

Fannish Inquisition Survey: Fort Worth in 2015 Smofcon Bid

Smofcon Bid: Fort Worth, Texas

What are the proposed dates for which you are bidding? December 4-6, 2015

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?

One of several hotels in downtown Fort Worth, Texas. The city has a free trolley bus called "Molly the Trolley" that has stops at most of the sites and restaurants in downtown.

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

We are too close to proposed dates to check fares for the exact weekend, but on a four-week lead time on booking, all are based on Thursday – Monday travel to D/FW International Airport and checked via Orbitz. Booking on November 17, 2012, for travel beginning on December 13, 2012. All fares are round trip. We have included Tokyo and Toronto in pricing as well since at least one is likely to be a seated Worldcon at the 2015 SMOFcon.

- London: \$787.99 non-stop
- Boston: \$237.60 non-stop
- Chicago: \$183.60 non-stop
- Los Angeles: \$267.20 non-stop
- Melbourne: \$1631.10 one-stop
- Tokyo: \$1318.39 one-stop
- Toronto: \$537.87 one-stop, \$671.59 non-stop (I have seen this fare much cheaper)

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?

DFW International Airport is one of the largest and busiest airports in the world. You can fly from almost any major world city to DFW nonstop and almost any city in North America in one stop or less. DFW is an American Airlines hub but several other airlines have gates including: Delta, Virgin America, AeroMexico, Air Canada, Alaska Airlines, British Airways, Cayman Airways, Emirates, Frontier, jetBlue, KLM, Korean Air, Lufthansa, Qantas, Spirit, Sun Country, TACA, United, and US Airways.

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?

DFW is about 26 miles from downtown Fort Worth. Public transportation from DFW to downtown is available via the Trinity Railway Express for \$2.50 each way (as of December 3, 2012) Monday through Saturday. (TRE trains do not run on Sunday except for special events.) Super Shuttle (and several competitors) offer service for \$17 per person each way. Taxi fare from DFW to locations within the Fort Worth Central Business District is \$43 flat rate. Amtrak serves downtown Fort Worth via the Texas Eagle and Heartland Flyer routes.

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

We are still looking at hotels and are not ready to make a decision yet but we are currently talking with the historic Fort Worth Hilton, the new Omni Fort Worth, the Sheraton Fort Worth Hotel and Spa, and the Embassy Suites Fort Worth.

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

No information yet. We are working to keep the room rates below \$149 a night, single-quad.

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?

All convention activities will take place in our selected hotel.

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

Cannot answer until we decide on a site, but all of the facilities will offer three rooms that can be used for breakouts in the day, one large space for evening functions. All the tech needed for a SMOFcon will be provided by the sponsoring organization.

Please describe the restaurant scene near your site.

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There are more than 60 restaurants in downtown Fort Worth. All quite walkable or easily accessible via the free trolley bus from all of our potential sites. Food options range from \$ to \$\$\$\$\$. There is a good mix of styles of food in all price ranges. As well as local restaurants and national chains (some of which are both).

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

No smoking in all public places in all of the hotels we are considering. Some hotels offer smoking rooms. Most restaurants are non-smoking in Fort Worth.

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

Weatherspark.com has this to say: The month of December is characterized by essentially constant daily high temperatures, with daily highs around 59°F throughout the month, exceeding 72°F or dropping below 55°F only one day in ten.

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

Fort Worth has several world renowned museums, including the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History, the Kimbell Art Museum, and the National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame. Sundance Square in the heart of downtown is home to dozens of restaurants, galleries, bars, clubs, upscale shops, and a large bookstore. The Fort Worth Water Gardens is a public park on the south side of downtown and was used as a location in the film Logan's Run. The Fort Worth Stock Yards are a few miles away (and easily accessed on Saturday by free trolley). Downtown Dallas is within walking distance of Fort Worth via the Trinity Rail Express which connects both cities. Cowboys Stadium and Rangers Ballpark are 15 miles away but are not accessible via public transportation.

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

Right now the committee of the Fort Worth SMOFcon bid includes Tim Miller as bid chairman, Russ Miller (no relation), and Ed Dravecky. This committee will be expanded as we get closer to the vote and we make a final decision on location.

Tim Miller chaired the general interest conventions FenCon III and IV, Conniption '93 and '93 ½, as well as InstaCon 6 and 9. InstaCon is an occasional Texas regional conrunning convention. He has attended all of the US SMOFcons since 2006. He has been on staff for several recent Worldcons and was the Publications division head for ReConStruction, the 10th Occasional NASFiC in Raleigh NC in 2010.

Russ Miller (no relation) chaired FenCon V and VI, has served as treasurer of FenCon and the Dallas Future Societies since their inception. He is a former president of ORAC, a DFW area fan club that FenCon grew out of. He attended the Kansas City and the Austin SMOFcons. Russ was also the Member Services division head of ReConStruction, the 2010 NASFiC.

Ed Dravecky has been communications director and webmaster for FenCon from the beginning. He was a member of the San Antonio Worldcon bid committee and is running social media for LoneStarCon 3. He is a former president of ORAC and attended the Kansas City and the Austin SMOFcons. Ed served on the publications staff for several Worldcons and ReConStruction. His fanzine, Eligible!, debuts in 2013.

Tim, Russ, and Ed are all founding members of FenCon and also all are former board members of ALAMO, the organization putting on the San Antonio Worldcon.

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

No decision has been made as to who will chair the SMOFcon if we win. Tim and Russ are the likely candidates. See above for more information about them.

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

The final decision about facilities has not yet been made, but we are very aware of the importance of the social space at a SMOFcon and it is our top requirement for any facility we look at.

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

Those options are under discussion but no final decision has been reached.