

Detroit is the “*Real McCoy*”

In July 2012, Detroit welcomed the opening of the Elijah J. McCoy United States Patent and Trademark Office, which holds the distinction of being the first satellite office located outside of the Washington D.C. area. Appropriately, the Office is named after Elijah J. McCoy, who secured more than 50 patents over his lifetime. McCoy was born in Ontario, Canada to fugitive slaves, and his family moved to Michigan when McCoy was a young child. After an apprenticeship abroad, McCoy returned back to Michigan to work as a fireman, an oiler, and a designer in a home-based machine shop. He is best known for inventing an automatic lubricator for oiling steam engines of locomotives and ships. Although others attempted to duplicate McCoy’s invention, none held up to the original. Legend has it that railroad engineers specifically seeking McCoy’s invention to avoid inferior copies of the device would ask, “Is it the real McCoy?”

Why locate a patent office in Detroit, an aging city recovering from bankruptcy? Simple—the people. Descended from Native Americans, European, Asian, and Middle Eastern immigrants, and more recently transplanted southerners, their friendliness sets them apart from other areas of the country. In addition to being known for their friendliness and Midwestern values, Detroiters are also known for their grit and determination. Those who choose to stay here and those who choose to come here to live or work share an infectious excitement. Many embody the true entrepreneurial spirit of America and relish the opportunity to not just be a part of the status quo somewhere else, but to be ahead of the curve and to be a part of actually rebuilding a city to be better than it is.

The future for both Detroit and the state of Michigan is especially promising. At the state level, Michigan is determined to reinvent itself under innovative programs like PURE MICHIGAN, which strives to promote Michigan’s entrepreneurial climate. In Detroit, elected officials are focused on the goal of positioning the city for long-term success as Detroit emerges from bankruptcy. To achieve these goals, leaders in Michigan are building a foundation based on entrepreneurship, education and innovative economic development through the collaborative effort of the private and public sectors. Due to these efforts, Michigan is one of the top states for increased manufacturing growth over the last several years.

Detroit is happening. Current projects include a new sports arena for the Detroit Red Wings, residential housing, upscale restaurants, and the mass transit M-1 Rail connecting Downtown Detroit and Mid-town. Investors are back, fueling the growth of Automation Alley in Oakland County, the defense sector in Macomb County, the university Research Corridor in Midtown Detroit, and the high-tech sector in Ann Arbor. In fact, the Detroit Region boasts the highest concentration of tech-related jobs in the Midwest and is second nationally to Silicon Valley. The M@dison Theatre Building in Detroit’s so-called Madison Block (the nickname for Detroit’s tech start-up neighborhood) includes two dozen tech start-ups. In April, Detroit was named by Inc. as one of the top twenty most innovative cities in the country. Of special note, is that one business entrepreneur publication noted that Detroit leads the country in 38 different patent classes, with the majority involving the automotive industry.

Detroit's renaissance is being led by both older established companies, and new companies lured to the state by its highly educated workforce, tax incentives, and available land for expansion. Moviemakers have discovered the Detroit area and Michigan as a venue for shooting films. Visitors come from all over the world to tour Shinola Detroit, a factory inspired by the region's rich manufacturing history and with a vision for improving the future of manufacturing in America. Skilled watchmakers handcraft watches with genuine Swiss movements, and artisans build urban bicycles. Quicken Loans, led by visionary Dan Gilbert, is investing in Detroit by repurposing abandoned office buildings into trendy lofts, and hiring twenty-somethings to work and play in the city. Detroit is home to a burgeoning startup software technology community and is blessed with visionaries who are providing venture capital and backing early-stage technology companies.

Raising a family in suburban Detroit sets Detroit apart from other large metropolitan regions. Unlike other large metropolitan regions, accessibility to downtown Detroit from the suburbs is convenient via major expressways. Affordability is another benefit of Detroit when compared to many other urban areas, especially real estate. Transferees from other parts of the country are often surprised by the quality and size of house that \$300,000, for example, will buy you. Depending on your needs, you can get a spacious home in an older established community or in a new neighborhood. Living in the city of Detroit proper is becoming more popular with professionals, students, and empty nesters who want to experience city life. In fact, occupancy rates for housing in the city's downtown and mid-town areas is at 98% capacity. Although crime garners media attention, Downtown Detroit has less crime than the national average. Some of Detroit's biggest employers, such as Blue Cross Blue Shield, Compuware, and Quicken Loans even offer financial incentive packages for employees to move and live in Detroit. Similarly, the PTAB may offer relocation incentives or allowances for new hires working out of the Detroit office. The Detroit office is located within a collection of repurposed buildings that include apartments and townhomes.

It is no surprise that Michiganders are highly educated, as quality education is a priority in Michigan. Both public and private schools within the region frequently make nationally based "best of" lists for education. At the post-secondary level, the University of Michigan and Michigan State University are among the nation's most respected universities! The region's health care system thrives due to its proximity to major university medical centers, including the Henry Ford Medical System, William Beaumont Health System, and the University of Michigan Health System.

Michiganders like to play, and the affordability of living in the Detroit metropolitan area frees up more disposable income to pursue other interests. Fortunately, as a result of its rich cultural, manufacturing and economic history, Detroit is home to many jewels that captivate every interest. For culture aficionados, Detroit offers the second largest theatre district in the country, with over 13,000 seats within a two block radius. With over 140 bars and restaurants within the one square mile of Downtown Detroit, there is always plenty to do. If you are a sports lover, Detroit is perfect for you between the Tigers, Red Wings, Pistons, Lions, Wolverines and Spartans. Detroit

ranks fourth behind New York, Boston, and Chicago in the number of professional major league sports championships.

If shopping is your sport, a short drive up I-75 from downtown Detroit is the Somerset Collection. Fashion mavens worldwide make a point to visit the Somerset Collection when in the Detroit area. Retailers already know that Oakland County is ranked fourth wealthiest county in the United States with a population of over 1 million.

If recreation and vacation is your thing, Michigan is blessed with wonderful lakes, islands, national parks, picturesque towns, and beautiful vacation spots, making heading “up north” a popular pastime. With its Great Lakes, Michigan has the longest freshwater coastline in the United States. Michigan also has over 11,000 inland lakes. Access to fresh water provides ample opportunity for sailing, boating, fishing, swimming, hiking, and viewing beautiful sunrises and sunsets. In fact, the Sleeping Bear Sand Dunes National Lakeshore in the northwest corner of Michigan’s Lower Peninsula was named ““Good Morning America’s’ Most Beautiful Place in America” in 2011, and is about a 4 ½ hour drive from the city of Detroit. Closer to the Elijah J. McCoy U.S. Patent and Trademark Office is Belle Isle Park, the largest island park in the United States.

Detroit is an international gateway, and interestingly from Detroit, one actually gazes *south* toward Canada! From the Elijah J. McCoy U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, Canada is visible across the Detroit River. Access to Canada provides additional opportunities for recreation and travel, including visits to Canada’s largest city, Toronto, and the annual Stratford Festival, North America’s largest classical repertory theater, presenting the works of William Shakespeare and other great writers, both within easy driving distance of the city of Detroit.

People reading and watching the national news may wonder if Detroit is an authentic, genuine city in which to live, work, and raise a family. Yes, for all of the reasons outlined and more, Detroit is the “real McCoy”!