

Michigan

# Coffee drink manufacturer to bring \$11 million investment to West Michigan



La Colombe's Draft Latte cold brew coffee will be manufactured in Norton Shores. (Courtesy)

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on September 22, 2016 at 1:40 PM



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NORTON SHORES, MI -- Norton Shores will be the home of [La Colombe Torrefaction](#)'s ready-to-drink coffee product manufacturing, bringing 37 jobs and \$11 million of investment to the community.

The Philadelphia-based company will make its cold brew drinks – Draft Latte and Pure Black – at an established dairy factory at 6636 Norton Center Drive.

"Producing Draft Latte in Western Michigan made a lot of sense to us," said Todd Carmichael, CEO and co-founder of La Colombe. "We wanted to find a facility that could accommodate a speedy route to market, was in the heart of American dairy country to ensure an abundance of fresh milk and was located in a vibrant, highly skilled and supportive municipality. Muskegon County was just that."

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The factory will employ 25 full time workers and 12 part time, according to documents filed with the city of Norton Shores.

La Colombe has been in business for 23 years, and has multiple cafes along the east coast, and in Chicago. The company was founded on the idea of "America deserves better coffee."

The Norton Shores plant will produce mocha, vanilla and other variants of the Draft Latte and Pure Black.

"We have many new creations in the chute as well," Carmichael said. "This new plant allows us to expand our ready-to-drink products."

While the products will be made in West Michigan, they aren't currently available in the state. They are sold online.

The cans will be on sale at select retailers throughout Michigan, and nationwide, by early 2017," Carmichael said.

Visiting a [La Colombe café](#) is also out of reach in Michigan right now. But Carmichael said it's not outside the realm of possibility.

"We plan to be a great partner to our new neighbors in Norton Shores and the greater Muskegon area," he said.

Part of that partnership is a 12-year, 50-percent tax abatement for land and building improvements of about \$1.5 million, which was approved by Norton Shores City Council this week. The other \$9.5 million of investment will go toward equipment and machinery.

The factory was previously home to dairy manufacturers Thohlstrop Dairy and Philos Foods.

"Tax abatements are, for the city, about the last economic development tool we have," said Mayor Gary Nelund. "Their business plan and model appears to be something that has a potential to be very big in the community for creating jobs."

The city will initially collect an additional \$30,000 in taxes annually, while giving up the same amount, according to [city of Norton Shores documents](#). First year taxes to all jurisdictions are expected at \$165,000.

Nelund said its an investment on the city's part since it will collect more taxes in the future.

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