



SITE SELECTION CONSIDERATIONS INSPECTION CHECKLIST

The Destination

Accessibility

- Ease and cost
- Proximity to lodging
- Permits access by people with disabilities
- Adequate taxi/limousine service
- Sufficient parking space
- Availability of printed driving directions
- Proximity to interstate or highways
- Seasonality of destination (peak season vs. off-season)

Environment

- Availability of local attractions
- Shopping
- Recreation
- Sports
- Weather conditions
- Appearance
- Safety of parking area
- Reputation of area/facility for hosting meetings
- Support and services available from local convention bureau
- Availability of experienced verified vendors such as audiovisual firms, exhibit service contractors, temporary help, and security

The facility

- Comfortable clean ballrooms: furniture in good condition, modern bathroom fixtures, adequate lighting, adequate closet space and hangers, smoke detectors, fire exit information posted
- Adequate lighting and cleanliness of stairwells
- Availability of beverage and ice machines to handle event
- Availability of "towers" or VIP areas offering special guest services
- A variety of meeting room styles available with floor plans
- Established reservations procedures and policies in writing for review
- Non-smoking areas and smoking permitted areas
- Are ballrooms available for early arrivals and late departures
- Current convention rate and rack rate for individual guests (not part of the group)
- Date facility will provide firm rates
- Guarantee and deposit requirements

The facility (continued)

- ___ Payment policies and types of credit cards accepted
- ___ Refund policy for cancellations
- ___ Dates of any planned renovations
- ___ Telephone access charges (long distance, local, and calling card)
- ___ Adequate parking space (free or for a fee)

Meeting space

Meeting rooms come in all shapes and sizes, and with a number of obstructions and inadequacies. The meeting planner must evaluate the potential of each room under consideration. They should measure the room, prepare scale diagrams, incorporate all equipment, staging and decorations, and calculate the desired square footage per person for the required setup. Below are some questions the meeting manager should be prepared to answer before the site inspection:

- ___ How many meeting areas will be required?
- ___ In addition to the formal program, will meeting areas be needed for committee and business meetings?
- ___ What is the estimated attendance for the event?
- ___ Are attendees to be seated theater style, classroom style, banquet or conference style?
- ___ Are rooms with high ceilings, columns or obstructions needed to accommodate audiovisual presentations?
- ___ Is space needed in or near the meeting room(s) for refreshment breaks?
- ___ What pre- and post-meeting space is required for affiliated ancillary groups?
- ___ Are meeting rooms accessible to people with disabilities?

Food and beverage service areas

- ___ Appearance and cleanliness
- ___ Cleanliness of food preparation areas
- ___ Adequate staffing at peak times
- ___ Attitude of personnel
- ___ Prompt and efficient service
- ___ Do you have to utilize in-house caterers or can you select your own
- ___ Cost range
- ___ Reservations policy
- ___ Feasibility of setting up additional food outlets for continental breakfast and quick luncheon service if necessary
- ___ Diversity of menus
- ___ Creativity or access to companies specializing in this
- ___ Costs: tax and gratuities; projected price increase by the time of the meeting; extra labor charges for small group functions
- ___ Liquor laws (restricted times)
- ___ Cash bar policies: bartender cost and minimum hours, cashier charges, drink prices
- ___ Refreshment break pricing: guarantee policies, when a guarantee is required, number prepared beyond guarantee
- ___ Special services: tailored menus, theme parties, unique refreshment breaks, food substitutions available, table decorations, dance floor

Food and beverage service areas (continued)

- Size of banquet rounds (eight people or 10 people)

Exhibit space

- Loading area and proximity to exhibit area
- Availability and location of exhibit receiving area
- Location of utilities
- Maximum floor load
- Security of area
- Location of fire exits
- Proximity to food service areas, restrooms, and telephones
- Availability of sufficient time for move-in and move-out
- Reputation of facility regarding vendor relations
- Decorations to enhance facility appearance
- Availability of supplemental lighting
- Proximity of exhibit hall to other portions of the meeting
- First aid station
- Availability of office space for exposition manager, service contractors, and suppliers
- Crate storage areas and policies

Offices and other services

- Sufficient space for furniture and equipment necessary to perform the business at hand
- Good lighting
- Easy for attendees to locate
- Adequate electrical outlets
- Availability of internet connection (*speed of service*)
- Ability to secure space after hours
- Is the facility flexible regarding the tentative agenda, or is meeting space locked in by a signed contract?
- Are doors to meeting rooms wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs?

Equipment

Tables:

- six feet long
- eight feet long
- schoolroom width (15"-18")
- rounds, 60 inches
- rounds 72 inches
- cocktail tables

Chairs:

- padded banquet chairs
- padded wood chairs
- non-padded metal or plastic