PUBLIC SERVICE

Introduce an AI permit assistant

Compare mandatory automated screening with an optional assistant and human appeal.

Decision question
What operating safeguards should a city test before introducing an AI permit assistant?

Study objective
Specify the safeguards and usability tests required for a limited permit pilot.

Hypothesis to check
Optional use, a clear retention rule and human appeal may change acceptance and the factors people prioritize.

Decision owner
City service director and permit operations team

BASELINE

Baseline

Modeled acceptance **39 / 100**

Modeled risk **49 / 100**

The city will require permit applicants to use an AI assistant to complete forms. The system collects personal data and flags applications for additional review. Applicants pay the existing filing fee. A flagged application must be corrected online before staff will accept it at the counter.

ALTERNATIVE

Optional assistant with human review

Modeled acceptance **40 / 100**

Modeled risk **47 / 100**

The city will offer an optional AI assistant for permit forms at no extra charge. Applicants may use the counter or existing online form instead. The assistant collects only the personal data required by the form and deletes draft data after 30 days. A human reviewer makes the decision, explains any refusal and hears an appeal. Publish error rates and processing times each month.

Fictional worked study computed from an authored audience. Results describe generated cases and heuristic scenario scores. The two versions share their audience and seed. Human fieldwork is proposed and has not been performed for this example.

Survey response distributions

120 generated cases per version. Shares use substantive answers to each question. Human respondents: 0.

QUESTION 1

The permit process described here is acceptable.

	Baseline 120 answered / 120 asked	Alternative 120 answered / 120 asked
1	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
2	47 (39.17%)	38 (31.67%)
3	73 (60.83%)	81 (67.5%)
4	0 (0%)	1 (0.83%)
5	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

10 changed across 120 answered pairs. 0 pairs excluded. Distribution distance 7.5 pp.

QUESTION 2

I trust the city to handle my application fairly under this process.

	Baseline 120 answered / 120 asked	Alternative 120 answered / 120 asked
1	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
2	33 (27.5%)	33 (27.5%)
3	77 (64.17%)	77 (64.17%)
4	10 (8.33%)	10 (8.33%)
5	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

0 changed across 120 answered pairs. 0 pairs excluded. Distribution distance 0 pp.

QUESTION 3

Which factor most shapes your reaction to this permit process?

	Baseline 120 answered / 120 asked	Alternative 120 answered / 120 asked
Privacy	41 (34.17%)	27 (22.5%)
Fairness	0 (0%)	33 (27.5%)
Implementation	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Trust	0 (0%)	28 (23.33%)
Cost	79 (65.83%)	32 (26.67%)
No major concern	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

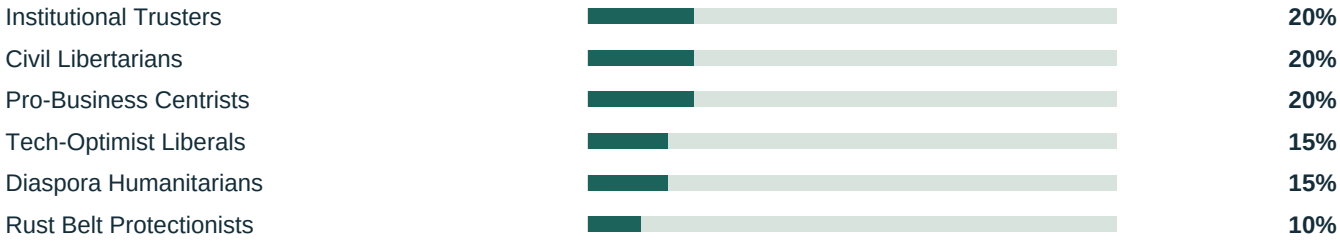
75 changed across 120 answered pairs. 0 pairs excluded. Distribution distance 50.83 pp.

Audience and context graph

Authored shares and scenario links define the exercise. Field evidence is addressed separately.

Permit applicants and reviewers

Illustrative US municipal permit office



Who to recruit

Recruit first-time applicants, repeat contractors, applicants who need language or accessibility support and counter staff.

Evidence to collect

Sample public form errors and processing times. Have people complete the same test task in each arm with a human reviewer scoring errors.

Context graph excerpts

9 nodes and 8 relationships in the complete graph download.

Introduce an AI permit assistant / contains / Permit applicants and reviewers

Intended audience (authored): "Permit applicants and reviewers"

Introduce an AI permit assistant / contains / Evidence to gather

What to check with people (evidence needed): "Have first-time and repeat applicants complete identical tasks. Check errors, comprehension of data use, counter acce..."

Introduce an AI permit assistant / contains / Evidence constraint

Baseline wording (evidence needed): "data"

Evidence to gather next

This example proposes human fieldwork before a real decision.

Decision rule

A pilot requires verified access, error and appeal performance. Compare the modeled factors with observed task completion and explanations from applicants.

FIELDWORK STEPS

01 Pretest the descriptions with applicants who have different digital and language needs.

02 Assign the same realistic application task to each process.

03 Collect the three questionnaire answers after the task.

04 Review errors with a human permit officer and publish pilot findings using the frozen instrument.

RECORDS TO CHECK

- Exact data fields and retention policy
- Staff handling of flagged applications and appeals
- Task errors and completion time by access need

How this report was reproduced

Both versions use the same frozen authored audience, instrument and seed. Scenario indices use a 0-100 scale. Survey response shares and paired changes describe generated cases. Check wording, coverage and actual behavior with people before interpreting a modeled contrast.

Example release	1.0.0 / 2026-11-22
Signal engine / survey method	3.7.0 / 1.3.0
CiviSphere audience dataset	1.0.0
Fixed seed / cases per version	19427 / 120
Human respondents	0
Input SHA-256	58270ab1162f1104883186ee019c01ebe4d2d15008dfeedb944c5929c98ce232
Result SHA-256	bb3bf0189365d2a34b70ff0283871f4f5b616e33edcd24f33b019873716e6862