staffing
  - Judge coverage
  - Caseload numbers
  - Court delay
  - Court security
  - Attorney case coverage
  - Wayfinding for public
  - Other public services
  - Transportation/parking
  
- Discuss matters related to court and stakeholder shared operational efficiencies aligned with each option.
  - Building adjacency
  - Court coverage
  - Communications with court
  - Intra-communications with other stakeholders, public reserves
  - Overall campus security
  - Sharing of technology
  - Sharing of staff
  - Holding cells, segregated prisoner movement space, sally port

- Attorney conference space,
  - Security check points,
  - Sharing of space (courtrooms, clerk’s office, waiting areas, jury assembly room, etc.)
  - Facility public services (food service, restrooms, waiting areas, etc.)
- Discuss matters related to public conveniences such as access to transportation, parking, access to other courts and public services, security concerns, as well as access to public amenities.
  - Discuss thoughts related to possible local economic impacts, historical character, and overall community image of each option, ease of public access.

Information from stakeholder focus group interviews will be included in a final project report provided to the County by the NCSC consultants. The report may include quotations without personal attribution and references to general opinions cited in focus group discussions.



# **Albemarle County, Virginia Courts Location Operations Impact Review Appendix 2**

## **Public Survey Analysis**

## **Final Report**

**December 6, 2017**

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Nancy Crandall, Court Management Consultant  
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## Survey Methodology

The public survey was designed by consensus of County officials, County staff, and County employed consultants to protect individual respondent identities. All persons who use the court in any capacity were invited to take the survey. Survey respondent identification was limited to the following factors: [1] whether the person lived in Albemarle County; and [2] whether the person was part of the legal community, and/or routinely working with the court system. The survey introduction reminded users that the results would be anonymous, thereby encouraging respondents to share their open and forthright feedback. The final survey instrument is provided in Appendix A.

As stated in the main report, the public and stakeholder surveys were developed to collect general feedback information from court users and potential court users and not designed to be extensively vetted scientific data gathering instruments. The broader public interest survey (public survey) allowed both the legal community and the general public to provide professional and personal feedback on the court location options and interrelated issues.

The public survey was launched on August 10 and closed on August 25. During that time, 519 responses were received from 412 unique IP addresses. A validation phase occurred after survey closure to ensure the integrity of the data, which resulted in several test entries (made by NCSC consultants and county officials and staff who wished to test the survey's ability to detect IP addresses and browser settings) being removed. A total of 504 valid responses were retained for detailed survey analysis.

All responses received from duplicate IP addresses were validated using the same steps that were used for the stakeholder survey: [1] a review of IP addresses, [2] data coding and individual user checksum validation, and [3] a detailed question-by-question review of the differing responses received from users sharing a single IP address, in order to ascertain that each response was from a unique, not-duplicating survey respondent. Please refer to section 2 (stakeholder survey validation) for further details on the survey results validation process, the potential for duplicate entry identification, and the validity and security limitations inherent in a non-username online survey.

Considering the results of the validation process, it is NCSC consultants' belief that the public survey was not subjected to significant outside manipulation by any parties acting in bad faith. A total of 14 test responses from internal testers were removed, and one duplicate response (from a person who took the survey twice and provided duplicate answers) was removed, resulting in the remaining pool of 504 valid responses received.

For a summary of the public survey response results, please see Section VII of main report *Albemarle County, Virginia, Courts Location Operations Impact Review*, and refer to Public Survey Responses at a Glance. An in-depth review of the response results is provided in this report. The public survey provided several opportunities for the respondent to elaborate or make additional comments. These comments and additional input are included in the appendices and provide further qualitative insight into the opinions and values of the respondents. Quantitative analysis of these lengthy narratives did not demonstrate any single issues that were not already evident throughout other parts of the survey.

### Survey Results and Analysis

#### Question 1: Do you live in the County?

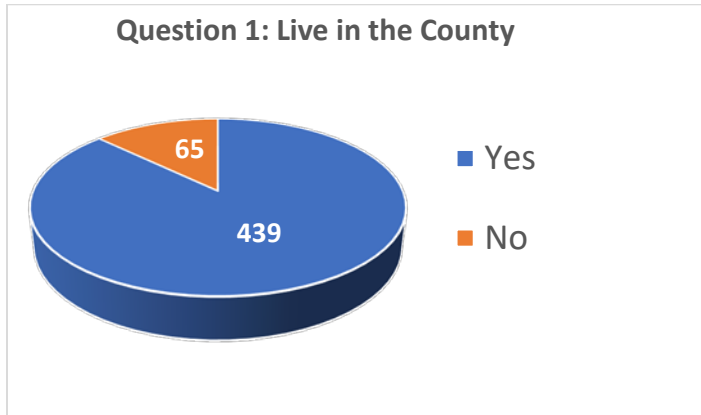


Figure 1

#### Question 2: Are you part of the legal community and/or routinely work with the Court System?

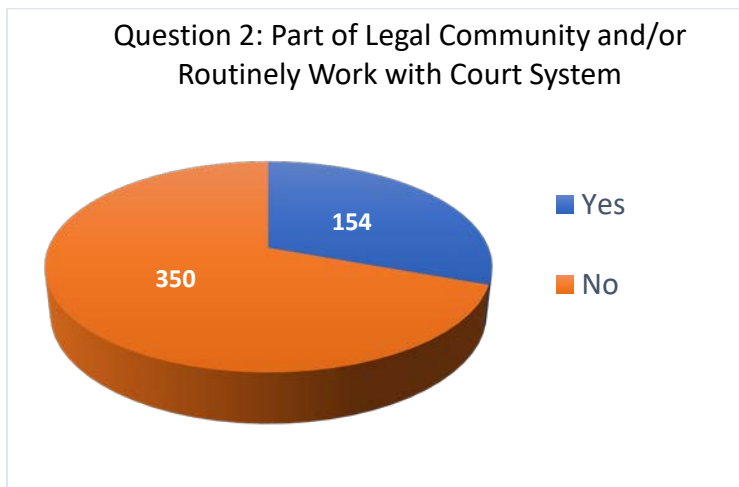


Figure 2

**CROSSTABULATION – Question 1 and Question 2**

**Do you live in the County? \* Are you part of the legal community and/or routinely work with the Court System? Crosstabulation**

			Q. 2: Are you part of the legal community and/or routinely work with the Court System?		Total
			No	Yes	
Q. 1: Do you live in the County?	No	Count	30	35	65
	Yes	Count	320	119	439
Total		Count	350	154	504

The public survey pool was comprised of individuals who are and are not part of the legal community and/or routinely work with the Court System, based on the responses to question 2. Since a fairly high number of the respondents indicated they are part of the legal community and/or work with the Court System, further analysis was conducted to compare the responses for these two groups and these findings are found in Appendix B.

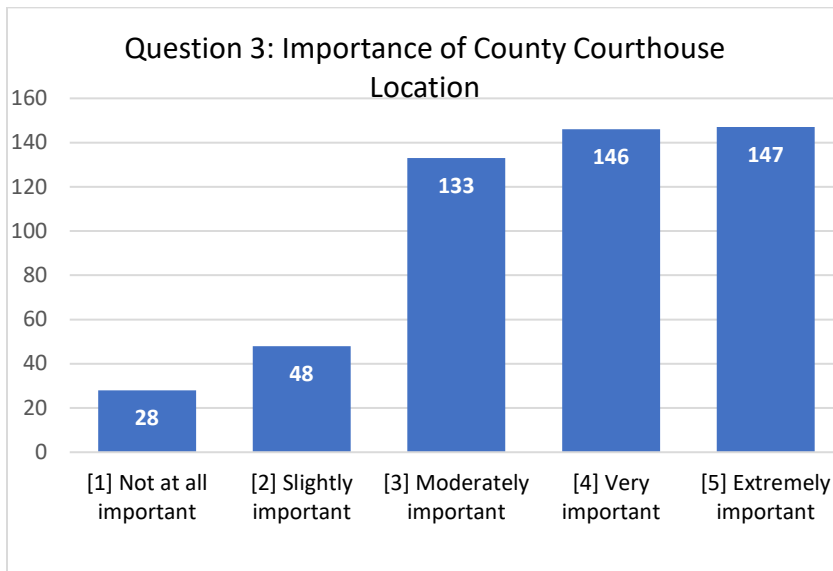


**Question 3: How important is the location of the County’s courthouse to you?**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Not at all important	28
[2] Slightly important	48
[3] Moderately important	133
[4] Very important	146
[5] Extremely important	147
<b>Total*</b>	<b>502</b>

\*Excludes 2 non-responses

- Most frequent response was “Extremely important.”
- Mean response was 3.67, between “Moderately important” and “Very important.”



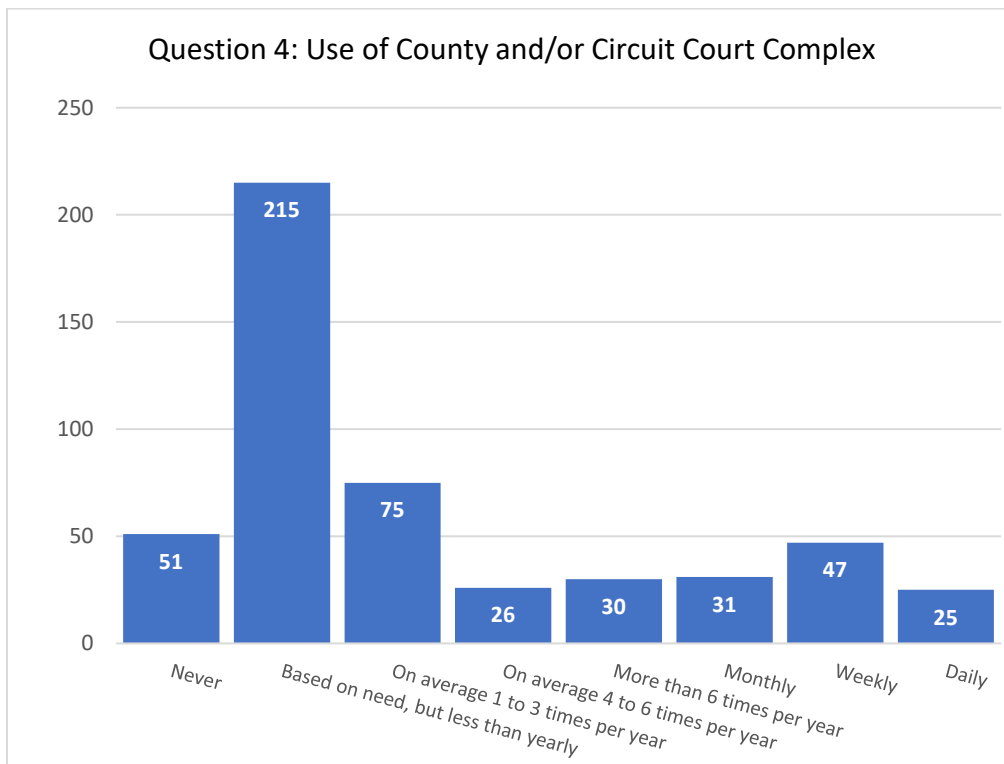
**Figure 3**

**Question 4: How often do you currently use the County General District Court and/or Circuit Court Complex? (Please select one):**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
Never	51
Based on need, but less than yearly	215
On average 1 to 3 times per year	75
On average 4 to 6 times per year	26
More than 6 times per year	30
Monthly	31
Weekly	47
Daily	25
<b>Total*</b>	<b>500</b>

\*Excludes 4 non-responses

- Most frequent response was “Based on need, but less than yearly.”



**Figure 4**

**Question 4a: My primary reason for going to the Courts is:**

Common Answers Received to Question 4:

- **139 Responses:** Research/Records/Document Filing
- **116 Responses:** Legal Issues/Court/Traffic/Trial
- **39 Responses:** Jury duty
- **26 Responses:** Work
- **22 Responses:** Licensing/Permits
- **18 Responses:** Real estate

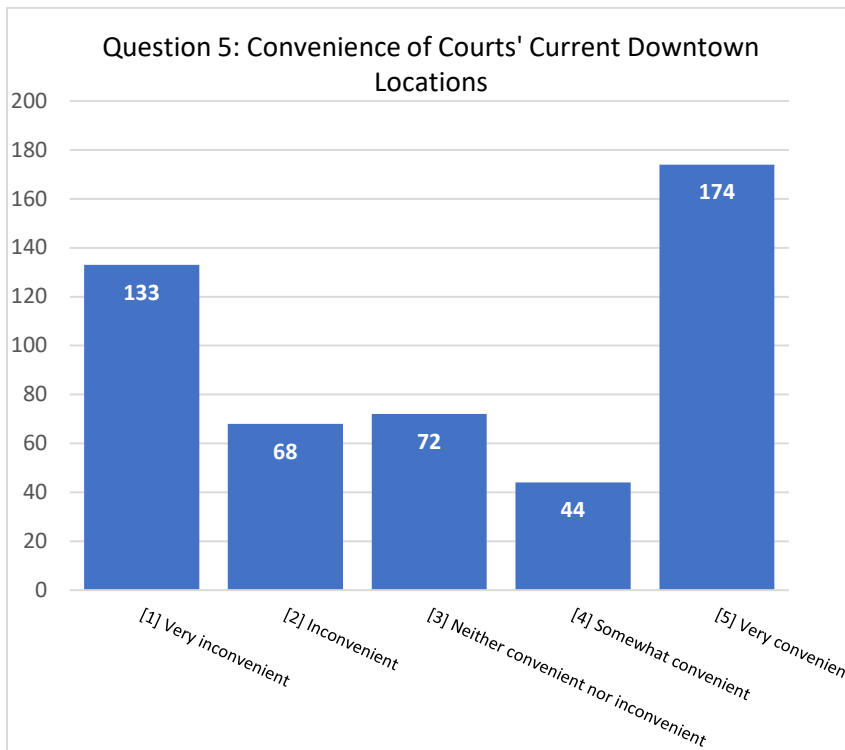
Although 433 of the 504 respondents appeared to provide a response to this question, many of these answers contained text indicating they do not go to the courts. Appendix C contains the detailed comment responses and should be read for further qualitative input.

**Question 5: How convenient are the courts' current downtown locations for you?**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Very inconvenient	133
[2] Inconvenient	68
[3] Neither convenient nor inconvenient	72
[4] Somewhat convenient	44
[5] Very convenient	174
<b>Total*</b>	<b>491</b>

\*Excludes 13 non-responses

- Most frequent response was “Very convenient.”
- Mean response was 3.12, between “Neither convenient nor inconvenient” and “Somewhat convenient.”



**Figure 5**

**Question 5a: Description (optional)**

Additional comments received for question 5 are included in Appendix D. Forty-two respondents made additional comments regarding parking, with some respondents reporting parking was adequate.

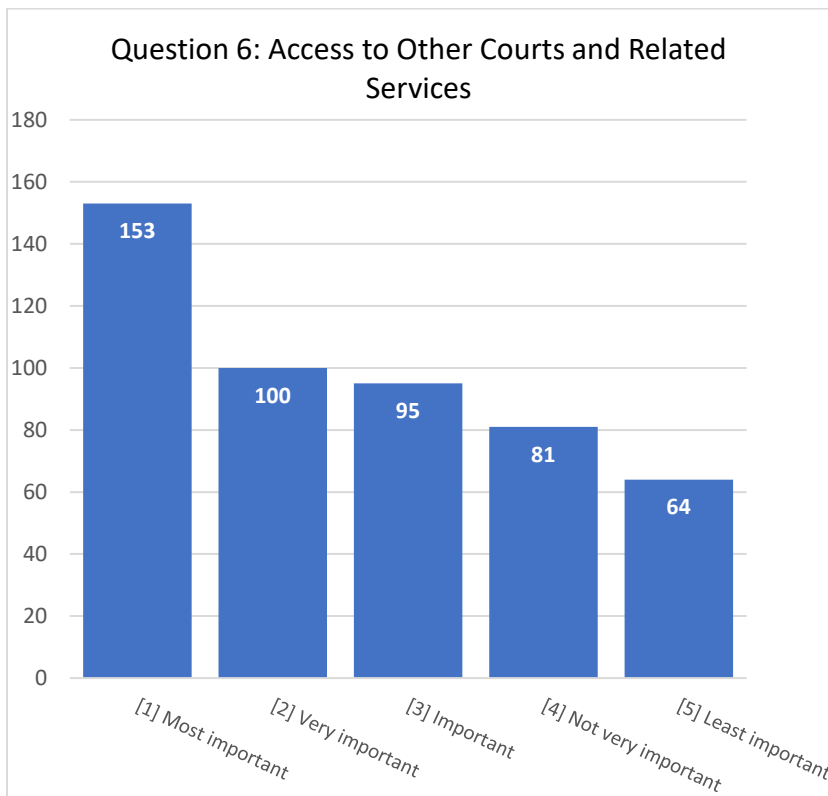
**Question 6: What is most important to you regarding the courts’ current downtown location?** (Please rank the following with 1 being most important and 5 being least important.)

**Question 6a: Access to other courts and related services (i.e., attorney’s office)**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Most important	153
[2] Very important	100
[3] Important	95
[4] Not very important	81
[5] Least important	64
<b>Total</b>	<b>493</b>

\*Excludes 11 non-responses

- Most frequent response was “Most important.”
- Mean response was 2.60, between “Very important” and “Important.”



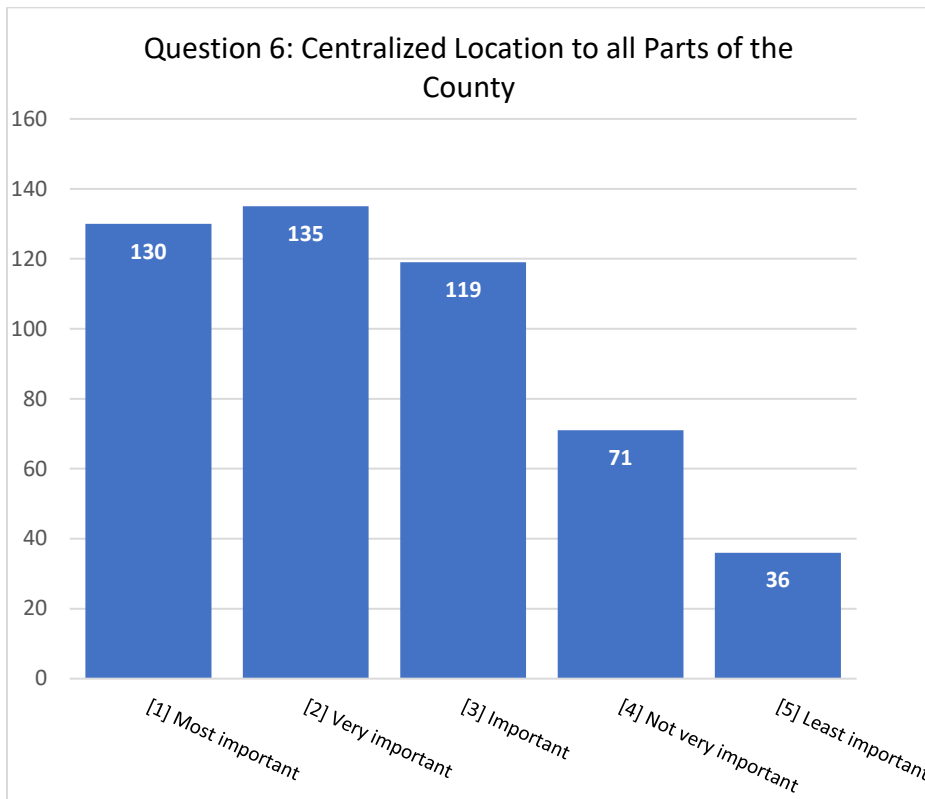
**Figure 6**

**Question 6b: Centralized location to all parts of the County**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Most important	130
[2] Very important	135
[3] Important	119
[4] Not very important	71
[5] Least important	36
<b>Total</b>	<b>491</b>

\*Excludes 13 non-responses

- Most frequent response was “Very important.”
- Mean response was 2.49, between “Very important” and “Important.”



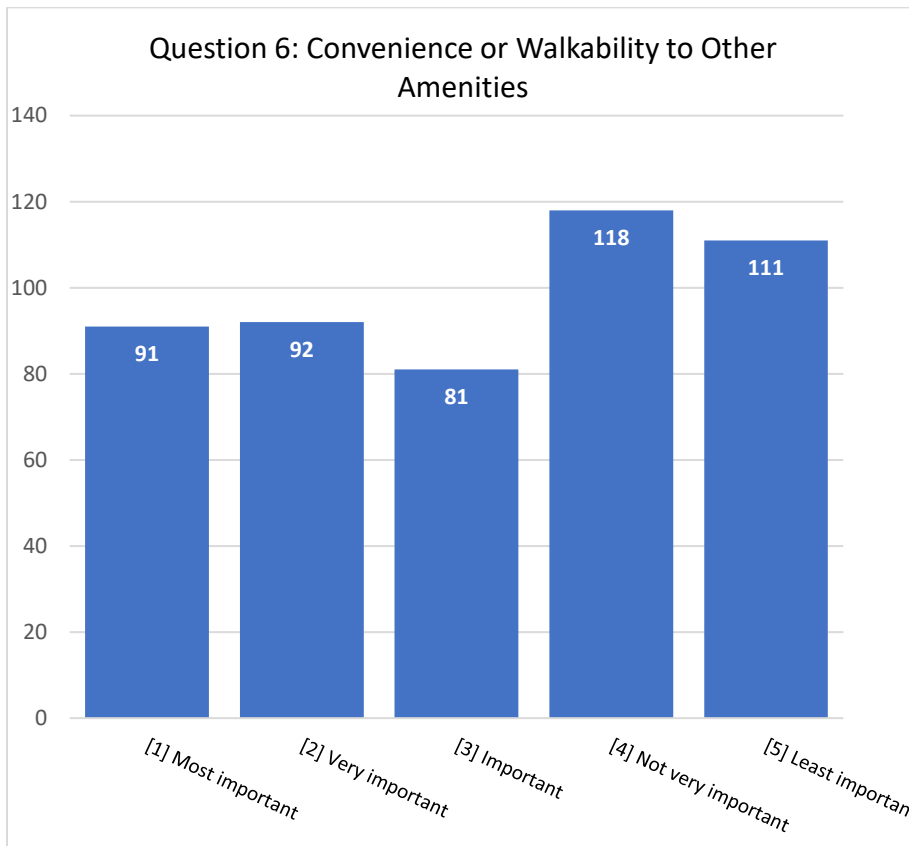
**Figure 7**

**Question 6c: Convenience or walkability to other amenities (bank, shops, restaurants)**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Most important	91
[2] Very important	92
[3] Important	81
[4] Not very important	118
[5] Least important	111
<b>Total*</b>	<b>504</b>

\*Excludes 11 non-responses

- Most frequent response was “Not very important.”
- Mean response was 3.13, between “Important” and “Not very important.”



**Figure 8**

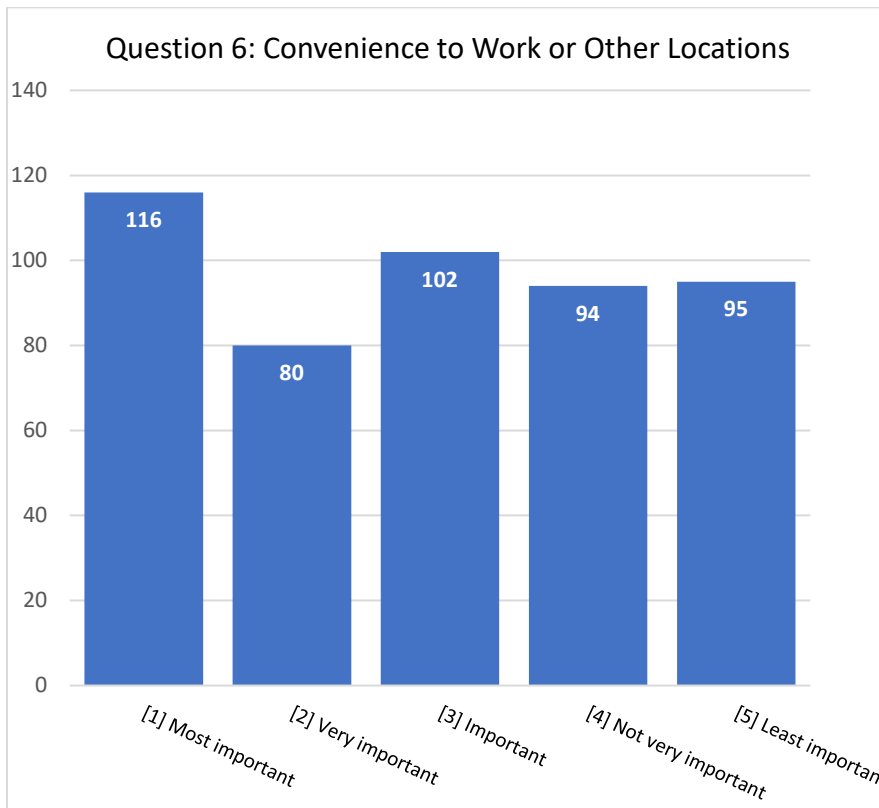


**Question 6d: Convenient to where I work or other locations I visit**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Most important	116
[2] Very important	80
[3] Important	102
[4] Not very important	94
[5] Least important	95
<b>Total*</b>	<b>487</b>

\*Excludes 17 non-responses

- Most frequent response was “Most important.”
- Mean response was 2.94, between “Very important” and “Important.”



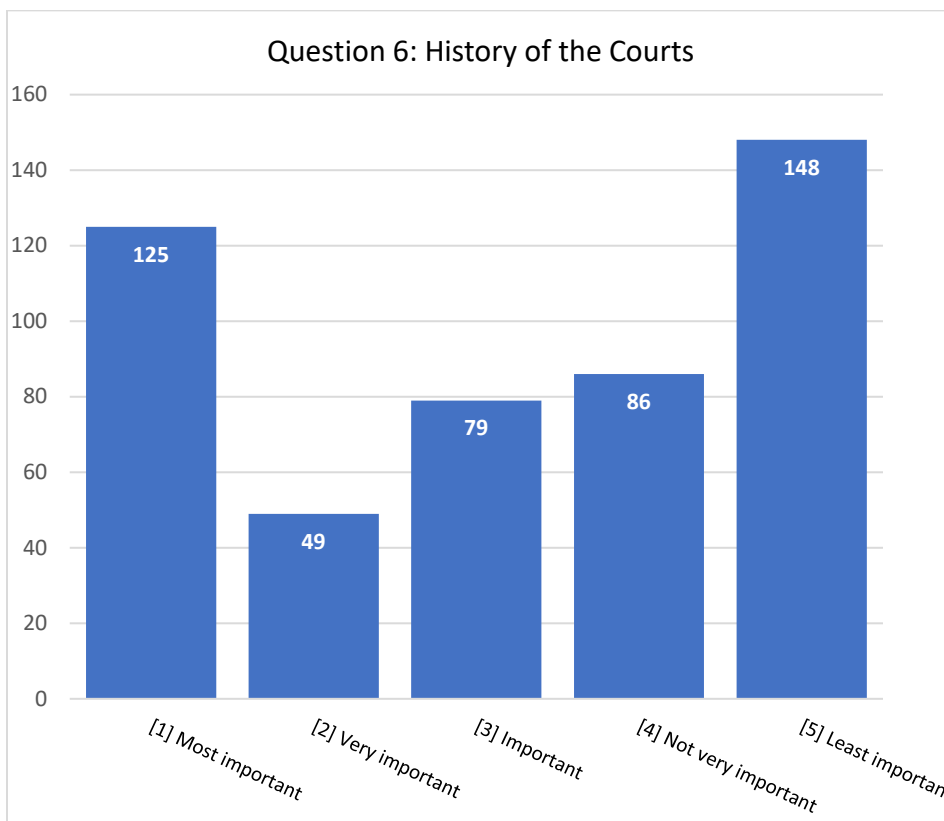
**Figure 9**

**Question 6e: History of the courts**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Most important	125
[2] Very important	49
[3] Important	79
[4] Not very important	86
[5] Least important	148
<b>Total</b>	<b>487</b>

\*Excludes 17 non-responses

- Most frequent response was “Least important.”
- Mean response was 3.17, between “Important” and “Not very important.”



**Figure 10**

**Question 6: Additional Comments**

Additional comments are included in Appendix E. Seventy-nine responders provided comments including 25 comments regarding parking.

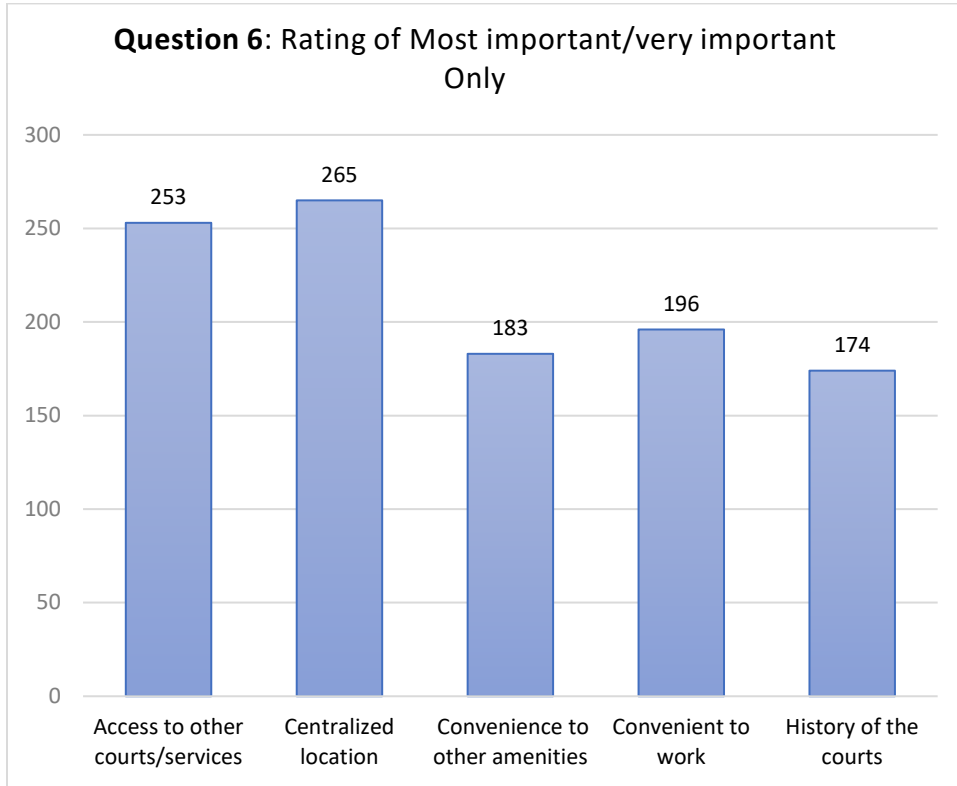
**Question 6f: Summary and Comparisons**

Figure 10 summarizes and compares the five different parts rated in question 6. The mean rating shown is a weighted average calculated by multiplying each rating category 1 thru 5 by the number of respondents for each rating category, summing the products, and dividing by the total number of respondents. A lower mean rating indicates a higher importance since 1 is the highest rating for most important. Based on the mean rating, the topic “Centralized location to all parts of the County” is ranked highest, closely followed by “Access to other courts and related services”.

Part	Topic	Mean Rating*	Relative Ranking	RATING				
				Most important [1]	Very important [2]	Important [3]	Not very important [4]	Least important [5]
1	Access to other courts and related services, (i.e. attorney’s office)	2.6	2 <sup>nd</sup>	153	100	95	81	64
2	Centralized location to all parts of the County	2.49	1 <sup>st</sup>	130	135	119	71	36
3	Convenience or walkability to other amenities (bank, shops, restaurants)	3.13	4 <sup>th</sup>	91	92	81	118	111
4	Convenient to where I work or other locations I visit	2.94	3 <sup>rd</sup>	116	80	102	94	95
5	History of the courts	3.17	5 <sup>th</sup>	125	49	79	86	148

\*Lower mean rating score is higher importance.

The mean rating and ranking did not provide much contrast between the five topics; therefore the two highest ratings of “most important” and “very important” were combined and this graph is shown in Figure 11. More than half of the respondents rated “Centralized location to all parts of the County” and “Access to courts and related services” as most or very important, compared to the other three topics which were ranked most or very important by 40% or less of the respondents. Topic descriptions have been abbreviated for display purposes in the following graphs.



**Figure 11**

Figure 12 contains the same respondent ratings in a slightly different view for each of the five parts.

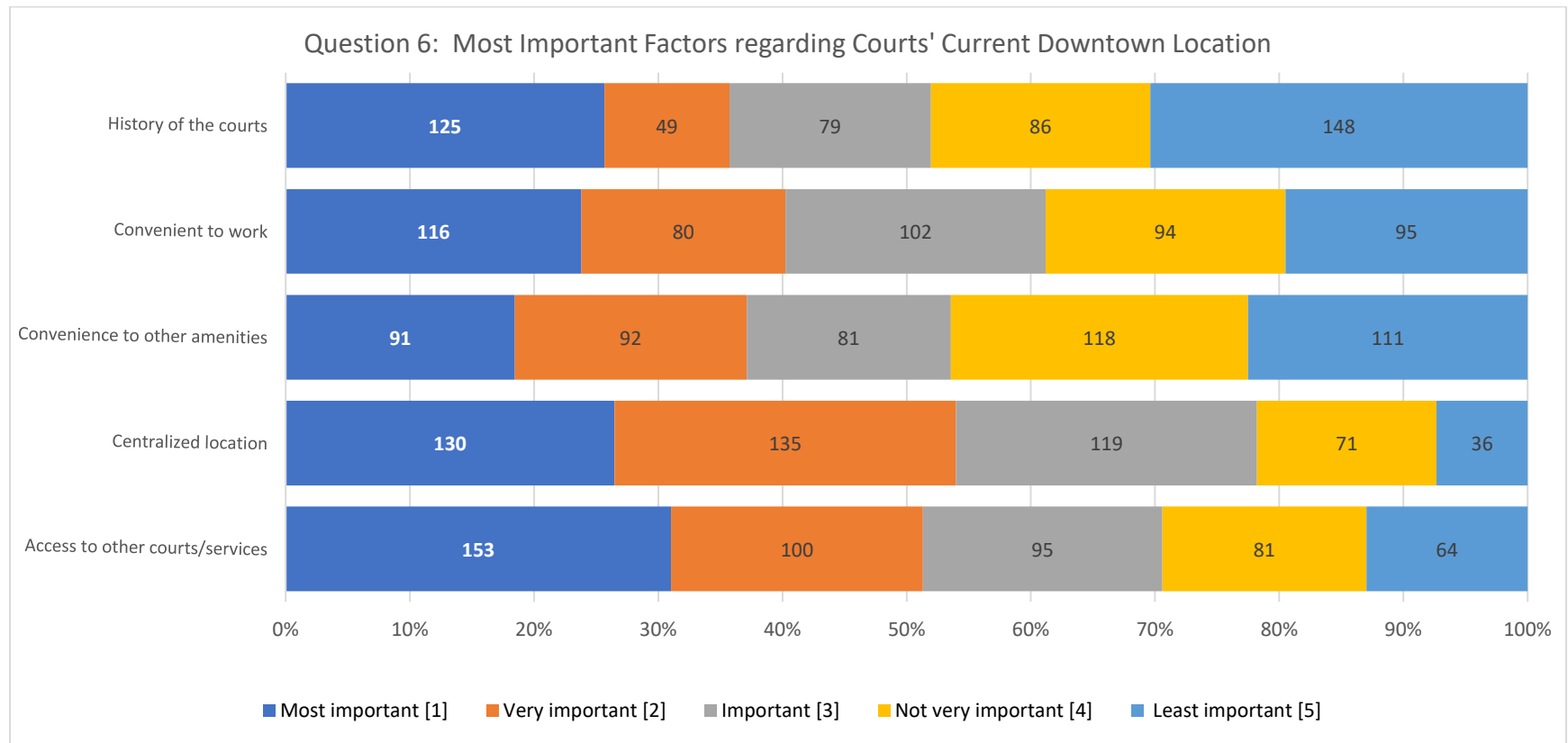


Figure 12

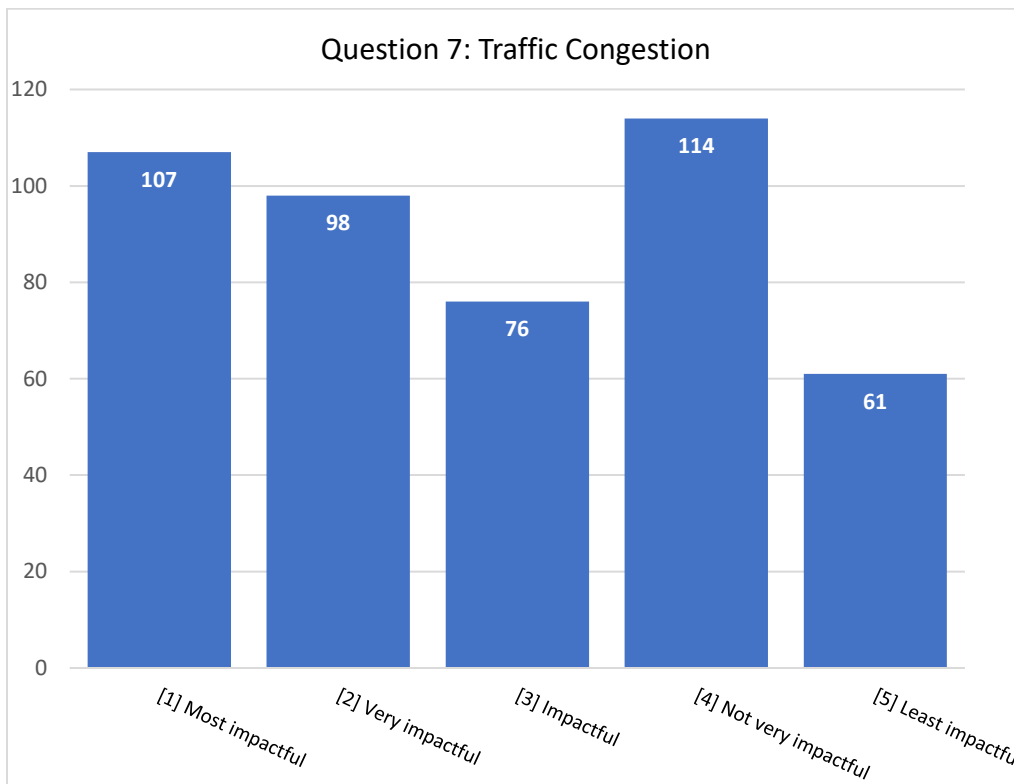
**Question 7: Which of the following conditions has a negative impact, if any, on your experience when going to the courts in the current downtown locations? (Please rank the following with 1 being the most impactful and 5 being least impactful.)**

**Question 7a: Traffic congestion**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Most impactful	107
[2] Very impactful	98
[3] Impactful	76
[4] Not very impactful	114
[5] Least impactful	61
<b>Total*</b>	<b>456</b>

\*Excludes 48 non-responses

- Most frequent response was “Not very impactful.”
- Mean response was 2.83, between “Very impactful” and “Impactful.”



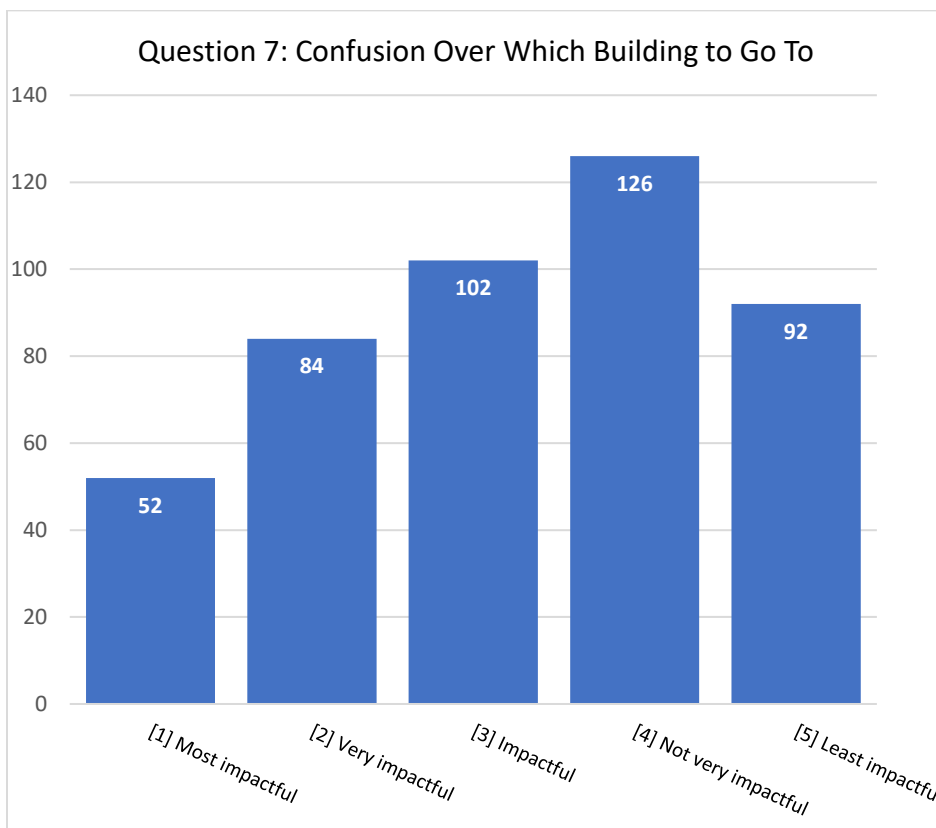
**Figure 13**

**Question 7b: Confusion over which building to go to**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Most impactful	52
[2] Very impactful	84
[3] Impactful	102
[4] Not very impactful	126
[5] Least impactful	92
<b>Total*</b>	<b>456</b>

\*Excludes 48 non-responses

- Most frequent response was “Not very impactful.”
- Mean response was 3.28, between “Impactful” and “Not very impactful.”



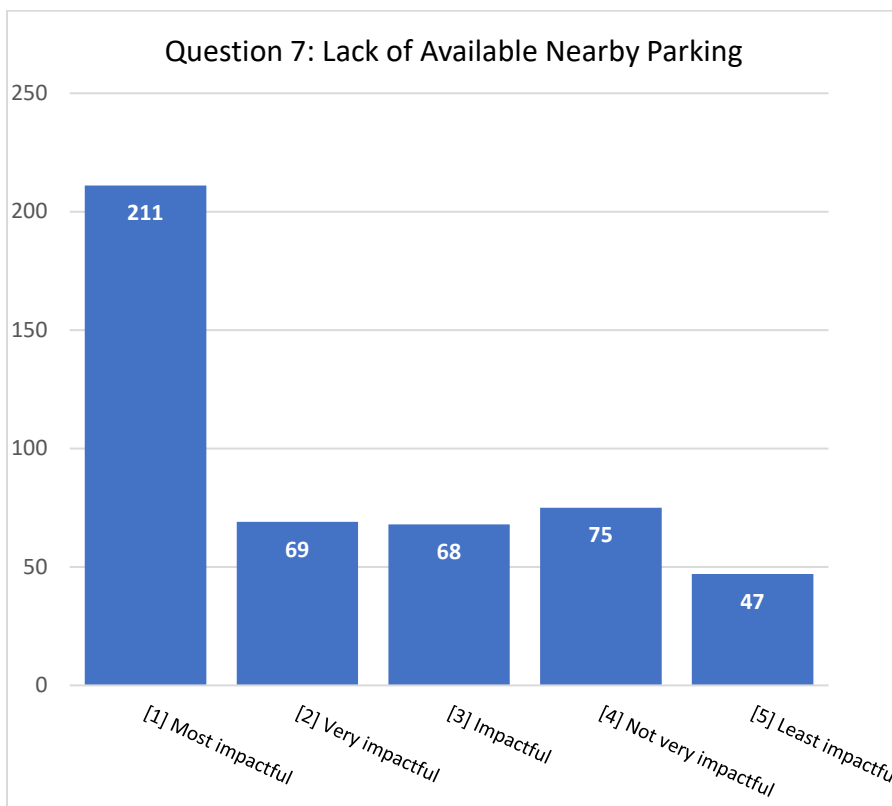
**Figure 14**

**Question 7c: Lack of available nearby parking**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Most impactful	211
[2] Very impactful	69
[3] Impactful	68
[4] Not very impactful	75
[5] Least impactful	47
<b>Total*</b>	<b>470</b>

\*Excludes 34 non-responses.

- Most frequent response was “Most impactful.”
- Mean response was 2.31, between “Very impactful” and “Impactful.”



**Figure 15**

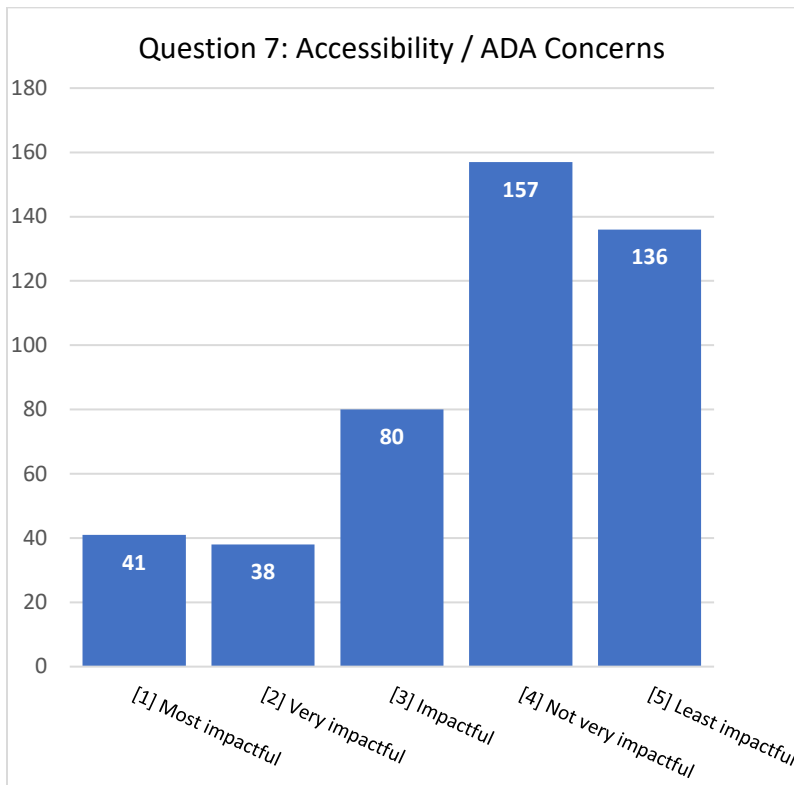


**Question 7d: Accessibility / ADA concerns**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Most impactful	41
[2] Very impactful	38
[3] Impactful	80
[4] Not very impactful	157
[5] Least impactful	136
<b>Total*</b>	<b>452</b>

\*Excludes 52 non-responses.

- Most frequent response was “Not very impactful.”
- Mean response was 3.68, between “Impactful” and “Not very impactful.”



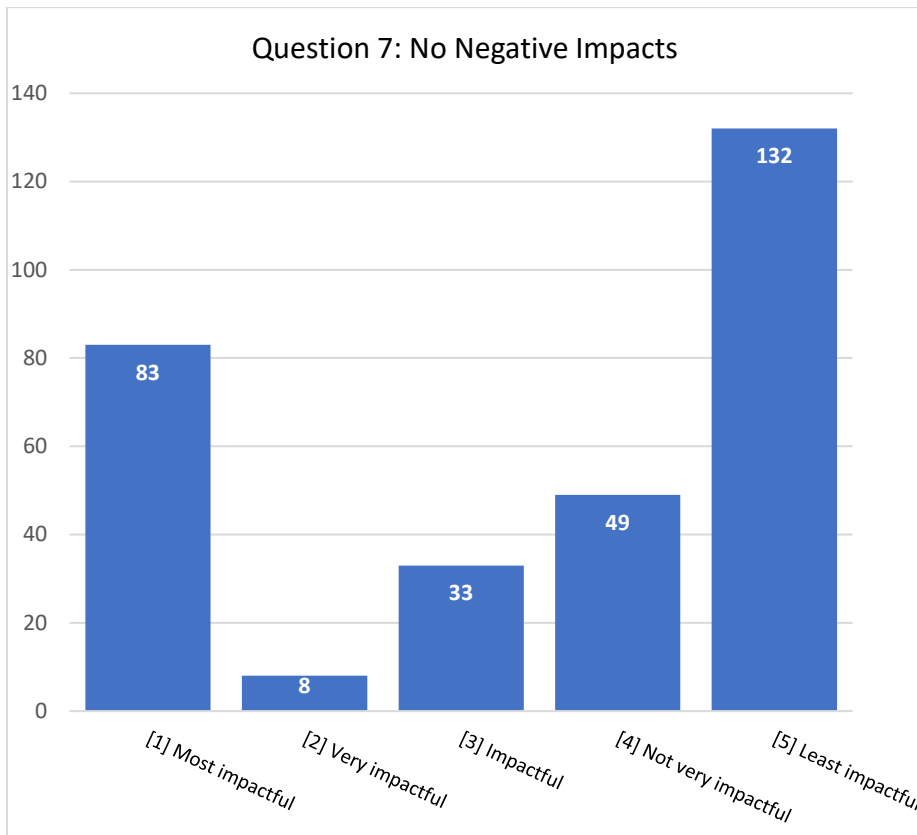
**Figure 16**

**Question 7e: No negative impacts**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Most impactful	83
[2] Very impactful	8
[3] Impactful	33
[4] Not very impactful	49
[5] Least impactful	132
<b>Total</b>	<b>305</b>

\*Excludes 199 non-responses

- Mean response was 3.45, between “Impactful” and “Not very impactful.”



**Figure 17**

**Question 7f: Other (please describe)**

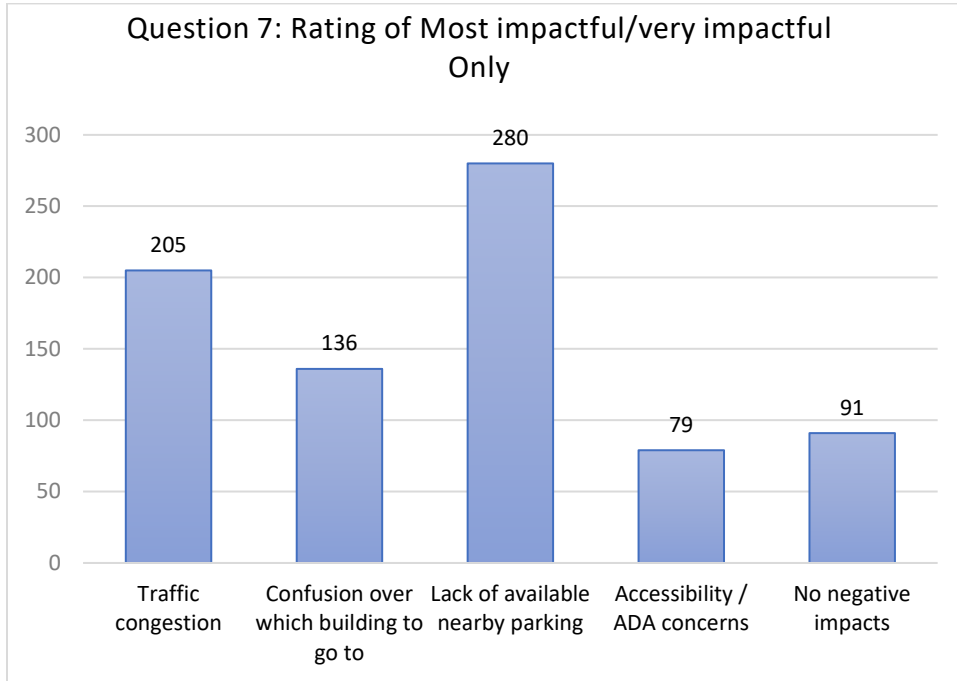
Forty-three respondents provided narrative in this section. No single “Other” factor rose to a level of prominence other than the points listed in the analysis for Question 7, Parts 1 through 5; parking and safety were identified by a few individuals. All other comments provided by the respondents are listed in Appendix F.

**Question 7g: Summary and Comparisons**

Part	Topic	Mean Rating *	Relative Ranking	RATING				
				Most impactful [1]	Very impactful [2]	Impactful [3]	Not very impactful [4]	Least impactful [5]
1	Traffic congestion	2.83	2 <sup>nd</sup>	107	98	76	114	61
2	Confusion over which building to go to	3.28	3 <sup>rd</sup>	52	84	102	126	92
3	Lack of available nearby parking	2.31	1 <sup>st</sup>	211	69	68	75	47
4	Accessibility / ADA concerns	3.68	5 <sup>th</sup>	41	38	80	157	136
5	No negative impacts	3.45	4 <sup>th</sup>	83	8	33	49	132

\*Lower mean rating score is higher impact.

“Lack of available nearby parking” was the most impactful factor identified when going to the courts in the current downtown location, followed by “traffic congestion,” although the most common response for traffic congestion was not very impactful. The top two ratings of most impactful and very impactful were combined in Figure 18, showing these same factors were viewed as highly impactful. Figure 19 provides a linear graph of all ratings for the 5 factors impacting the current downtown location experience.



**Figure 18**

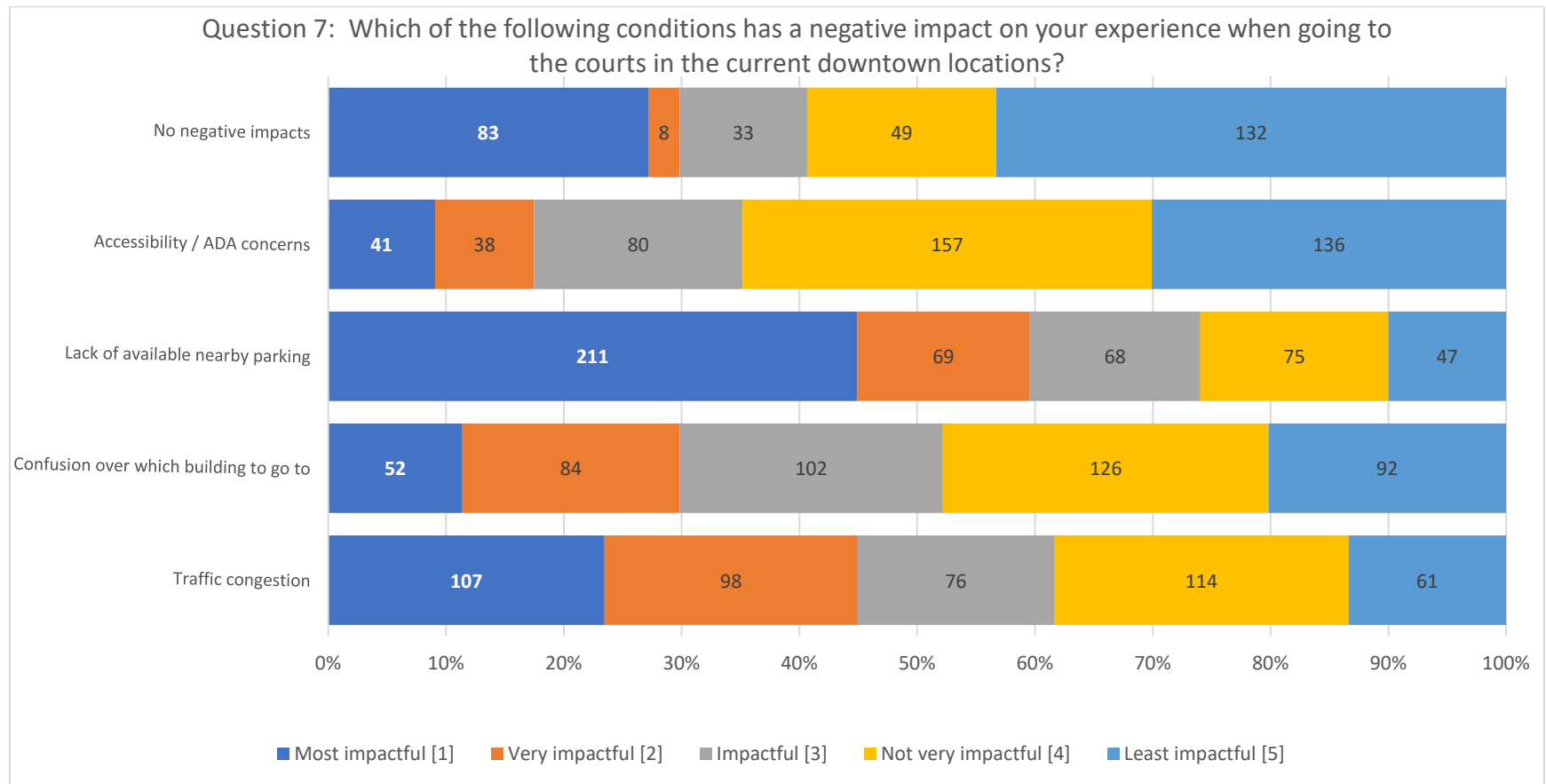


Figure 19

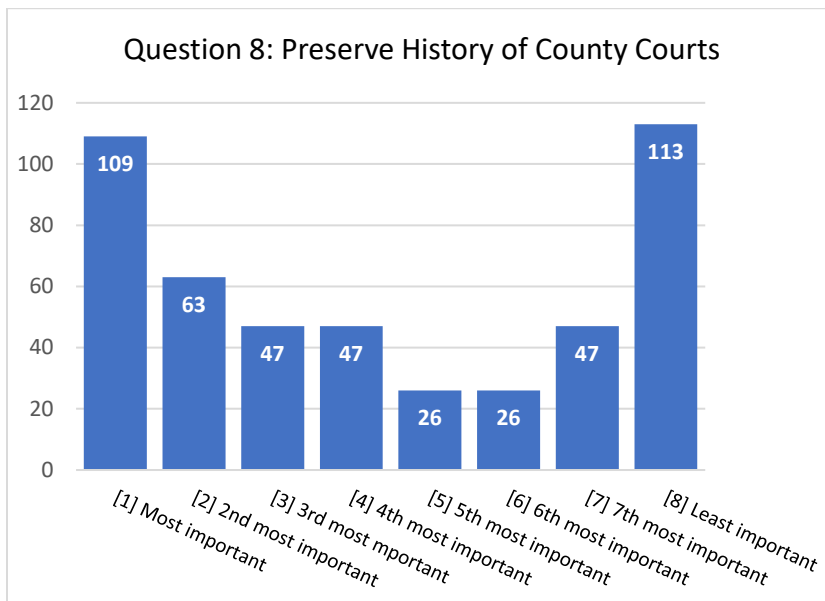
**Question 8: The Courts Project will be one of most significant investments in a County facility in recent history. Please rank the following project considerations you believe are most important in deciding on the location options (with 1 being most important and 8 least important).**

**Question 8a: Preserve History of the County Courts**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Most important	109
[2] 2 <sup>nd</sup> most important	63
[3] 3 <sup>rd</sup> most important	47
[4] 4 <sup>th</sup> most important	47
[5] 5 <sup>th</sup> most important	26
[6] 6 <sup>th</sup> most important	26
[7] 7 <sup>th</sup> most important	47
[8] Least important	113
<b>Total*</b>	<b>478</b>

\*Excludes 26 non-responses

- Most frequent response was “Least important.”
- Mean response was 4.36, between “4<sup>th</sup> most important” and “5<sup>th</sup> most important.”



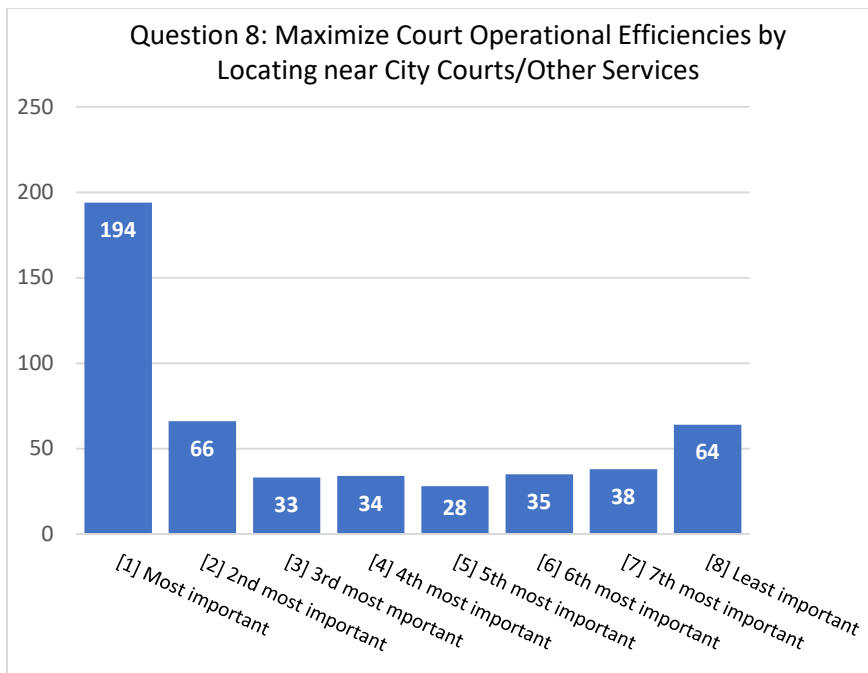
**Figure 20**

**Question 8b: Maximize court operational efficiencies by locating near City Courts and other court services**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Most important	194
[2] 2 <sup>nd</sup> most important	66
[3] 3 <sup>rd</sup> most important	33
[4] 4 <sup>th</sup> most important	34
[5] 5 <sup>th</sup> most important	28
[6] 6 <sup>th</sup> most important	35
[7] 7 <sup>th</sup> most important	38
[8] Least important	64
<b>Total*</b>	<b>492</b>

\*Excludes 12 non-responses.

- Most frequent response was “Most important.”
- Mean response was 3.43, between “3<sup>rd</sup> most important” and “4<sup>th</sup> most important.”



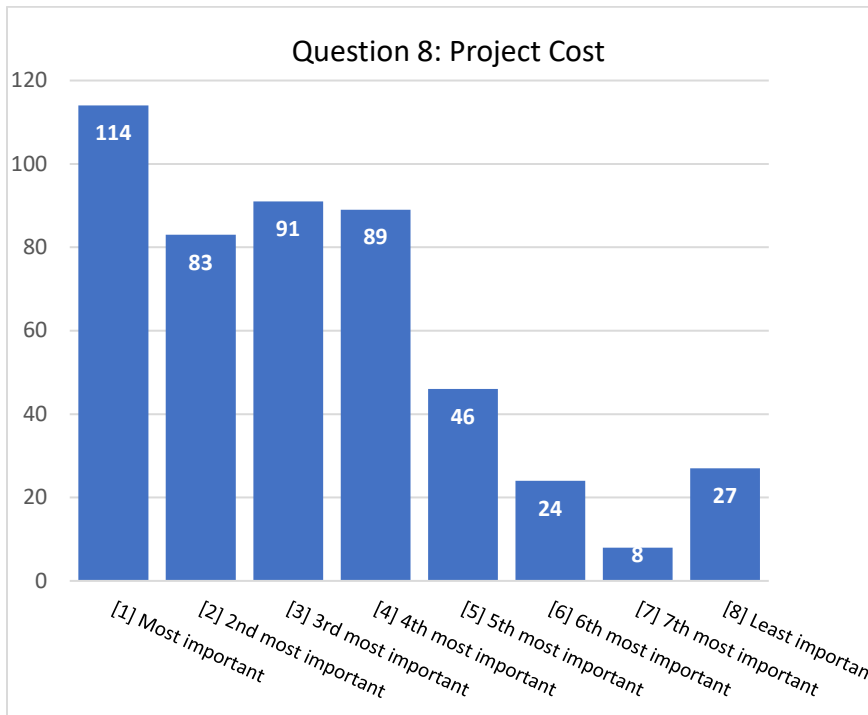
**Figure 21**

**Question 8c: Project cost**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Most important	114
[2] 2 <sup>nd</sup> most important	83
[3] 3 <sup>rd</sup> most important	91
[4] 4 <sup>th</sup> most important	89
[5] 5 <sup>th</sup> most important	46
[6] 6 <sup>th</sup> most important	24
[7] 7 <sup>th</sup> most important	8
[8] Least important	27
<b>Total*</b>	<b>482</b>

\*Excludes 22 non-responses

- Most frequent response was “Most important.”
- Mean response was 3.23, between “3<sup>rd</sup> most important” and “4<sup>th</sup> most important.”



**Figure 22**

**Question 8d: Proximity to amenities (restaurants, banks, retail)**



Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Most important	58
[2] 2 <sup>nd</sup> most important	42
[3] 3 <sup>rd</sup> most important	63
[4] 4 <sup>th</sup> most important	66
[5] 5 <sup>th</sup> most important	54
[6] 6 <sup>th</sup> most important	51
[7] 7 <sup>th</sup> most important	53
[8] Least important	84
<b>Total*</b>	<b>471</b>

\*Excludes 33 non-responses.

- Most frequent response was “Least important.”
- Mean response was 4.70, between “4<sup>th</sup> most important” and “5<sup>th</sup> most important.”

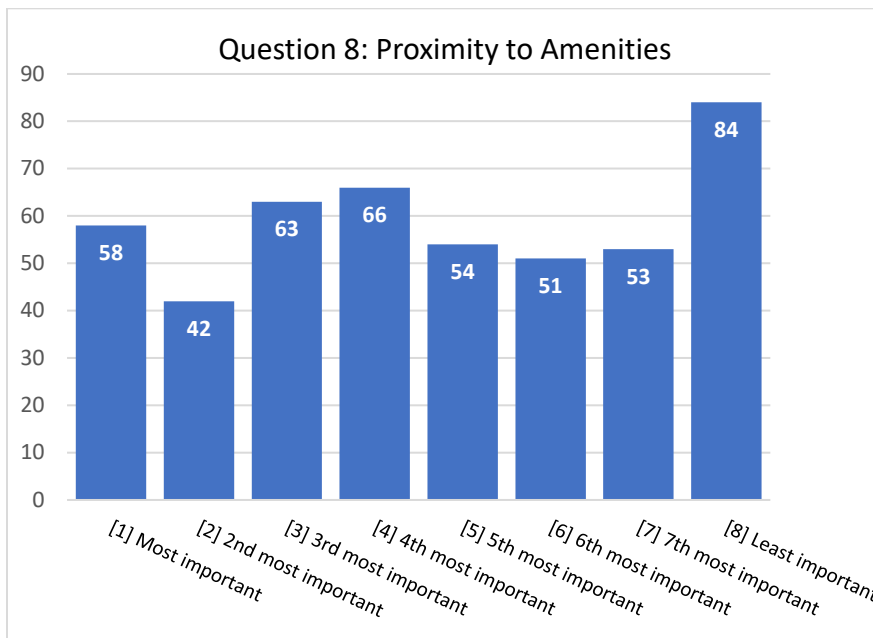


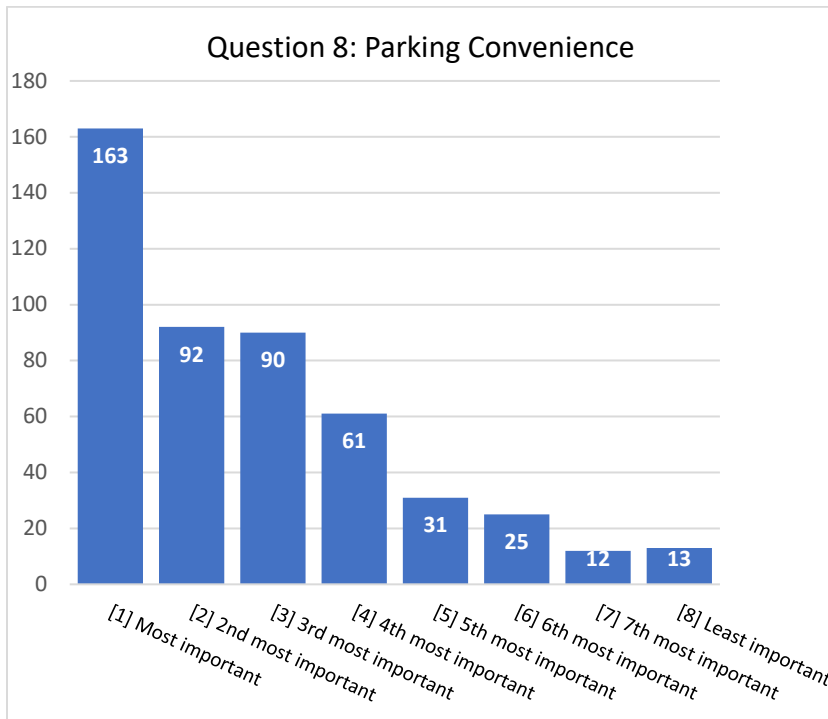
Figure 23

**Question 8e: Parking convenience**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Most important	163
[2] 2 <sup>nd</sup> most important	92
[3] 3 <sup>rd</sup> most important	90
[4] 4 <sup>th</sup> most important	61
[5] 5 <sup>th</sup> most important	31
[6] 6 <sup>th</sup> most important	25
[7] 7 <sup>th</sup> most important	12
[8] Least important	13
<b>Total*</b>	<b>487</b>

\*Excludes 17 non-responses

- Most frequent response was “Most important.”
- Mean response was 2.78, between “2<sup>nd</sup> most important” and “3<sup>rd</sup> most important.”



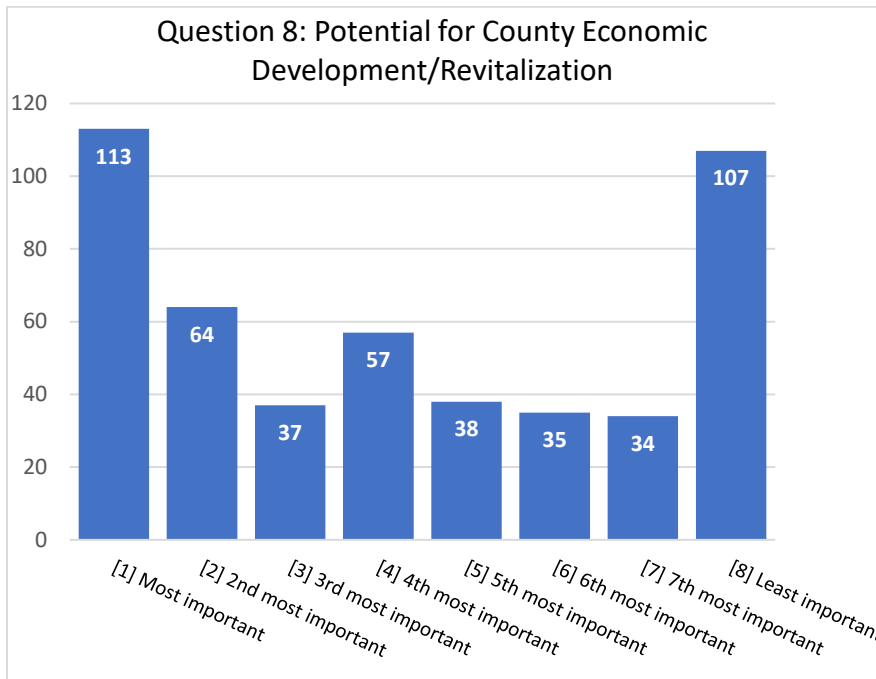
**Figure 24**

**Question 8f: Potential for County economic development/revitalization**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Most important	113
[2] 2 <sup>nd</sup> most important	64
[3] 3 <sup>rd</sup> most important	37
[4] 4 <sup>th</sup> most important	57
[5] 5 <sup>th</sup> most important	38
[6] 6 <sup>th</sup> most important	35
[7] 7 <sup>th</sup> most important	34
[8] Least important	107
<b>Total*</b>	<b>485</b>

\*Excludes 19 non-responses.

- Most frequent response was “Most important.”
- Mean response was 4.28, between “4<sup>th</sup> most important” and “5<sup>th</sup> most important.”



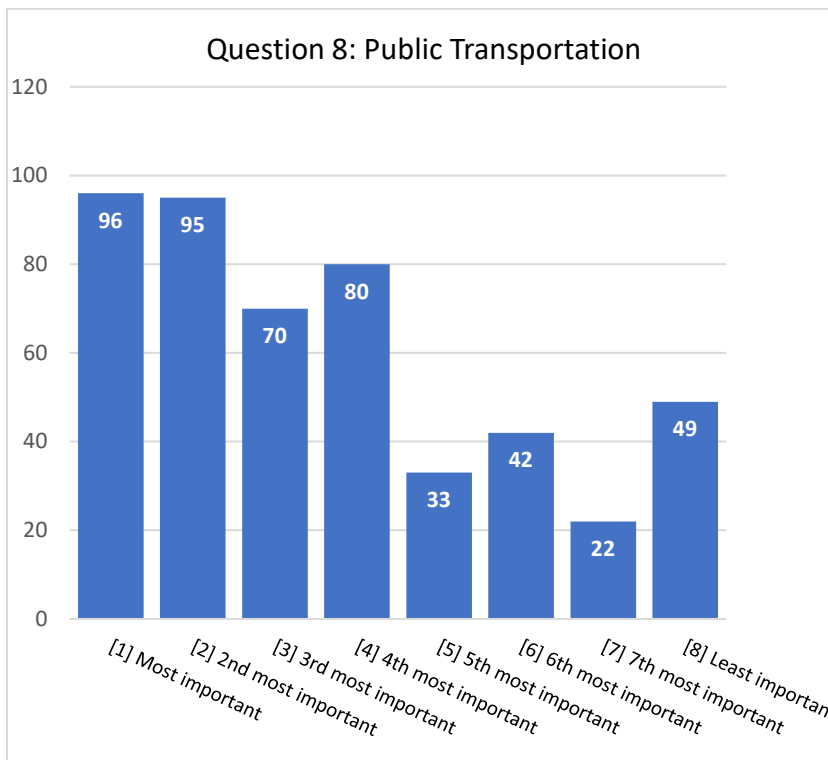
**Figure 25**

**Question 8g: Public transportation**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Most important	96
[2] 2 <sup>nd</sup> most important	95
[3] 3 <sup>rd</sup> most important	70
[4] 4 <sup>th</sup> most important	80
[5] 5 <sup>th</sup> most important	33
[6] 6 <sup>th</sup> most important	42
[7] 7 <sup>th</sup> most important	22
[8] Least important	49
<b>Total*</b>	<b>487</b>

\*Excludes 17 non-responses

- Most frequent response was “Most important.”
- Mean response was 3.65, between “3<sup>rd</sup> most important” and “4<sup>th</sup> most important.”



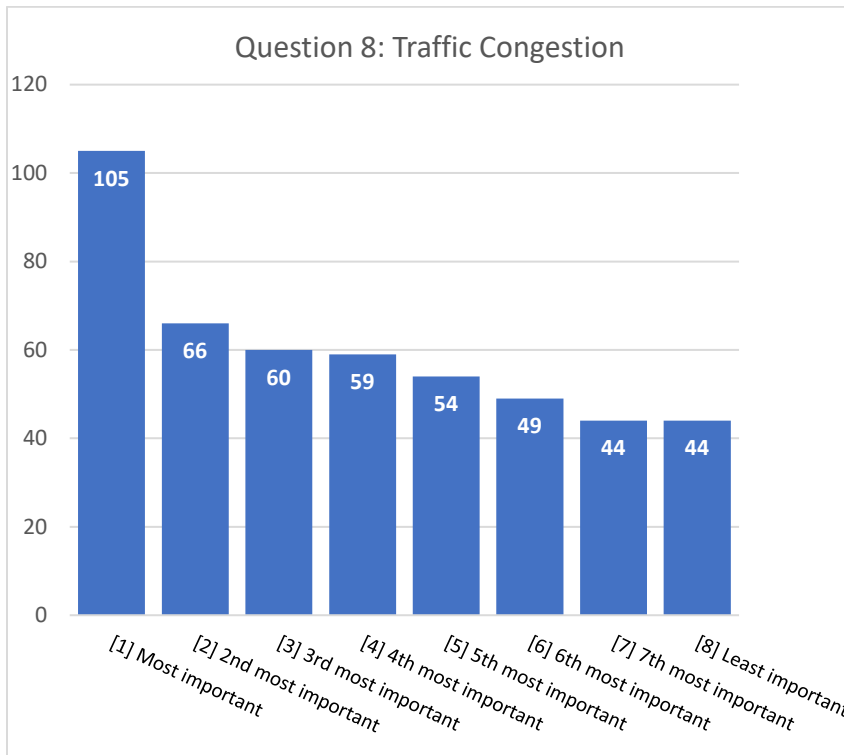
**Figure 26**

**Question 8h: Traffic congestion**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Most important	105
[2] 2 <sup>nd</sup> most important	66
[3] 3 <sup>rd</sup> most important	60
[4] 4 <sup>th</sup> most important	59
[5] 5 <sup>th</sup> most important	54
[6] 6 <sup>th</sup> most important	49
[7] 7 <sup>th</sup> most important	44
[8] Least important	44
<b>Total*</b>	<b>481</b>

\*Excludes 23 non-responses.

- Most frequent response was “Most important.”
- Mean response was 3.90, between “3<sup>rd</sup> most important” and “4<sup>th</sup> most important.”



**Figure 27**

**Question 8i: Other (specify)**

Fifty-four respondents selected the “Other” category and 34 respondents rated this other issue as most important; however, no single “Other” factor rose to a level of prominence beyond the points listed in the analysis for Question 8, Parts 1 through 8. A few items mentioned include: parking, safety, and financial and economic impact. The detailed comments are found in Appendix G.

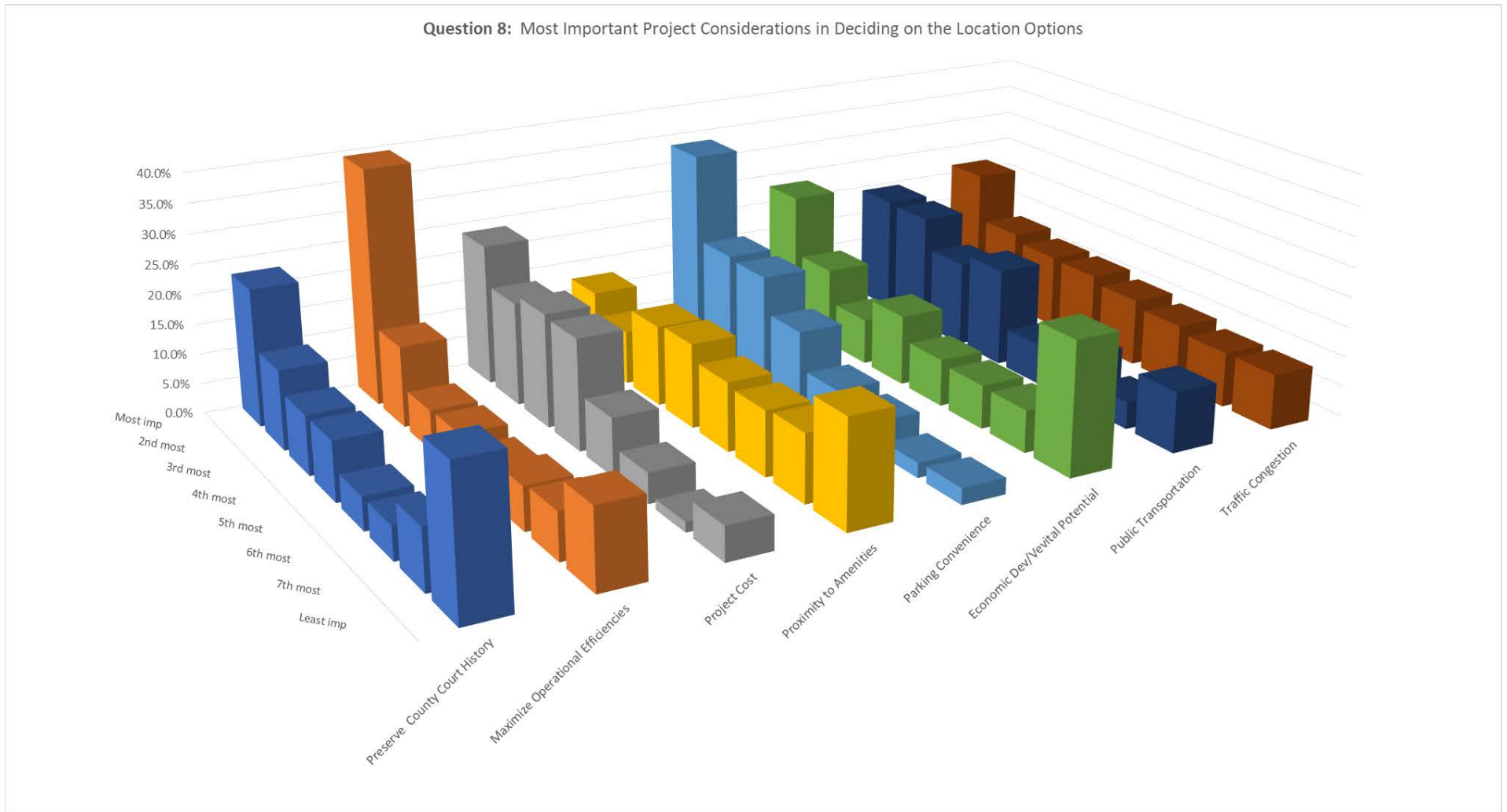
**Question 8j: Summary and Comparison**

**Question 8: The Courts Project will be one of most significant investments in a County facility in recent history. Please rank the following project considerations you believe are most important in deciding on the location options (with 1 being most important and 8 least important).**

Figures 28 and 29 below provide the mean (average) rating, relative ranking based on the mean scores, and the number of respondents for the 8 rating levels. The category “Other” is shown in Figure 28 but is removed from all subsequent graphs in this section.

Part	Topic	Mean Rating *	Relative Ranking	RATING							
				Most important [1]	2nd most important [2]	3rd most important [3]	4th most important [4]	5th most important [5]	6th most important [6]	7th most important [7]	Least important [8]
1	Preserve History of the County Courts	4.36	7 <sup>th</sup>	109	63	47	47	26	26	47	113
2	Maximize court operational efficiencies by locating near City Courts and other court services	3.43	3 <sup>rd</sup>	194	66	33	34	28	35	38	64
3	Project cost	3.23	2 <sup>nd</sup>	114	83	91	89	46	24	8	27
4	Proximity to amenities (restaurants, banks, retail)	4.7	8 <sup>th</sup>	58	42	63	66	54	51	53	84
5	Parking convenience	2.78	1 <sup>st</sup>	163	92	90	61	31	25	12	13
6	Potential for County economic development / revitalization	4.28	6 <sup>th</sup>	113	64	37	57	38	35	34	107
7	Public transportation	3.65	4 <sup>th</sup>	96	95	70	80	33	42	22	49
8	Traffic congestion	3.9	5 <sup>th</sup>	105	66	60	59	54	49	44	44
9	Other	2.8	n/a	34	5	1	1	0	2	0	11

\*Lower mean rating score is higher importance.



**Figure 28**

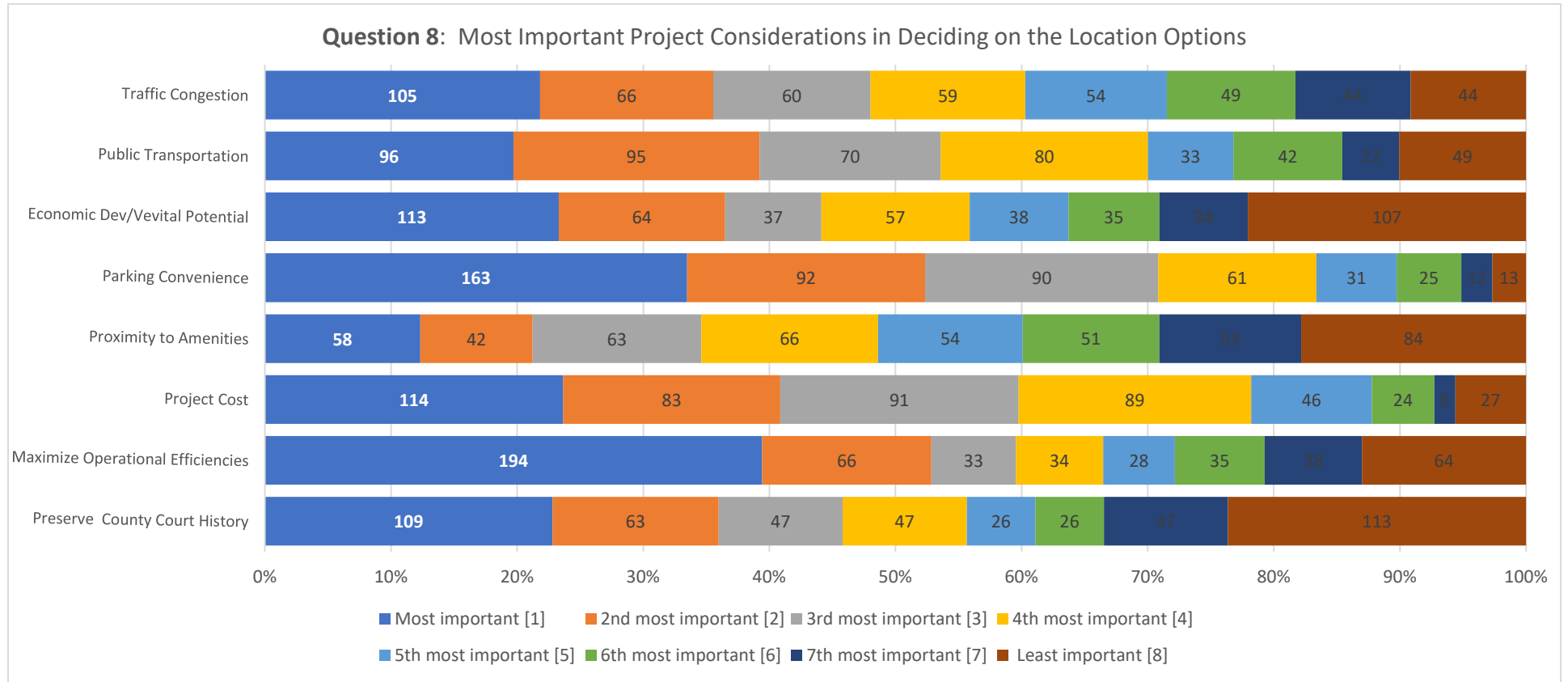


Figure 29



High polarization is reflected in the categories of “Preserve History of the County Courts” and “Potential for County economic development/revitalization” with ratings of most important and least important being selected in high volume. Figure 30 below provides a comparison of the top two rankings (most important and second most important) to the two lowest rankings (least important and seventh most important) for each of eight topics. Over 50% of the respondents viewed “Maximize Operational Efficiencies” and “Parking Convenience” as most or important (rating of 1 most important or 2 second most important).

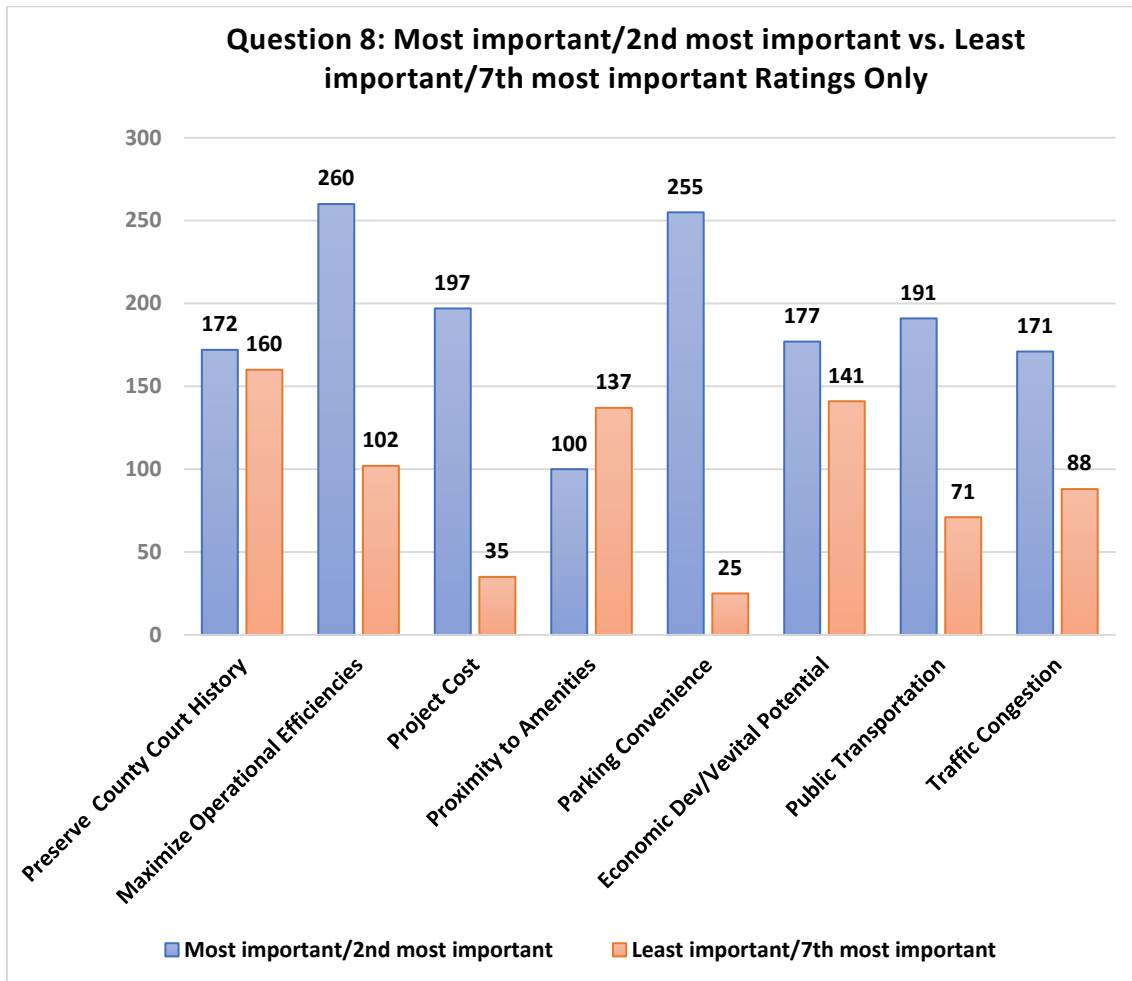


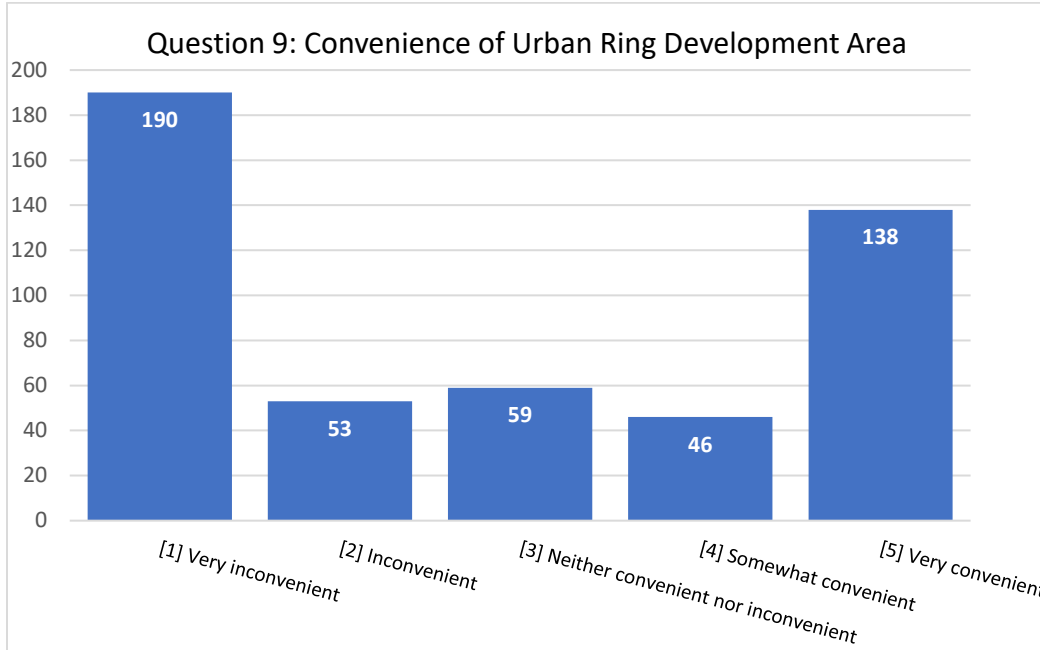
Figure 30

**Question 9: Under “option 5,” the Circuit and General District Courts would be co-located in an urban ring development area (presumed location: the Route 29/Rio Road vicinity); either in the same building or in separate adjacent buildings within a courts complex. How convenient would moving the County General District and Circuit courts from their current location be for you?**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Very inconvenient	190
[2] Inconvenient	53
[3] Neither convenient nor inconvenient	59
[4] Somewhat convenient	46
[5] Very convenient	138
<b>Total</b>	<b>486</b>

\*Excludes 18 non-responses.

- Most frequent response was “Very inconvenient.”
- Mean response was 2.77, between “Inconvenient” and “Neither convenient nor inconvenient.”



**Figure 31**

### **Question 9a: Additional Comments**

Forty-one responders provided additional narrative in this section. See Appendix H for the detailed comments provided by survey responders. Similar to the previous comment sections, no single issue was identified in the narrative provided and both positive and negative opinions were reflected.

### **Question 10: Is there an issue or additional input regarding the potential courts project considerations that have not been raised in this survey? If yes, please briefly explain.**

Detailed input received from responders is shown in Appendix I. One hundred ninety-seven respondents provided additional comments in this section. Common topics were repeated in this section regarding parking, public transportation, safety, and convenience/inconvenience. Valuable insight into the responder concerns and attitudes is gained from all narrative responses provided in this survey.

## Appendix A: Albemarle County Courts Operations Analysis Related to Possible Relocation Public Impact Survey

Albemarle County Board of Supervisors (BOS) and County staff are seeking public input on a significant decision regarding needed improvements of the County's court facilities. The purpose of this anonymous survey is to gather input from residents of the County on their experiences at our existing courts and what project considerations they feel are most important as the County plans a significant capital investment to either renovate or relocate the courts. **This survey is not a vote for or against any aspect of the Board's considerations, but rather a tool for information gathering purposes.**

Albemarle County has been actively determining the best option to address the challenges facing our courts and to identify opportunities to improve infrastructure and the efficiency of court operations, while providing the best current and future value for County taxpayers. Albemarle County officials have been conducting research and analysis of five different options, as presented at a BOS public hearing on October 24, 2016. Now, two primary options remain under consideration:

- "Option one (1)," the "Downtown renovation/expansion option" would utilize a property adjacent to the current County Courts complex (the Levy Opera House parcel) for the new construction of a three story General District Court facility, which would also include the County's Commonwealth Attorney's office. The existing County court complex would then be modernized to create a second Circuit Court and support operations.
- "Option five (5)" would relocate the County's Circuit and General District Courts to a new courts complex in the County, outside the city limits of Charlottesville. This option assumes a new courts complex on either County owned property or through a development partnership opportunity. The Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court would remain in its current downtown location.

Further background information of the analysis, prior studies and options considered is available on the county's website at the following address: <http://www.albemarle.org/courts>.

**Your opinion matters!** Please complete your response no later than **Friday, August 25, 2017**.

Thank you for your consideration and assistance.

1. Do you live in the County?  
 Yes  No
2. Are you part of the legal community and/or routinely work with the court system?  
 Yes  No

3. How important is the location of the County's courthouse to you?

- Not at all important     Slightly important     Moderately important     Very important     Extremely important

4. How often do you currently use the County General District Court and/or Circuit Court Complex? (please select one):

- \_\_\_\_\_ never  
\_\_\_\_\_ based on need, but less than yearly  
\_\_\_\_\_ on average of 1 to 3 times per year  
\_\_\_\_\_ on average of 4 to 6 times per year  
\_\_\_\_\_ more than 6 times per year  
\_\_\_\_\_ Monthly  
\_\_\_\_\_ Weekly  
\_\_\_\_\_ Daily

My primary reason for going to the courts is:

---

---

5. How convenient are the courts' current downtown locations for you?

- Very inconvenient     Inconvenient     Neither convenient nor inconvenient     Somewhat convenient     Very convenient

(Optional) Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

6. What is most important to you regarding the courts' current downtown location? (please **rank** the following with 1 being most important and 5 being least important))

- \_\_\_\_\_ Access to other courts and related services, (i.e. attorney's office)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Centralized location to all parts of the County  
\_\_\_\_\_ Convenience or walkability to other amenities (bank, shops, restaurants)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Convenient to where I work or other locations I visit  
\_\_\_\_\_ History of the courts

(Optional) Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Which of the following conditions has a negative impact, if any, on your experience when going to the courts in the current downtown locations? (please **rank** the following with 1 being the most impactful and 5 being least impactful)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Traffic congestion
- \_\_\_\_\_ Confusion over which building to go to
- \_\_\_\_\_ Lack of available nearby parking
- \_\_\_\_\_ Accessibility / ADA concerns
- \_\_\_\_\_ No negative impacts

(Optional) Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

8. The Courts Project will be one of most significant investments in a County facility in recent history. Please **rank** the following project considerations you believe are most important in deciding on the location options (with 1 being most important and 8 least important).

- \_\_\_\_\_ Preserve history of the County Courts
- \_\_\_\_\_ Maximize court operational efficiencies by locating near City Courts and other court services
- \_\_\_\_\_ Project cost
- \_\_\_\_\_ Proximity to amenities (restaurants, banks, retail)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Parking convenience
- \_\_\_\_\_ Potential for County economic development/ revitalization
- \_\_\_\_\_ Public transportation
- \_\_\_\_\_ Traffic congestion
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other: specify \_\_\_\_\_

9. Under “option 5”, the Circuit and General District Courts would be co-located in an urban ring development area (presumed location: the Route 29/Rio Road vicinity); either in the same building or in separate adjacent buildings within a courts complex. How convenient would moving the County General District and Circuit courts from their current location be for you?

- Very Inconvenient       Inconvenient       Neither convenient nor inconvenient       Somewhat convenient       Very convenient

(Optional) Please describe : \_\_\_\_\_

10. Is there an issue or additional input regarding the potential courts project considerations that have not been raised in this survey? If yes, **please briefly explain.**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix B: Question 2 Legal Community Comparison**

	Are you part of the legal community and/or routinely work with the Court System?		
	No	Yes	Total
Question	Most Common / Aggregate Response	Most Common / Aggregate Response	Most Common / Aggregate Response
<b>Q2:</b> Are you part of the legal community and/or routinely work with the Court System?	<b>69.4%</b>	<b>30.6%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Q3:</b> How important is the location of the County’s courthouse to you?	Moderately important, 32.8%	Extremely important, 57.8%	Extremely important, 29.3%
<b>Q4:</b> How often do you currently use the County General District Court and/or Circuit Court Complex? (Please select one):	Based on need, but less than yearly, 58.3%	Weekly, 28.9%	Based on need, but less than yearly, 43.0%
<b>Q5:</b> How convenient are the courts’ current downtown locations for you?	Very convenient, 90; <u>Very inconvenient, 97</u>	Very convenient, 84; Very inconvenient, 36	<u>Very convenient, 174</u> ; Very inconvenient, 133
<b>Q6:</b> What is most important to you regarding the courts’ current downtown location? (Please rank the following with 1 being most important and 5 being least important.) <i>(This question asked respondents to offer a score between 1 and 5.) The options provided to respondents were as follows: [1] Most important, [2] Very important, [3] Important, [4] Not very important, [5] Least important.</i>	#1 Centralized location to all parts of the County, 2.39	#1 Access to other courts and related services, 2.06	#1 Centralized location to all parts of the County, 2.49
(Aggregate Score on a 1.00-5.00 Scale)			
<b>Q7:</b> Which of the following conditions has a negative impact, if any, on your experience when going to the courts in the current downtown locations? (Please rank the following with 1 being the most impactful and 5 being least impactful.) <i>(This question asked respondents to offer a score between 1 and 5.) The options provided to respondents were as follows: [1] Most impactful, [2] Very impactful, [3] Impactful, [4] Not very impactful, [5] Least impactful.</i>	#1 Lack of available nearby parking, 2.15	#1 Lack of available nearby parking, 2.73	#1 Lack of available nearby parking, 2.31
(Aggregate Score on a 1.00-5.00 Scale)			

	Are you part of the legal community and/or routinely work with the Court System?		
	No	Yes	Total
Question	Most Common / Aggregate Response	Most Common / Aggregate Response	Most Common / Aggregate Response
<p><b>Q8:</b> The Courts Project will be one of most significant investments in a County facility in recent history. Please rank the following project considerations you believe are most important in deciding on the location options (with 1 being most important and 8 least important).</p> <p><i>(This question asked respondents to offer a score between 1 and 5.) The options provided to respondents were as follows: [1] Most important, [2] 2<sup>nd</sup> most important, [3] 3<sup>rd</sup> most important, [4] 4<sup>th</sup> most important, [5] 5<sup>th</sup> most important, [6] 6<sup>th</sup> most important, [7] 7<sup>th</sup> most important, [8] Least important.</i></p>	<p>#1 Parking convenience, 2.62</p>	<p>#1 Maximize court operational efficiencies by locating near City Courts, 2.57</p>	<p>#1 Parking convenience, 2.78</p>
(Aggregate Score on a 1.00-8.00 Scale)			
<p><b>Q9:</b> Under “option 5”, the Circuit and General District Courts would be co-located in an urban ring development area (presumed location: Route 29/Rio Road vicinity); either in the same building or in separate adjacent buildings within a courts complex. How convenient would moving the County General District and Circuit courts from their current location be for you?</p>	<p>Very inconvenient, 99; <u>Very convenient, 114</u></p>	<p><u>Very inconvenient, 91</u>; Very convenient, 24</p>	<p><u>Very inconvenient, 190</u>; Very convenient, 138</p>



### Appendix C: Question 4: My Primary Reason for Going to the Courts Is

- 1. Court Business - I am a landlord and have had to evict a tenant once before. 2. Jury duty.
- A lawsuit.
- Access property records or county services and jury duty.
- Access public records.
- Access records in County Clerk's office/archives.
- Access to land records, recording clerks and probate clerk, all in Circuit Court Clerk's Office.
- Administration.
- Administrative.
- Any legal necessity.
- Appearance in General District and Circuit Court cases.
- Appearances in J&DRDC, General District and Circuit Court to file cases, appear in those cases, and retrieve information from the Clerk's Offices to research information related to servicing my clients.
- Appearing for hearings.
- Attending trials.
- Auctions.
- Being a witness.
- Business - permits, taxes.
- business license application, etc.
- Business licenses & fees.
- Business matters.
- Business related issues.
- Business requires documents.
- CABA continuing legal education.
- Carry permit renewal.
- Cases I am handling.
- Check property plats. Will and estate status.
- Check records, licenses, look up information.
- Check various titles, real estate deeds, etc.
- Checking records.
- Children's driver licenses, jury duty.
- CHP renewal.
- Circuit Court record research. I am an independent contractor researcher who performs both title and genealogical research. In addition, I am working on a church history, which is 1/2 genealogy and 1/2 200+ year title search. Many times I go between the Albemarle and Charlottesville Circuit Courts searching for records.
- CLE classes.
- Clerk records.
- Clerk's office and court appearances.
- Clerk's office business.

- Clerks office is located there.
- Clerk's Office visit.
- Clerk's office, litigation.
- Client business.
- Client representation.
- Collecting unpaid rent.
- Collections.
- Concealed carry permit renewal, pay traffic fines, etc.
- Concealed carry permits & marriage license.
- County clerk's office.
- County clerk's office business.
- County land records.
- County land records. Jury duty summons.
- County records room to research property deeds.
- Court appearances as attorney.
- Court cases, review records.
- Court records.
- Court; searching deed records; Recording deeds, etc.
- Debt Collection and visit Clerk of Court office for research.
- Deed and plat research for land surveying.
- Deed research to locate/identify old family graveyards.
- Deed research, traffic ticket.
- Deeds and records, was called for jury duty.
- Defending cases.
- Divorce, support, custody.
- Documents.
- Driver's license.
- Driver's license for child.
- Drop off documents for work.
- Drug Court, accompany clients to court, Family Treatment Court.
- Education.
- Estate matters.
- Fiduciary matters.
- File legal information to fulfill jury duty work.
- File warrant.
- Filing an eviction.
- Filing civil cases.
- Filing complaints about non-compliant taxpayers.
- Filing documents or getting copies of documents.
- Filing documents, researching records, reviewing files, appearances for hearings and trials.
- Filing for notary or other license.
- Filing paperwork with court after the death of a family member.

- Filing unlawful detainers or warrant in debt, garnishments or evictions.
- Filing warrant of debts for business purposes.
- Filings, research, hearings.
- Filling out forms for small business.
- For Court records.
- For legal matters that arise.
- For my clients; I am an attorney.
- For my employment.
- For traffic offenses, etc.
- For work.
- Fulfilling requirements related to my legal guardianship of my son who has been declared an Incapacitated Adult; dealing with matters related to an estate inheritance; other matters.
- General District court cases and Circuit Court records.
- General District Court cases.
- Get documents.
- Get information or pay a ticket.
- Getting former tenants to pay back rent.
- Getting my notary renewed.
- Getting some legal paperwork (name change, concealed carry permit, etc.).
- Going with a family member.
- Have never gone.
- Have not gone there at all.
- Haven't in 11 years I've lived here.
- Haven't needed to use it yet.
- Hearings at GDC and Circuit Court; and Clerk's Office for recordation of deeds.
- Hearings, filing.
- Helping crime victims through the court system. Meetings with commonwealth attorney staff.
- Historic Landmark.
- Homeowner reasons.
- I am a court appointed criminal defense attorney.
- I am a lawyer.
- I am a lawyer and mediator.
- I am a lawyer. I have numerous cases in all of the local courts.
- I am a social worker who attends court regularly to support clients and to file.
- I am an attorney.
- I am an attorney who represents people in court in both the city and the county.
- I am an attorney, and I go to do things related to the cases I am working on.
- I am an attorney – represent clients there.
- I avoid downtown.
- I have filed for judgments, appeared for traffic court and sent before a judge with my daughter when she obtained her driver's license.
- I haven't gone to date.

- I really don't. Haven't been in over 10 years.
- I represent clients as an attorney at law.
- I served as a CASA volunteer for 7 years and was in the court almost weekly.
- I take pictures to hang at the Courthouse. I am a member of Central Virginia Watercolor Guild.
- I used to be a volunteer deputy sheriff and routinely visited the court house.
- I work for the county finance department and we summons taxpayers for unpaid taxes.
- I work with CASA. My clients have business in the courts. I attend these sessions. This business is in addition to their dealings with the JDR court.
- If I am obliged to do so (i.e. - jury duty or involved in court case).
- If I ever got a ticket.
- I'm a deputy clerk.
- I'm a trial lawyer and go to Court for trials and hearings as well as the clerk's office for filing and following up on my case work.
- Info meetings.
- Investigations for clients.
- I've never gone. I assume I'll be called for jury duty sometime.
- Job responsibilities.
- Jury duties. Look up records.
- jury duty is only reason lately.
- Jury duty or other official business.
- Jury duty or public documents.
- Jury duty or to look up property records.
- Jury duty, observation as a citizen to learn more about our system.
- Jury duty, supporting friends who are testifying.
- Jury duty, to get forms.
- Jury duty, traffic ticket, kid's driver license.
- Jury duty. More recently had to go as witness.
- Jury service.
- Juvenile court - CASA volunteer.
- Land deed information, jury duty, wedding.
- Land owner research.
- Land records search.
- Law class observation.
- Law enforcement.
- Law suit.
- Legal and property.
- Legal documents and interaction with Court personnel.
- Legal documents, licenses or jury duty.
- Legal documents.
- Legal necessities, permits, etc.
- Legal proceedings.
- Legal work.

- Licenses, tickets, miscellaneous.
- Licensure.
- Litigating cases.
- Litigation of civil matters. Personal injury and product liability.
- Look at property transfers and judgements.
- Look up records.
- Looking up deeds.
- Many ... land records, probate matters, hearings and other matters. Personally ... gun permit, marriage license, notary and business licenses.
- Marriage license.
- Mediation.
- Meet with court staff as part of my job responsibilities.
- Meeting or tour.
- Meetings.
- Most often to observe ongoing proceedings.
- Most recently, looking up deeds.
- My business.
- My child's traffic violation.
- Necessity.
- No current reason. Went once for a traffic citation and once for small claims. Have testified as an expert witness a few times.
- Notary, research.
- Obtain county court services.
- Obtain permits.
- Obtain various documents needed for organizing my personal and professional life.
- Obtaining records and or transactions.
- Obtaining a record.
- Obtaining records.
- Obtaining records that are not available online.
- Occasional need, such as business license.
- Papers.
- Paperwork required.
- Parcel, zoning research.
- Part of my job.
- Pay ticket fines. Other random stuff.
- Permits and homeowner association research.
- Permits and research.
- Potential cases such as rental issues.
- Practicing attorney.
- Practicing law.
- Prefer not to say.
- Previous longtime courthouse employee.

- Probate and executor qualification.
- Probate and paying a ticket.
- Probate matters.
- Probate of estate.
- Probate or deed research.
- Professional.
- Protective order.
- Protests.
- Rare instances in which I would need to locate and review physical copies of land records, such as plats and/or deeds.
- Real estate, research.
- Real estate and collection matters.
- Real Estate documents.
- Real estate information and consulting.
- Real estate issues.
- Real estate needs.
- Real estate recording.
- Real estate records.
- Real estate records and court proceedings.
- Real estate records research.
- Real estate records searches, auctions.
- Real estate records, or observing courts in action.
- Real estate searches.
- Record and pick up deeds, file petitions, orders, search land records, etc.
- Record deeds.
- Record filing.
- Record room, litigation.
- Recorder of deeds.
- Recording deeds and dealing with records.
- Recording documents in deed room.
- Records and testimony due to larceny.
- Records at clerk's office.
- Records request.
- Records research.
- Records search.
- Records, and unfortunately to pay tickets.
- Registering wills and deeds.
- Related to legal office work pertaining to litigation, real estate records and wills.
- Renew concealed carry permit, real estate transactions.
- Renew permits.
- Rent collection.
- Represent clients.

- Representation of clients.
- Representation of clients as a lawyer.
- Representing clients in cases and review of files in Clerk's Office, also conducting trials and mediations.
- Representing clients with cases in the Courts.
- Representing clients, conferring with prosecutors, reviewing files in prosecutor's office.
- Research and recordation.
- Research court records, attend a hearing, or attend an auction.
- Research documents.
- Research in land records and court files; recording documents in Circuit Clerk's Office.
- Research in the clerk's office.
- Researching and recording documents.
- Researching court documents.
- Researching deeds.
- Residential real estate / land records access and recording.
- Response to a law suite.
- Review records; view court.
- School system with student I teach.
- See legal staff member.
- Small claims court and jury duty.
- Small claims, clerk of court records, research.
- So far, my only reason to go to court was to be on jury duty.
- Speeding tickets, rental property issues.
- Subpoena to testify etc.
- Summons/custody dispute.
- Support family members.
- Tax auction, pay fines, taxes.
- Taxes, licensing.
- Taxes, jury duty, possibly a ticket.
- Testify.
- Testifying/evidence.
- Through my work for the county.
- Tickets.
- Title examination.
- Title searches and recording homestead deeds.
- To access public records.
- To attend hearings or go to the Clerk's Offices or Judges Offices.
- To date, as an executor of an estate.
- To file documents, check documents, motions, and other litigation.
- To file legal documents or to obtain copies of same.
- To get information.
- To get records from the clerk's office.

- To obtain documents related to federal cases, to observe related proceedings, to assist clients testifying in state cases.
- To obtain public records and to sit in on court hearings of public interest.
- To practice law.
- To record documents in the land records.
- To renew my notary certification.
- To represent clients.
- To represent clients in matters heard before the Courts; to obtain documents from the clerks' offices; to file document with the clerks' offices; to meet with Commonwealth Attorneys or other court personnel.
- To represent my clients at hearings.
- To retrieve documents from the courts.
- To Search property records or to have documents recorded.
- To see deed records and record documents, and to review fiduciary records and/or meet with probate clerk.
- To testify as expert witness.
- Traffic court, jury duty.
- Traffic fine.
- Traffic infractions, support a friend, child custody issues.
- Traffic ticket, marriage license.
- Traffic tickets, paying fines.
- Traffic violation.
- Trail court.
- Unlawful detainers for rental property.
- Use is based on need, nothing specific.
- Use of court clerk's office for concealed carry permit.
- Used in past – custody issues, jury duty, support for friend's case.
- Various – documents, accompanying my children to court
- Various case interest.
- Various services.
- Various uses.
- Visit legal staff member.
- Visit the Clerk of Court Office.
- Visiting Clerk's office.
- When called for jury duty.
- When needed.
- Whenever I need to for some reason.
- Witness.
- Witness in civil trial. Got ticketed because trial went overtime.
- Witness, obtaining court records, meetings with Commonwealth Attorney, filing search warrants, obtaining court orders, locating and speaking with various attorneys.
- Work daily.



- Work place duties.
- Work related issues.
- Work related matters.
- Work related to CA office or courts.
- Work with social services.
- Youth driver's license.

## Appendix D: Question 5 Current Downtown Location Convenience, Additional Comments

- Across the street convenient.
- And since I often use both city and county courts on the same day it would require vehicle travel possibly multiple times on the same day, a terrible inconvenience.
- Convenient but parking horrible.
- Convenient parking is a challenge.
- Easy parking at the parking garage and a quick walk to the court.
- Even though I live outside the city, the consolidated, central, location is very convenient for "one-stop shopping".
- Good location, bad parking!
- Hard to get to. Confusing complex.
- Hate to go there.
- I am able to walk to the County Courts with my clients who usually park in my parking lot during the court appearances.
- I believe that, because of legal representation, all courts, city and county, should be centrally located together.
- I feel the historical buildings are extremely important to the character of our city.
- I often have to go to the City Circuit Court to check records on the same person as I do the County.
- I work close to the courts, can park at my office and walk over.
- If I had to go it would be inconvenient with the parking hassle.
- Just a few years ago, my firm purchased real estate and moved from the Barracks Road area to the outskirts of downtown in large part to be closer to the Courts.
- Keep in mind, when people have to be at court if they all stayed in the same general area they will have less chance of being late or missing the case.
- Lack of parking would be key obstacle to going.
- Lots of clients have cases in more than one court as well. Frequently what is happening in one Court will affect a case in the other jurisdiction or another Court.
- Love the old trees, but parking really stinks.
- May we add several 'very' in front of that.
- My office is two blocks away from the courthouse.
- Need better parking.
- No parking.
- No parking and we are Albemarle County NOT Charlottesville.
- Office nearby.
- Parking.
- Parking and the expense of parking is primary obstacle.
- Parking downtown is a problem. There are inadequate public parking spaces.
- Parking is a big problem.
- Parking is a long walk away from court.
- Parking is a major obstacle.
- Parking is a nightmare.

- Parking is a problem.
- Parking is always a problem in that area.
- Parking is biggest issue. Absolutely should be in Albemarle county. It should serve the residents of the county, not the lawyers.
- Parking is expensive and hard to find. The court rooms are not comfortable and not easily accessible to persons with disabilities.
- Parking is horrible and too far from the courts. Drunks and bums on every corner.
- Parking is often impossible.
- Parking is terrible.
- Parking is terrible and I think it's mean of the county to not provide free parking for witnesses and litigants.
- Parking is the biggest issue for me.
- Parking issues.
- Parking, confusion.
- Parking, lack of.
- Parking. And now it seems dangerous.
- Parking/ access.
- Sometimes available parking is blocks away and expensive.
- That it is near the J & DR courts and the City Courts makes the location of the Albemarle courts especially convenient. It couldn't be better.
- The traffic on 29, and the fact that it is so far north, would be extremely difficult to deal with for most residents.
- There is no parking. The Market St. garage is sometimes full and there is no validation for small claims court business.
- They are convenient because I have put my office in the Court Square area. But for everyone else, the parking is a misery. Bottom line, we are trying to stuff 10 pounds of potatoes in a five-pound bag. The city allowed too many buildings to be built on open-air parking lots. Moreover, getting downtown from out in the county gets harder every year. I'd suggest putting the courts on 5th Street Extended, off of Route 64, near where the police department and other county buildings are located.
- Traffic and parking issues.
- Unknown.
- Very close to home, although parking can be a challenge.
- Very convenient for me; not for the public.
- Very convenient if parking could be addressed especially short term options near the courthouses.
- Walkable to other downtown destinations, reducing parking and driving time/hassle.
- When bringing someone that requires assistance there is. I place to park to stay with that person. There is actually no place to park and get the other person safely in a building so that I can go legally park the car.
- You just need parking validation.

## Appendix E: Question 6: Current Downtown Location Important Factors-Additional Comments

- A. the current location does NOT have respectful and reasonable accessibility; elderly and persons with disabilities are utterly dis-respected in the current location; poor, fixed income, and others are dis-respected by inconvenience and cost of parking. B. danger, risk and stress: the current location comes with danger, risk and stress because of the location: traffic is difficult and stressful and will only become more so when the Belmont Bridge is under repair/construction (or whatever the City plans to do); the city has 4 times the violent crime rate as the county and the city has invited risk and danger into the current location – as we are all aware! C. 'History' of the courts?: the city has defamed the county's history and the historical character of the County Courthouse.
- Access: there is NO free or even paid but convenient parking at current location. Safety: driving into the congested downtown is UN-safe for many reasons including that the City has made the Court Square a TARGET for all sorts of violent radicals!
- Accessible by public transportation.
- Accessibility is most important!
- Albemarle County and its courts predate the existence of an independent city of Cville. Its courts should remain where they are.
- Albemarle courts should be in the county and not in the middle of the city.
- All city and county courts should be located together and in a central location.
- All options are least important to me.
- All the courts need to stay close to each other for the convenience of clients and staff. The historical significance of keeping the courts in the historical Court Square area is extremely important to me.
- Centralized courts efficient for lawyers, judges and citizens. Historic significance is very important.
- Centralizing courts in a single place only makes sense.
- Connection/access to city courts.
- Convenience of the public is Most Important.
- Convenience to clients - bus systems, parking at my office and walking to court, convenience to the jury at lunch break.
- Convenience to other courts is key.
- County business should be in the county.
- Court Square is an historic venue which attracts hundreds of people who are going to the Court Houses and conducting a business here on a daily basis. This community has been able to provide parking and access to food and amenities to court participants during the 41 years that I have practiced here. The Courts provide an economic stimulus to the historic downtown area and the entire apparatus of the Charlottesville legal system (Sheriff's Offices, Clerk's, and the lawyer community are contained in a small but vibrant community here resulting in efficiencies in the delivery of legal services. Somehow parking has been solved up until now and some investment in a parking structure is called for.
- Courts move out of Charlottesville.
- Density, Access to Transit.

- Ease of access to parking, services.
- Ease of clients and attorneys moving between the courts on Court Square.
- Ease of parking is a huge concern.
- FREE PARKING or at least AVAILABLE parking.
- Function v tradition.
- Get the courts out of the city.
- Having the Courts together is extremely important to non-lawyers who use the courts. It means they can go from one court to another easily and quickly. Among other reasons, this is very important if they go to the wrong court by mistake.
- History is extremely important to me. We are a "history" state and a "history" city.
- I also utilize the downtown branch of the library and the historical society. The current configuration allows me access to all research resources within walking distance of parking and lunch on the downtown mall. I am concerned that moving the economic engine of the court system will hurt the small businesses located downtown.
- I think parking should be most important.
- I think the court should be moved if the state legislature will not allow the confederate soldier in from to be relocated to a place not in front of the court.
- If the courts move, then the county offices need to move with them.
- IN THE COUNTY NOT city.
- It does not make sense to move the courts away from support services that people who use the courts need to coordinate with. This is a negative thing for people in the legal community, jurors, judges, support personnel and regular people who go to court. A large number of people would be inconvenienced.
- It is a terrible inconvenience to split the City/County court system and extreme financial waste for the County.
- It's very important to maintain these functions downtown. There historical, social and programmatic reasons to keep the courts where they are. A 'new' facility (not walkable to anything really) would be a waste of resources and bad planning.
- Just get Albemarle Co. business out of Charlottesville.
- Keep it where it is. Get parking in city.
- Keep the courts downtown ... it is the center of community.
- Leave courts in City ... you can move the county office building and sell/lease the old school and parking.
- Let's honor the historical significance of the present location. It is beloved.
- Like the historic Court Square for sense of peace and safety as well as history.
- Lived in Arlington and Fairfax. Liked what they did.
- Location needs to be easily accessible to all County residents.
- Make records available online.
- May I add: 'history' is very important. the City has acted STUPIDLY about history for years! the statues are not the first or only issue. City has proved itself - through many years - to be truly offensive of history learning, civics learning, civil discourse. When we prioritize 'history' we mean that our history must be displayed, exemplified and translated into our own times TO ENSURE

VIBRANT CIVILITY, EXCELLENT CIVICS EDUCATION, and the like. A NEW 21st CENTURY COURTS complex should be designed also to be a 21st Century PUBLIC FORUM! THAT CANNOT be done in present location for very many reasons.

- Most important is the vitality of the downtown mall and the professionals/money that will leave if courts and then offices move. The downtown mall is the heart of Charlottesville. Half of the people or probably more who eat and shop there every day are related in some way to the courts.
- Most important: cost to the county, both directly via operational costs and indirectly via attorney fees (city & county courts should be convenient for them as well).
- Move the courts outside of Charlottesville city limits.
- Need better parking.
- Our community is centered on downtown Charlottesville, and the courthouses are concrete manifestations of that fact. To move the county courts would be to reduce the sense of community that we enjoy in Charlottesville/Albemarle.
- Parking.
- Parking / public transportation connectivity (most important).
- Parking at current location is difficult and costly!
- Parking is an important factor to me.
- Parking is critical and it is terrible in the current location.
- PARKING IS KEY!!!
- Parking is the utmost importance.
- Parking problems.
- Parking should be convenient.
- Parking terrible.
- Parking, parking, parking - the lack and affordability thereof.
- Parking. A problem now.
- Please keep it where it is.
- Please locate in the county not the city.
- Prefer to see the County Court in the county and outside the city.
- Preserving relationship between county and city.
- Proximity to so many other courts is CONFUSING to public who cannot tell where they are supposed to be. Extremely inefficient.
- The current co-location of city and county courts, and the attorneys is a sustainable setup. Attorneys can walk to court. The don't lose "billable hours" commuting to and from court.
- The downtown location makes county jury duty bearable.
- The historical value of the building will continue even if is repurposed. I think it is very important to the attorneys who have located their offices nearby. Solving the parking problem for visitors is very important.
- The history of downtown will still be there.
- The legal community has grown around Court Square for more than 200 years. These roots and connections cannot be just picked up and moved up 29.
- The location downtown is not important. This question seems to assume otherwise and skews your thinking.

- There is not enough parking downtown!!
- There's a practical convenience to having all the courts together: when a person ends up in the wrong court (which happens daily), the correct court is close at-hand.
- To have the first local female circuit judge sit in a courtroom frequented by the founders of the country is historically important - but that is not a compelling reason to stay.
- Viability of Historic Downtown Charlottesville.
- What do you mean?
- Without the courts in city center, there is no there.

## Appendix F: Question 7 Current Downtown Location Negative Impact-Additional Comments

- A. Danger, risk and stress: the city's violent crime rate is 4 times that of the county and the city's poor decisions has added danger to the current location.
- Age and condition of the buildings.
- Walking to parking garage, alone, from later court hours.
- Because the courts are so close, when a litigant shows up at the wrong courtroom, it's no big deal. People frequently call our office believing their case is in one jurisdiction when it's in the other.
- Convenience of clients to visit attorneys and Courts.
- Core reason for courts: administration of justice. Anything that impacts administration of justice is most impactful.
- Cost to the poor.
- County money being spent in the city; please use county land.
- County residents deserve to have courts in county.
- Current location and facilities work quite satisfactorily for me.
- Dated facilities.
- Downtown C'ville is no longer a nice place to be.
- Economically, we have prime real estate in the County that can be effectively utilized for our court system. Additionally, the positive revenue impact the moving of the courts will have on County businesses.
- Functionality.
- I do not want to be in the city limits. I do not appreciate how the city manages itself and at this point I do not even feel safe in the city. Please move the courts to somewhere managed by Albemarle County so residents can feel safe and protected.
- I enjoy going downtown. Parking anywhere is a fact of life. It is interesting to walk down town. It would be boring walking through a giant parking lot.
- I have rarely if ever had a client fail to come to an appointment or court date due to traffic or parking problems. Since I am a lawyer, my clients know where to go, but I often answer the "which court is this" or "am I in the right court" questions.
- I prefer that the courts be moved to a new location outside Charlottesville. Charlottesville gets 15.8 million in revenue sharing money from Albemarle County. I think it is time to stop supporting downtown Charlottesville and their business interests and taxpayers.
- Keep all courts together. It helps the downtown business flow.
- Lack of parking.
- Lack of secure building.
- Leave courts in city ... there are city, sheriff, child custody, cross use of judges that NEED to be closely located.
- Maybe one of the other city parcels should have been used for a parking garage instead of an office building.
- Move from within the city to the county.
- No negative impacts.



- No negative impacts. The question is worded a bit confusingly so not sure how to convey that with the rankings.
- No problem & like drive through UVA to get there. Why would anyone not appreciate the beauty & historic nature of the current complex? Only developers interested in their own economic gain! If we wanted to live in such an area, we'd relocate to VA Beach. There are many possible solutions that would maintain this historic complex while modernizing its existing infrastructure (e.g., building down to add office & Court space; underground parking complex). Just think "out of the box" and don't give in to developers!
- Not sure how to answer, "no negative impacts." There are some as listed in survey.
- Once you know your way around, i.e. after the first time, it is OK.
- Out of the city!
- Parking.
- Parking and believe it should be in Lane Building.
- Parking for all of downtown is a struggle, but driving up congested 29 would be worse.
- Parking is the major issue for most citizens using the courts.
- Parking needs to be greatly improved.
- Poorly organized. Need to be modernized.
- Proximity to so many other courts is CONFUSING to public who cannot tell where they are supposed to be. Extremely inefficient.
- Really inconvenient location.
- Safety concerns.
- Safety is also an issue. It appears that the official city council position is in favor of mob violence. Just last week a person was standing silent in Lee Park when accosted by a group of trouble makers and had to be escorted out of a public park by the police for his safety. One of those accosting him appeared to be a person arrested at least twice in previous activities, and on bond for that very behavior. Suppose that had happened in Jackson Park on criminal docket call day, or when a jury panel was arriving to court. County taxpayers and users of the county courts should not have to risk fighting to find a parking place only to have to run the gauntlet of potential violent troublemakers to get to court.
- SAFETY is an actual concern especially since the City has proved that it manipulates and compromises effective public safety and violates the Constitution for petty political purposes!
- The confederate statute erected by the Daughters of the Confederacy in 1908 is a symbol to people of color of the racism and that should not be at the entrance to a court of justice.
- The most negative impact is your wanting to do this in the first place.
- There is no available ADA or general parking nearby and ADA access is poor.
- This question is worded poorly.
- This is a bad question. All results will confuse more than clarify. Who wrote this survey?
- This is an ideal environment for myself and my clients. I provide clients with parking while they attend court or appointments with me.
- Traffic congestion is a problem throughout Charlottesville and the urban ring. Difficult to get from one side of town to the other due to inadequate roads and lined up traffic. I am fortunate to have parking at my downtown office, but my driveway is frequently blocked by court parkers and I

encounter people parking illegally daily. I also encounter people who are having difficulty finding a court or related office frequently. Clear signage outside the courts would be helpful.

- UNSAFE: the congested downtown is not only stressful (bad for my cardiovascular condition) but also objectively DANGEROUS with so many homeless and other vagrants AND the CITY intentionally has made the Court Square a TARGET for all sorts of violent and/or deranged and/or unpredictable extremists!
- Very confusing question. Bottom line, there are no real negative impacts to being downtown.
- While confusion over which building to go to exists, moving the courts away from downtown would exacerbate this problem and make more people miss court, causing the court to issue a capias and then the deputies have to go find the person, etc.

## Appendix G: Question 8 Project Considerations-Additional Comments

- A. location of the courts, and how it is designed, within the landscape and within the community, the courts complex could become a community asset that the community respects; for example, as a location for civics learning, civil discourse, community building – ALL OF WHICH ARE VERY MUCH NEEDED! This is an opportunity that may eventually be discovered on par, as a vital value, to the economic development/revitalization values.
- Ability for LAJC and others to efficiently serve clients.
- Ability of agencies that support individuals that are dealing with the courts to interact easily, lowering the non-profits' expenses and making them more effective.
- ADA compliance and better ease by navigating in newer buildings.
- Add to existing county office building.
- As we said elsewhere a new courts complex must include design that incorporate a 21st century PUBLIC FORUM that has opportunities - ongoing! Real! Fun for kids and meaningful for adults! That changes so that people WANT to come to learn! - About CIVICS EDUCATION, CIVIL DISCOURSE, LEARNING ABOUT our history of 'rule of law and not of men', and local government! IT MUST as we see from the City's endless dangerous failures in this regard! And the County can become a truly 'world-class' model for CIVICS EDUCATION AND CIVIL DISCOURSE!
- CASA bought their building downtown in order to be close to all court facilities, lawyers, and other court services. The county and city currently have a "judicial critical mass". Improve it, don't destroy it.
- Central location for optimum fiscal efficiency.
- Concerns about what is currently going on in Charlottesville.
- Convenience to my office location – this will greatly impact my ability to efficiently provide legal services to clients.
- Cost of new building verses remodel plus room to grow.
- Cost to the poor.
- County business in the County! Also, use of Albemarle Square.
- Dividing the community is powerfully WRONG. We are essentially one community and that concept should be strengthened, not weakened.
- Don't spend our money!
- Economic impact on county – not cost but impact and potential improvement to country business and development. Why wasn't this an option in this list?
- Fairness to low income community.
- Find other ways to pressure the city to provide parking, or even attempt to buy land for the County's own parking needs.
- For convenience, having the courts and county government together would assist the citizens, basically one stop shopping.
- Get out of the city limits!
- Get us the hell out of this rotten city.
- Handicap parking.

- Having court services together for county residents will be great in a new county location. The ten-block walk from legal aid to the courts is not proximity today in the city.
- Having the buildings situated in and around other historic buildings makes for a better experience for the users of the Courts. The idea that there should be shopping center convenience in an area defined by a sea of cars is just a disaster for the larger community.
- History can be preserved – but the use doesn't have to stay there.
- I believe County courts should be in Lane Building.
- I believe having the County courts in the County is important for the economic development and identity of the County.
- I don't experience congested traffic in the court square area.
- I say proximity to restaurants, etc. is not that important but for those involved in a trial, litigants, jurors, attorneys, the fact that there are lots of places to eat nearby is really important – if the Court gives everyone 45 minutes to go get something to eat on a trial that began in the morning and may not end until late in the afternoon or in the evening, having a place to get something to eat without having to go get their car is important. And, having practiced law for 20 years, it is the most common experience to have someone show up in a courtroom and ask if they are in the right place – it is extremely common for someone to be in the County G.D. court but ought to be in the City instead. Same for J & DR – having the courts near each other is such a wonderful thing.
- Improve quality and capacity of services to the public.
- Improving parking, signage and renovations to the existing courts would be ideal. Beyond that, I think a centralized location within the County (i.e., in or near the City) is very important for ease of transportation access for all court users: county residents, employees, attorneys, non-residents. Due to proximity to major roads, etc.
- Keeping the courts in their original location that they were designed for in the 1800's.
- Law offices are located around the courts. It is very convenient for them. Relocating is not an option for them. For a deputy clerk, we can work anywhere. Can a parking structure be built within a reasonable budget?
- Message to community members (residents and businesses including those wishing to relocate to area) about where the heart of the community lies. Are we a community with a heart surrounded by suburbs and country or a disaggregated sprawl? THIS is the most important issue.
- Move county office building to county. Move courts to county office building.
- Move to a more convenient location in the county. Rio area would be good.
- Moving courts would demand city reversion to town status.
- Negotiate with City to participate in parking, costs etc.
- Not county resident but own com. Property on Berkshire drive. Currently own commercial property on Berkmar and am concerned about tax impact as owner of this property.
- Opportunity to spur economic activity in the county to offset massive pending school needs.
- Out of city.
- Parking.
- Please don't make Cville into anywhere USA. Preserve the history and buildings.
- Population growth projections.
- Proximity to attorney base. Downtown.

- Safety issues. The City and close proximity to criminals in the court system makes me afraid and uncomfortable even going near the courts.
- Safety of employees and users.
- SAFETY! Also the City's intentional making Court Square a TARGET for violent, and/or deranged, and/or unpredictable EXTREMISTS points out the GREAT NEED for the courts complex to be a welcoming, inviting place for civics education; there should be easy parking and a community room, that has a series on civics education, education about law and law enforcement (I am a graduate of the County Police Citizens Academy which is an excellent model).
- Sell County office building to City for Convention Ctr.
- Serving those using the courts.
- Spend less tax payer money. Move it out to the county.
- Stop wasting our money on consultants. Own and do your jobs.
- The access of defendants and families to legal services.
- The Charlottesville/Albemarle population has increased significantly since I moved here in 1989. It will continue to grow. Parking downtown may present a future problem, but I have never seen either parking garage full. If parking downtown becomes a problem the City cannot solve, then Albemarle can build a parking garage next to the baseball field at the old Lane High School/current County Office Building.
- The county courts should be relocated into the county.
- Use county facilities; enough county money is already going to the city.
- Use of current county land and facilities, if possible, would make the most sense. Converting the current county office building (Lane High) into a court complex and moving many of the departments to other county locations such as Burley property, fifth street complex, or county property near Monticello High should be cost effective and better located than a totally new complex such as Albemarle Square.
- We didn't elect the BOS to go into the commercial business, this is not the Soviet Union yet, I hope.
- We need to spend money on water, schools & parks first.
- What about the economic impact on downtown Charlottesville, which we all love and enjoy, if the Courts move out of the city? It will kill downtown, which is struggling as it is. I'm sure solutions to the parking and accessibility issues can be developed. Please don't destroy our beautiful downtown historic district!
- You'd still need to preserve the old courthouse.

## Appendix H: Question 9 Option 5 Convenience-Additional Comments

- "Very" does not begin to describe it, but that's the highest ranking selection on offer.
- Ability to practice efficiently in both courts would be impaired by the distance between the courts.
- Absolutely essential for County residents. We need to utilize these prime County spaces, as big box retailers close.
- Access is somewhat improved, but the facilities could be modernized.
- All courts should be moved including J and D court. The separation of the Sheriff's Office would be a security concern.
- Are you kidding me? So really all you are looking for is justification in the move you are going to make anyway.
- County courts should be in the county.
- Current location is not convenient to county citizen use.
- Do not move ... renovate.
- Great location.
- Grossly inefficient to move some courts away from the others.
- I avoid 29 north. we've just had a project to relieve congestion for 29 – why add something that will add more congestion? Hard for people to get to 29 from east west. Why would I want to go farther from southern and eastern Alb to get there? Or even west actually?
- I believe 5th Street near the county office building would be better. It's right off of I-64.
- I don't go often enough to make a difference to me personally.
- I live 2 miles from that location.
- I live near there. But the sprawl represented by this kind of development works against any sense of unity or community.
- I live south of town; would need to see a map re: connectivity / public transportation / alternate routes from just 29N.
- If the question is whether it would be convenient to move the courts up on Route 29 north, the answer is that it would be VERY inconvenient. PLEASE do not do this. That would be arguably convenient for only one slice of Albemarle. Southern, western, and eastern Albemarle would all be hurt by that. If you want something reasonably convenient, why not put it on 5th Street extended, right off 64, near your current location and (importantly) the police department?
- If you move ONLY the courts, those in county government would have to drive to the courts instead of walk.
- Inconvenient in the distance from law enforcement and attorneys.
- Is there room at the Rio/29 area?
- It makes no sense to try to achieve more tax revenues at the expense of the public, attorneys and court personnel.
- It will be more convenient if there is adequate parking
- It would be easy for me to get there from my home in Forest Lakes. But it will be very inconvenient in that most days I will have to drive to the Courthouse and back to my office or to the City or JDR courts, sometimes for the same client.

- It's not convenient, and it will lower the value of my building. But safety and parking require the courts to be moved out NOW.
- Keep all the courts together downtown near historical Court Square. Courts should not be used as a development tool.
- Move them to former Blue Ridge Hospital, state property.
- Moving the Courthouse would cause much more congestion on 29. People live in many areas of the county. We need to think of them. The downtown location brings attention to our history. Build on what we have.
- Our convenience should not matter as much as the convenience to the County. The convenience and priority to the County is paramount.
- Pantops.
- People are more familiar with downtown Cville than they would be with space age development on Jupiter's ring.
- Route 29 traffic is horrible!
- Since J&DR Court would still be downtown, and that is a court that we appear in most often (several times a week), we would not relocate to a county location and would have to drive.
- The move of the county seat from Scottsville to Charlottesville was to make it central to the county's population. Do we know the center of Albemarle?
- The road situation in that area HAVE improved. Be sure to include sidewalks and bike paths for safe coming and going through all that area in multiple modes. AND be insure to ADD bus service to that area to make it easy to get there, and get out, by bus, on the hour every hour, 7AM to 7PM.
- This is a much worse location for me than downtown.
- Traffic is already congested on its own, putting it there will make courts late.
- Very inconvenient for me and for non-lawyers who use the courts.
- Would be convenient but current location is also convenient.
- Would likely be inconvenient to legal workers.
- You do not need ONE more thing on 29 North.

## Appendix I: Question 10 Additional Input

- "Option 5" would noticeably increase the already annoying gap in cooperation and coordination between the city and the county. Grow together, not further apart!
- 1. Taking the courts away from the mall may impact businesses and 2. greatly disrupt the law offices in terms of convenience. Many law offices enjoy the ability to walk over here. Will there be convenient locations for them to relocate near the new court locations? Lastly, many of these buildings downtown will have to be renovated or torn down eventually. If the courts stayed it could be a boost economically for the County to solve its problems here. We need a parking structure and so does everyone else. Fix the problem we are already familiar with and boost the economy here. Going somewhere else could be hugely expensive. I have a background in construction lending. Renovating, though costly, is less expensive than new construction. It doesn't matter to me where I drive to work. But, I recommend we place our bets on our current location.
- 1. Though I don't have exact data to support this, my sense is that somewhere between 70% and 90% of the attorneys who utilize these courts occupy offices within walking distance to them. If you relocate the courts, attorneys will either migrate to that area (assuming there is available/affordable space to do so), or travel to that area every day, which will cause the already congested Rio/29 area to become nothing short of a nightmare.
- Again, I think it is a great opportunity for the County to utilize the courts project to improve life in the County – to promote economic development, County identity, etc. as well as improving access to the courts for our residents. Having the courts crammed into the small downtown space, while it may be convenient to some of the legal community, ignores the convenience to community members who must go to court. Moving the courts would be a great benefit.
- Albemarle County Courts need to be located where it will be most convenient, safest, and easiest for county residents to seek help, not to help the lawyers and others.
- Albemarle County should begin moving away from any support for the City of Charlottesville in light of the current events taking place there, including the revenue sharing agreement.
- Albemarle would be removing developable/re-developable land from the tax rolls, when it has the benefit of having those services located in the City now. Other government complexes, such as Henrico, don't seem to catalyze nearby business.
- All County business & facilities should be at County locations. County purchases should NOT be from the city. Meetings and celebrations should not be in the city. Why bankroll the city when we are forced to share County taxpayers revenue with them? The Confederate statue in front of the Courts should be moved to an honorable place in the County.
- Almost all of the professionals who work in the courts system want the courts to stay downtown. Moving them will be bad for the justice system, slowing things down, causing confusion, and creating problems.
- As a County Taxpayer, I believe the City takes tremendous advantage of the County. In the long run, moving the Courts to the County will stimulate growth and generate significant tax revenues – all of which will benefit the County. Many in the legal community have a vested interest in the status quo. But that is not what is best for the taxpayers and the residents of Albemarle County.



- As a Dunlora resident, I don't want one bit of my county tax dollars going to the city. This includes County office buildings AND any money transferred via the extortion revenue sharing agreement.
- As a long-term resident, I would very much like to see us remove ourselves from Charlottesville. I don't want to go there at all. I pay taxes to Albemarle. Let's bring it to Albemarle!
- As a taxpaying, long-term citizen of Albemarle County, I no longer want to support the City of Charlottesville directly or indirectly in any way. I think it is a shame that a portion of my tax dollars goes to the City of Charlottesville annually due to the revenue sharing agreement. City of Charlottesville government has shown over and over again that they take the revenue sharing agreement for granted and they waste huge sums of taxpayer money annually.
- As long as our courts are in Charlottesville, they will control our traffic and parking – this seems like a bad plan because their interests are not ours. What the city has done with downtown parking and traffic is horrible and shows no sign of improving.
- Attorneys, including court appointed attorneys and public defenders, frequently have cases scheduled in both county and city courts on the same day. Often, attorneys move back and forth between courts in rapid succession. Moving the county courts will have a significant impact on the ability of these attorneys to represent as many clients as they currently do, which will in turn clog court dockets as scheduling cases becomes more difficult. It may also result in fewer attorneys being willing to take court-appointed matters in the county, because of the inconvenience.
- Avoid self-serving "donations" of land from self-serving developers.
- Be aware of the burden of cost of any decision being made to the taxpayers of the County. It seems our County only knows how to spend rather than be fiscally responsible with our tax dollars!
- City courts are cramped as well, so we should sell them our buildings to facilitate the expansion of their courts and move out!
- City shows disrespect for county residents and laws as exhibited in ragged mountain reservoir area dispute.
- Confidence that P3 would work. Tax dollars at risk.
- Cost of real estate for a court complex in the county is too high. We do not have a number of vacant factory buildings like Augusta Co. had in Verona that makes the process feasible.
- County business should be in the county. City and county are different.
- Courts do not have much spin-off economic development benefit, some patronage of restaurants, some title insurance, only a few lawyer offices would relocate, would occupy space that would be better put to private sector business/industry/housing, better alternative would be a small county satellite center for police or possibly a few other services that would benefit from a northern location.
- Don't move the courts please!
- Don't waste our tax dollars on something like this!
- Efficiency of use of existing facilities, city county relations, minimize destruction of county green space.
- End the revenue "sharing?" agreement between the County and City. This is a travesty that the BOS has allowed to go unchecked for the past 20 years. \$16,000,000 per year will go a long way to fund the move of the courts to Rio/29. Think about your County taxpayers and businesses for once!

- Expand economy with downtown location.
- Fairness to people of low-income who need public transport and who often get confused about which court, city or county, they must go to. Public Defenders cannot take as many cases if have to split time to 2 sights.
- Find another way to reconcile the differences between Alb Co and City of Charlottesville Revenue Sharing Agreement. Leave the court system where it is and apply all that money to something more useful to the general community.
- Get all county resources out of Charlottesville.
- Get out of Charlottesville city limits!
- Going to court is often the most stressful experience people will ever have. Having an operation would be equally stressful. Courts involve loss of freedom and being incarcerated; perhaps losing custody of one's children, the prospect of having to pay spousal support, or failing to receive adequate support, whether you are found guilty of drunk driving, or your child is found to be a truant. If an adoption is approved or a guardian is appointed for your elderly parent. These stressful events, tended by a smoothly functioning court system with all the players nearby is a great benefit of the current system of having judges, lawyers, clerks and additional personnel nearby – like a big medical complex. Thanks.
- Has an effort been made to end the revenue sharing as a way to pay for the work needed to upgrade the court buildings so the courts can stay in their historic location?
- Having all the courts close to each other is very important to the legal community. It is also very important to non-lawyer citizens who need to use the courts.
- Having served time as a jury member, the waiting area for jurors is very cramped and uncomfortable. Waiting for sometimes hours, there should be better facilities with more amenities.
- How is it going to be paid for? Are we going to need another bond issue so that our grandchildren will be burdened with paying this bond off just like the school bond issue. And what is the impact on future taxes. It's nice to have new buildings but can we really afford all of these things. I think the Board needs to take a course in economics 101.
- How would relocating the courts benefit development of county businesses and economy in general? How would it impact surrounding neighborhoods? Why leave these items out of the survey?
- I am concerned that separating the County's courts from the City's court system will put an undue burden on people who work to advocate for citizens that need to come before the court. I also think that Court Square is linked to the early days of our nation and to the founders of the country and our constitution and it would be a shame to dismantle the court system in its historic location.
- I am very concerned about what will happen to our historic courthouse with both options. I do not like the idea of the original building being altered except to restore – i.e. no additions. If the complex moves, if the old courthouse should be given to the Historical Society.
- I can't imagine voters approving a move to a non-contiguous site ... the county would have to devote too many resources (communications time/expense) to influence enough voters.
- I don't believe re-locating courts to Rio road/US 29 intersection is best use of the limited land available in that area.

- I don't think courts will encourage ec dev. courts are changing. Fewer people actually go to court and those who do will only want fast food, including attorneys and others who will be driving back and forth and stressed out driving through for take-outs. Just leave it alone and stop being pie in the sky. Look for industry or high tech/bio tech, retail is changing and courts won't help make up for that reality. Consider a long-range plan to consolidate services and eventually merge w cites we only need one court area.
- I have had experience with directing people who were not sure of which court they were to attend. Having the City and County courts in close proximity has minimized possible disruption to such individuals when advising them of where to go.
- I have never understood why county offices and functions were in the city!
- I have seen no development/positive area economic impact at or around any of the courts that have been moved to a rural/semi-rural area. Courts do not attract businesses or homes – just bail bond offices.
- I hope you all will decide to leave the courts where they are currently. Thank you for considering our input.
- I think construction of a new facility could increase the safety and security of the courts.
- I think input from non-lawyers should be considered. I am an attorney who, over time, has had offices in court square and also in the county. Clients were so grateful to not have to drive downtown and not have to pay for parking at the county location. Downtown lawyers don't seem to understand the distaste so many people have to the downtown streets, the hassle of finding parking, etc. Tough to have endure that when you're also stressed about going to court. I find downtown charming, and like that it's walkable, but I don't think this issue should be decided on the basis of what lawyers want; to be meaningful, this survey should be sent to non-lawyer users of the court: go to the courthouses every day for a week and pass it out to those who are there, as litigants, witnesses, or one-time seekers of licenses, records, etc.
- I think it's actually very important to the fiscal health and quality of life of Albemarle residents to have a vibrant and successful downtown in Charlottesville. Be careful what you wish for in this tit for tat with the city. Take up their offer of parking, certainly.
- I think moving the County Admin. Office to a Rio / 29 location would make a lot more sense. As long as other city courts and the J&DR court remained downtown, I doubt other attorneys would more their offices to a Rio /29 location.
- I think the county courts should definitely be located in the county.
- I think the County must be very leery of future joint projects with the City. The City seems to play a child-like game of "it's my ball so we will play by our rules". The recent water supply ordeal comes to mind!
- I would like to see improvement in facilities for storage and archiving of public county records. The current storage is inadequate and some of the records are deteriorating. Any improvement to the court facilities should consider digitization of all public records to increase accessibility and preserve them for future users.
- Identification of the different courts and their locations.
- If the city wants the County to keep the general district and circuit courts within the city confines, the trade-off should be abolishment of the annexation taxes paid each year by the County to the city.

- If the courts remain downtown the City should contribute more to the overall cost as part of the benefit to their business base.
- If the state legislature does not change the law to allow localities to decide on the removal of confederate monuments, then the Court should be moved so that the symbols of racism erected during the Jim Crow era will not be present when people of color enter the Albemarle County Court house.
- I'm glad you're getting input from citizens who use the courts in addition to the attorneys who don't want to relocate away from the downtown mall.
- I'm most concerned about those citizens who need to utilize the court system but don't have transportation or ready access to technology or who don't speak English fluently and how this move might impact them. I'd want to know how often do people who need to attend court (other than the attorneys) need to attend court in both the city and county on the same day? How likely/unlikely is it that citizens will not know which court house (city or county) they need to report to and find themselves across town at the wrong building? Will a move help or hinder that?
- Impact on other stakeholders.
- impacts on downtown Charlottesville.
- Important for the County government to coordinate with the City government and vice versa. I view the County and the City as one community. Continuation of the centralization of the Courts of the City and the County and supporting services in downtown Charlottesville is very important.
- In the location on 29 you will have a larger parking area and easy to get to.
- inefficiencies in daily work among attorneys with a split court system were clearly spelled out by them at the BOS meeting and ignored by the Board.
- It is a travesty to have lawyers and the legal community traveling back and forth to conduct business when it all be done in one place. What a waste of time and money!
- It is important for the jobs directly and indirectly associated with the current location of the Courts to remain within walking distance of the Mall both to make those jobs more attractive to fill and to help support Mall businesses and the vitality of the Mall, which is an important amenity for both the city and county.
- It is very important that the site be easily accessible by public transportation.
- It just seems like greed and rivalry between the county and city rather than any public interest.
- It only makes sense to locate the county courts in the county for ease of access to county residents and for the economic benefits from having it in the county. When the courthouse was first built, Charlottesville was only a village and it was appropriate at the time, but things have changed.
- It seems to me that the County benefits from having a vibrant City. The more we try to develop commercial areas outside of the city center, our County becomes just more sprawl: big box stores, huge parking expanses, highways and forgotten strip malls. Let's beautify the County and make it a great place to live instead of a great place to drive around from one shopping center to another.
- It's high time City and County worked together for a change and respected each other's needs.
- I've wondered why the courts wouldn't best be relocated adjacent to the County Complex on US 29 south of town, which would make it near the jail and other county services.
- Jefferson Madison Monroe. It would be unforgivable to move the court from this historic place.

- Just feel that people who do need to use the court services need to have easy access to the complex and downtown makes it extremely hard to park and find the correct place to go. The rt 29 and Rio area is much more accessible to all of the counties residents than the current location ... there is no room to expand or to add parking downtown so putting tons of money into that old location is just not a viable option for the future.
- Just get our business out of Charlottesville!
- Juvenile Court, court security.
- Keep history where history was made and also think of the convenience for tourists interested in all the court history being in one place – downtown Charlottesville.
- Keep the costs intact.
- Keeping county funds and sales within the county, not subsidizing the city (more).
- Keeping expenses down and not raising taxes by better managing the counties operational and capita improvement budget.
- Lack of parking results in a lot of wasted time and frustration.
- Law offices and restaurants could be located near a new court complex.
- Make the courts cheaper in court square.
- Many attorneys have moved out of the downtown area so no need for courts to be there. Parking is horrendous and sometimes impossible. With the on-going changes for parking implemented by the city, the county should see other alternatives for the courthouse to best accommodate the citizens of Albemarle County, not City of Charlottesville. Merging with the City would eliminate a lot of expenses for both county and city needs to be on the table.
- Many lawyers' offices are downtown which is convenient to the courts. The courts contribute to the vibrancy and ambience of downtown.
- More revenue for the county by the courts being located in the county.
- Move the courts! Justice can be served anywhere, not just in downtown Charlottesville. Be responsible with Albemarle taxpayer money and keep the investment in Albemarle!
- Move them out of downtown, it is a nightmare to have the courts there.
- Moving will create negative impact on all downtown constituencies.
- Moving Albemarle County's court systems to a County location should be a done deal not an issue. For this older resident of Albemarle County, safety is a number one concern. Please move the Court System from downtown Charlottesville.
- Moving county offices out of downtown would be better than moving courts but does not have significant economic development value suggested by some.
- Moving courts complex will vastly increase traffic by making bus access more difficult and by requiring multiple new daily vehicle trips from downtown attorney offices.
- Moving it to Rio/29 still poses a congestion issue. I would rather see the courts moved to the Avon Extended/Mill Creek area if they have to be moved.
- Moving the courts away from the city courts downtown will have an extremely negative effect on lawyers who regularly practice in both city and county courts – many in the same day. It will be particularly difficult for the state public defenders who are responsible for both court systems, have limited staff, and have limited parking. The caseloads that each public defender carries

means that adding the commuting time to get to/from county courts located outside of downtown will simply take valuable time away from their substantive work on cases.

- Moving the courts into a suburban county location would create more traffic – all of the people who use or support the court system would need to drive back and forth to their offices downtown at least once daily. And this inconveniences a lot of people and makes them less productive.
- Moving the courts into the county would keep some of the money generated by nearby businesses to stay in the county ... it may sound selfish, but that's where I live.
- Moving the courts is likely to hurt Charlottesville. Hurting Charlottesville will eventually hurt Albemarle, more than any benefits Albemarle might hope to gain by moving the courts.
- Moving the courts out of downtown may help the city solve their parking issues. At this time I prefer not to go downtown at all.
- Moving to 29 North is a bad idea. You have tried so hard to get traffic off 29 North. Why put more on it? Also, ask yourself ... how long does it take a resident of Crozet or Scottsville to get to 29 North and Rio? A long time, that's what. No, if you want to move it, you should move it to 5th Street Extended off of Route 64. Very easy access for many, plus it's right near the police department and your other county building. Your other option is to buy the least historic building within 200 yards of the current location, demolish it, and put a parking lot on it. That, or buying the McGuire Woods building from them and turning that into your courthouse. It at least has parking underneath it."
- Moving to a highway, suburban site loses a sense of community and makes the justice system less visible. Main issue is the accessibility of legal services and the interconnection of courts in one vicinity.
- Need City Convention Center near downtown Mall, so sell County Facilities to Charlottesville and consolidate office complex at Pantops.
- Need to build a new complex for security, access to parking close to the courts, and just better access. I think spending money at the current location is a bad idea.
- No issues seem to have been covered. History would have inactive buildings so no real effect. Convenience of getting to the courts and parking should be the greatest issue.
- No tax increases should be involved in moving the courts.
- Not practicable to move circuit court without expensive and doubtful referendum.
- Once again the county needs to work with the city.
- Our community (both county and city) are driven by the legal economy, financial economy, tech startups, real estate and historic tourism. Preserving both the efficiency and history of the existing city and county court systems is paramount for the listed industries.
- Parking for court staff, citizens using the courts and law enforcement officers is the crux of the current problem. Moving some of the courts away from the current location will be incredibly inefficient. Prosecutors often practice in multiple courts during the same day (J&DR, General District, Circuit and sometimes courts of other jurisdictions including federal court and City courts). Joint sentencings often occur that require prosecutors to attend courts outside of their normal courthouse, special prosecutors appear in courts other than their own jurisdiction and judges frequently sit in more than one court. Defense attorneys appear in different courts throughout the day and many have intentionally located their offices near the court complex for

maximum efficiently. If a citizen accidentally appears in the wrong court, they can quickly remedy their mistake by walking a few blocks.

- The J&DR court utilizes the Albemarle Sheriff for security and prisoner transport, the Sheriff's office is able to meet that demand due to the proximity of all of the courts. We just spent in excess of \$20 million dollars renovating the J&DR court/Sheriff's office. A combined General District Court would free up space in the Circuit Court building and improve efficiency.
- Parking in the City requires county tax payers to pay to visit a county court. Albemarle Officers have no arrest authority outside of the court room on grounds surrounding the court which make victim protection impossible. A court in the County would alleviate many concerns for residents of the county. It is well past time to move out of Court Square which only benefits the City. Also not mentioned most of the tax revenue made by the attorneys trying these cases all goes back to the City.
- Parking needs to be stressed more.
- PARKING PARKNG PARKING.
- Parking, parking, parking.
- Please keep the courts downtown. The current downtown location of the courts makes them more accessible to the community because of the proximity to the Charlottesville courts and the U.S. Courthouse. Moving the courts would be a step backwards for the entire community.
- Possible use county land such as 5th S Ext. Build up not out. Quick in-out (ie i64), near city. Rt 29 is congested enough now. Save a ton of money. Seems to be a no brainer for 5th st ext.
- Private interest in dumping Albemarle Square on the county rather than the logical and historical need to stay in Charlottesville. A transparent SCAM.
- Proximity to city courts for efficiency of legal representatives, overall cost estimates and public transportation options and schedules.
- Public Transportation seems to be a concern for the County. People often end up in the wrong Court. Now imagine a person has to take public transportation to court and ends up at the wrong court. If that happens now, they walk across the street. If you move the court, and someone needs to get to the other court, it may take then hours to get there instead of 5 minutes.
- Radical solution (which I'm sure others have thought of): Charlottesville renegotiated (or abolishes) the Revenue Sharing agreement to help the County pay for the higher cost renovation. For the County to move the Courts out of the City is a vindictive, selfish, and short-sighted solution.
- Reduce county government expansion.
- Relocate the County Office building to the same location with the courts.
- remove county court from the negative issues recently developed by the city.
- Rt 29 north is very inconvenient for much of the County. Even with the new improvements which are great, it is still a pain to go there.
- Safety of the judges, court personnel, jurors, witnesses, and even those charged criminally is not addressed anywhere in this survey. My previous comments address this.
- Security should be maintained and the separation of Deputies would be a concern.
- Since most attorneys are located downtown, would they charge more because of the travel between their office and the County location or how would that impact the cost of their and availability to provide services.

- Stop wasting money on snowflake whiners!
- Tax \$\$\$!
- Thank for this difficult duty as our elected representatives!
- The Board of Supervisors should consider the impact on USERS of the system, including both attorneys and litigants. While the City and County have separate courts, litigants and attorneys can easily find themselves bouncing between City and County facilities in a single day. Keeping the courts close to one another makes the system more efficient.
- The buildings are historic but to have easy access for county residents to courts is very important.
- The City has agreed to provide the 100 parking spaces that County says it needs for the Courts, an excessive number, but they agreed. The Courts should be in the Court Square area. Economic development will not follow location of the Courts outside of downtown.
- The City invested big money to brick the court square area to look it did in Jefferson's time. Not just a waste if move occurs, what will replace the historic courthouses – I have not heard that discussed.
- The City is the heart of the County. The Courts belong in that heart!
- The concept of a public private partnership sounds like a boondoggle. The County should modernize and expand the existing courts complex without private developers like a normal facilities/CIP project.
- The convenience of attorneys should not be a preeminent consideration. Police and social workers and other professionals are also regularly in court. Wherever it is located, the design should include a workspace that allows professionals to bring their laptops and other mobile devices so they can work while waiting for the case to be called. There should be parking areas for ALL county employees who use the courts regularly and not just the police.
- The cost of moving the courts really isn't addressed sufficiently. Shouldn't that be a very important consideration?
- The county court should be in the county – not within Charlottesville city limits.
- The county courts should be convenient to county citizens. Currently they are only convenient for the lawyers.
- The county needs to move all of their employees out of the city, i.e. courts and all offices in the County Office Building due to what is currently going on within the city of Charlottesville. Our tax dollars should not be supporting the city.
- The County should honor its commitment to work with the City and finish what it started at the Levy site. Traffic is a problem that will not be solved by moving the Courts.
- The county's estimate for the cost of staying downtown is vastly inflated because it assumes far more extra space is needed than is the case. The county is not using the expertise of those who use the courts on a daily basis. We do not need tens of million of dollars worth of renovations downtown. We are very close to already having what we need.
- The County's relationship to the City is very important. You must work together for a positive outcome for both.
- The court should be more of an economic contribute to county rather than the city and more convenient to county citizens. The city has shown that it has no interest in preserving icons of history



- The courthouse is currently walking distance from COB. Moving it would presumably necessitate driving from COB to the new location.
- The courts keep the mall alive and flourishing. All of Charlottesville appreciates this when they more rarely go there to enjoy it.
- The courts should be compared with existing county services building (5th St extended) where there is currently almost no congestion AND county personnel ... police, DSS who make frequent court appearance S are already located – an added efficiency and cost savings to taxpayers.
- The current building could be used for other business. We can't always consider those who have regular business in that area. The needs have overcome the space availability and a new facility could be modernized such that it can last much longer and have greater functional capacity.
- The current courts are extremely outdated. It is foolish to continue to invest in property where we are dependent upon resources from the city. Renovating the courts would. E like dropping money down a hole.
- The current location helps bind our community together; historically and through our current legal and local government communities. The relocation of the Court house is a larger question that is presented in the survey that would separate local government staff. There currently exists a wedge between Cville and Albemarle, distance proximity would likely increase the wedge and discourage collaboration.
- The current location will ONLY GET WORSE or MUCH MUCH WORSE since the City has failed to replace the Belmont Bridge after all these years! THAT project will take VERY LONG to get done and will not likely relieve traffic congestion, confusion, etc.
- The downtown city streets were not built to handle the traffic of today. Having all court matters, attorneys, their clients, police & sheriffs depts. located in a bottleneck is no longer feasible. New modern facilities, easy to get to, ample parking would actually help the downtown mall attract more tourists.
- The efficiencies that would be lost by moving part of the courts out of Court Square cannot be overstated. Please listen to the people who actually work there.
- The expressed preference of the overwhelming majority of the legal community not to move the courts.
- The feasibility of the City and County Courts merging!
- The interplay between the Courts has been alluded to, but the specific negative effects on the County prosecutor, public defender, and private defense lawyers of moving the Circuit and General District Courts away from the City courts has only been touched on very briefly. The tremendous negative effects, added expense, and decreased efficiency caused by moving those two courts while the J&DR Court remains on High Street, have not been covered at all.
- The intersection of 29 and Rio already has heavy traffic.
- The lack of parking and the expense of parking are a serious problem. The traffic around court square is bad.
- The legal community will naturally be, and has been, generally opposed to the relocation of the County courthouse(s). Partners of many law firms purchased real estate to house their firm operations near the County courthouse(s), and are thus naturally self-interested for the preservation of the current location. Of greater concern and importance is the value to the

County, including the importance of parking availability and economic revitalization; its the County's court house(s); therefore, the County should decide where to locate their court houses.

- The legitimacy and experience of the courts can hardly be divorced from history. The thought of moving the whole business to the location of a used-up strip shopping center in automobile world is really terrible. What will it look like? The Northside library? Doubtless, it will be a formal experiment by an out of town 'court expert' architecture firm that excels at moving projects through public meetings and across project managers' desks (And we'll get the same plans and elevations as the Lubbock, Texas project). Really? Will it be surrounded by a sea of parking? Of course. Will environmentalism and 'efficiency' be used as an excuse for how great this thing will be? You bet. It will be a shame, and a loss for our community, because the courts are living, breathing institutions that ought to remain in their established place in the historic urban fabric.
- The more Charlottesville and Albemarle act like one community instead of two, the stronger we will be.
- The notion that the construction of a Court Complex would promote economic growth and enlarge the tax base is only conjecture, but the inconvenience to the players in the Court system and the loss of the efficiencies enjoyed by them because of the proximity of the courts to each other is an absolute fact which is negative.
- The opportunity for the county to improve its economic condition through the courts needs to be preeminent. While the courts serve a specific function and a specific population, they can and should work to the benefit of the county and its citizens first and then to the community which uses it. If the courts are truly an economic driver for the city, the city should be willing to accommodate the county financially in any number of ways to make this a workable solution for all.
- The poor and disadvantaged would find the Cville 29 location a hardship. Keep it where it is.
- The poor will have no expendable income because it will all go to their lawyers to pay for their time to drive to a court that is not next to their office.
- The relocation of the courts outside of Charlottesville will severely impact city/county relations to the detriment of the entire community.
- The time wasted driving back and forth between downtown offices and courts north of town if they are located there. Also the additional traffic that would be created by both the legal community and those people using the courts who are not located north of town.
- The vision of a divided-highway Route 29 as an exurban "Main Street" with a Court Complex as its anchor is unlikely to be anything like its name implies. It will be more sprawl and will not play well to businesses looking to locate in Albemarle--why not go to other pure-suburban locations elsewhere that are even cheaper, with more parking and less congestion? Although they can be annoying partners at times (no question about it) Albemarle's greatest strength is its intimate connection to UVA and Charlottesville. Otherwise it would be Fluvanna, Nelson or Buckingham, which – let's be honest – also owe what little prosperity they can claim to CVS/UVA.
- There would be more congestion and confusion on Rio Road. Every time I go to the new library I feel I am making a life and death choice just to turn into the library.
- They are the center of town and must stay.
- This idea is ill advised. There is no advantage to moving the whole lot of you. If the courts are too large and you have outgrown your space, move a portion of the court.

- This is a terrible survey! Poorly worded question, unclear how to rank answers.
- This survey does not mention that a referendum would be required. Nor does it make any mention of the potential impact on city/county relations. It also does not address the potential need for increased staffing related to lost efficiencies if the court is moved.
- Top considerations in my opinion are historical preservation (huge) and close proximity to city courts and attorneys.
- Traffic congestion along 29N/Rio is terrible – location is very inconvenient for anyone not in the northern part of the county and would be difficult to relocate all of the associated offices that are currently within walking distance
- Unnecessary bureaucracy brought about by area educational assets.
- Until recently was long time resident and still own county property and am concerned about tax impact on county residents regardless whether new or renovation or otherwise.
- Urban Albemarle is a non-sequitur.
- We are lucky to have such a beautiful and historical place to have our courts. Don't move.
- We live in eastern Albemarle. Burley Middle School in the center of the city is very inconvenient for us as is Walton for others. How about a new middle school near Monticello High and use Burley Nd Walton for other county purposes or departments.
- We need to separate the county from the city of Charlottesville – they are two different entities and the lines have been blurred for far too long. As an AC citizen I hate that tax dollars go to the city for buildings.
- What about Option 4 that has apparently been taken off the table?
- What is the estimated cost to the taxpayer to relocate the courts buildings?
- What would the County do with the existing historic buildings? Has the County engaged a feasibility study with a firm that understands historic architecture and adaptive use and upgrades to such facilities? Has there been any data collected on the impact the move of court facilities would have on downtown Charlottesville?
- When I was a volunteer deputy sheriff, and when I had a civil matter considered at the court, the district court judge was able to ask another judge from the city to assist to help move cases faster. Working cooperatively with the city would be a good option if the city were more cooperative regarding budget and location issues. I prefer Albemarle County move location to the County office complex instead of trying to use 29N. Traffic in the Rio Road area is almost as bad as trying to find a convenient parking spot downtown.
- While I don't rely on public transportation, I think it is very important to be sure the poor people who need the courts can get to them.
- While I love the use of the old buildings, I believe it's time to move the county courts to the county.
- Why didn't you ask about option on Lane building being used, only asked on Rt 29 Rio so your results will be skewed.
- Why in the world would it be left in the city? Cow towing to the attorneys?
- Why mover the courts to the 29 corridor which is the least convenient to anyone not living there? Sounds like just another way for the County to enrich the pockets of a developer and to cost

County residents a great deal of money. The latter would then lead to another tax rate increase for its citizens who pay a lot for very minimal services

- Yes, a better location than proposed Rio Road location. This is a horrible location.
- Yes, what organization would investigate the business partners and the possible ethics violations that might occur with the BOS running such a business, even if it were a lawful purpose of County Government.
- Yes, why are you attempting this? Who is behind this? No public money should be spent on consultants. If you do not know what to do, do NOTHING! How does moving something from A to B help development? Or are you trying to rewrite history or just plain old spite against Charlottesville at our expense.
- Yes. Most of the attorneys are located in and around Court Square. Every consideration should be given to keeping the courts downtown. I've heard of the possibility of building a parking garage in space currently occupied by the current city lot, the convenience store, and Guadalajara. Improved public transit is a must for multiple reasons. Levy Opera House property renovations works with the overall expansion of the parking garage.
- Yes. Moving the courts would have an extremely negative impact on the people who use the courts (not just attorneys but the public at large), as well as those who provide invaluable services in both the city and the county (e.g., public defenders and legal aid). It also would harm the businesses around it and the relationship between the city and county. It would be a grave mistake, and I implore the board to please not move the courts to another location.
- You are trying to reinvent the wheel. Neither the legal community nor the commonwealth's attorneys' office wants the court to move. Are you traveling down the path of the city to rewrite history?
- Your survey is very poorly written. If questions are not clear, and every question asking for a rank herein IS unclear, then you create different paradigms for people who are doing the responding. If people's understanding of a question differs, they are effectively answering different questions which skews your data. This is simple survey editing and shouldn't be a problem created in the first place. Wasting time on a survey that collects useless data uses up the public's willingness to answer surveys. That's a shame because public input is an important commodity for decision makers.



**Albemarle County, Virginia  
Courts Location Operations Impact Review  
Appendix 3**

**Stakeholder Survey Analysis**

**Final Report**

**December 6, 2017**

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## Survey Methodology

By consensus of County officials, County staff, and County employed consultants, the stakeholder survey was to be designed to protect individual respondents' identities. Thus, survey responses are anonymous to encourage open and honest feedback from participants without concern for user identification, attribution, role-to-answer correlation, or potential respondent questioning or any form of reprisal. Participants were therefore asked to identify themselves in two very general ways only: [1] by role/function (Circuit Court Clerk, District Court Clerk, Judge, Interpreter, etc.), and [2] by jurisdiction (Albemarle County, City of Charlottesville, or both). The survey introduction further stated that the results would be anonymous and aggregated for analysis, encouraging voluntary users to provide NCSC with their open and forthright personal feedback. The final survey instrument is included in Appendix A of this report.

A summary of stakeholder survey response results is provided in **Section VII of the main report, under Stakeholder Survey Responses at a Glance**. The in-depth review of the responses is provided in this report.

Due to overall project timelines, the stakeholder survey had a narrow timeframe, being launched on August 2 and closing on August 14. During that time, 98 responses were received. After survey closure and prior to analysis, a validation phase occurred to further ensure the integrity of the data.

Because the survey was designed to protect individual user names or user information, the responses received were primarily validated by each responding user's IP address as related to survey access. In most cases, two different survey users will have two different IP addresses. However, an IP address is not always directly equivalent to an individual user, because some organizations' networks are designed to use the same IP address for multiple employees. Therefore, it is not surprising that many of the responses shared the same organizational IP addresses with other users. But IP address identification did assist NCSC consultants in the data review process, allowing the survey analyst to focus on reviewing and further validating those entries where multiple users had the same IP address as one another.

Secondarily after the IP review, individual responses received from the same IP address were subjected to a checksum macro calculation. This means that the survey data received was turned into a numeric format, and all of the numeric responses from one respondent were added together, so that each survey user would have their own numeric code as a result of their responses. For example, the possible answers to the survey question "How often does your work require that you physically visit the courthouse?" were as follows: [1] Daily, [2] A few times a week, [3] A few times a month, [4] A few times a year, or [5] Almost never. This data was recoded so that a response of "Daily" would have a numeric code of 1, "A few times a week" would have a code of 2, and so forth. This process allowed the survey data to be abstracted for mathematical scanning. In all, 28 different codes were created for each user in this manner, and these 28 codes were added together to create each user's personal checksum. The purpose of the checksum was to ensure — to the furthest extent possible — that each user responding from a given IP address was indeed a unique individual, and not the same person taking the survey more than once.

The checksum calculation provided a further tool for survey response validation. For example, if three respondents from the same IP address had checksum values of 42, 64 and 90, this would indicate that all



three respondents were unique users (and not one person entering valid data more than once), because the data checksums — and therefore the survey responses and opinions provided by each person — are very different from one another.

In those unusual cases where two users from the same IP address had equal — or nearly equal — checksum values, the NCSC analyst performed a further validation by reviewing the actual data codes for each reviewed user, question by question. As a very simplified demonstrative example, if a hypothetical survey had five questions, and a numeric value of 1 to 5 could be received for each question, then survey user A might answer with the values 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, while user B might answer with the values 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1. Both of these users would have a checksum number of  $(1+2+3+4+5 =) 15$ , so the analyst would then need to review each user's unique data entries to ensure that the users are in fact different from one another. In that review, while noting that user A answered question 1 with "1" while user B answered the same question with "5," and so forth, the analyst can ascertain that the respondents were indeed different users with very different opinions, despite their identical checksum number.

In this manner, NCSC consultants ensured to the best of its ability that each survey respondent was a unique user. There does remain the potential that a dishonest survey respondent could — for whatever reason — take the survey twice from the same IP address, providing very different scores to the various questions each time, and thereby "cheat" the validation process and remain undetected. However, there would be no logical reason for a person to do this, because if a person answered the questions differently each time, the conflicting scores would become averaged in the aggregate pool of all user sums, and their varying answers would have no sufficient impact on the data received to further a personal agenda. Meanwhile, if they answered the survey several times and gave very similar scores from the same IP address each time, they would be detected in the checksum validation process.

It is theoretically possible that a user could take the survey twice and remain undetected, by (for example) taking the survey on both a work computer and a home computer, providing similar but not identical scores and comments each time. This is an integral flaw that is inherent in anonymous surveys. As Albemarle Assistant County Executive Lee Catlin noted in an e-mail of August 11, "It is important to note that online surveys are susceptible to duplicate responses by persons who are determined to circumvent the safeguards."

This type of circumvention could not be detected by the validation process. To be defeated, it would likely require the survey (prior to online programming, testing, and launch) to be deliberately designed to require mandatory assigned usernames and passwords, uniquely assigned to each user. Such a design is possible for future survey endeavors, but it should be noted that in the NCSC consultants' experience, users are likely to respond to questions differently — for example, with fewer text comments, more restrained criticism, or more neutral scoring — when (a) they are told that their results will be anonymous and aggregated, and (b) they are aware (through the username assignment process) that they will be confidentially identified by the survey controller, even if they are never identified to their peers or superiors.

Using these various review and validation techniques, NCSC consultants determined that an individual at the same IP address took the stakeholder survey twice and provided identical answers each time.

Therefore, one of these two cloned responses was removed for analytical purposes. All other reviewed responses to the stakeholder survey passed the three-stage validation process as described above, and were therefore regarded as valid data presented by the survey respondents in good faith. The final survey pool consisted of 97 respondents. For analytical purposes non-responses to individual survey questions have been removed for that specific question.

The stakeholder survey provided several opportunities for the respondent to elaborate or make additional comments. These comments and additional input are included in the appendices and provide further qualitative insight into the opinions and values of the respondents. Quantitative analysis of these lengthy narratives did not demonstrate any single issues that were not already evident throughout other parts of the survey, though some highlights have been noted in the review.

### Survey Results and Analysis

The pool of stakeholders participating in the survey is identified by court function below. A high number of respondents chose “Other” as their court function and this category is discussed further.

#### Question 1: Please indicate your function in the court system:

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
Clerk – Circuit Court Clerk	1
Clerk – District Court Clerk	2
Judge – Circuit Court Judge	1
Judge – District Court Judge	2
Law Enforcement	1
Private Attorney	23
Probation/Corrections	13
Prosecutor	10
Public Defender/Legal Aid	15
Other (See below)	27
<b>Total*</b>	<b>95</b>

\*Excludes 2 non-responses

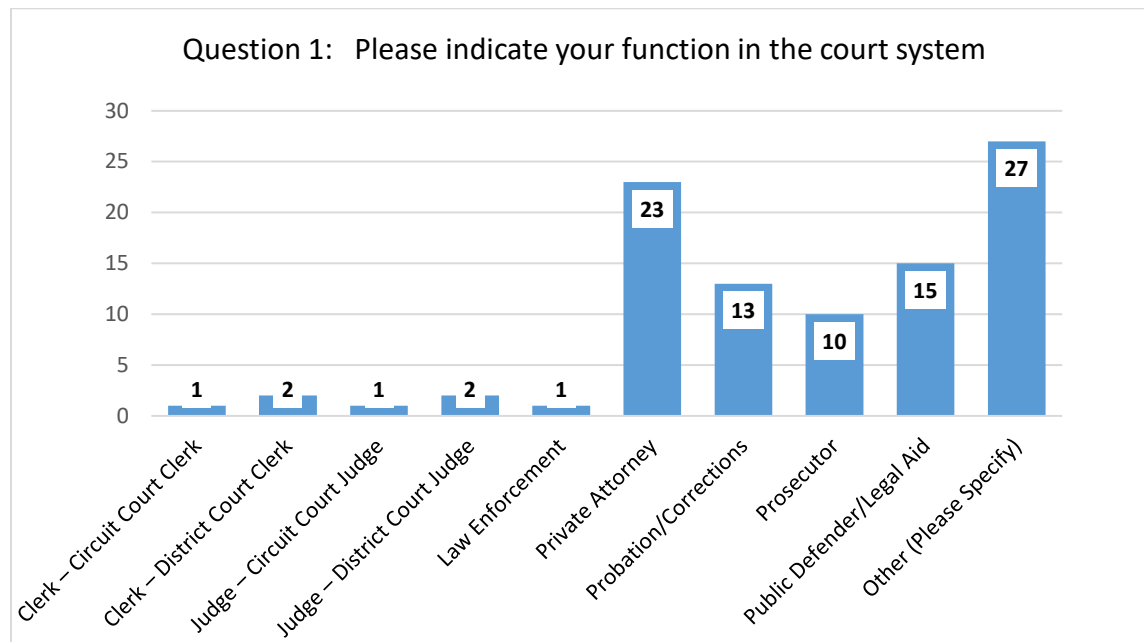


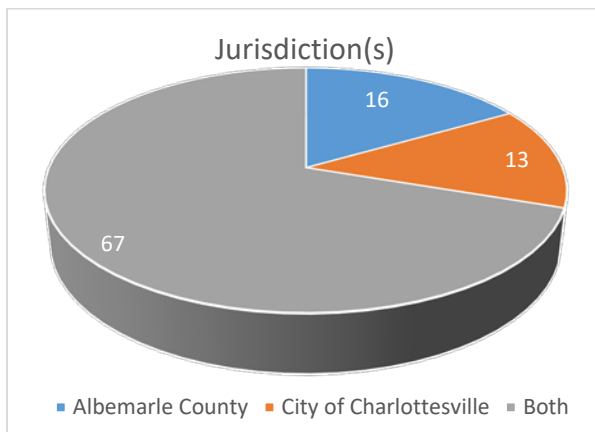
Figure 1

The “Other” detailed responses are provided in Appendix B. Note, four respondents provided other information while selecting a non-other category resulting in the discrepancy between 27 others reported above and 31 detailed responses found in the appendix.

Some repeated categories (grouped by general area) include:

- **7 Responses** Title Abstractor/Examiner/Researcher
- **3 Responses** Real Estate Title Agent/Examiner
- **3 Responses** Attorney (City, Local, Court Appointed)

**Question 1a: Please indicate your jurisdiction(s):**



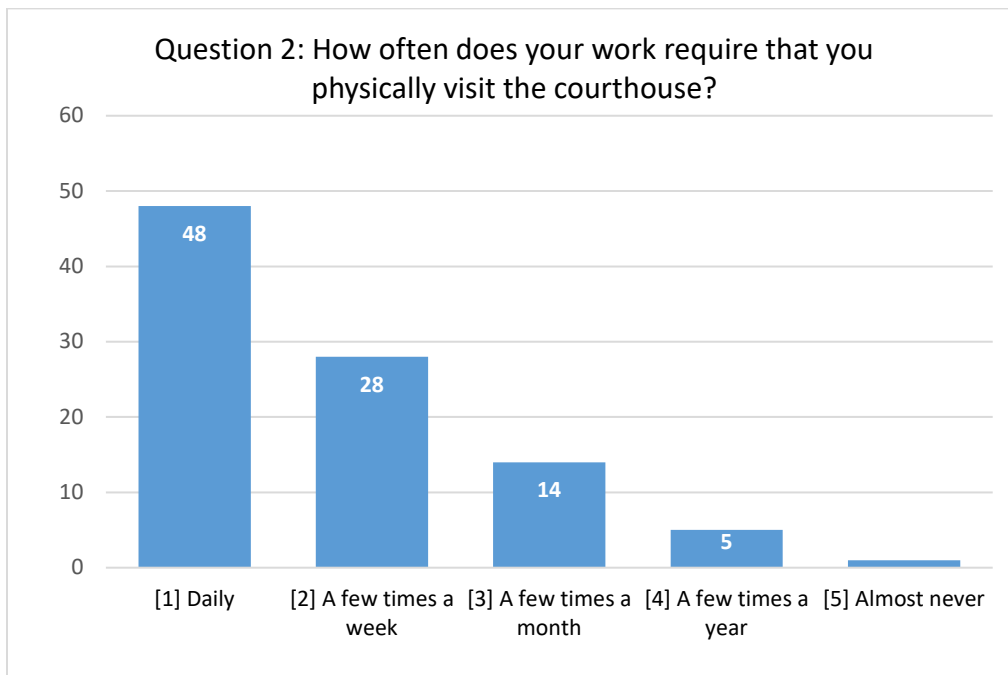
**Figure 2**

**Question 2: How often does your work require that you physically visit the courthouse?  
(Please select one)**

Responses to question 2 reflect half of the surveyed respondents are physically at the courthouse daily and 28 respondents indicated they visit the courthouse a few times a week.

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Daily	48
[2] A few times a week	28
[3] A few times a month	14
[4] A few times a year	5
[5] Almost never	1
<b>Total*</b>	<b>96</b>

\*Excludes 1 non-response



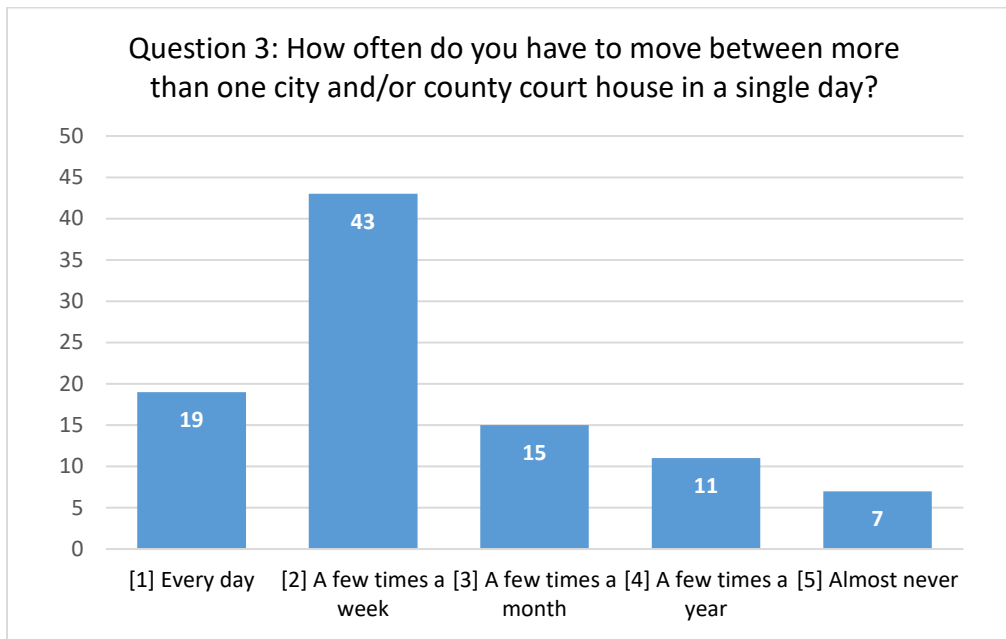
**Figure 3**

**Question 3: How often do you have to move between more than one city and/or county court-house in a single day? (Please select one)**

Sixty-two respondents indicated they move between more than one courthouse every day or a few times a week.

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Every day	19
[2] A few times a week	43
[3] A few times a month	15
[4] A few times a year	11
[5] Almost never	7
<b>Total*</b>	<b>95</b>

\*Excludes 2 non-responses



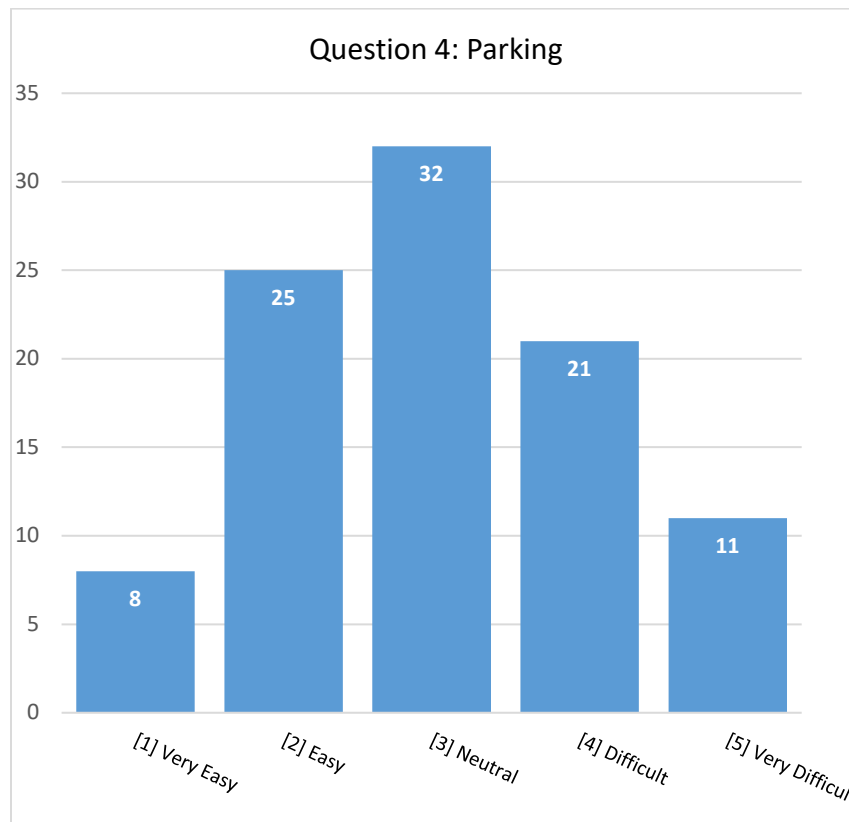
**Figure 4**

**Question 4: How would you rate the ease of access to the Courts’ current location for first-time visitors for the following items?**

**a. Parking**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Very Easy	8
[2] Easy	25
[3] Neutral	32
[4] Difficult	21
[5] Very Difficult	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>97</b>

- Mean response was 3.02, “Neutral.”



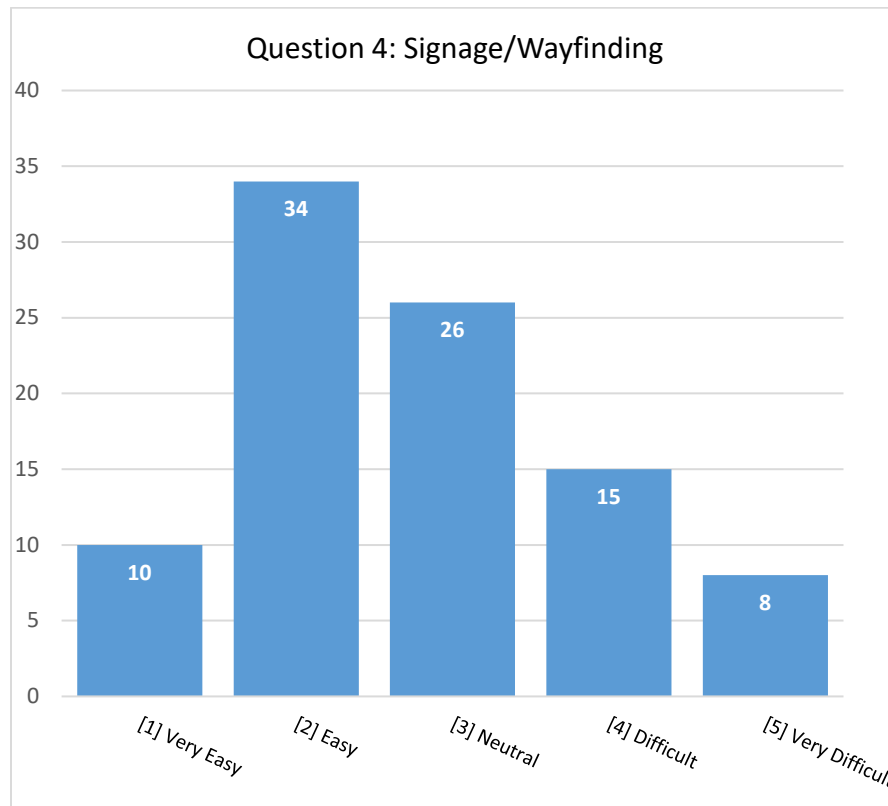
**Figure 5**

**b. Signage/Wayfinding**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Very Easy	10
[2] Easy	34
[3] Neutral	26
[4] Difficult	15
[5] Very Difficult	8
<b>Total*</b>	<b>93</b>

\*Excludes 4 non-responses

- Mean response was 2.75, between “Easy” and “Neutral.”



**Figure 6**

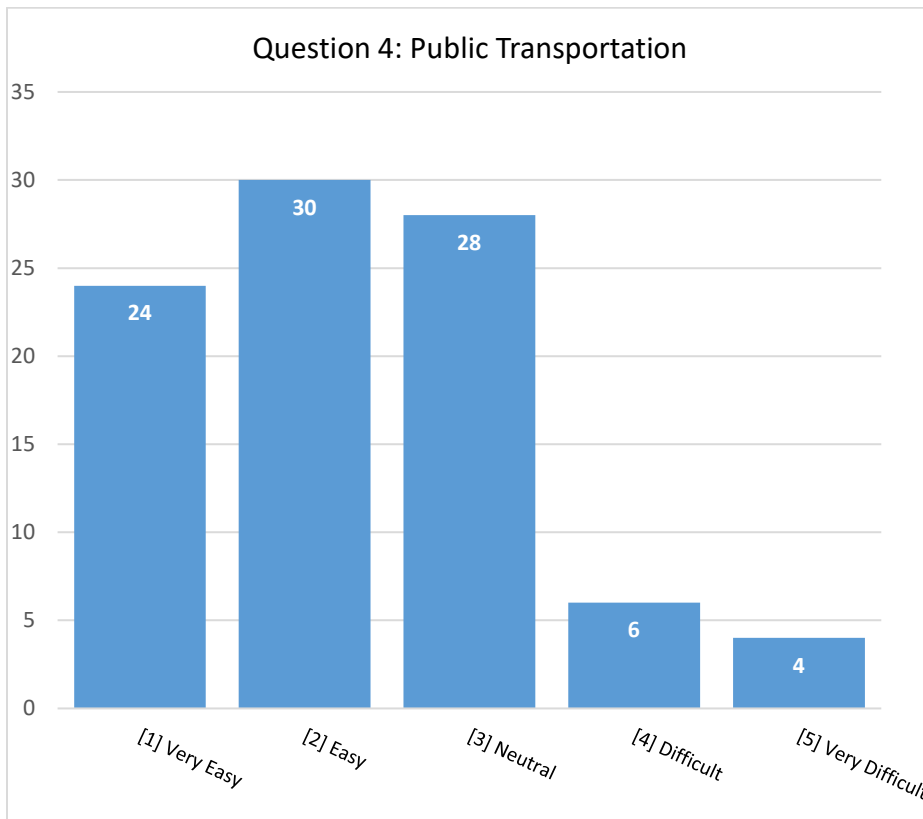


**c. Public Transportation**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Very Easy	24
[2] Easy	30
[3] Neutral	28
[4] Difficult	6
[5] Very Difficult	4
<b>Total*</b>	<b>92</b>

\*Excludes 5 non-responses

- Mean response was 2.30, between “Easy” and “Neutral.”



**Figure 7**

### **Question 4a: Explanation of Response (optional)**

Appendix E contains the narratives provided by 41 responders. These explanations provide additional insight into the three topics surveyed and why individuals feel there is or isn't an issue.

### **Question 4b: Summary and Comparison**

Question 4 asked responders to rate ease of access for first-time visitors in three areas: parking, signage/wayfinding and public transportation. The rating categories were simplified in the figures presented below by combining very easy and easy and difficult and very difficult into one category each. Responders were evenly divided on the ease of access on parking. Signage/wayfinding and public transportation were heavily weighted towards very easy/easy.

#### **Parking:**

- Very easy/easy 33
- Neutral 32
- Difficult/very difficult 32

#### **Signage/wayfinding:**

- Very easy/easy 44
- Neutral 26
- Difficult/very difficult 23

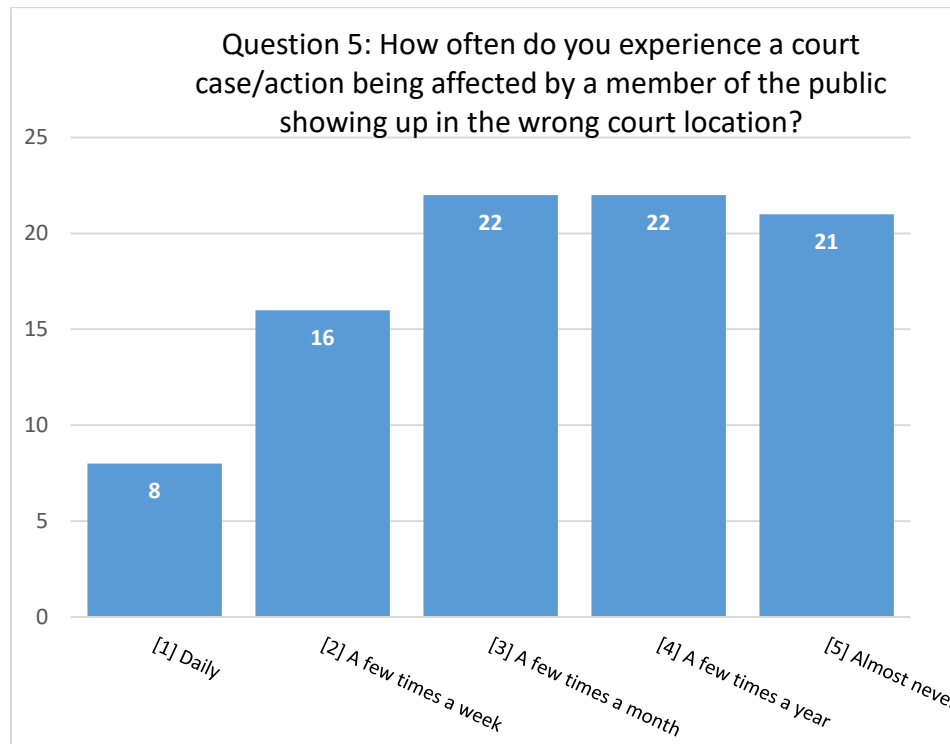
#### **Public transportation:**

- Very easy/easy 54
- Neutral 28
- Difficult/very difficult 10

**Question 5: How often do you experience a court case/action being affected by a member of the public showing up in the wrong court location? (Please select one)**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Daily	8
[2] A few times a week	16
[3] A few times a month	22
[4] A few times a year	22
[5] Almost never	21
<b>Total*</b>	<b>89</b>

\*Excludes 8 non-responses



**Figure 8**

**Question 5a: Additional Description (optional)**

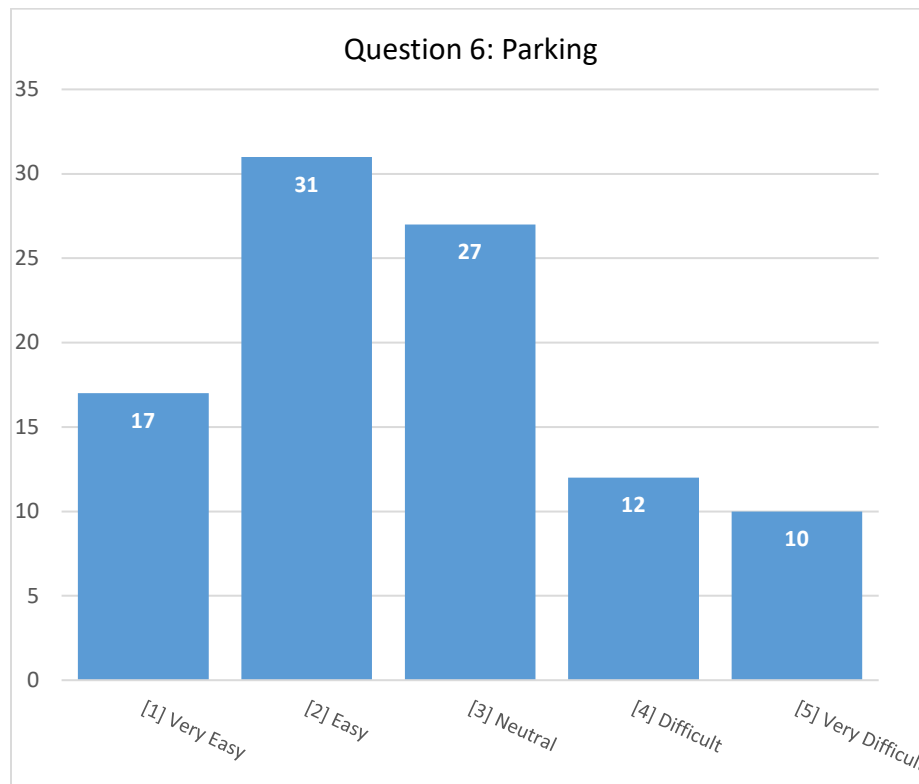
Additional descriptions were provided by 25 responders and these are shown in Appendix F for additional review and consideration. Responders who had experienced this situation daily or weekly were more likely to provide additional information.

**Question 6: How would you rate the ease of the public’s ability to access our courts if the County’s Circuit and General District Courts were moved to an urban ring/development area with adequate onsite parking and public transportation provided? (presumed location: the Route 29/Rio Road vicinity)**

**a. Parking**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Very Easy	17
[2] Easy	31
[3] Neutral	27
[4] Difficult	12
[5] Very Difficult	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>97</b>

- Mean response was 2.66, between “Easy” and “Neutral.”



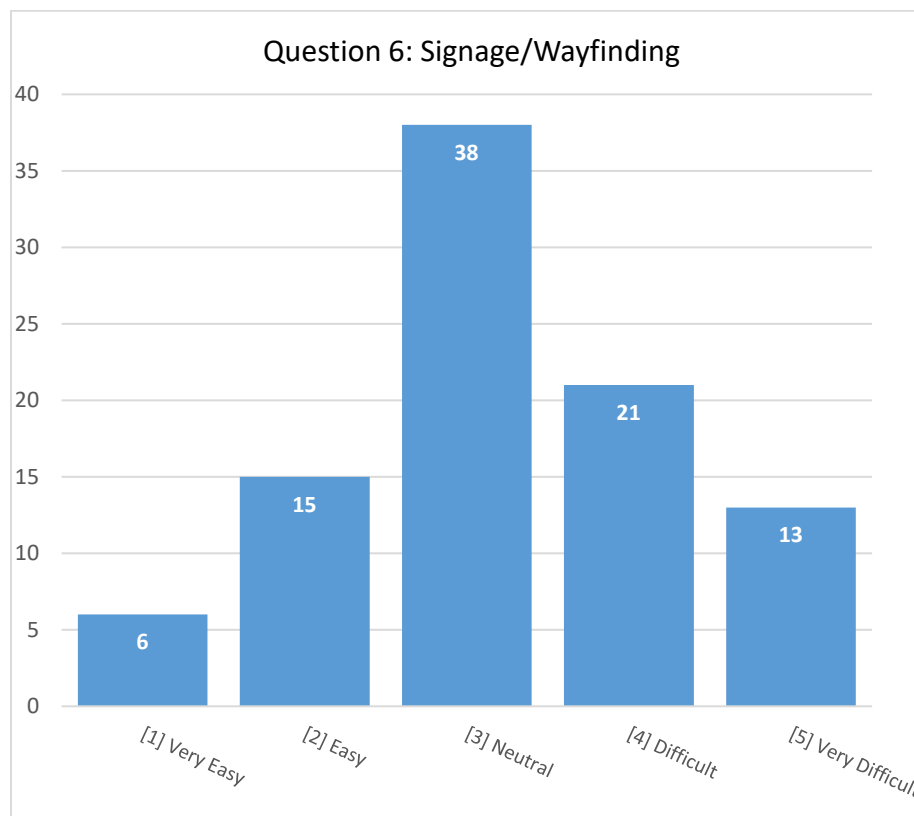
**Figure 9**

**b.: Signage/Wayfinding**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Very Easy	6
[2] Easy	15
[3] Neutral	38
[4] Difficult	21
[5] Very Difficult	13
<b>Total*</b>	<b>93</b>

\*Excludes 4 non-responses

- Mean response was 3.22, between “Neutral” and “Difficult.”



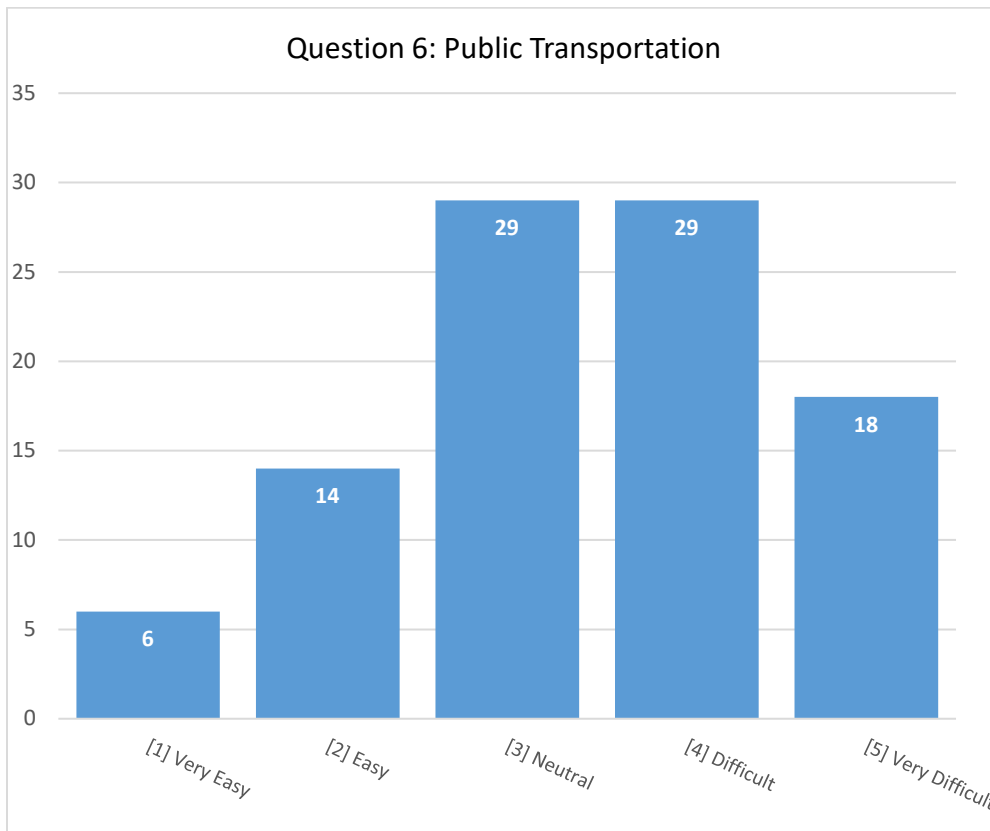
**Figure 10**

**c.: Public Transportation**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Very Easy	6
[2] Easy	14
[3] Neutral	29
[4] Difficult	29
[5] Very Difficult	18
<b>Total*</b>	<b>96</b>

\*Excludes 1 non-response

- Mean response was 3.41, between “Neutral” and “Difficult.”



**Figure 11**

### **Question 6a: Additional Explanation (optional)**

Additional explanations were provided by 42 respondents as reported in Appendix G.

### **Question 6b: Summary and Comparison**

Question 6 asked responders to rate ease of access if the courts were relocated in three areas: parking, signage/wayfinding and public transportation. The rating categories were simplified in the figures presented below by combining very easy and easy and difficult and very difficult into one category each. Nearly half of the responders rated parking as easy or very easy. Signage/wayfinding was most commonly neutral but skewed towards difficult or very difficult. Public transportation was heavily weighted towards difficult or very difficult.

#### **Parking:**

- Very easy/easy 48
- Neutral 27
- Difficult/very difficult 22

#### **Signage/wayfinding:**

- Very easy/easy 21
- Neutral 38
- Difficult/very difficult 34

#### **Public transportation:**

- Very easy/easy 20
- Neutral 29
- Difficult/very difficult 47

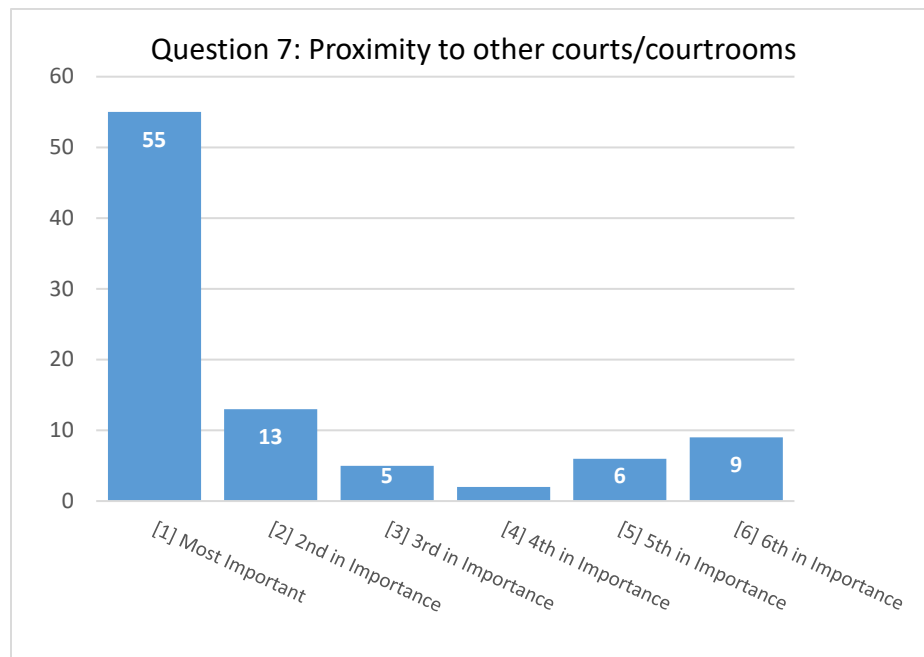
**Question 7: Under option 5, the Circuit and General District Courts would be co-located in an urban ring development area (presumed location: the Route 29/Rio Road vicinity); either in the same building or in separate adjacent buildings within a Courts Complex. Please rank the following attributes for this type of Courts Complex in terms of creating court docket efficiencies (with 1 being most important and 6 least important).**

**Question 7a: Proximity to other courts/courtrooms**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Most Important	55
[2] 2 <sup>nd</sup> in Importance	13
[3] 3 <sup>rd</sup> in Importance	5
[4] 4 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	2
[5] 5 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	6
[6] 6 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	9
<b>Total*</b>	<b>90</b>

\*Excludes 7 non-responses

- Mean response was 2.09, between “2<sup>nd</sup> in Importance” and “3<sup>rd</sup> in Importance.”



**Figure 12**

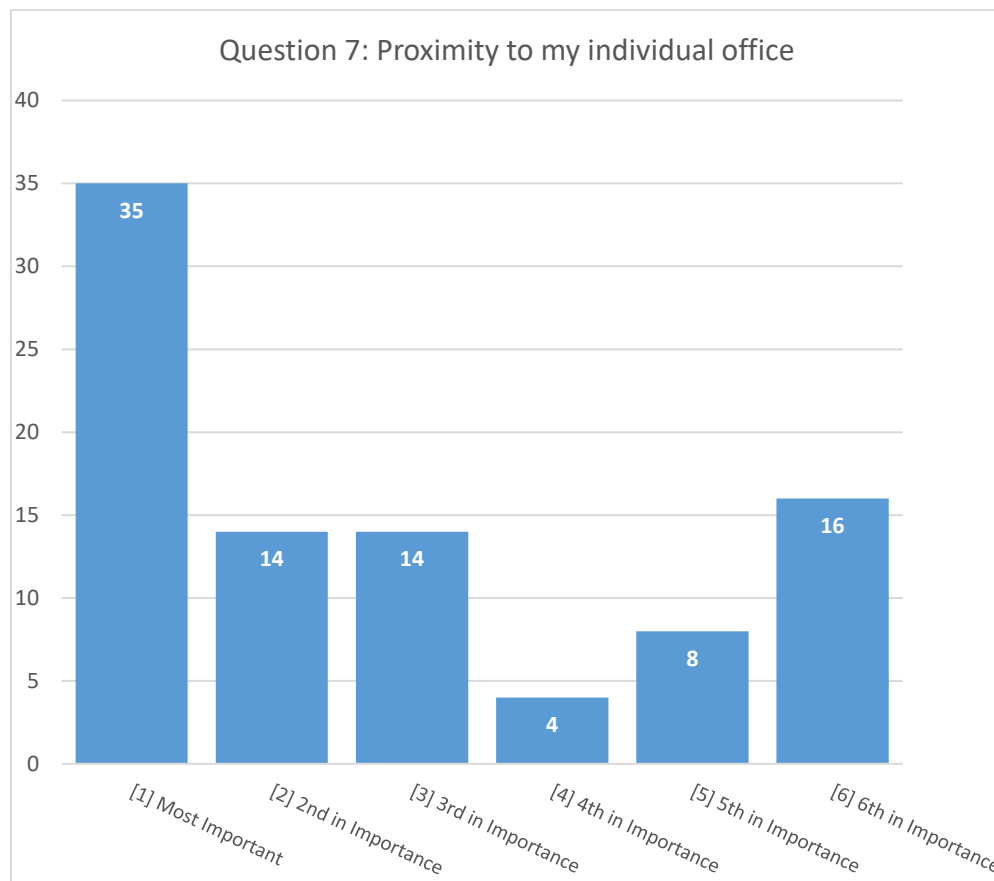


**Question 7b: Proximity to my individual office**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Most Important	35
[2] 2 <sup>nd</sup> in Importance	14
[3] 3 <sup>rd</sup> in Importance	14
[4] 4 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	4
[5] 5 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	8
[6] 6 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	16
<b>Total*</b>	<b>91</b>

\*Excludes 6 non-responses

- Mean response was 2.82, between “2<sup>nd</sup> in Importance” and “3<sup>rd</sup> in Importance.”



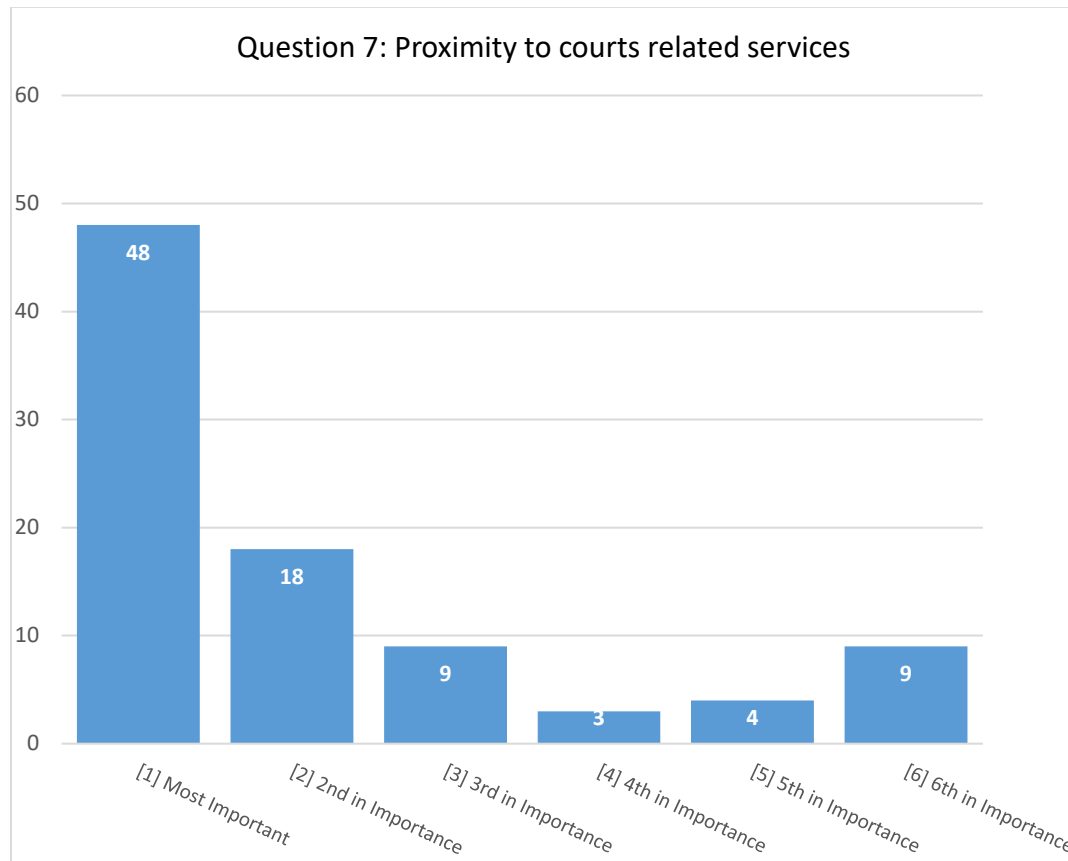
**Figure 13**

**Question 7c: Proximity to courts related services**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Most Important	48
[2] 2 <sup>nd</sup> in Importance	18
[3] 3 <sup>rd</sup> in Importance	9
[4] 4 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	3
[5] 5 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	4
[6] 6 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	9
<b>Total*</b>	<b>91</b>

\*Excludes 6 non-responses

- Mean response was 2.16, between “2<sup>nd</sup> in Importance” and “3<sup>rd</sup> in Importance.”



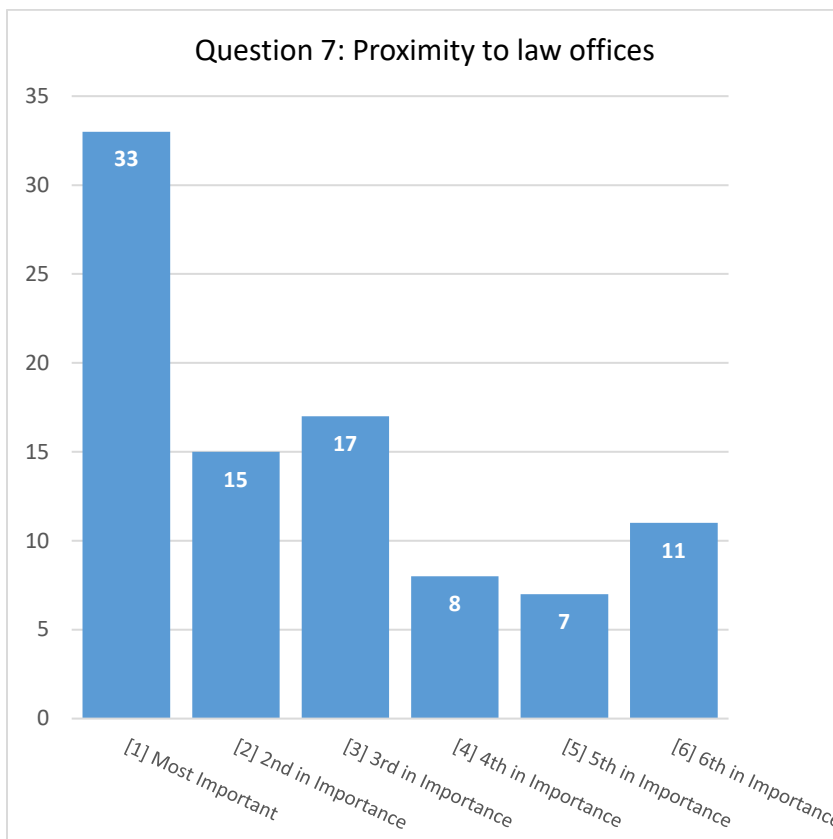
**Figure 14**

**Question 7d: Proximity to law offices**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Most Important	33
[2] 2 <sup>nd</sup> in Importance	15
[3] 3 <sup>rd</sup> in Importance	17
[4] 4 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	8
[5] 5 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	7
[6] 6 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	11
<b>Total*</b>	<b>91</b>

\*Excludes 6 non-responses

- Mean response was 2.71, between “2<sup>nd</sup> in Importance” and “3<sup>rd</sup> in Importance.”



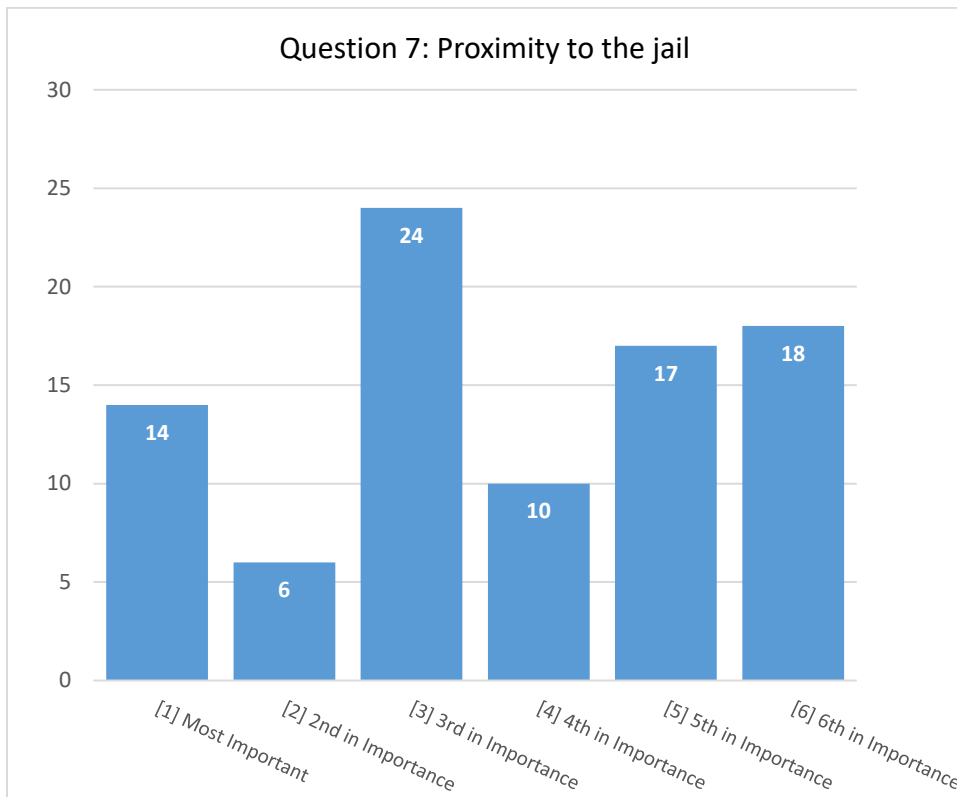
**Figure 15**

**Question 7e: Proximity to the jail**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Most Important	14
[2] 2 <sup>nd</sup> in Importance	6
[3] 3 <sup>rd</sup> in Importance	24
[4] 4 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	10
[5] 5 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	17
[6] 6 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	18
<b>Total*</b>	<b>89</b>

\*Excludes 8 non-responses

- Mean response was 3.72, between “3<sup>rd</sup> in Importance” and “4<sup>th</sup> in Importance.”



**Figure 16**

**Question 7f: Other (specify)**

Twenty-two responders provided an explanation under the “Other” category. These responses are presented in Appendix H. Some responders indicated difficulty with understanding this survey question or feeling the survey isn’t addressing the “heart of the problems.” No one “Other” factor rose to a level of prominence beyond the points listed in the analysis for Question 7, Parts 1 through 5.

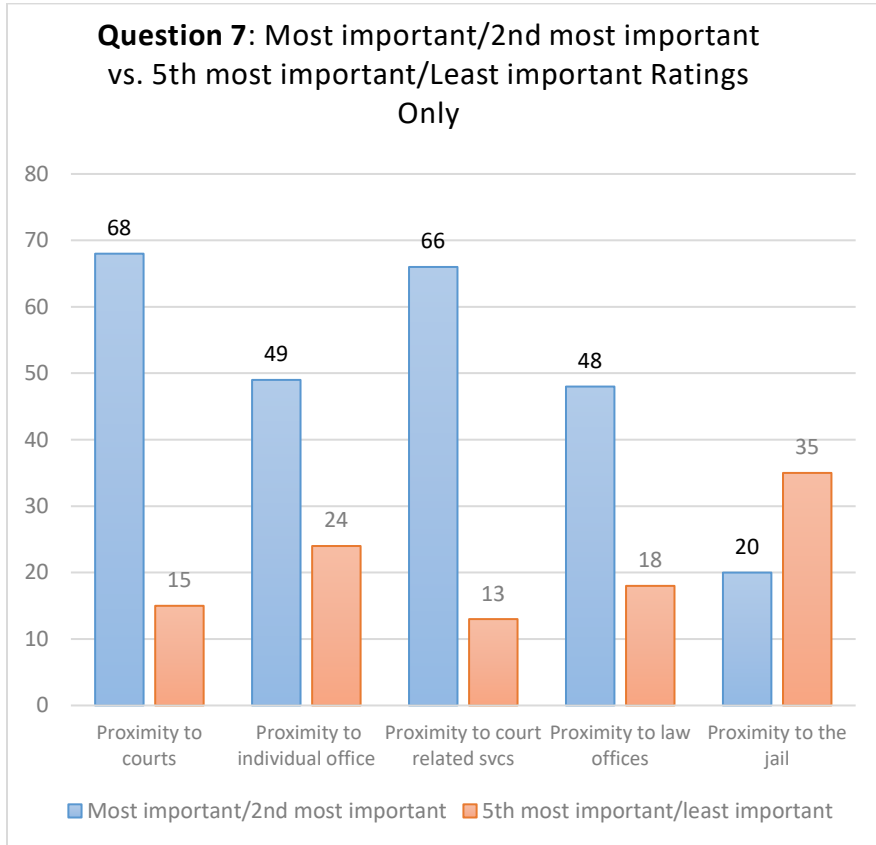
**Question 7g: Summary and Comparisons**

Question 7 asked respondents to rank five proximity attributes in terms of creating court docket efficiencies for this type of Courts Complex (co-located in an urban ring development area), with 1 being most important and 6 least important. The sixth attribute choice was “other,” which is not included in the following figures. Respondents were allowed to rank multiple attributes with the same rating, which is reflected in the following table where most important was disproportionately chosen.

Figure 17 compares the highest two (most important and second most important) and lowest two (fifth most important and least important) rating categories for each of the five attributes. Very high importance was placed on proximity to courts/courtrooms and courts related services (parts 1 and 3) followed by proximity to individual offices and law offices (parts 2 and 4). These stakeholders rated proximity to the jail less important.

Question Topic	Mean Rating*	Relative Ranking	RATING					
			Most important [1]	2nd most important [2]	3rd most important [3]	4th most important [4]	5th most important [5]	Least important [6]
Proximity to courts	2.09	1 <sup>st</sup>	55	13	5	2	6	9
Proximity to individual office	2.82	4 <sup>th</sup>	35	14	14	4	8	16
Proximity to court related services	2.16	2 <sup>nd</sup>	48	18	9	3	4	9
Proximity to law offices	2.71	3 <sup>rd</sup>	33	15	17	8	7	11
Proximity to the jail	3.72	5 <sup>th</sup>	14	6	24	10	17	18

\*Lower mean rating score is higher importance.



**Figure 17**

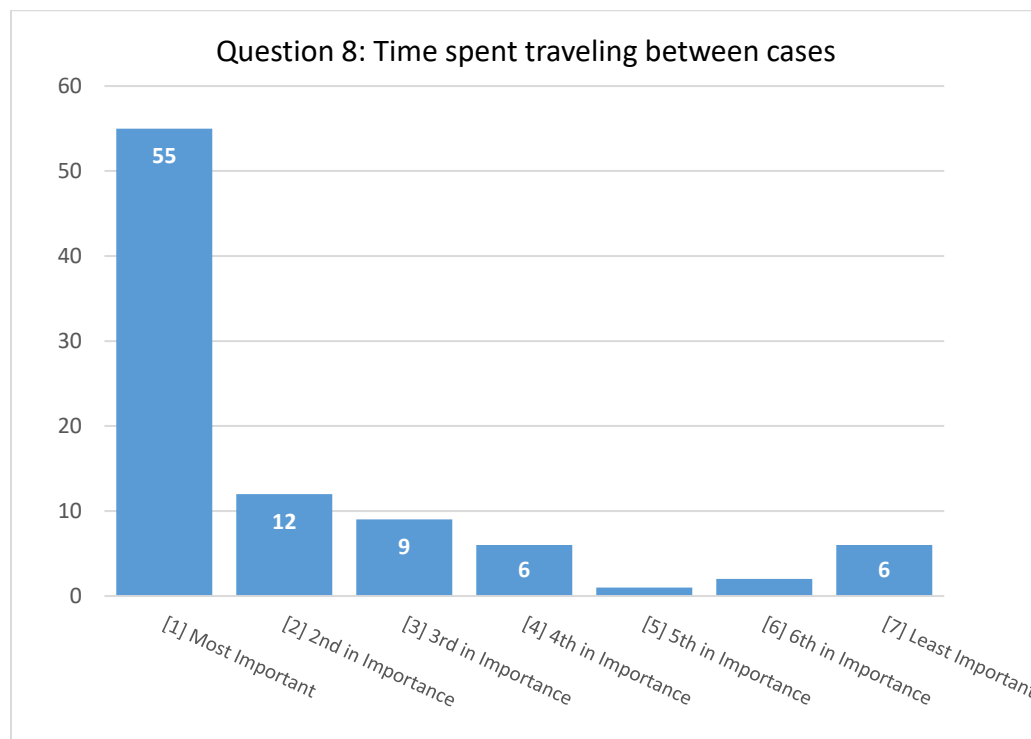
**Question 8: Under option 5, the Circuit and General District Courts would be co-located in an urban ring development area (presumed location: the Route 29/Rio Road vicinity); either in the same building or in separate adjacent buildings within a Courts Complex. Please rank the following attributes for this type of Courts Complex in order of importance to you (with 1 being most important and 7 least important).**

**Question 8a: Time spent traveling between cases**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Most Important	55
[2] 2 <sup>nd</sup> in Importance	12
[3] 3 <sup>rd</sup> in Importance	9
[4] 4 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	6
[5] 5 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	1
[6] 6 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	2
[7] Least Important	6
<b>Total*</b>	<b>91</b>

\*Excludes 6 non-responses

- Mean response was 2.07, between “2nd in Importance” and “3rd in Importance.”



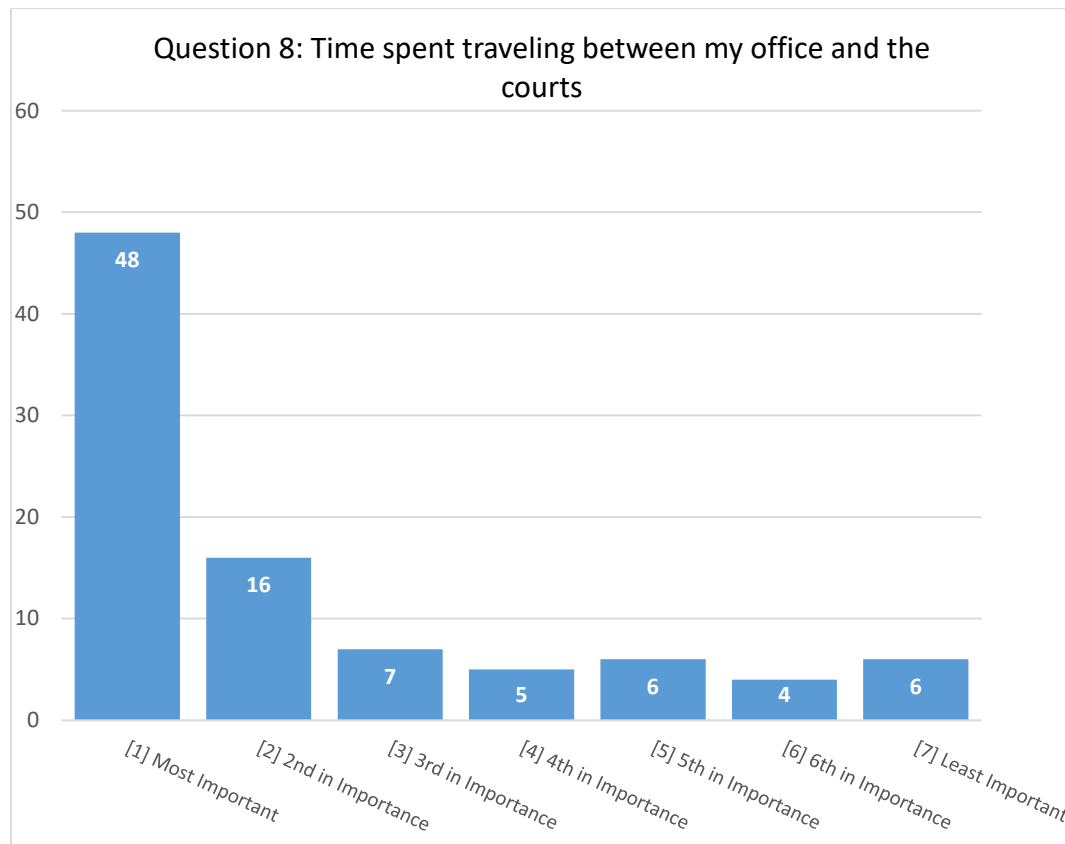
**Figure 18**

**Question 8b: Time spent traveling between my office and the courts**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Most Important	48
[2] 2 <sup>nd</sup> in Importance	16
[3] 3 <sup>rd</sup> in Importance	7
[4] 4 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	5
[5] 5 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	6
[6] 6 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	4
[7] Least Important	6
<b>Total*</b>	<b>92</b>

\*Excludes 5 non-responses

- Mean response was 2.36, between “2nd in Importance” and “3rd in Importance.”



**Figure 19**

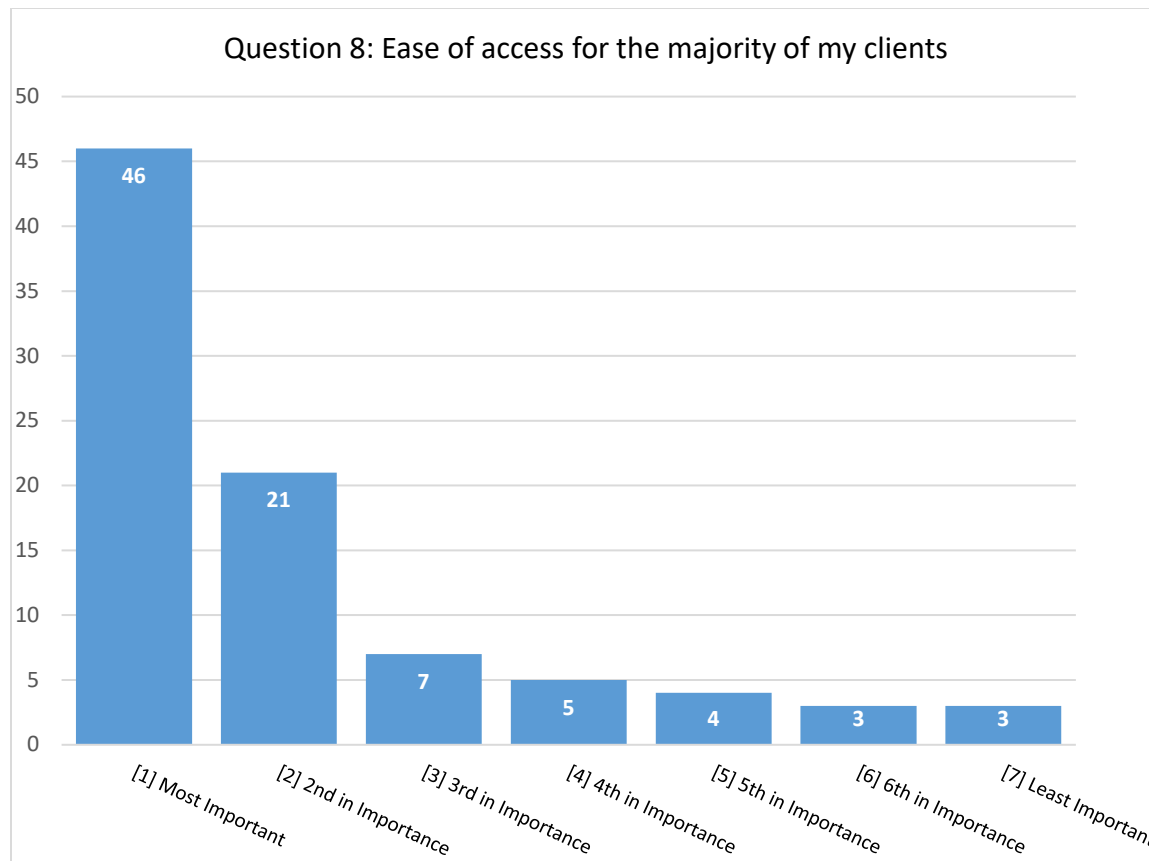


**Question 8c: Ease of access for the majority of my clients**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Most Important	46
[2] 2 <sup>nd</sup> in Importance	21
[3] 3 <sup>rd</sup> in Importance	7
[4] 4 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	5
[5] 5 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	4
[6] 6 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	3
[7] Least Important	3
<b>Total*</b>	<b>89</b>

\*Excludes 8 non-responses

- Mean response was 2.11, between “2nd in Importance” and “3rd in Importance.”



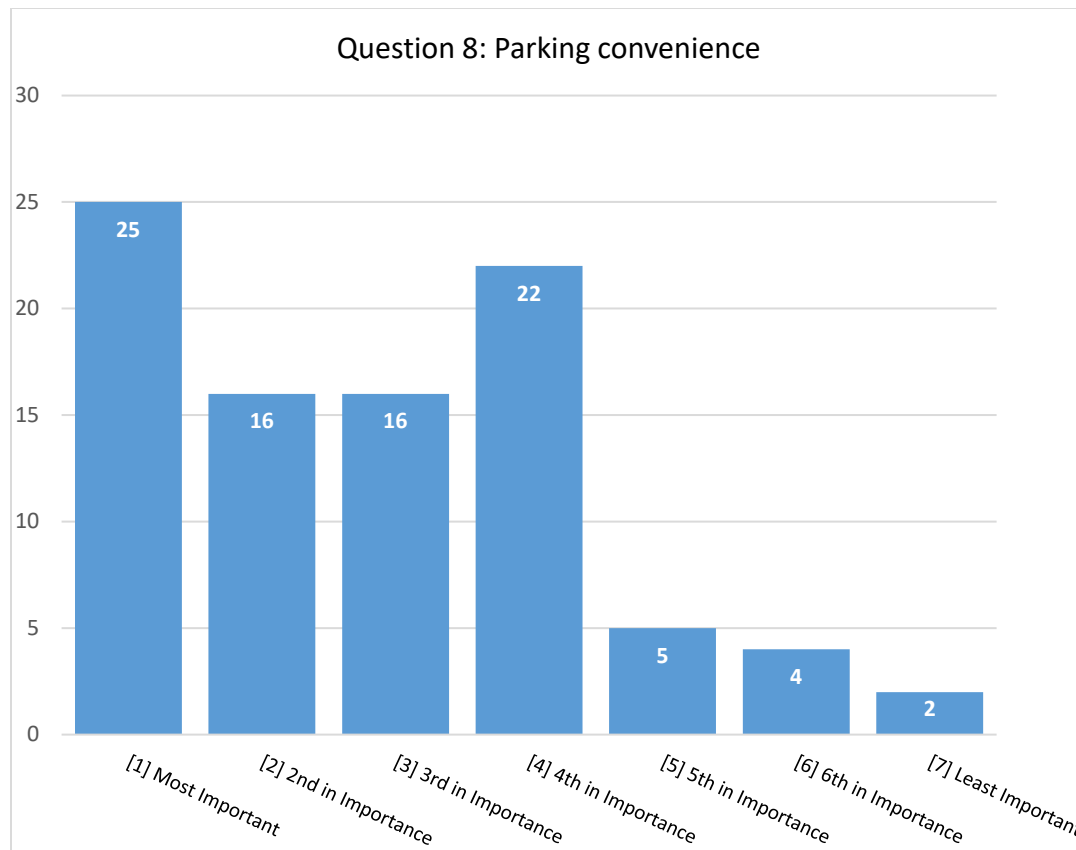
**Figure 20**

**Question 8d: Parking convenience**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Most Important	25
[2] 2 <sup>nd</sup> in Importance	16
[3] 3 <sup>rd</sup> in Importance	16
[4] 4 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	22
[5] 5 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	5
[6] 6 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	4
[7] Least Important	2
<b>Total*</b>	<b>90</b>

\*Excludes 7 non-responses

- Mean response was 2.84, between “2nd in Importance” and “3rd in Importance.”



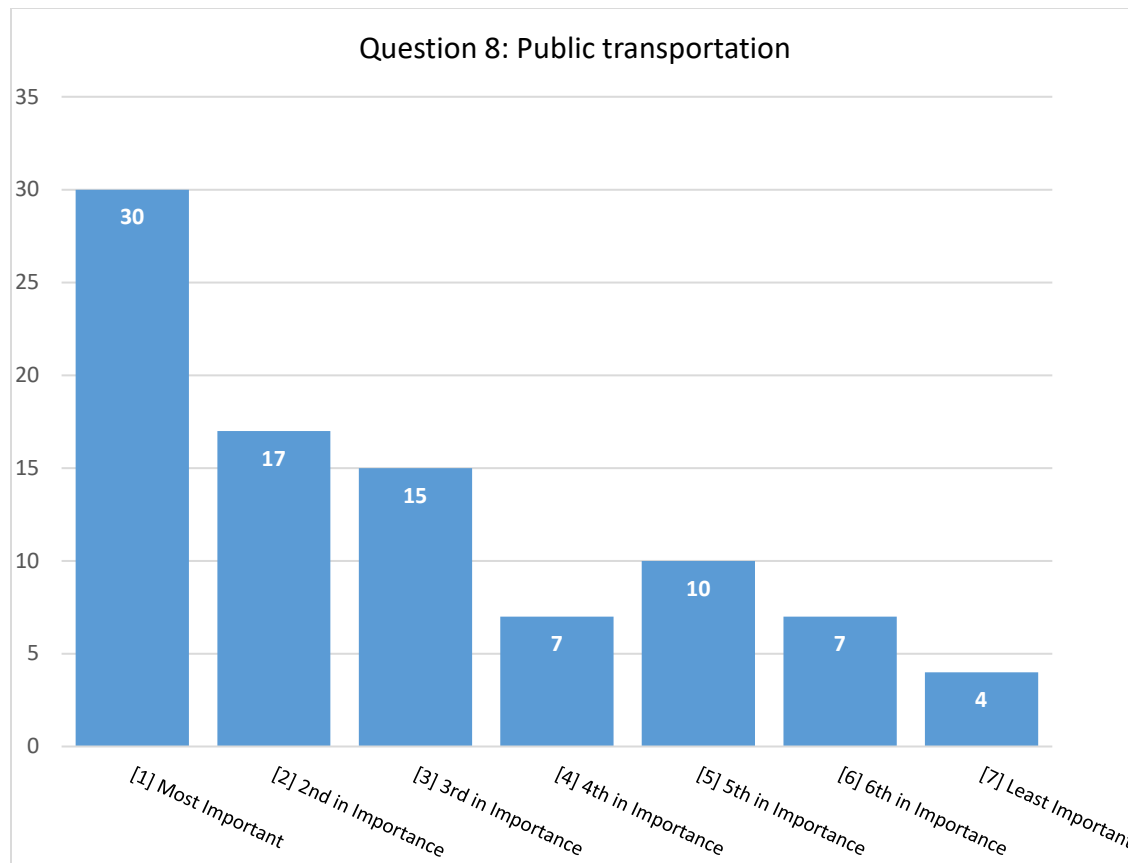
**Figure 21**

**Question 8e: Public transportation**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Most Important	30
[2] 2 <sup>nd</sup> in Importance	17
[3] 3 <sup>rd</sup> in Importance	15
[4] 4 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	7
[5] 5 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	10
[6] 6 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	7
[7] Least Important	4
<b>Total*</b>	<b>90</b>

\*Excludes 7 non-responses

- Mean response was 2.86, between “2nd in Importance” and “3rd in Importance.”



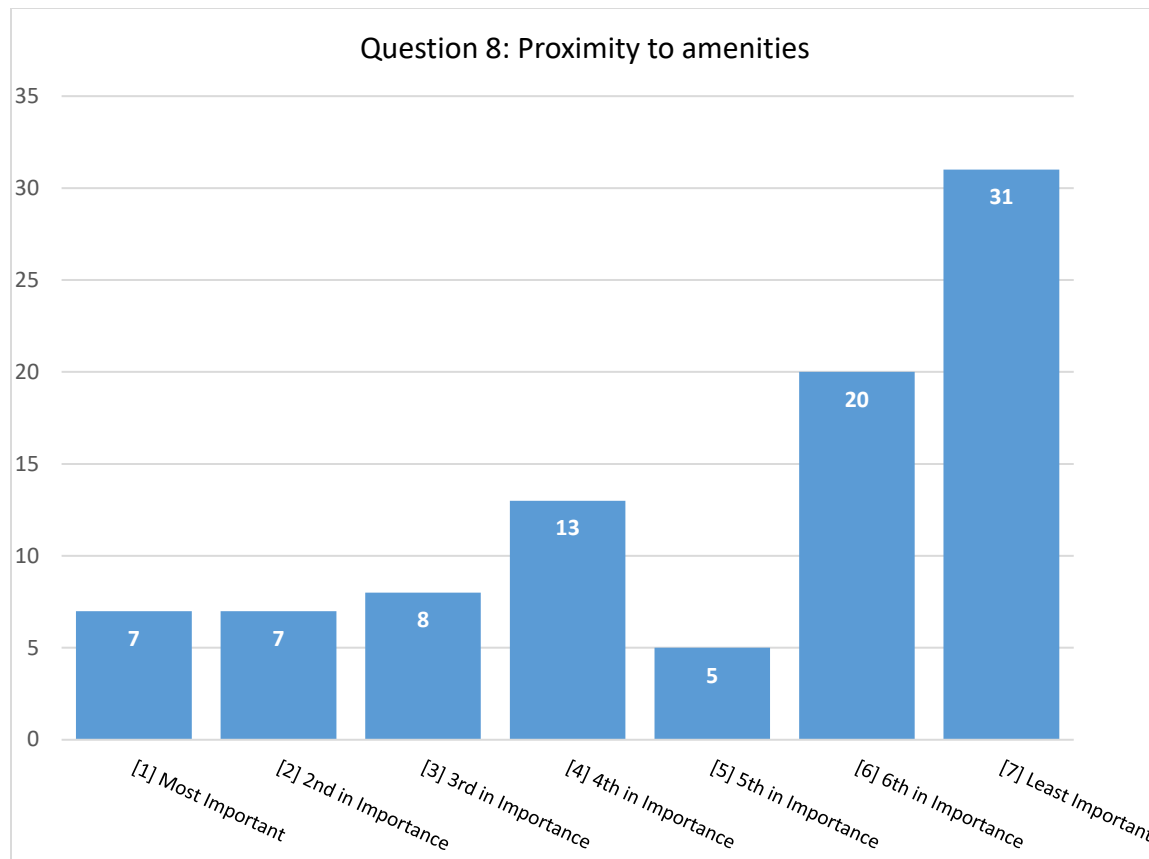
**Figure 22**

**Question 8f: Proximity to amenities (restaurants, banks, retail)**

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Most Important	7
[2] 2 <sup>nd</sup> in Importance	7
[3] 3 <sup>rd</sup> in Importance	8
[4] 4 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	13
[5] 5 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	5
[6] 6 <sup>th</sup> in Importance	20
[7] Least Important	31
<b>Total*</b>	<b>91</b>

\*Excludes 6 non-responses

- Mean response was 5.04, “5th in Importance.”



**Figure 23**

**Question 8g: Other (please specify)**

Appendix I contains the explanations for the “Other” category, as provided by 16 responders. A review of these comments did not identify any additional attributes for consideration.

**Question 8h: Summary and Comparisons**

This question asks the responder to rank six attributes in order of importance for the described type of Courts Complex on a scale of 1 to 7. As in question 7, responders used the same rating for multiple attributes, as evident in Figure 11 from the high percentages ranked as most important (1). The “other” category was ranked also, but no specific attributes were identified so this category is excluded. The mean rating score reflected a rating of second most important for three attributes: time spent traveling between cases (2.07), ease of access for clients (2.11) and time spent traveling between office and courts. Parking convenience and public transportation were rated, on average, closer to third most important while proximity to amenities was ranked lower at fifth most important.

The highest two rankings (most important and second most important) and two lowest rankings (sixth most important and least important) are used for the graphical presentation in Figure 24 below.

Topic	Mean Rating*	Relative Ranking	RATING						
			Most important [1]	2nd most important [2]	3rd most important [3]	4th most important [4]	5th most important [5]	6th most important [6]	Least important [7]
Time spent traveling between cases	2.07	1st	55	12	9	6	1	2	6
Time spent traveling between office and courts	2.36	3rd	48	16	7	5	6	4	6
Ease of access for clients	2.11	2nd	46	21	7	5	4	3	3
Parking convenience	2.84	4th	25	16	16	22	5	4	2
Public transportation	2.86	5th	30	17	15	7	10	7	4
Proximity to amenities	5.04	6th	7	7	8	13	5	20	31

\*Lower mean rating score is higher importance.

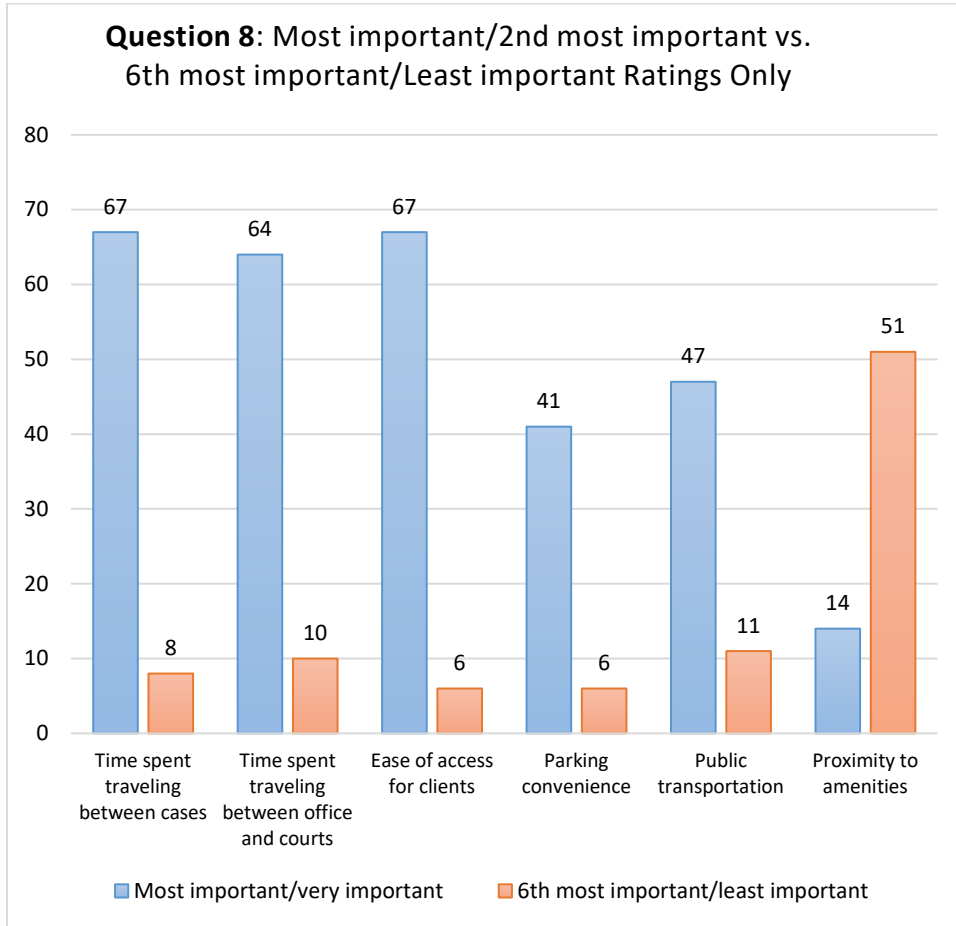


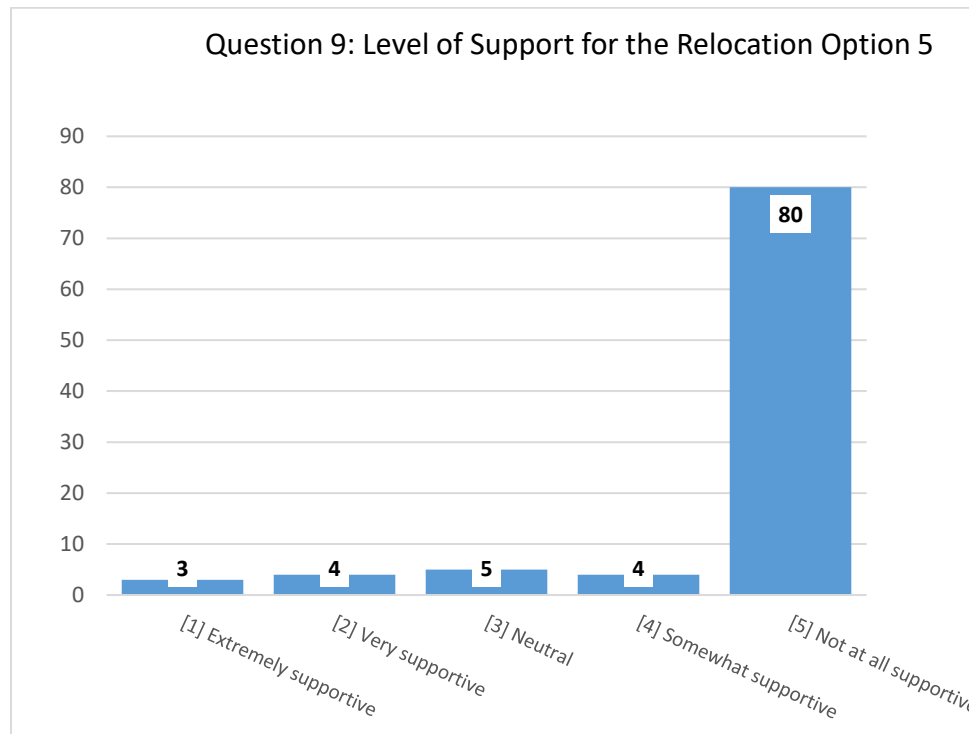
Figure 24

**Question 9: Option 5 would provide for a new Courts Complex, presumably in the Route 29/Rio Road vicinity. The design would be undertaken to provide an efficient layout and central location for the General District and Circuit Court. If this were the case, please indicate your level of support for the relocation option (Option 5).**

The surveyed stakeholders overwhelmingly responded negatively to the relocation Option 5 as presented in question 9, with 80 respondents choosing ‘not at all supportive’ (5).

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Extremely supportive	3
[2] Very supportive	4
[3] Neutral	5
[4] Somewhat supportive	4
[5] Not at all supportive	80
<b>Total*</b>	<b>96</b>

\*Excludes 1 non-response



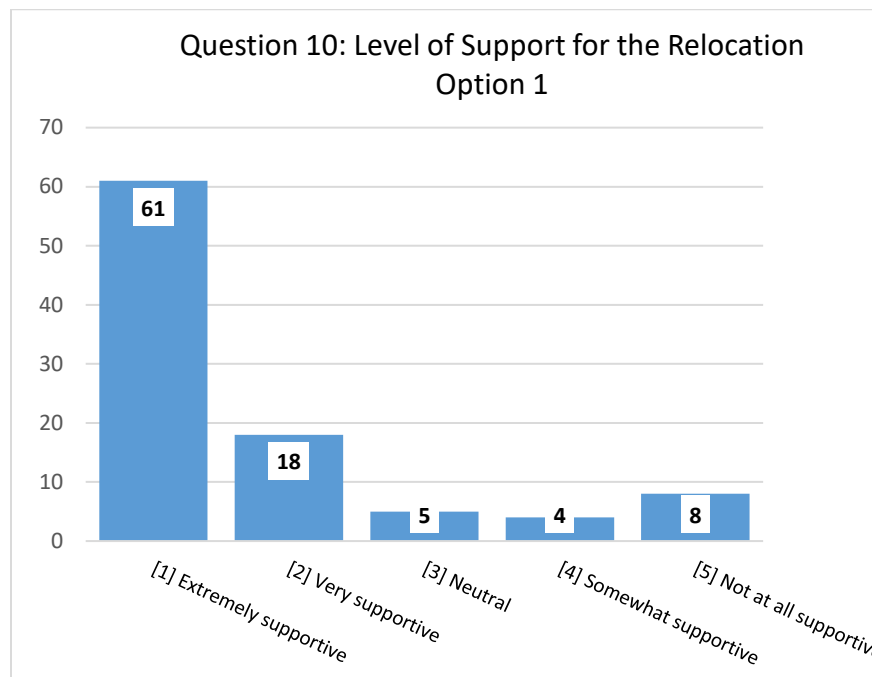
**Figure 25**

**Question 10: Option 1 would provide for a renovated historic Courts Complex for the County’s Circuit Court/Clerk and a new construction addition/renovation project at the Levy property for the County’s General District Court/Clerk and Commonwealth Attorney’s office with the potential to co-locate the City’s General District Court/Clerk in the same building. The design would be undertaken to provide an efficient layout within the constraints of the existing building architecture, improved security and modernized facility. If this were the case, please indicate your level of support for the relocation option (Option 1).**

Conversely to question 9, respondents were extremely supportive of the relocation Option 1 as presented.

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Extremely supportive	61
[2] Very supportive	18
[3] Neutral	5
[4] Somewhat supportive	4
[5] Not at all supportive	8
<b>Total*</b>	<b>96</b>

\*Excludes 1 non-response



**Figure 26**



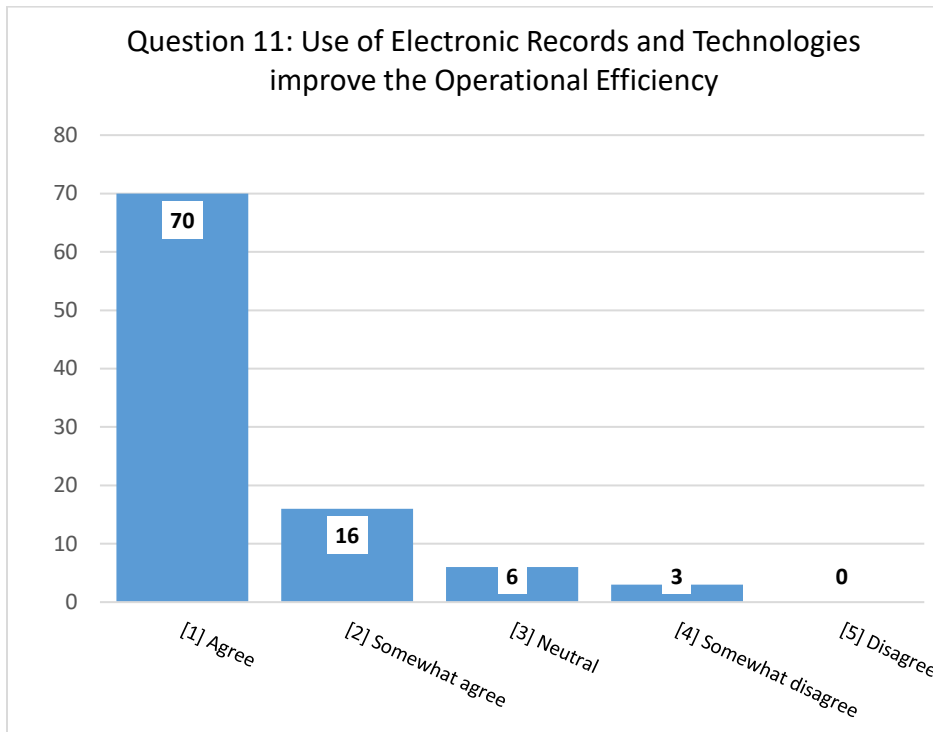
**Question 11: The use of electronic records and court access technologies improve the operational efficiency of the courts.**

73.7% of the respondents agreed that the use of electronic records and court access technologies improve the operational efficiency of the courts while no respondents disagreed with this statement.

Question Response	Participant Answer Count
[1] Agree	70
[2] Somewhat agree	16
[3] Neutral	6
[4] Somewhat disagree	3
[5] Disagree	0
<b>Total*</b>	<b>95</b>

\*Excludes 2 non-responses

- Mean response was 1.39, between “Agree” and “Somewhat agree.”

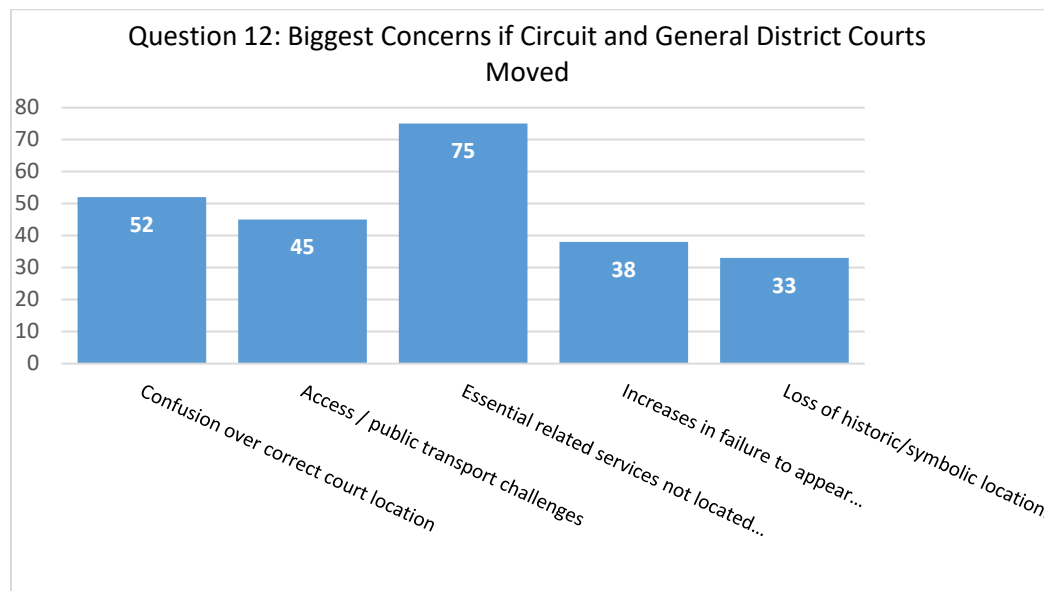


**Figure 27**

**Question 12: In your opinion what are your three biggest concerns for citizens and litigants if the Circuit and General District Courts are moved to an urban ring development area (presumed location: the Route 29/Rio Road vicinity)? Check up to 3.**

Respondents were asked to select no more than three biggest concerns for citizens and litigants if the Circuit and General District Courts were moved to an urban ring development area. ‘Essential courts related services not located in proximity to court complex’ was selected by 75 of the stakeholders surveyed. ‘Confusion over correct court location’ and ‘Access by the public due to public transportation challenges’ were cited as a big concern by a high number of respondents as well.

Question Response	Respondents Who Selected This Concern	Respondents Who Did Not Select This Concern
Confusion over correct court location	52	45
Access by the public due to public transportation challenges	45	52
Essential courts related services not located in proximity to court complex	75	22
Increases in failure to appear rates/bench warrants	38	59
Loss of historic and symbolic location for courts	33	64
Other (please describe)	25	72



**Figure 27**

**Question 12a: Other (please describe)**

Appendix J provides the comments from 25 respondents. Time efficiency when workload is split between the courts was raised by several respondents as an issue, specifically pertaining to legal representation, overlapping historic records and law enforcement.

**Question 13: Is there an issue regarding the potential Option 5 that has not been raised in this survey? If yes, please briefly explain.**

Appendix K provides the input received from 35 respondents. A review of these narratives did not identify any additional issues not previously covered in other parts of the survey.

## Appendix A: Albemarle County Courts Operations Analysis Related to Possible Relocation Justice Stakeholder Survey

**Intro:** To address long-term court facility needs, Albemarle County officials have been conducting ongoing research and analysis of Courts Complex options for several years including recent analysis of five (5) options presented at the Board of Supervisors (BOS) public hearing on October 24, 2016. At this time, two options remain under active consideration. Option one (1) includes construction of a new General District Court facility on the Levy Building site and renovation of the existing downtown Circuit Court complex. Option five (5) is the possible relocation of the County’s Circuit and General District Courts (excluding Juvenile and Domestic Relations Courts) to a central site within the County’s Development Area outside of current downtown Charlottesville locations.

**In their review of the possible relocation option (option 5), County officials are seeking Judicial stakeholders’ input through your completion of the following survey.** On behalf of the county, this survey is being distributed to stakeholder organizations via the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) to the official identified by the County as the main contact. Please complete the following survey on behalf of your organization and/or forward the link to others as you deem necessary. Survey results will be anonymous and aggregated for analysis.

NCSC consultants will be on-site conducting judicial stakeholder focus group sessions in late August to learn more regarding themes emerging from results. County staff will follow up to schedule the on-site meetings with the appropriate stakeholders for the week of August 28<sup>th</sup>. Your feedback regarding impacts, opportunities and concerns related to this option is very important to the ongoing evaluation. The survey and interview results along with other research and analysis will inform the BOS decision making process.

We appreciate your participation in this short survey and request that you complete and return it by August 14<sup>th</sup>. Answering all of the questions on the survey is appreciated but not required if the question is not applicable to you. It should take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

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1. Please indicate your function in the court system:

- Clerk:  Circuit Court Clerk  District Court Clerk  J&DR
- Judge:  Circuit Court Judge  District Court Judge  J&DR
- Interpreter
- Law Enforcement
- Private Attorney
- Probation/Corrections
- Prosecutor
- Public Defender/Legal Aid
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate your jurisdiction(s):

Albemarle County    City of Charlottesville    Both

2. How often does your work require that you physically visit the courthouse?

Daily    A few times a week    A few times a month    A few times a year    Almost never

(Optional) Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

3. How often do you have to move between more than one city and/or county court house in a single day?

Every day    A few times a week    A few times a month    A few times a year    Almost never

(Optional) Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

4. How would you rate the ease of access to the Courts' **current location** for first-time visitors for the following items?

a. Parking:

Very Easy    Easy    Neutral    Difficult    Very Difficult

b. Signage/Wayfinding:

Very Easy    Easy    Neutral    Difficult    Very Difficult

c. Public Transportation:

Very Easy    Easy    Neutral    Difficult    Very Difficult

Optional: Please explain your response (i.e. Why is access to transportation, wayfinding, parking, etc. in the current location easy or difficult)?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. How often do you experience a court case/action being affected by a member of the public showing up in the wrong court location?

Daily    A few times a week    A few times a month    A few times a year    Almost never

(Optional) Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

6. How would you **rate** the ease of the public's ability to access our courts if the County's Circuit and General District Courts were moved to an urban ring/development area with adequate onsite parking and public transportation provided (presumed location: the Route 29/Rio Road vicinity)?

a. Parking:

Very Easy     Easy     Neutral     Difficult     Very Difficult

b. Signage/Wayfinding:

Very Easy     Easy     Neutral     Difficult     Very Difficult

c. Public Transportation:

Very Easy     Easy     Neutral     Difficult     Very Difficult

Optional: Please explain your response (i.e. Why is access to transportation, wayfinding, parking, etc. in this scenario easy or difficult)? \_\_\_\_\_

7. Under option 5, the Circuit and General District Courts would be co-located in an urban ring development area (presumed location: the Route 29/Rio Road vicinity); either in the same building or in separate adjacent buildings within a Courts Complex.

Please **rank** the following attributes for this type of Courts Complex in terms of creating **court docket** efficiencies (with 1 being most important and 6 least important).

\_\_\_\_\_ Proximity to other courts/courtrooms

\_\_\_\_\_ Proximity to my individual office

\_\_\_\_\_ Proximity to courts related services

\_\_\_\_\_ Proximity to law offices

\_\_\_\_\_ Proximity to the jail

\_\_\_\_\_ Other: specify \_\_\_\_\_

8. Under option 5, the Circuit and General District Courts would be co-located in an urban ring development area (presumed location: the Route 29/Rio Road vicinity); either in the same building or in separate adjacent buildings within a Courts Complex.

Please **rank** the following attributes for this type of Courts Complex in order of importance to you (with 1 being most important and 7 least important).

\_\_\_\_\_ Time spent traveling between cases

\_\_\_\_\_ Time spent traveling between my office and the courts

\_\_\_\_\_ Ease of access for the majority of my clients

\_\_\_\_\_ Parking convenience

\_\_\_\_\_ Public transportation

\_\_\_\_\_ Proximity to amenities (restaurants, banks, retail)

\_\_\_\_\_ Other: specify \_\_\_\_\_

9. Option 5 would provide for a new Courts Complex, presumably in the Route 29/Rio Road vicinity. The design would be undertaken to provide an efficient layout and central location for

the General District and Circuit Court. If this were the case, please indicate your level of support for the relocation option (Option 5).

- Extremely supportive
- Very supportive
- Neutral
- Somewhat supportive
- Not at all supportive

10. Option 1 would provide for a renovated historic Courts Complex for the County's Circuit Court/Clerk and a new construction addition/renovation project at the Levy property for the County's General District Court/Clerk and Commonwealth Attorney's office with the potential to co-locate the City's General District Court/Clerk in the same building. The design would be undertaken to provide an efficient layout within the constraints of the existing building architecture, improved security and modernized facility. If this were the case, please indicate your level of support for the relocation option (Option 1).

- Extremely supportive
- Very supportive
- Neutral
- Somewhat supportive
- Not at all supportive

11. The use of electronic records and court access technologies improve the operational efficiency of the courts.

- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neutral
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree

12. In your opinion what are your three (3) biggest concerns for citizens and litigants if the Circuit and General District Courts are moved to an urban ring development area (presumed location: the Route 29/Rio Road vicinity)? Check up to 3.

- Confusion over correct court location
- Access by the public due to public transportation challenges
- Essential courts related services not located in proximity to court complex
- Increases in failure to appear rates/bench warrants
- Loss of historic and symbolic location for courts
- Other (please describe): \_\_\_\_\_

13. Is there an issue regarding the potential Option 5 that has not been raised in this survey? If yes, please briefly explain.

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**Appendix B: Question 1: Function in the Court System “Other” Responses**

Administrator in Commonwealth Attorney Office  
CASA Board  
CASA Program Director  
Charlottesville/Albemarle Drug Court Coordinator  
Chief Deputy Clerk - Circuit Court  
City Commonwealth Attorney  
Commissioner of Accounts of the Circuit Court of Albemarle County  
Court Appointed Attorney  
Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) Staff  
Department of Social Services  
I am a private attorney who also serves as a substitute judge in both the City and the County General District Court...  
Jail  
Legal Assistant - Prosecutor's Office  
Local Government Attorney  
Piedmont CASA  
Prosecutor office staff  
Prosecutor Support  
Real Estate Title Agent  
Real Estate Title Company Agent  
Real Estate Title Examiner (employed by national t  
Security  
Substitute Judge, District Court and J&DR Court  
Title Abstractor  
Title Examiner  
Title Examiner  
Title Examiner  
Title Examiner & Title/Settlement Agent  
Title Examiner/Paralegal  
Title Researcher  
Victim Advocate  
Victim Witness



## Appendix C: Question 2: Frequency of Physical Presence at the Courthouse - Additional Comments

- CASA has 12 employees 8 of whom attend court regularly. We work with 100+ Volunteers who participate in hearings that are related to the cases to which they are assigned. CASA is assigned to City and County J&DR abuse and neglect cases.
- Currently I don't need to go that often but in the past I've gone more frequently, at least several times a month.
- District 9 staff as a whole are generally in Court most days of the week.
- For Albemarle but in the City Courts daily.
- For well over 20 years, I was in the local courts several times a week before transitioning to a part-time practice.
- I do search work in the Circuit Court Clerk's Office Record Room, and record land records in the County Clerk's Office frequently, often going back and forth several times during the day.
- I go to the courtrooms to handle cases every day and frequently handle cases in all three courts in the same day. I don't just go and stay, I go handle a few cases, then have additional cases at another time. I often handle some cases in court, then go the J&D court and handle cases and then go back to the other court and handle more cases. At least once a week I will have cases in two courts at the same time, where one judge will hold a case in one court and wait for me to finish a case in another court and then I come back and finish cases in that court. I also go to the clerk's offices of all three courts at least ten times a day to file paperwork, to check files and to handle scheduling issues.
- I primarily work in the federal system but have occasion to visit the local courts.
- I visit all three courthouses (GDC, JDRC, and Circuit) each day and sometimes multiple times each day.
- I work for a title insurance company as a title examiner. We utilize the clerk's offices to research the land records, etc.
- I work in court house.
- Judge Higgins hears many requests by my office for search warrant seal orders and electronic evidence records. These hearings involve both a Charlottesville prosecutor and Charlottesville police detective. These requests need to be presented to a circuit court judge who will not be the judge who hears the trial, which is why these requests go to Judge Higgins. These types of hearings are often for emergency situations, and they would be much, much harder to coordinate if the Albemarle Co. Circuit Court was moved out of downtown. There is also a frequent need to obtain prior conviction records for evidence at trial in certain cases.
- Many days - multiple trips per day.
- Multiple times a day.
- Multiple times per day, back and forth between office and courtrooms. Although I am a county prosecutor, I frequently appear in city court, or have to go see city judges due to conflicts county judges may have.
- My law firm, if not me specifically, is in this court several times a week if not daily.

- My staff visit the Circuit Courthouse a few times a month. They visit the Juvenile Court several times a week.
- Occasionally, I have a day with no court, but even on such days, I usually have need to visit the Clerk's Office for the Charlottesville and Albemarle Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Courts to review file material I am not allowed to copy or remove, such as a psychological evaluation.
- Often, several times a day.
- Only in the event of an appeal; our cases are heard in J&DR court.
- Sometimes more than once a day.
- The frequency varies depending on matters that may be transferred between courts.
- While my office is located within a private law firm, it is across Market Street from the Court House and the Clerk's Office. I oversee Fiduciaries in the County for the Judge of the Circuit Court, and every Fiduciary who qualifies in the Clerk's Office must report to me over a period generally of several years. Frequently Fiduciaries who qualify come immediately to my office with questions to be answered. Members of my staff visit the Clerk's Office as much as two or three times a week and the Deputy Clerk in charge of Probate visits my office with some frequency. I appear formally before the Judge of the Circuit Court at least once every two months and as often as once a month on average.

### Appendix D: Question 3: Movement between Courts - Additional Comments

- And sometimes, daily.
- As I am an officer of the Circuit Court of Albemarle County, I rarely have occasions to visit the City Courts on official business. However, the Continuing Legal Education courses sponsored by the Charlottesville-Albemarle Bar Association are held in the General District Courtroom of the City of Charlottesville.
- At least once per week.
- I am in court on a daily basis. I am in more than one court several times a week.
- I personally do not move between the two courthouses that often, but the files of Drug Court participants do.
- I spend the most time in the juvenile court, which serves both the City and the County. I frequently move between courtrooms in that Court during a single day. It is not uncommon for Judges to schedule cases for me in two courtrooms at one time, especially if half a dozen attorneys and federal deadlines are involved, such as in abuse and neglect cases. The attorneys who work in Social Services cases are accustomed to running up and downstairs to cover all of our cases. I rarely practice in the general district courts any more, partly because whenever I do, I seem also to be scheduled in juvenile court that day and it is difficult to cover both. I do practice in both the City and County Circuit Courts and, as I said above, a few times per month I have cases in both Circuit Court and juvenile court on the same day.
- Many days - multiple trips per day.
- My law firm routinely (at least weekly, but often daily) needs to move between these courts quickly in the same day for multiple cases.
- My understanding from the state public defenders and legal aid staff is that they frequently move between court houses in a single day and so therefore moving the court house will have a significant increased cost to their ability to provide indigent services
- Often its 3-5 days a week.
- Often, it is every day.
- Our cases are regularly appealed to Circuit Court.
- Required to go to several different clerks' offices on a daily basis to maintain dockets .
- See above. I do it daily, I move between multiple courts handling cases. As the juvenile prosecutor who also handles serious Circuit cases and regular General District dockets, I am in all courts, all days.
- When I was in full-time practice for over 20 years, it was several times per week. Now rarely.

## Appendix E: Question 4: Ease of Access for First-time Visitor - Explanations

- As to parking, most available spots immediately surrounding the courthouse are reserved for law enforcement for the City and County, with possibly 30(?) spots available to the general public within walking distance. As to signage, I've never seen road signs to either courthouse, however many many times I've personally had to direct citizens to the correct courthouse (be it Albemarle or Charlottesville, General, Circuit, or Juvenile). I can't speak to public transportation in the area.
- Centrally located and fairest location to Albemarle County citizens. Close to attorney offices and ancillary services.
- Centrally located and great for transit, but there are no signs visible from the street so that makes it tricky. There is ample parking, but most of it is limited to two hours, which can be difficult if you don't know how long you will be there. I know people complain about downtown parking all the time but I really don't get what the fuss is about. I am always able to find parking when I drive to work.
- Everyone knows how to get to the Downtown Mall from the time they move to the area, and always before they get a ticket.
- For first time visitors, street parking could be difficult, especially if you don't know your way around.
- Free 2 hour garage parking, courts validate. Courts are on the bus line. Signage could be better.
- Frequently individuals go to the City Court instead of the County and vice versa but due to the very convenient proximity, individuals can be redirected without missing their court dates and potentially in criminal cases being arrested for failures to appear. This would not be possible if the locations were removed by more than walking distance.
- I do not know enough about public transportation to answer accurately.
- I park on the streets around the court house nearly every day without issue. Public transportation to downtown Charlottesville is clearly better and more frequent than to any other possible location in the county.
- It is very easy to find the way, although some more signage at certain locations would be helpful.
- It's a little difficult to answer this question, as I've been utilizing this area for 15 years and am not sure what first-time users may think of the ease of access. I find it to be easily accessible and convenient.
- Large parking deck 2 blocks away, w/ validated parking for up to 2 hours.
- Never enough parking for court, full or spaces not available for public use unless you have to park in garages and they are mostly full inconvenient.
- Not enough parking.
- Parking and transportation is very easy because my office is only 2 blocks from the courthouse at its current location. For newcomers, it is easy to find 1 and 2 hour public parking spots all around the area because cars are constantly coming and going.
- Parking deck is only a short walk away.

- Parking garage isn't too far away for first time visitors. Those who come more frequently know their way around Court Square and how to find parking. The only courthouse with an easy to see sign is JDR - most traffic goes behind the Albemarle GDC and CC so no sign is seen. Public transportation is a block away.
- Parking in the parking garage is easy and available, and has good access to all of the courts, except Charlottesville Circuit Court, which is a block further away than the County courts are. However, some people look for street parking instead of using the parking garage, which can be challenging. Finding a specific court can be difficult for a newcomer; a sign with a map and names of the court houses would be useful. I haven't used public transportation to get to court, but many of my clients do, and it works for them.
- Parking is always difficult in the downtown area as there are limited public spaces that are at no cost, and there are two parking garages that do charge.
- Parking is easy, assuming you know where to find spots.
- Parking is only in the garages unless you can find something on the street.
- Parking is unacceptable for many reasons. Court and clerk's office users can be on a strict budget and the cost of parking is sizable depending on the time in court and utilizing the clerk's office. Our office does stamp for free two hours of parking for the parking garage. I know individuals can go over this amount of time easily for perhaps a trial or appearing as a witness for a trial. Some who seek street parking (2 hours) not knowing how long they will be may spend more money should they get a parking ticket.
- Parking is very difficult in the downtown area. If one is not familiar with the area it is also challenging to discern which is the county circuit court and which is city. While the city bus goes downtown, the place from which a client is coming may or may not have a bus stop.
- Parking very limited.
- Parking: The Market Street Garage is a block or two from the courts. It is rarely, if ever, full during times of large dockets in the courts. Signage is fine. Public transportation: All CATS buses serving the County and City converge at the transportation center at the east end of the Downtown Mall, a 3 -4 block distance from the Courts.
- Public Transportation is offered. The frequency of the route presents arrival problems - if a bus is delayed for example. Our office and court does all it can to expedite all processes.
- Regularly see families having difficulties finding affordable parking options
- Signage could be greatly improved as to court locations and access to parking. There is ample parking if you go right to it and accept that you will have to pay.
- Signage is almost non-existent. The clerks in our office as well as the service division of the city police department are continuously directing litigants/court users to all jurisdictions.
- Signage is difficult because parking lots are not always advertised.
- Some days parking is easy, some days parking is difficult.
- Some people say that it is difficult finding parking and some say it is easy. I am neutral since I have a designated parking spot. Also, it may take a couple of times to drive around to find a parking spot, but there is usually something around. Signage, in my opinion, has always needed to be improved. I am not familiar with the ease of access to the courthouse as it relates to public transportation.

- The Courthouse at its current location is easily accessible by public transit and has multiple parking options to include one hour parking, street parking, and two parking garages in close proximity.
- There are no directions to the court houses, when you get there, the courts are hard to find. There is no curbside parking, even for officers that have cases. The Sheriff's Office takes what parking there is available. The parking garage gets full during the day. I can't imagine how difficult the parking is for a citizen. It's as if no one cares about the citizen or the officers that have to appear before the courts.
- There is a lot of parking 100 yards away, in the Market Street Parking Garage. If anyone doesn't know where they are headed, it would be very easy to put up two signs to point them to where they are going. Total cost, perhaps \$1,000.
- There is a parking garage and the courts validate parking.
- There is a public garage on East Market Street within easy walking distance of all County courts, but there is no good signage, either at the garage or at the courts, to inform first-time visitors of that fact. Many businesses will validate parking tickets for two hours of free parking, but perhaps not everyone knows that. There is also free on-street parking, though in limited supply, near all of the courts. Better signage would solve virtually all of any perceived parking problem. I don't use public transportation to get to court, but I think several busses stop fairly regularly near the Market Street Garage. These busses serve the City and much of the urban ring of the County, but not the outlying rural areas.
- There is a public parking garage one block from Court Square which is rarely, if ever, full, and there is a substantial amount of on-street parking abutting and near Court Square. There is relatively little signage, but most residents of the area know where Court Square is and are glad to answer the questions of non-residents. As to public transportation, Court Square is only two blocks from the central hub of our local transportation system where I understand that all routes converge.
- There is a public parking space across nearby, as well as parking around Court Square and downtown. However, parking is not optimum and could be improved with a designated facility nearby.
- There is almost always ample parking either in lots, garages, or on-street within a block or two of each courthouse. Some courts validate garage parking. Signage is good, but in addition, with the proximity of the courts to each other, it is easy to move from one courthouse to another if one has made a mistake in which courthouse one has entered.
- There is only two-hour free parking close to the courthouse, and it is in short supply. Some of our families have difficulty paying for the paid parking in the vicinity. I don't think the signage is very good, as I'm frequently asked by visitors to the court where to go.
- There is public parking in 2 nearby garages, plus street parking around the court house. The central bus station is a block away from the courthouse. Given the historic nature of the area, users get confused around the Albemarle courthouse but since they are next to one another, it is easy to be directed.
- There isn't a lot of accessible free parking downtown for court litigants. There is a centrally located garage that costs money to park. I often have to give directions to people who are trying to find the Albemarle courts.

## Appendix F: Question 5: Frequency of Wrong Court Location - Additional Descriptions

- At least 3 or 4 times a week, we have someone who shows up to the City GDC who has been sitting for an hour or two in the County or vice versa.
- Because my office is close to Court Square, a few times a month I have people ask me on the street which court they are supposed to go to and have to explain that they are in the wrong place.
- But this is easily corrected with the courts in close proximity. The bailiffs and the judges all explain what court they are presiding over and where the other court that is in question is and how to get there. Judges also understand and allow for such errors. If the courts were not physically proximate, this would have a significant deleterious effect on docket management.
- Clients are already often confused and go to the wrong courthouse. If the courts were spread out miles apart, they would not be able to make it to the new location timely which would have negative legal consequences for them despite their best efforts to appear.
- Does not apply to me.
- From time to time (once or twice a year) a person will ask me if this is the right court. Almost always it is.
- I also frequently encounter citizens on the street who need directions to a courthouse and who do not realize there are six different such places over four different locations and are unsure where they need to be.
- I am not officer of the court but have staff that attend court every day and they have not mentioned this as a problem.
- I get asked by members of the general public which courthouse do they need to go to regularly. It certainly helps to have them all in the same area when people walk to the wrong one.
- I have noticed the deputy sheriffs re-direct people from one court to the other on occasion. I frequently (weekly to a couple times/month) receive calls from potential clients who believe that they have a case in one jurisdiction when it's in the other. I always check both. Many people have cases in both the City and County.
- I used to visit the Clerk's Office more regularly and would witness this happening very often. (A few times a month.) Since I now do not visit the Clerk's Office as regularly, I do not see it as often.
- It depends on what you mean by "experience." It happens in a way to affect one of my cases a few times a year, but I see it happening weekly to other people. I also see it happening on a monthly basis to attorneys.
- My personal experience as a full time lawyer and during 12 years as a Substitute Judge in the District level courts was that it is an unusual day if at least one person does not have to be directed to a different court.
- N/A to my work.
- Not really involved in court cases other than reviewing files.
- Often, during the week, but it doesn't interrupt my work much at all.
- People occasionally go to a City court when they should go to a County court, or vice versa. I think they usually figure it out pretty quickly and get redirected, but sometimes it makes people

late for their court case. With changing dockets in the juvenile court, it is often difficult for even lawyers to know which of two main courtrooms they should be in. I wish bailiffs at the front door were better informed and able to tell people as they come in. Most full-time Sheriff's Deputies are, but not always the reserve Deputies.

- People often confuse the General District Courts for Charlottesville and Albemarle.
- Simply due to poor signage and walking through wrong entrance to same building.
- The deputies are good at directing people to the appropriate court house. I hear people arriving in the wrong court frequently, and a deputy will tell them where to go, and they arrive in the correct location before it effects a case.
- The quantity is hard to estimate, but I've definitely seen it happen. I used to attend the civil docket in GDC pretty regularly, and after the judge explained that this was Albemarle (or Charlottesville) and if they were supposed to be in Charlottesville (or Albemarle) they were in the wrong place, not infrequently someone or several people would get up and leave.
- This is an everyday occurrence and has been during my 30 year tenure in the Charlottesville-Albemarle Court system. While the courts and addresses are clearly marked, people either don't properly read their summonses or they are just too ignorant to understand the difference between the courts.
- This rarely happens TO me but I see it fairly regularly. People don't seem to realize that Charlottesville and Albemarle are two different jurisdictions.
- While I am in the General District Court so rarely now, my answer is based on my experience when I was in the General District Court often. However, as my office is across the street from the Circuit and General District Courts of Albemarle County and within a block of all City Courts, I am asked on an average of once a week when I am walking in the area of my office where a certain Court is located.
- While my staff have not encountered this I cannot speak for the member of the public.



## Appendix G: Question 6: Ease of Access Issues if Relocated - Additional Explanations

- Accessing the courts means much, much more than on site parking. Accessing the courts also means accessing the lawyers and the agencies the courts, attorneys, probation officers, prosecutor offices, victim witness services, police departments. Time is the more relevant resource than parking in that regard. If the County moves its courts, the lawyers who serve the local system will not be able to set cases expeditiously. In the long run, that hurts the defendants, victims, citizens, and witnesses, not the lawyers. Cases will be delayed for everyone because a lawyer for a defendant cannot co-set cases anymore.
- Because you will always have individuals going to the City rather than County and vice versa, a move to a remote location would significantly impact citizens ability to be in the right place at the right time.
- Clients are already getting mixed up between courts and moving them further away makes it much more time intensive and difficult if you go to the wrong one. It also makes it more difficult for judges who need to move between courts due to conflicts quickly.
- Distance would be terrible.
- Due to the city/county courts' current location, if a member of the public accidentally goes to the wrong jurisdiction's courthouse, they can very quickly remedy the matter. If the county courts are moved, if a member of the public goes to the wrong courthouse, because of the distance, it will be impossible for them to return to the proper court and still have the matter heard the same day. This will without a doubt affect the courts' dockets. I interact with many members of the community on a daily basis that do not realize Charlottesville and Albemarle are separate jurisdictions. Moving the General District and Circuit Courts, but keeping a combined J&D Court will further cause confusion.
- Everyone can get to the downtown mall. It is in walking distance of many low income individuals. That would not be the case if in the urban ring.
- Hard to answer because there is no knowledge as to where the location might be. The city has much better public transportation than the county.
- I can't answer re: the ease of parking, as it's noted above that there would be onsite parking. I believe it will be much MORE difficult to navigate getting to the Court on 29 due to the amount of businesses and the traffic that are present in that area. In my opinion, it's difficult to go to that area at all times of the day now with regular congestion.
- I find it hard to believe that the public transportation will be adequate out there. Downtown C'ville is a hub, so it's very easy to get to from any point, and multiple buses come in; a bus that runs every hour or half hour out to a location places someone at risk that if they miss that bus, they'll miss their court date. This is especially true for low-income residents without cars. Also, I think there will be a huge convenience cost for people who have come to the wrong courthouse or need to be at both courthouses.
- I imagine parking would be easy if there was one big parking lot at a new court location, but wayfinding would be far more problematic for anyone who thought they were at a court downtown, were redirected by a deputy when they arrived at the wrong court, and had to make it to another location. Many of my clients can't drive, and anyone who needed to use public

transportation to get to the opposite location at the last minute would not be able to make it to court on time.

- I marked very difficult because there is already so much traffic on Route 29 and the signage can be confusing. Depending on the time of day, people can be delayed by the traffic, especially if there is an accident.
- I would like many more specifics before I comment.
- If the courts are moved from a central location, 3/4 of county residents would have a much more challenging commute to reach them. In addition, city residents need to access county courts for many reasons, not least of which is the significant UVA Hospital docket in both GDC and Circuit courts. These are people least likely to be able to access transportation. Further, such a relocation is likely to result in many more default judgments against those least able to remedy their situation. In addition, circuit court dockets will be put under further stress by the increase in de novo appeals from GDC caused by default judgments being entered because of mistakes in courthouse. Also, many more capiases and show causes for failure to appear will be issued and have to be adjudicated merely because of errors. The costs are staggering. This does not even address the lost economies due to judges no longer being able to easily sit for each other in conflict or other issues, or legal aid attorneys being unable to represent as many needy people due to travel time constraints.
- If the parking was adequate and onsite, and if the signage was good, and the public transportation covered the whole County and was frequent enough, the public could certainly get there. There are a lot of "ifs" there. At least as important, though, would be how long the public would have to wait for their cases to be scheduled and how often they would wait for lawyers or have to have cases re-scheduled because lawyers' cases elsewhere ran long and they couldn't get there. Cost is another access issue. If the courts are separated, many lawyers will charge their clients more to represent them because they will not be able to cover as much ground in a day, so to speak. More people won't be able to afford to hire counsel. There would be a tremendous burden on the Public Defender's Office to cover different locations; indigent criminal defendants might wait longer (perhaps sitting in jail if they can't be bonded) for their trials. If the Public Defender's Office can't add lawyers to handle such a dramatic change, representation would suffer.
- It would still be a lot easier to be near the Charlottesville courts for attorneys and the public for ease of going back and forth between the courts if necessary.
- Maybe you'll ask about this later, but don't leave off the sheer time involved. Right now, I can go from one court to another in 3 minutes. If the courts are moved, that goes up to about 30 minutes, minimum.
- Moving away from other court functions that operate so closely together is a disservice to the community. Public transportation would be less convenient and less connected to other useful stops. Showing up at the wrong courthouse will be a disaster, as opposed to a 1 minute fix by walking to correct one.
- Moving it all the way out 29 disadvantages all the people who are on the Southside of Charlottesville. The traffic is so bad that it will take people a lot longer to get there. The location now is easily accessed from all directions because it is in the middle of the County and the traffic

on the downtown feeder routes is not as unbearable as 29 or Hydraulic or Rio or the new parkway.

- Moving the courthouse to 29/Rio Rd would not be a good option because there is less public transportation to those areas. Moreover, sometimes people have cases in two courts on the same day so it is fairly easy for them and their lawyers to move between the courts.
- Moving the courts is a terrible idea. It would disenfranchise the poor members of our community, and the commute would be brutal for people living in Southern Albemarle. Ample parking is not enough of an excuse for uprooting the courts.
- New location and traffic congestion on route 29.
- Parking is likely the ONLY benefit of moving the courts.
- Parking would be easier. 29/Rio is a headache no matter where you're going or why, and public transportation is not affected. 29/Rio is a traffic nightmare.
- Parking would be expected to be a surface lot in the County. Signage would be expected to be good in the immediate area of Rio/29, but nonexistent elsewhere. Lengthy public transportation routes.
- Parking: I presume there would be a very large parking lot at any new facility.
- Public Transportation would be easier for those living along the bus line that will serve the new complex, exceedingly difficult for all others."
- Rio/29 is already congested. Moving the County courts to that location will only make it WORSE
- Route 29 is a nightmare. The traffic is nearly always congested. Accidents frequently occur. People drive far too fast. Turns lanes are difficult to navigate.
- Route 29 main road.
- So this all depends on the location of the courts within the urban ring. There are some areas of the urban ring that public transportation just doesn't get to.
- Some victims have multiple cases in different jurisdiction the same day around the same time.
- The building isn't there yet, so how can anyone rate what the parking would be like or the signage?
- The question indicates adequate parking, so I can only assume parking would be "very easy." I have no idea about signage since there is no such location. Although there may be bus routes to the area, I do not know if they will be direct to the area, and since it is not the main station, a strict schedule would have to be kept in order to be on time. That is not always the case with CATS.
- The question presumes the new space would have adequate parking, so I have no reason to doubt finding parking would be very easy. However, finding the way to a new court building that is in a different location than where all of the court buildings have historically been will be difficult. Further, putting a courthouse at 29 and Rio Road will only increase traffic in that area of town and add an additional 20 minutes of a commute for any county residents who live in the south parts of the county.
- The Rio Road and 29 intersection is a mess. The new traffic pattern is unfamiliar to many and the amount of traffic is out of control in this particular part of town. I find myself avoiding this part of Rt. 29 if at all possible to make it somewhere on time.
- This question is impossible to answer - the prompt states that there will be "adequate" parking and public transportation, but that begs the question of what is adequate. If it is truly adequate,

then the answer is necessarily "easy." The fact remains that it will be difficult to even get to the complex because of traffic and, for many, travel distance.

- Traffic is horrible anywhere on 29.
- Unfortunately this eliminates J & D and the Federal Courts. Also changes the bus routes and leaves more users relying on public transportation. For example East Market Street is within walking distance for a lot of court users (to include attorneys). This office can refer anywhere from 3 to 6 or more cases a day to court appointed attorney's which most are within walking distance of the court.. Additionally, VASAP and OAR programs.
- Unless buses came more frequently, it will be difficult for people without cars.
- Very difficult for our office to maintain coverage for all the courts dockets if courts are split up in different locations.
- Wayfinding: would be terrible for people who don't regularly drive past the new facility.
- We are in walking distance of all of the courts currently. We would have to budget more to reimburse employees to drive their cars to the new location.
- While on-site parking would presumably be provided, whether or not signage would be adequate for people coming from all directions to locate the court complex is, of course, unknowable at this time. Any idea that even adequate, much less convenient, public transportation will be provided has to be considered a pipe dream. The present system of public transportation has had to be subsidized to a very great degree in order to keep it operating, and it is beyond the farthest realm of possibility that two such systems would be viable in the County. All of this does not even take into account that a Court Complex in the area described would be much farther from the center of the County than the present complex. Moreover, the entire community as well as the Virginia Department of Transportation have been working for years to reduce congestion on U. S. Route 29, and a new complex in the area designated could only have the effect of increasing congestion on that artery.
- Would just be completely non convenient for our office and take a lot of wasted time for us getting to and from there.

## Appendix H: Question 7: Option 5 Court Docket Efficiencies Attributes - Additional Comments

- Busy lawyers often practice in both Albemarle AND city courts on the same days.
- Everyone who serves in the Juvenile Court would be driving all day long back and forth if you separate the Circuit and GDCTs. LE, Sheriff's, OAR, Probation, Attorneys and prosecutors don't just serve in the J& D or just in the other courts. They can't just go to J&D and stay all day. The inefficiency for everyone who has cases in J&D and any other court would be ridiculous. Additionally all other services for the courts are currently located close to the courts location and everyone would have to move to be closer if you move half of the system out to 29. Additionally with the City courts staying downtown, people who serve the courts would be split three ways. The same court service people, some LE, all attorneys and probation serve both in the City and the County.
- From my perspective, the most important thing is that low income people have easy access to the courts. Locating the circuit and GDC together is helpful-- as long as they're in a good location. I would define a good location as a place that's a) close to the city courts with which they're often confused; b) easily available by public transportation, walking, or biking; c) doesn't place people at risk of suffering prejudice by missing their court date due to confusion about location. I might add that moving the Albemarle Courts out to Rio Rd. makes them even further away from the county office building.
- I am not sure that I understand the question. It is important to have the Circuit and General District Court near each other. Its also important to have those Courts near JDR and the City Courts. Having the City, County and Federal Courts all within a few blocks of each other makes it very convenient for attorneys and requires little driving on most days. being near the jail is also important.
- I don't understand this question, which presupposes the creation of court docket efficiencies by the move. It would in fact DESTROY efficiencies in every way that you are asking about. It will be farther away from other courts, farther away from my office (though closer to my home), farther away from related court services, farther away from law offices, and farther away from the jail.
- I interpret "courts related services" as including the Sheriff's Office and the Police Department.
- It would be more challenging for visitors and personnel who deal with the courts everyday if J&DR court stays downtown and the others move.
- It would be much more inconvenient for probation officers to get to. Also, now, the courts are close to both juvenile and adult probation offices, and attorneys.
- Non-attorney users typically visit a single courtroom. Most attorney users visit a single court in one day.
- PARKING.
- Particularly with legal aid, when the courts are removed from proximity with each other, fewer people (who are at risk of domestic violence or homelessness) can be served. With the current level of proximity of city and county courts, one attorney can be present for many clients in 2 or 3 different courts at the same time. If county courts are removed from a central location, many of those clients will go unserved, because there will be no increase in funding for additional

personnel at legal aid. In addition, offices such as the public defender will experience similar strain, however, there will be a constitutionally mandated increase in their staff in order to provide adequate representation to indigent defendants. While that may not affect county tax rates, it will still affect the tax bills of county residents and needs to be included in any calculation of costs associated with such a move.

- Plenty of parking and signs directing you the courts. Bus routes that could transport a person(s) to the court complex with ease.
- Proximity to law offices and the other courts is essential in order to keep the court dockets moving efficiently. Our dockets already move very slowly because we don't have many criminal attorneys. Defense attorneys have to jump back and forth from city to county courts. That process will become far slower if attorneys have to drive back and forth between complexes.
- Proximity to the County Office Building on McIntire is also important. I see a lot of people who need to go back and forth between the County Office Building and the Clerk's Office. (For example: The Community Development Dept. will send an individual over to the Clerk's Office to get a copy of their plat of record, which they will need to bring back to Community Development. Think of all the added driving this will create for people.)
- Proximity to where to where people live.
- Question is not artfully drafted. My answers assume the question is asking whether efficiencies will be created by relocation and, if so, the rank of the listed items in creating efficiency.
- Space. Modernity. Security. Access. Future Scalability.
- Splitting the courts (city vs. county) as well as county juvenile from county others is the epitome of inefficiency. More cars on the road traveling back and forth. More wasted time in traffic. Not just for attorneys but for all court personnel and court users.
- The new area defined would not even be proximate to the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court of the County, much less the City and Federal Courts. It would not be at all convenient to the innumerable organizations located in the Court Square Area which currently serve litigants, prisoners, former prisoners, and the general public which is involved with the court system. Neither option is close to the Jail and in either case prisoners must be transported by vehicle, but the Court Square Area is much closer to the Jail than the proposed area.
- The survey does not get to the heart of the problems that would be caused both within the County Courts and between the City and County Courts by the proposed move. The organic inter-relationship between and among the Courts, prosecutors, defense lawyers, clerks, other agencies such as the Public Defender's Office, Legal Aid, OAR, is critical to the efficient administration of justice in our community; it would be shattered by the proposed move.
- This question is confusing. I think moving the courts will be highly detrimental in each of the categories.
- While each of these attributes is important creating a separate campus will not necessarily be more efficient.

## Appendix I: Question 8: Option 5 Courts Complex Attributes - Additional Comments

- Again, I'm not opposed to a courts complex provided it meets the needs of my clients. I am concerned about the detrimental effect of moving the Albemarle Courts to a remote location which will necessarily be less accessible to public transportation and pedestrians than downtown is.
- Again, this is a poorly-worded question, because it asks me to rank things that you call "attributes" that are not in fact attributes. I have answered it as though your question was "how important do you believe that these considerations should be in deciding where to locate the courts?"
- All of these things are important and they would all be made worse by moving the two of the Courts away from all of the lawyers and lunch options. It would cause a lot more driving.
- Allowing/creating more unnecessary congestion in an already congested area.
- As stated above, it seems patently obvious that the only possible attribute in which a new location could be considered more convenient would be parking. And it must be considered that the City has bought land abutting the Court Square Area specifically for a new parking garage. In all other respects, relocation of the Albemarle County Courts would, in my opinion, only be a disaster for the system of justice in Albemarle County.
- Banks would be very important while restaurants not so much.
- Ease of the people who are daily serving the courts, the sheriff who has to move prisoners, the probation and court service people who appear every day, LE officers who and citizens who are regular users of the courts and attorneys who practice in all of the courts are important for the courts to be efficient. Having to attend certain courts downtown and others way out on 29 would be extremely inefficient and actually cause additional cost. Many of the court service agencies would have to restructure and possibly hire additional staff so they could serve the city and the county separately given the distance between them. Currently most of the agencies often utilize the same staff for both courts.
- Losing historical nature of court square should be considered as well.
- Most county cases do not require public transportation. I'm VERY concerned about additional costs of taking county cases because my office is now downtown and I can schedule more hearings, for less expense to clients, because I can easily walk to court.
- Nobody going to court for eviction, a protective order, a criminal complaint, custody/visitation, a warrant in debt, or pretty much any other reason why someone is hauled into court cares one whit about ""amenities."" Going to court is not a recreational activity, and most people want to get as far away as possible as quickly as possible.
- Proximity to where clients live.
- Same as for prior question.
- See Explanation 14.
- The current courthouse complex is far more convenient for my practice. I am directly across the street from the courts, and moving them to Rio/29 will cause a significant disruption in my ability to practice law. Also, I don't understand this survey question, but I want to make perfectly clear that moving the courts is a bad idea.

- The issue of parking can be addressed by purchasing a lot and building parking for people who attend court.
- The survey does not get to the heart of the problems that would be caused both within the County Courts and between the City and County Courts by the proposed move. The organic inter-relationship between and among the Courts, prosecutors, defense lawyers, clerks, other agencies such as the Public Defender's Office, Legal Aid, OAR, is critical to the efficient administration of justice in our community; it would be shattered by the proposed move.



## Appendix J: Question 12: Biggest Concerns if Circuit and General District Courts Moved - Additional Comments

### Question 12 Biggest Concerns if Circuit and General District Courts are Moved- Additional Comments

- Additional cost to litigants/parties.
- Additional inconvenience will add to attorney's fees and costs of litigation, and most of those who are the litigants in the local courts are Albemarle County residents.
- Attorneys charging clients more due to increased time caused by separation of city/county.
- Difficult for access to attorneys' offices and other courts.
- Difficult transition between the county and city courts when files must be sent back and forth for Drug Court matters. Also, added time for public defenders and defense attorneys to get to the different courts. It would cut down their ability to effectively represent people in both courts.
- Difficulties faced by the Police, the Sheriff's Offices, OAR, language interpreters, litigators and lawyers.
- Ease of access to counsel.
- Efficiency within the entire court system. The above subjects offered are incomplete.
- Extreme loss of court efficiency.
- For my own personal benefit, I don't want the courthouse to move from downtown. Further, I think for the citizens, moving the courthouse would be infuriating.
- Getting to both ACC & CCC on the same day on time if they are spread out across town.
- Having some of the justice system in one location and the rest of it in another will cause confusion, inefficiency, extra cost, require court serving agencies to have to restructure and add additional staff to fully serve the system at two separate locations. The three courts, times two jurisdictions are too intertwined in the daily functions and for the daily users both justice system participants and justice system agencies to separate part of it to a second location.
- Inability for public defenders and legal aid to represent as many indigent clients.
- Increase in legal costs due to most lawyers located in court square area.
- Length of time it now takes to get to this area - our staff members are in Court all throughout the day for multiple cases and at times need to run over to the office to conduct a U/S, obtain additional documents, etc.
- Many clients often have transportation issues. The reason they are in Court might also be a reason why they are no longer able to drive. Getting from Court to OAR or Region 10 is often a significant burden.
- Moving 2 of 3 county courts away from the city courts will create extreme inefficiencies for everyone: defense attorneys, sheriff's office, commonwealth attorney, and citizens. Anyone suggesting that separating them is a good idea does not have an understanding of how our local courts work, how they struggle to move efficiently with so few attorneys and judges, and separating the courts will exacerbate the problem. Separating them will result in higher transportation and personnel costs for the sheriff, a strong likelihood of the courts having to add

weekend dockets, requiring overtime for court staff and security, and making things far more difficult for citizens. It is an absolutely terrible idea all the way around.

- Moving the courts would create a huge hardship for ALL regular users of the courts.
- None. Albemarle County needs an adequate government center that can expand to fit future needs. Co-Locating in the City (Option 1) is a certain dead end for the County in the future. Electronic/digital access may obviate the need for transactional attorneys from having to visit the Court, but litigation and trials demand personal appearances. That demand will not change, but will only continue to grow.
- Overlapping historic records causing me to have to drive back and forth between the County and City Clerks Offices.
- See Explanation 14.
- The ability of the two courts to coordinate services will be severely adversely impacted. This is a huge social justice issue and it effects the efficiency of both court systems.
- The city courts, as opposed to court related services not being in proximity would cause administrative problems.
- These options, again, do not get to the heart of the problems that would be caused both within the County Courts and between the City and County Courts by the proposed move. The organic inter-relationship between and among the Courts, prosecutors, defense lawyers, clerks, other agencies such as the Public Defender's Office, Legal Aid, OAR, is critical to the efficient administration of justice in our community; it would be shattered by the proposed move.
- Timely administration of justice/dockets.

### Appendix K: Question 13: Issue Regarding Option 5 Not Raised - Explanations

- Ability of judges to assist and cover cases with ease between the jurisdictions.
- Additional cost to government and nonprofit agencies serving the courts due to inefficiencies resulting from relocating Albemarle courts outside downtown--another case of unfunded mandates for taxpayer supported agencies. Services will definitely be degraded if courts move unless government funding of agencies provides adequate resources to offset the inefficiencies resulting from court relocation.
- All stakeholders locally—judges, commonwealth attorneys, sheriffs, police, public defenders, legal aid, probation & parole, court services, etc.,—have already voiced their objections, but the attempts continue. This contemplated move would have a major deleterious effect on legal aid clients. The number of clients we could serve with full representation would decline precipitously, and undesirable outcomes in their cases would rise dramatically.
- As a prosecutor, if Circuit/General District Courts were moved to the Rio Road area, it would be physically impossible for me to do my job. On a daily basis, I appear in 2, if not all 3 courts. Often, I am scheduled to be in multiple courts within 15 minute or fewer increments. I am often called by the clerks or judges to handle a last minute issue, such as a bond hearing. With a 15 to 30 minute commute with traffic between Circuit/General District and J&D, the courts' dockets would have to be extended by a number of hours to accommodate this. Private defense attorneys who freely move between Charlottesville and Albemarle courts will further contribute to this problem. Most importantly, the Public Defender's Office, which covers both Albemarle and Charlottesville, has to move between 5 courthouses on a daily basis. With the inability to efficiently handle trials and bond hearings, defendants will be held in jail unnecessarily simply because attorneys cannot be available. Already overwhelmed dockets simply cannot handle these added issues. An essential part of my job is to openly and frequently communicate with the police department. If our office is relocated to Rio Road, we will be 30 minutes away from both the police department and the Victim Witness department. On a weekly, and sometimes daily basis, I meet with victims of crime with Victim Witness and police officers. To ensure the comfort and safety of victims, these meetings often occur at the police department. I cannot be required to commute an hour to meet with victims and also be present at the proposed courthouse location for hearings and trials. The distance is simply unacceptable and will have a severe detriment on my ability to protect victims and prosecute criminals in Albemarle County. I am a public servant whose salary does not accommodate multiple trips back and forth between courthouses on a daily basis. Because I am paid by the government, I cannot bill clients for the additional travel expense. The Public Defender's Office faces the same issue. Beyond that, in order to accommodate the distance between courthouses and the loss of the ability to freely move between Charlottesville and Albemarle Courts for purposes of trials, certifying paperwork (which has to be handled in person), and other daily activities, I anticipate the Commonwealth Attorney's Office will need to add additional attorneys, perhaps doubling our size, as well as staff and paralegals. The Public Defender's Office will need to do the same. These costs will be billed to the tax payers.
- As a resident of the County (Forest Lakes), I have seen a number of surveys and plans concerning the development of various aspects along 29 North. I do not understand why the

County spends so much effort on commercial development instead of beautification efforts. It seems to me that a main reason the County is such a great place to live is because the City is financially vibrant. We are a suburban area, lets act like one of the better ones instead of one of the sprawling strip mall burbs.

- Cost of building a new court complex would be much more expensive than remodeling/refurbishing the current court.
- Dismembering a Court in which Jefferson, Monroe, and Madison practiced in without compelling justification.
- Has anyone noticed that Route 29 is a traffic hellhole? Why do we want to throw more traffic there?
- I believe that the Courts are in a convenient location now for CAs, probation and parole, and attorneys. I don't see a reason to move, but building improvements would certainly be a positive thing and welcomed by most of the community members that would be impacted by the alternative of moving.
- I really don't think the County has given enough thought to how much the community considers the City and the County to be one community and how much our institutions operate that way every day. Moving the courts would likely hurt the City and that fact would hurt the County. They would be cutting off their nose to spite their face.
- I'm not sure why "somewhere in the urban ring" automatically means the Rio/29 area. I avoid Rio/29 like the plague.
- Keeping it at Levy requires PARKING PARKING PARKING.
- Moving to Rio Rd. is a solution in search of a problem, creating more problems than it hopes to solve.
- No.
- No.
- No.
- No, but all of the concerns have equal merit. I found it difficult choosing just three of the five available. Please don't move the courthouse outside of downtown!
- Option 5 does not address the problem of attorneys being in multiple courts close in time. I frequently have cases set at 9:00 in one court, and 9:30 in another, and if one case goes long, the times overlap, and I find myself running back and forth between courts as cases are called. We also visit Commonwealth's Attorney's offices multiple times a day to file motions, work on discovery, and negotiate with prosecutors. The close proximity of the downtown Court Square makes this possible. While the Levy building is much closer than 29 North, it is not close enough for attorneys to go from office to office and court to court as quickly as we need to.
- Please see previous comments. Basically, there is not one aspect of the administration of justice in Albemarle County and in both the Count and City Courts that would be improved by Option 5. To the contrary, all of them would be materially degraded.
- See my "other" comments above.
- Separating the courts will undermine joint City/County justice system improvements.
- Sorry, but this is simply an unnecessary, terrible and ill-conceived plan. Please keep Albemarle courts where they are.

- Supporters of Option 5 have no understanding of how the court system works and how crucial it is that ALL of the local courts be in the same area. The Charlottesville and Albemarle courts are all part of the same organism, not separate entities. Option 5 is totally self-serving to the Board, and not the People.
- The BoS repeatedly ignoring, for almost 20 years the unanimous lack of support for moving the Courts. Many think this is about re-negotiating the revenue sharing agreement. Please tell us who WANTS the Courts moved?
- The City of Charlottesville was incorporated in the 1890s and some parts of the City were not incorporated until the 1960s. Therefore, title searchers may be following the chain of title of a parcel in the City and the title will end in the City and continue in the County. Presently, if this happens, the researcher can walk across the street and continue. If you move the courts, this person will now have to spend 25+ minutes making the trip to some other location. This is not efficient and title searchers are likely the primary users of the record rooms. Also, it appears that public transportation to the courts seems to be a concern. Imagine the complications this will create for a person who needs public transportation, and goes to the WRONG courthouse. Presently they walk across the street. If you move the courthouse, then this person has to now somehow figure out how to get from one court to the other via public transportation. So then, their error goes from costing them 5 minutes to costing them likely several hours. Keep the City and County courts next to each other.
- The impact on indigent services that are already underfunded.
- The imposition on the local bar will be significant, and I think scheduling of cases will be made far more difficult if the Albemarle courts move to Rio/29. I do not support this at all.
- The proximity and separation of the JDR court.
- The public defender's office has one office in downtown Charlottesville. Moving the courts would be a burden on the PDs since their office would not be close to the court. Defendants who leave a courthouse on Rt 29 would not be able to just walk to their attorney's office. This would result in a strain on the attorney client relationship. Moving the courts far from where the majority of attorney offices are located (downtown Charlottesville), you will lose attorneys who are willing to accept court appointed cases.
- There has been a consistent lack of consideration of the full cost of such a relocation in all presentations made to date. County tax burdens alone do not tell the whole story, and even those have been minimized in most presentations to date. There are additional costs that will be borne by both city and county residents, some reflected in state taxes, some reflected in other fee structures, some reflected simply in loss of access to vital services. Many of these issues seem to have been willfully ignored in the rush to "build something." Every stakeholder in this issue has urged keeping the city and county courts physically proximate. You should listen to the experts on the ground.
- There is a 3rd option not being expressed which would be considerably less expensive than renovation Levy while keeping all the courts within Court Square. I believe it is extremely unfair and biased to not also include that option/alternative in the equation as the cost for new construction over historic renovation are not "apples to apples".

- There is a large amount of attorney's offices and real estate title agencies surrounding the current location. It would be very inconvenient for all of them if the court is moved. These are the people I see in the Circuit Court Clerk's office every single day.
- These issues are only the tip of the iceberg in what would be a catastrophic decision to move the courts. There is no doubt that the current courthouse will not meet the growing needs of the County in the future, however, there are multiple ways to update the current courthouses and keep them located downtown, so as to not disrupt the current infrastructure, and just as importantly, keep a historic monument to our County's role in U.S. history.
- Yes, but I believe I have dealt with them above.
- Yes. The best scenario is co-location of the City and County General District Courts. It would decrease failures to appear, allow judges to coordinate their dockets to more efficiently and effectively serve the high volume of cases that are processed and tried there.
- Yes: I am unaware of a SINGLE user of the courts who supports Option 5. Simply put, no stakeholder I have spoken with supports moving the courts.