

Fannish Inquisition Survey: Detroit NASFiC Bid

NASFiC Bid: Detroit

What are the proposed dates for which you are bidding? July 17-20, 2014

What is your proposed convention host city? Is your convention site in a city center location or a suburb? If a suburb, what are the transport options into the city center? How far is the site from the city center?

We are bidding for the city of Detroit. Our hotel is right in the city center, and the building has a people mover (downtown rapid transit) stop located right in the hotel for easy access to other parts of the city center.

What is the typical current airfare to your closest airport from world cities such as London, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, Melbourne? Atlanta?

Since we are bidding for a NASFiC, international airfare rates are less relevant than North American. Rates for a few major US population centers are below. Detroit is a Delta hub, and Delta claims that 60% of the US population is within 90 minutes by air. Additionally, many major population centers are within a 6 hour drive of Detroit, such as Chicago, Cincinnati, Columbus, Toronto, Indianapolis, Pittsburgh, etc.

- Los Angeles: \$350-\$450
- Seattle: \$400-\$500
- New York City: \$250-\$270
- Houston: \$400-\$500
- Chicago: \$170-\$200 (5 hour drive)
- Toronto: \$450-\$470 (5 hour drive)

Do international flights, as well as domestic, fly into your local airport? Which airlines? If not, where is the closest international airport? Are direct flights from the cities above flown into your local airport?

Yes, DTW is an international airport (although less relevant to this NASFiC bid). See answer above.

How far is your convention site from the nearest airport/train station and what is the likely cost of getting to the hotels by both public transport and taxi from that airport/train station?

The hotel is located 20 miles from the airport. We are the Motor City, and car rentals from the airport are available beginning at about \$25/day. Approximate cab fare from the airport is \$44.50. We plan to establish a system to aid members in coordinating arrival times for taxi sharing purposes. If there is sufficient demand, we will arrange for shuttle transportation on peak days, and the shuttle costs will be \$22-\$26. It is possible to take public transportation to the hotel from the airport for \$2.25, but it takes almost 2 hours and involves multiple bus transfers.

The hotel is located 4.5 miles from the Amtrak station and 1 mile from the Greyhound station.

What hotel(s) are being used for the convention? How many rooms, what type, accessibility issues, etc.?

Our facility will be the Detroit Renaissance Center Marriott, a world-class facility on the Detroit River in downtown Detroit. The hotel has over 1298 rooms, with 600 doubles. There are 52 suites. All areas of the hotel except the business center entrance are accessible.

For the past few years, the hotel has hosted Youmacon, a 10,000 person Anime convention, so they have some experience with fans, costuming, and etc.

What are your hotel room rates? Do these rates include breakfast? Do they include internet in the room? How firm are these rates?

The rate is \$118 for standard rooms, and \$209 for deluxe suites. Internet access is \$1/day. The rate does not include breakfast. We are in contract negotiations and will be signing a provisional contract to lock in rates within the next couple of months.

What is the cost to *park* at the convention/hotel facilities?

Parking is in an adjacent garage and is \$12 per day on Monday-Friday, and \$6 per day on Saturday and Sunday.

What is the distance from the main hotel(s) to the closest entrance of the convention site? What are the transportation options for those who prefer not to walk or who have mobility difficulties?

The hotel is also our meeting site.

If using overflow hotels (or hotels not directly connected) what is the cost of a cab ride door-to-door with the convention center?

N/A

Please describe your convention site facilities. For example, the quantity and sizes of rooms, tech options, accessibility issues, etc.

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The Marriott has over 100,000 square feet of divisible meeting space. The hotel's function space is located on three levels with the major meeting venues stacked directly on top of each other. The circular design provides maximum accessibility to any part of the hotel. Regardless of what level the meeting room is located on, attendees are no more than a 1-minute walk to the guest elevators and 60 paces to their guestroom.

In our current contract we have a 25,000 sq ft exhibit hall (divisible into two uneven sections), the adjacent 3,100 sq ft registration area, a 3,200 sq ft ballroom for large events (divisible into two sections), and 6 meeting rooms of between 1,500-1,700 sq ft each (divisible into two).

If we grow beyond current capacity, the site has many additional spaces we can grow into, and none were otherwise booked as of the beginning of contract negotiations. We will look to pick up additional space as early as possible should signs indicate it will be needed.

The hotel offers full service A/V assistance. None of the rooms currently have built-in AV (screens, etc), but a hotel renovation is planned during 2013 which (we speculate) may include some upgrades to technology.

Where will your large events (i.e. Hugo Ceremony and Masquerade) be held?

At our current size estimates (800 people), the Mackinac Ballroom, which is 3,200 sq ft and seats 400 theater style. If we grow and are able to pick up additional spaces, we would look to hold large events in either portions of the Renaissance Ballroom (able to accommodate up to 2100 theater style) or the Ambassador Ballroom (1200 theater style). Being a NASFiC, our largest event would be the Masquerade.

Please describe the restaurant scene near your site.

There is an 1100 seat food court located in the Renaissance Center, the office/retail/corporate space that our hotel is located in. This includes typical fast food restaurants, such as McDonald's, Subway, etc. There are a total of 30 restaurants/food outlets located through the Renaissance Center, including a high end steakhouse and a high end Italian restaurant. Because the Renaissance Center is primarily a business location, some of these restaurants do typically close on weekends, but we will work with them to encourage them to stay open during our weekend.

The hotel has a restaurant and a bar area serving food. The hotel restaurant typically serves only breakfast and lunch, but they have agreed to stay open in the evenings and provide menu options that are ideal for fannish budgets.

There are additional restaurants within a short walk of the hotel. In addition, the Renaissance Center features an on-site People Mover station, putting hundreds of additional restaurants within easy reach, including the Greektown entertainment center, which is just 2 stops away.

Please describe the policies / laws regarding smoking in your hotel(s), convention center, and city.

All bars, restaurants, and hotels in Detroit must be 100% smoke free.

What type of weather can we expect at the time of year your convention is to be held?

The average temperature range is 63 to 83 degrees. There are an average of 9 days with rain. Rains in the summer can be heavy, with thunderstorms. Our facility is located right on the riverfront, so there are generally pleasant breezes even on hot days. In general, day times may be hot, but things cool down in the evenings.

What are some of the main tourist attractions of your city?

Detroit Institute of Art (a world class museum, including the Diego Rivera industry frescoes)

Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History (the only one of its kind in the country)

Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village (America's Greatest History Attraction: Millions of artifacts. Dozens of historical buildings. A museum, village, factory tour and more.)

Motown Historical Museum — Hitsville USA

Detroit Tigers baseball

Detroit Zoo

Who is on your committee? Who is your bid chair? What experience do they have in general? In running this convention in particular?

The bidchair is Tammy Coxen. Tammy has 15 years experience running conventions. She was a 3-time chair of ConFusion, a Detroit annual regional SF convention. She was head of Program Ops for Torcon 3 and program ops staff at several Worldcons prior to that. She was a founding member of MidFan and Chair of the first Midwest Construction, a conrunning convention targeted a regional conrunners. Most recently, she was head of the highly praised hospitality suite at World Fantasy Con 2012.

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We have an active and young fannish community in the Detroit area. Our bid committee features several experienced conrunners who have been instrumental in running two large local conventions: ConFusion and Penguicon. They have also been resources for Worldcons and other local and regional conventions.

Some key bid committee members include:

Anne Gray - 17 years experience running conventions, 3-time Chair of ConFusion (2004, 2005, and 2009), after heading Programming, staffed Hospitality, Publications, and Program Ops for ConJose, Torcon 3, and Noreascon 4, and the World Fantasy Awards banquet in 2007, head of the Art @ Renovation project

Kim Kofmel - Active in fandom since 1978, Programming Head for ApolloCon (2005-2008, 2013), World Fantasy Convention in 2006, and InstaCon 6 and 8, Lead for Commercial and Science Exhibits for Denvention 3, Academic Program Lead for Renovation, Minister of Party (North America) for the London in 2014 Worldcon bid, Hospitality Lead for World Fantasy Convention 2012

Mark Hall - 2-time Chair of ApolloCon, Hotel Liaison, World Fantasy 2012, Dealers/Art Show/Exhibit Hall layout, Denvention 2008

Lisa Garrison Ragsdale - Active in fandom for more than a decade, Chair of Marcon (2003), as well as Guest of Honor Liaison, and head of Publicity, ran Children's Programming for Torcon 3, Children's Services at Denvention 3 and Chicon 7, youth programming at Anticipation, and was the Childcare Liaison for Renovation

David M Stein - Active in fandom since 1973, 3-time ConChair of ConClave, Co-founder and 2-time ConChair of Contraption, Tech Director of the 2000 Hugo Awards, Bid Committee for Detroit '85 NASFiC bid, Art Show Staff at Chicon V, NolaCon II, Chicon 2000, LoneStarCon 2, Torcon 3

Other bid committee members include: Mary Kay Kare, Helen Montgomery, Evelyn Baker, Jeff Beeler, Mark Bernstein, Don Wenzel, Steve Gutterman, Joe Saul, Lisa Leutheuser, Doug Houseman.

If known, who will be the chair of the convention? What experience do they have?

It is expected that Tammy Coxen will be the chair. See above.

What arrangements will be made for evening socializing and party space? Do you have a corkage waiver?

We have been clear with the hotel on the need for an active evening hospitality scene as our first priority in selecting a hotel. The hotel does not restrict guests from bringing any food or drink into their sleeping rooms. Our consuite will be in a suite, and thus not subject to function space corkage waivers. We have currently blocked all suites on 2 floors of the hotel for parties, and can add additional floors with suites as needed.

Are you planning to have any membership discounts for certain groups, such as young adults, military, or seniors?

Not at this time, but we may consider implementing such discounts in the future.