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**Subject:** Dallas reaffirms convention center design that uses part of old Dallas Morning News site  
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## Dallas reaffirms convention center design that uses part of old DMN site



A multi-year redevelopment effort looms for the downtown convention center — but just how the new facility will look is still being discussed.

Submitted renderings

Dallas Business Journal

By [Plamedie Ifasso](#) – Staff Writer, Dallas Business Journal

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There's some fresh clarity around plans for the multibillion-dollar redevelopment of Dallas' Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center.

The design presented by project officials during an April 3 briefing matched what was approved last year by Dallas City Council, which would mean the convention center expands to the southeast and northwest.

That would rebuff a proposal by Hunt Realty to shift the center closer to the Reunion district and [does not resolve City Hall's conflict](#) with real estate investor Ray Washburne, who owns the former Dallas Morning News building that would be impacted by the new convention center.

Dallas City Council approved this convention center layout in March 2024 to avoid conflicting with a Union Pacific rail line and the Texas Department of Transportation's plans to widen Interstate 30, and to keep the city's options open in regards to a potential high-speed train project.

During the April 3 community briefing, held at the Black Academy of Arts and Letters within the convention center, project officials shared additional design details. The convention center's connection with the Ommi Hotel will remain, as well plaza and

pedestrian connections, while the facility's new main entrance will face City Hall.

Rosa Fleming, director of convention and events services for Dallas, also shared that the city has completed its reworking of utility and water lines since [a June groundbreaking](#) and that officials are hopeful the project should will stay within a \$2.5 billion to \$3.5 billion budget.

Fleming said the city evaluated 16 design proposals including the request by Hunt Realty Inc. to move the [convention center closer to Reunion Tower](#). Dallas City Council is set to receive a briefing about the project on May 21.



The convention center footprint, as presented in 2024, shows how the new, more compact design could straddle Memorial Drive and extend north to the old Dallas Morning News site.

City of Dallas/Inspire Dallas

It's not clear how the city's latest plans sit with Hunt and Washburne. Neither responded to requests for comment.

Washburne has said he's considering selling the old DMN site, which he purchased in 2019, to a data center company. Council has been discussing the real estate at 508 Young St. owned by Washburne and could consider buying the site.

Redevelopment plans for the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center call for doubling the ballroom space, increasing exhibition halls in the complex by 76,000 square feet and nearly tripling meeting room space to 260,000 square feet. If everything goes according to plan, the reworked convention center could open in 2029. Fleming shared this week that 59 conventions have pre-booked space at the center while 137 are waiting for the city to complete its design process.

*Noor Adatia contributed reporting.*

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