

SFGATE

GOTT'S ROADSIDE TO ADD THREE NEW BAY AREA LOCATIONS IN 2017

By Justin Phillips



Gott's Roadside is opening three new Bay Area locations in the second half of 2017, pushing its Bay Area total to seven. New outposts are headed to **Walnut Creek** and Greenbrae this fall, and the **San Francisco International Airport**, which will open in early July.

Gott's president **Clay Walker** told Scoop his restaurants' sales have been strong over the last few years, and the expansion, though coming with the quick volley of openings, has been in the works for a while.

And even though he couldn't comment on what other chains are seeing, he said he has noticed diners seem to be in search of respite from tumultuous times.

"Viewing the world through the lens of one brand, I think the

polarized political climate has certainly pushed people toward more comfort food or at least environments where people feel comfortable eating," Walker said.

Gott's last opened a restaurant in **Palo Alto** back in 2013.

The new trio of shops fit the burger outfit's pattern of opening in recognizable places that also have what Walker calls "captive audiences." Gott's in Walnut Creek is going to be close to **Broadway Plaza**, a popular shopping center. The SFO location will be in the international terminal.

Walker said the SFO space will be a litmus test of sorts for how exactly the Gott's brand can grow in the right environment.

"We kind of fantasize about Los Angeles or Southern California as a future market largely because of population and climate," he said. "For a growing brand, SFO is yet another operating opportunity for us."

For Walker and the Gott's crew, to feel confident during a slew of quick succession openings says as much about the strength of their brand as it does about the restaurant industry's current climate for local chains.

"We're in the happy business. Our job is to make customers happy," said Walker. "People want that and they want consistency these days. We can give that to them."