

Walnut Creek Downtown Retail Market Overview

Third Quarter 2026



**Q3 Reflects
Strong Leasing
Rebound**



Walnut Creek Downtown | Retail Market Overview

Third Quarter 2026

Retail Trade Areas

Retail Area	Total SF	Vacant SF	Vacancy Rate
1 Broadway Plaza	981,151	95,000	9.7%
2 Historic Downtown	590,567	35,454	6.0%
3 West of California	166,912	7,256	4.3%
4 Plaza Escuela	177,886	9,420	5.3%
5 Target	141,558	0	0.0%
6 East of Broadway	121,379	9,120	7.5%
7 Olympia Place	105,319	10,131	9.6%
8 The Corners	87,320	8,154	9.3%
9 North of Civic	96,318	21,642	22.5%
10 Main Street Plaza	78,141	7,826	10.0%
11 South of Newell	61,469	0	0.0%
12 Newell Promenade/Agora	75,830	0	0.0%
TOTALS:	2,683,850	204,003	7.60%

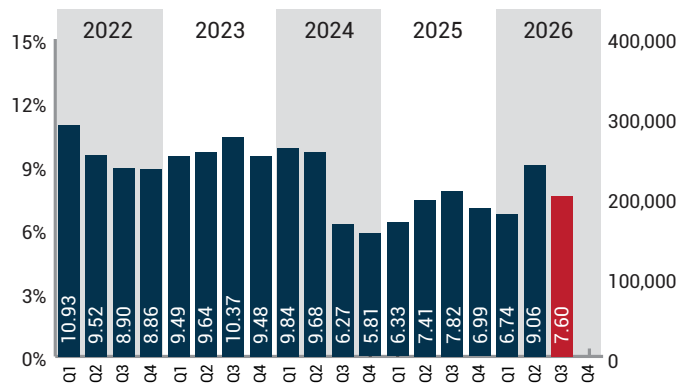
Q3: Occupancy Rates Surge

John Cumbelich & Associates' Q3 report on the downtown Walnut Creek retail market captured a strong leasing rebound, as overall occupancy rose strongly from 90.94% to 92.40% on net positive absorption of 45,373 SF.

Thirteen new leases totaling 29,690 SF in the downtown core, plus 27,730 SF in new leases within Broadway Plaza generated 57,420 SF in newly absorbed space. New leases at Broadway Plaza included **The North Face, Skims, Gorjana, New Balance, Laderach, Rowan, Go Greek, Figs, Tecovas, American Eagle & PacSun**. Among the new leases were **Shabugo** which will backfill the 5,500 SF former California Pizza Kitchen, **Sleep 365 Mattress** which leased 3,043 SF at Plaza Escuela, **Masses Sport Bar** at 1411 Locust Street and **JETSET Pilates** that will occupy 3,500 SF at The Agora. These leasing gains were moderated by five new vacancies totaling 12,047 SF, including ISI Elite Training on Locust Street, Camera West at Plaza Escuela and Starbucks at the Mercer. Starbucks has greatly dialed back its Walnut Creek presence, having closed cafes over the years at The Agora, Olympia Place, Plaza Escuela, inside Barnes & Noble, at Ygnacio Center, and now at Mercer.

New lease announcements are expected shortly for the former Pinstripes space, as well as other new additions at Broadway Plaza.

Overall WC Downtown Vacancy Rate

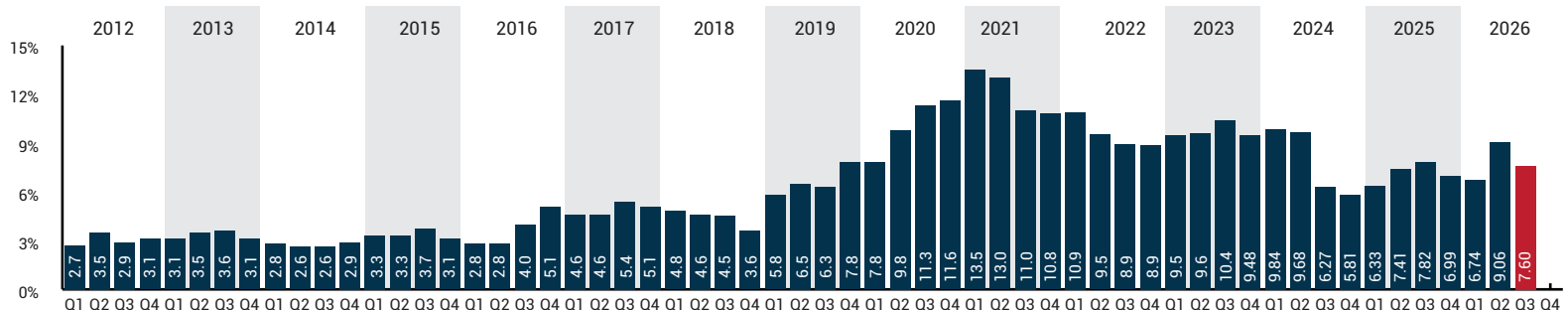


(Cont'd on next page)

Walnut Creek Downtown | Retail Market Overview

Third Quarter 2026

Historical Walnut Creek Downtown Vacancy Rate



THE OVERALL DOWNTOWN VACANCY RATE DECREASED 1.46% IN Q2 2026

Most impactfully, the significant absorption of smaller spaces during Q3 had a remarkable effect on the 1.74 M SF of downtown space below 30,000 SF in size. This cohort of space moved from 8.95% vacancy in Q2 to 6.70% in Q3 – the lowest vacancy rate for this cohort since Q4 of 2018. Similarly, the sub 10,000 SF cohort, which includes all small shop and restaurant spaces, dropped from 10.21% vacancy to 9.30% - the lowest level on this gauge of market health since Q4 of 2022.

The overall market has an available inventory of 204,003 SF. Yet importantly, 87,000 SF of that sum is locked up in a single vacancy – the former Neiman Marcus space. Excluding that one building, the rest of downtown clocked in at a very healthy 4.36% vacant.

Strongly improving occupancy rates are producing an array of benefits, both direct and indirect for landlords, consumers and the community. Lower vacancy rates create increased leasing pressure on remaining vacancies, and provide landlords with the opportunity to be picky, not only demanding higher rental rates but seeking higher quality, higher credit tenants. Better brands provide a higher quality of retail and dining options for consumers, elevating the communities where they operate. Also, as retail and dining space becomes increasingly sparse, second tier assets including long-suffering vacancies become viable releasing options for a growing list of tenants that are otherwise shut out of the market.

High interest rates and construction costs will keep a tight lid on future new construction, thus directing all leasing interest into the shrinking pool of existing available spaces. Consequently, we anticipate further leasing gains, shrinking vacancy rates and rising rents in 2027.



Walnut Creek Downtown | Retail Market Overview

Third Quarter 2026

Walnut Creek's Retail Market

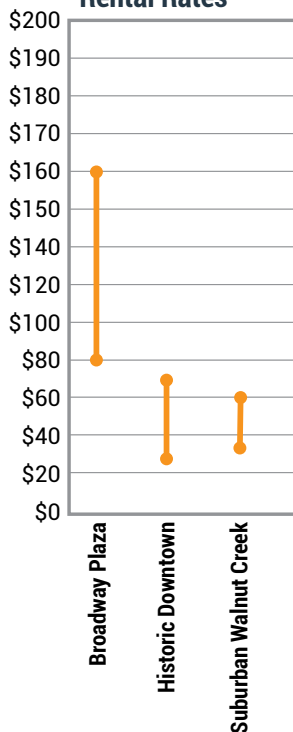
The Walnut Creek retail market is the premier shopping destination in the East Bay and home to a wide variety of premium branded retailers.

Tiffany & Co., Nordstrom, Coach, Crate & Barrel, Banana Republic, Talbots, Apple Store, Anthropologie, Pottery Barn and numerous other best-of-class retailers serve the entire East Bay market from stores located in this unique, open air retail landscape that mixes successful restaurant, retail and entertainment destinations.

Downtown Walnut Creek offers a rare mixture of newer retail centers and an historic shopping district that blend seamlessly.

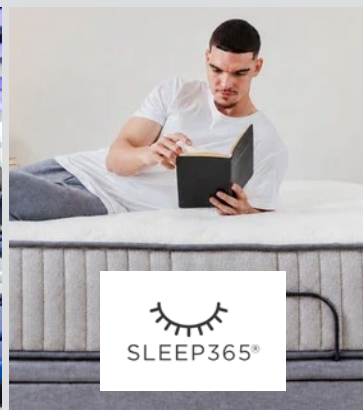
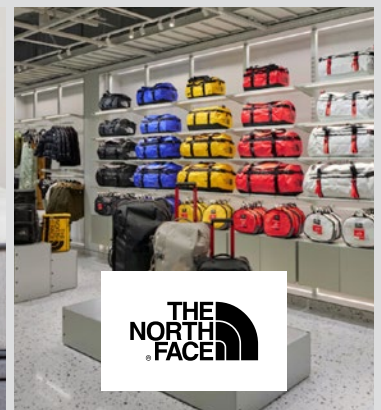


Rental Rates



Key Findings from the Retail Sector

- Surging downtown leasing moved the occupancy rate for <30K SF spaces to an 8-year high.
- Broadway Plaza added The North Face, Skims, Gorjana, New Balance, Laderach, Rowan, Go Greek, Figs, Tecovas, American Eagle & PacSun.
- New leases by Shabugo, JETSET Pilates and Sleep 365 Mattress were among over 57,000 in new Q3 leases.
- Only 12,047 SF in new vacancies occurred during Q3, as the market stabilized.
- Broadway Plaza has only 8,000 SF of available space, excluding the former Neiman Marcus vacancy.

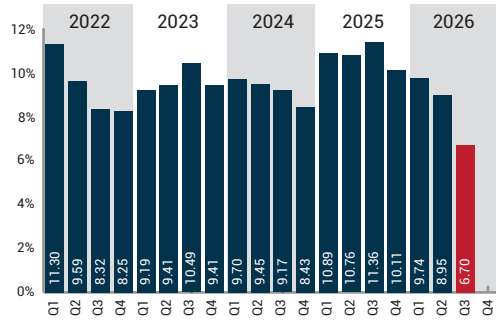


Walnut Creek Downtown | Retail Market Overview

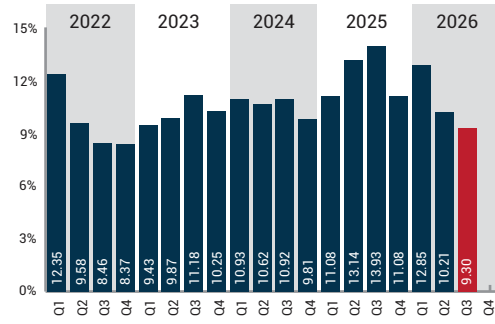
Third Quarter 2026

Results

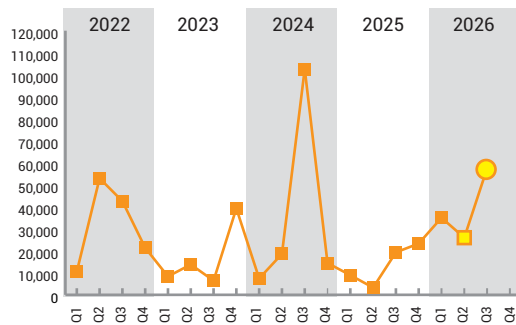
Vacancy Rate Excluding Anchors 30k+ SF



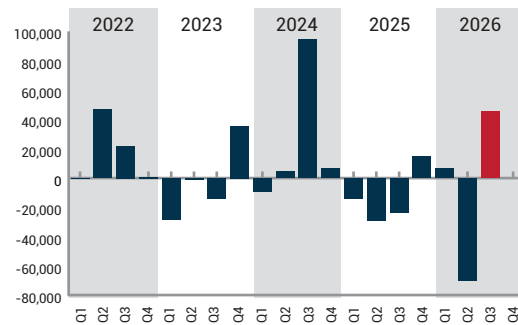
Vacancy Rate Excluding Spaces 10k+ SF



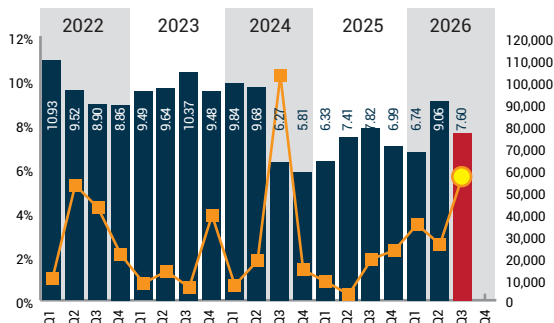
Gross Absorption (SF)



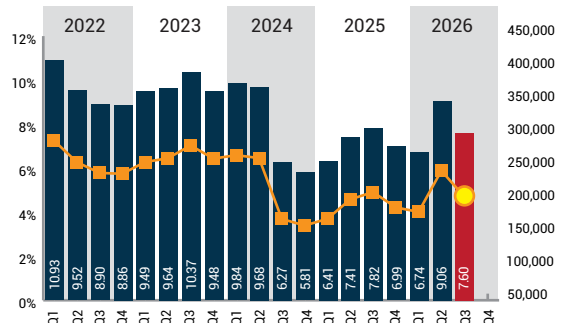
Net Absorption (SF)



Vacancy Rate vs Absorption (SF)

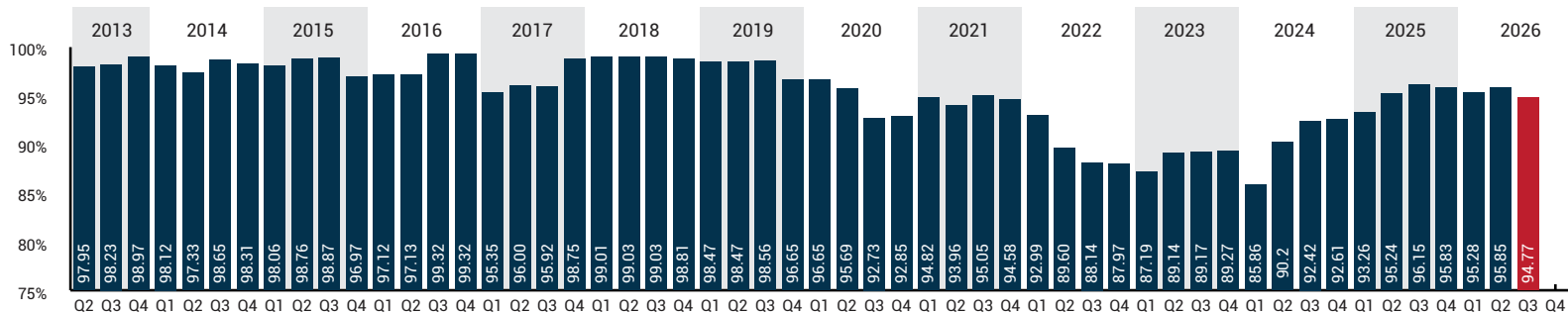


Vacancy Rate vs Available (SF)



Third Quarter 2026

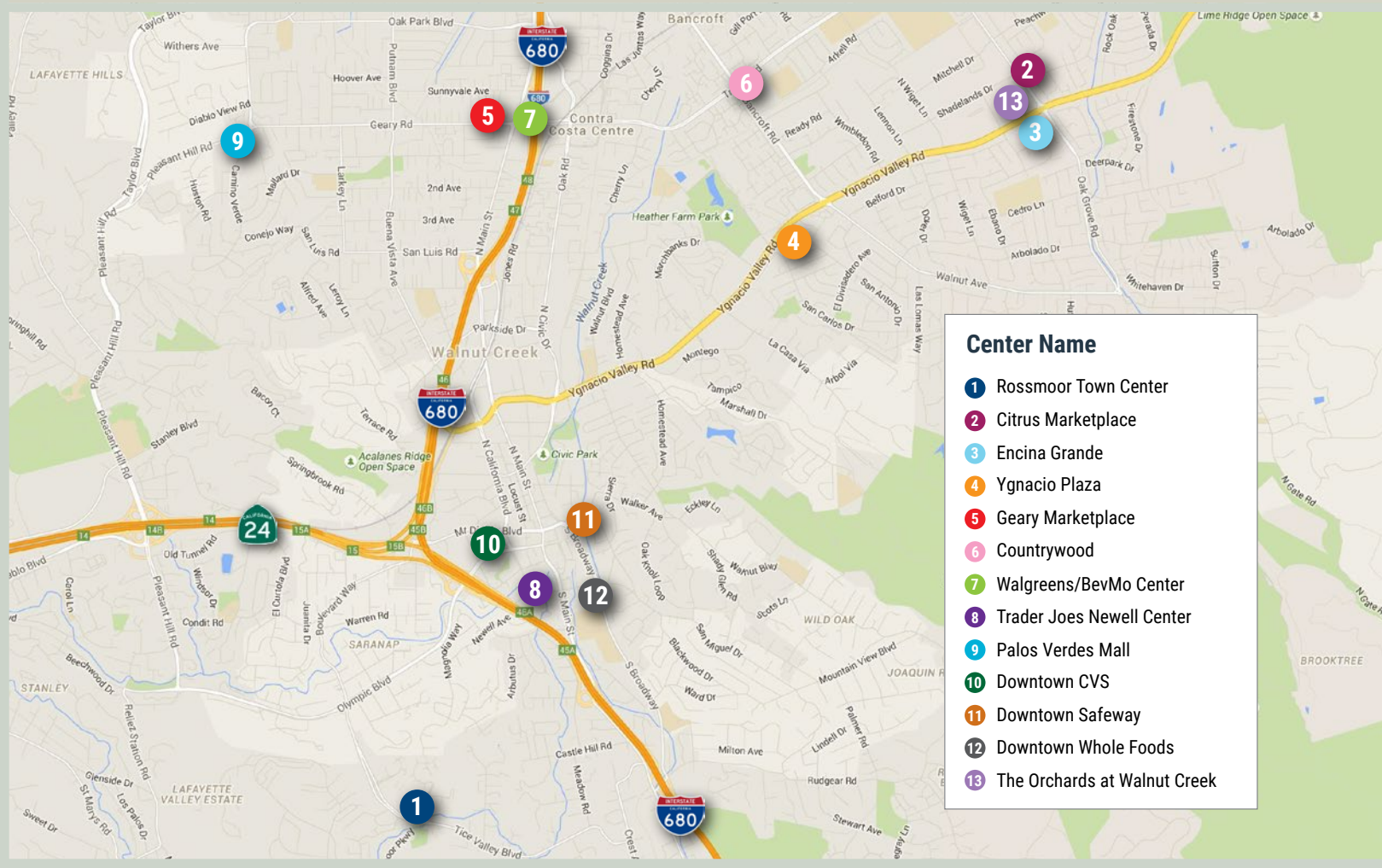
Historical Neighborhood Center Occupancy Rate



GROCERY ANCHORED CENTERS OCCUPANCY LOWERED 1.08% IN Q3 2026

Neighborhood Center Summary

Grocery anchored centers in Walnut Creek saw occupancy remain very strong, moving from 95.85% to 94.77% in Q3. Prior to Q3, the market enjoyed five consecutive quarters with occupancy levels above 95%, something that has not occurred since Q3 of 2021. The most notable vacancy among neighborhood centers is the 19,000 SF former Rite Aid space at the Palos Verdes Mall. Impressively, six centers clocked in at 100% occupancy.



Walnut Creek Downtown | Retail Market Overview

Third Quarter 2026

Featured Transaction

A private investor purchased the 9,882 SF retail + office center located at
986/990 MORAGA ROAD –LAFAYETTE, CA
The firm represented the seller in the transaction



ABOUT THE FIRM

John Cumbelich & Associates is a San Francisco Bay Area firm that provides commercial real estate services to Fortune 500 retailers and select owners and developers of retail commercial properties. The firm's expertise is in developing store networks for retailers seeking to penetrate the Northern California marketplace, and the representation of premier power center and lifestyle developments.

John Cumbelich

Chief Executive Officer
john@cumbelich.com
CA DRE #01006249

Tim Seiler

Partner
tim@cumbelich.com
CA DRE #01076263

Joe Kuvetakis

Partner
joe@cumbelich.com
CA DRE #01854159

Catherine Macken

Associate Broker
catherine@cumbelich.com
CA DRE #02136323

Joe Cumbelich

Associate Broker
joe.cumbelich@cumbelich.com
CA DRE #02278794

Featured Retailer



Crumbs
Breakfast, Lunch & Bar

Crumbs
Breakfast, Lunch & Bar

SEEKING
3,000 – 5,000 SF
Bay Area Locations

Submit sites to
John Cumbelich

Featured Listing



1406 N BROADWAY – WALNUT CREEK, CA
±5,196 sf freestanding retail building for lease

JohnCumbelich
& Associates

PARTNER **XTEAM**
RETAIL ADVISORS

JOHN CUMBELICH & ASSOCIATES
1470 Maria Lane, Suite 420
Walnut Creek, CA 94596

TELEPHONE 925.935.5400
WWW.CUMBELICH.COM

[VIEW ALL LISTINGS](#)

Walnut Creek Downtown | Retail Market Overview

Third Quarter 2026

Completed Assignments – Walnut Creek, CA

TIFFANY & CO.

Tiffany & Co.
6,785 SF
The Corners



Terra Outdoor Living
10,000 SF
1902 Mt Diablo Blvd



RH
11,747 SF
Broadway Point

Crate&Barrel

Crate & Barrel
19,725 SF
1201 S Main St

PVOLVE

Pvolve
2,042 SF
Ygnacio Plaza



Macerich
2,509 SF
1401 Mt Diablo Blvd



Verizon
4,285 SF
Main Street Plaza



Xfinity
3,452 SF
Main Street Plaza



Wells Fargo Bank
5,400 SF
Oak Grove Plaza



Pottery Barn
16,760 SF
Broadway Point

TALBOTS

Talbots
13,525 SF
Plaza Escuela



MODEL BAKERY
EST. 1988

Model Bakery
4,367 SF
1315 N Main St



california
PIZZA KITCHEN

California Pizza Kitchen
6,000 SF
Agora @ S Main



Gott's Roadside
5,500 SF
Main Street Plaza



LensCrafters
3,099 SF
The Corners

HIGHWIRE
—COFFEE ROASTERS—

Highwire Coffee
642 SF
The Waymark



World Famous Hot Boys
2,100 SF
1394 N Main St



Vineyard Vines
3,400 SF
1500 Mt Diablo Blvd



Pacific Catch
5,446 SF
Agora @ S Main



TD Ameritrade
4,988 SF
Agora @ S Main



Starbucks
1,700 SF
Agora @ S Main



Mike's Bikes
6,725 SF
The Mercer



Tommy Bahama
4,100 SF
The Corners



SkinSpirit
3,000 SF
The Mercer



Burger Lounge
2,376 SF
The Orchards

LUNA SEA LOUNGE

Luna Sea Lounge
1,145 SF
The Waymark



Rooftop
4,143 SF
1500 Mt Diablo Blvd



Teleferic Barcelona
4,495 SF
1500 Mt Diablo Blvd



Sasa
3,640 SF
1432 N Main St



AT&T
5,196 SF
1521 Olympic Blvd



SALAD DAYS

JOHN CUMBELICH | OCTOBER 12, 2026

October 5, 2026 – True Food Kitchen files for bankruptcy.

Is anyone shocked by the news that yet another salad focused restaurant brand has bit the dust? Not me.

A brief recap for those of you who have been too busy enjoying your chicken sandwiches, burritos, burgers and bowls to notice how the salad brands have been wilting.

Tender Greens – filed for Chapter 11 in 2024

Salad and Go – filed for Chapter 11, August 2026

True Food Kitchen – filed for Chapter 11, October 2026

The question is not, “why did they fail?” rather, the question is “who’s next?” **Sweetgreen** is the consensus front-runner. The chain’s struggles came into sharp relief in 2025, as same-store sales declined 9.5% in Q3 due to an 11.7% drop in foot traffic. By August of 2026, the stock was down 86% from its peak. Like just about every other brand that dove into the deep end of the salad economy, the company simply does not make money. One suspects that their best chance for stabilization may stem from the harsh reality that most of their national competitors are going bankrupt. But this sounds more like a stay of execution than a mandate for growth.

The plight of each of these salad brands has laid bare the true North Star of American diners. In this country, we like our animal proteins and we like our caffeine. Chick-fil-A, Raising Cane’s, Dutch Bros, 7 Brew, In-N-Out, McDonald’s, Shake Shack and Whataburger are all clamoring to add sites to meet consumer demand. The biggest growth challenge for the protein and coffee brands is the push back from municipalities that are coping with the impacts of consistently long drive thru lines that snake through parking lots and onto city streets. These lengthening lines of consumers are now being addressed with double and triple lane drive thus that can accommodate 50 vehicles at once – a telling affirmation of consumer dining preferences that spills out before us.

And inside this divergence of outcomes lies a secret that aspiring brand builders in the dining worlds should digest. To wit, Americans like their salad hidden in their protein, not their protein hidden in their salad. If you look at my order at Chipotle or Cava, it’s mostly composed of beans, rice, salsa, lettuce and guacamole (Salad!). The supporting actor role in my order is played by the flavorful meat. A healthy and largely plant-based meal can be delivered at many of the non-salad chains. Pay attention to the crucial mom shoppers who make dining choices for their families, buying three or five meals at a time. Their kids don’t think of it as health food. Instead, they find these dishes tasty, filling and as an extra bonus they don’t need to use utensils. Or a plate. Consumers aren’t necessarily rejecting the vegetables served at salad brands; they are rejecting the format.

Meals like those served at Chipotle, Chick-fil-A and McDonald’s look and feel entirely different than a bowl or plate of greens with a piece of cooked meat or fish tucked inside. Notably, salad isn’t easily eaten on the go, in the car, or without the full complement of dining apparatus: a table, a plate or bowl and utensils.

Anecdotally, the clientele at the salad chains appears to be weighted towards Millennials and Gen X, who visit solo or in pairs. But after the ball game, the team swarms In-N-Out or Chick-fil-A. Road trippers break at Starbucks or Dutch Bros, and increasingly at McDonalds or other brands that have successfully leaned into the caffeine space. Parents and coaches do not take the kids, the team, or the birthday party out for salad.

Brilliant brand builders like Ray Kroc, Howard Schultz and Truett Cathy did not waste their energy or enterprise seeking to reeducate the American consumer, and later the world, on what to eat. Rather their success was built on meeting the consumer exactly how and where they wanted to eat and drink. They focused on the food and drink choices that have been staples for centuries, and then introduced various other menu items, some healthy, some decadent, as tastes have changed over the years.

A frank testimony showcasing who the victors and the vanquished are in the faltering efforts to build a national salad chain played out in the bankruptcy auction for Salad and Go’s drive thru real estate. The bidding war quickly escalated into a brawl between whom? Dutch Bros and 7 Brew – two brands whose brilliance lies squarely at the intersection of caffeine and convenience.

In researching this blog post, I found it remarkable how each of the salad brands had gone to the trouble to adopt a slogan. Each one of them was aspirational! Transformational! Alas, their outcomes were something less.

“Greens for Everyone”; “Real Food for Real Life”; “Slow Food Done Fast”; “Build healthier communities by connecting people to real food.” That last one is a mouthful.

For aspiring restaurant operators, the message is clear: convenience, comforting foods, and caffeine drive consistent volume—aspirational slogans do not.

Entrepreneurs take note: Burger King’s “Have it your way” message was much more than a slogan. It was the playbook for enduring success.



[CLICK TO VIEW MORE BLOG ARTICLES](#)