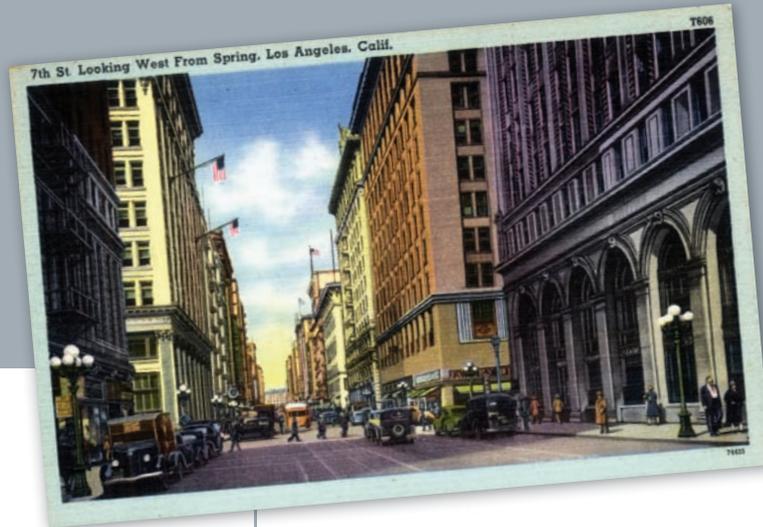


strolling on 7th street: downtown's historic thoroughfare



Historic postcards from the Marlene Laskey Collection



LOS ANGELES
CONSERVANCY

Seventh Street in downtown Los Angeles is a dynamic corridor with an exciting history. The street spans four commercial districts (Financial, Jewelry, Theatre, and Fashion), grew very quickly along with the rest of the city center, and has remained highly intact for more than a century.

Located nearly a mile south of the original pueblo, the area that is now Seventh Street was once agricultural land on the outskirts of Los Angeles. With the arrival of the Southern Pacific Railroad in 1876, the city's population exploded, and the rural fields began to give way to residences.

As the city's commercial center continued to expand, Seventh evolved from residential to commercial use. The street's first major commercial building, the eight-story Lankershim Hotel, opened in 1905 at Seventh and Broadway (it was demolished in the early 1990s).

In 1906, John Bullock opened his flagship department store at the corner of Seventh and Broadway. Bullock's paved the way for Seventh Street to develop into an upscale shopping street distinct from the bustling retail on Broadway.

By the end of the teens, Seventh was home to several major retailers as well as dozens of smaller stores. The corner of Seventh and Broadway was one of the busiest intersections in Los Angeles for many years. Thousands of shoppers and theatregoers arrived daily, many on the famed Red Car trolley system.

Office development took hold along Seventh in the 1920s, with thirteen large office buildings opening between 1920 and 1928. By 1929, every single plot on Seventh from Figueroa to Los Angeles Streets had been developed.

The predominant architectural style seen on Seventh Street is Beaux Arts, a formal style based on classical (mainly Greek and Roman) forms that experienced a popular revival in the early twentieth century. Most of the street had been developed by the time Art Deco reached the mainstream in the late 1920s. The street's few Art Deco façades resulted from 1930s makeovers of Beaux Arts structures.

As with many city centers, downtown gradually lost favor to postwar suburbs, which offered shopping and entertainment closer to home. Increasingly, downtown businesses closed and buildings became dormant.

In the 1960s and '70s, redevelopment incentives fostered the new commercial center on Bunker Hill, leaving Seventh Street virtually deserted. Fortunately, it was also left alone, with few historic structures demolished to make way for new construction. More than seventy-five percent of the buildings on Seventh between Figueroa and Los Angeles Streets were built before 1929, creating an invaluable architectural trove, historic record, and filming location.

Today, Seventh Street is the latest frontier in the ongoing revitalization of downtown. Renewed interest, along with incentives such as the city's Adaptive Reuse Ordinance, have fueled the conversion of historic buildings for new uses along Broadway, Spring, Main, and Seventh Streets. Since 2003, nearly a dozen former commercial structures on Seventh have reopened as apartments or condominiums. This increase in housing is in turn drawing new restaurants, nightlife, and retail to the area. Seventh Street is a kaleidoscope of old and new, history and vibrancy, adding new layers to the story of downtown Los Angeles.

#01 Barker Bros. Building (818 Building)
818 W. Seventh Street
Curlett and Beelman (1926)
Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #356

This Renaissance Revival structure was the sixth and final downtown home of Barker Bros., a Los Angeles-based furniture company founded in 1880. Advertised at the time of its construction as one of the largest furniture stores in the country, the building was converted into offices when Barker Bros. closed in the 1980s. The building's magnificent exterior remains in nearly original condition.



Bruce Boehner

#02 Home Savings of America Tower (Figueroa Tower)
831 W. Seventh Street
Albert C. Martin and Associates (1989)

In this postmodern tribute to the French chateaux of the Loire Valley, designer Tim Vreeland paid homage to "the enduring architectural quality" of Seventh Street. Original tenant Home Savings had a tradition of integrating public art with architecture as seen here in the Venetian glass mosaic murals by Joyce Kozloff, a trompe l'oeil Metro entry mural by Terry Shoonhoven, and many other works of art in and around the building.



LAC Archives

#03 Fine Arts Building
811 W. Seventh Street
Walker and Eisen (1926)
Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #125



Bruce Boehner

Intending to "create a grouping of the highest class specialty shops and studios in America," no expense was spared in this stylish and unique building dedicated to the fine arts. Walker and Eisen's Romanesque exterior is graced with monumental figures by sculptor Burt Johnson, and the foyer is a *tour de force* by the era's preeminent tile master, Ernest Batchelder. Although the concept of a dedicated artists' space was short-lived, the building has served for many years as architecturally distinctive office space.

#04 Broadway Plaza (Macy's Plaza)
700 W. Seventh Street
Charles Luckman Associates (1973)

Covering an entire city block, the Broadway Plaza includes a twenty-three-story hotel, a thirty-two-story office tower, and an eight-story brick-clad department store/parking structure, linked by a two-level atrium shopping plaza. Charles Luckman served as both the architect and developer of the project, an unusual arrangement at the time. The hotel originally featured a revolving restaurant named Angel's Flight with 360-degree views of downtown.



Bruce Boehner

#05 Roosevelt Building (The Roosevelt)
727 W. Seventh Street
Curlett and Beelman (1927)
Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #355/
National Register of Historic Places

This massive Renaissance Revival building was purported to be the largest office building in Southern California when it opened. Architects Curlett and Beelman were prolific downtown practitioners, designing six buildings on Seventh Street alone. In 2008, the Roosevelt underwent conversion to 222 residential units, restoring the original entry lobby with its spectacular mosaic marble floors.



Bruce Boehner

#06 J. W. Robinson Company (600 W. Seventh Street)
600 W. Seventh Street
Noonan and Richards (1915), Edgar Mayberry with Allison and Allison (1934 remodel)
Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #357

Founded in Los Angeles in 1883 as the Boston Dry Goods store, the J. W. Robinson Company was the first major department store to move to Seventh Street west of Broadway. The building encompasses nearly nine acres of floor space on seven floors. The upscale store was immediately successful and spurred the further development of the area as a shopping district. In 1934, a major remodel gave the store its current Moderne façade, replacing the original Beaux Arts design. The building's upper floors now house telecommunications and data storage equipment.



LAC Archives

Bruce Boehner

Robinson's before and after the 1934 remodel.

#07 Union Oil Building (617 W. Seventh Street)
617 W. Seventh Street
Curlett and Beelman (1923)



Bruce Boehner

Union Oil Company moved its corporate offices to Los Angeles in 1901, one of the first of the major oil companies to do so. The firm occupied several buildings before this one, including 215 Seventh Street, now known as The Bartlett. The massing and understated elegance of the Union Oil Building is a precursor of Curlett and Beelman's later Seventh Street office blocks, Barker Bros. (1926) and the Roosevelt Building (1927).

#08 Brockman Building

530 W. Seventh Street

Barnett, Haynes and Barnett (1912)
National Register of Historic Places

With the construction of this building and plans for several others, developer John Brockman helped position Seventh Street as an up-and-coming district. This Renaissance Revival structure is clad in dark brick with cream-colored terra cotta accents. It has housed a succession of upscale clothiers, including longtime tenant Brooks Brothers. It later went through an extended vacancy and several preservation struggles, before being converted into eighty loft-style apartments.



Bruce Boehner

#09 Henning Building (The Mandel)

518 W. Seventh Street

Dodd and Richards (1917)

This modest four-story brick-clad building has a long retail history. Over the years, it housed Swobdi Millinery, the elegant woman's clothing store Citrin's, and Mandel's Fascinating Slippers. The Henning Building and its neighbor to the east, the former Coulter Dry Goods Company, were converted into fifty-five loft-style apartments, now known as The Mandel.



Annie Laskey

#10 Coulter Dry Goods Company (The Mandel)

500 W. Seventh Street

Dodd and Richards (1917)

This gracefully curved structure was built as the sixth location for the prominent retailer, the Coulter Dry Goods Company. Later home to Dohrmann's and then Lane Bryant, the building was repeatedly threatened with demolition. It was joined to its neighbor the Henning Building, and the two buildings reopened in 2007 as The Mandel, a complex of fifty-five loft-style apartments.



Bruce Boehner

#11 Quinby Building

529 W. Seventh Street

Meyer and Holler (1926)

Built as an office tower, the Quinby Building now houses telecommunications data centers. The charming Grand Avenue entry and lobby retain many of their 1920s marble and decorative elements.



Annie Laskey

#12 Bronson Building (The Collection)

527 W. Seventh Street

Austin and Pennell (1913)

The Bronson Building stood nearly empty until 1915, when it was leased to the Brack Shops, a then-novel collection of independent shops in a department store-like setting. Still home to above-the-street retail, the building became known as The Collection in the 1970s.



Annie Laskey

#13 Brock and Company Building (Mas Malo/Seven Grand)

515 W. Seventh Street

*Dodd and Richards (1922)**Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #358*

LAC Archives

Built for Brock and Company, one of the city's most successful jewelry companies, this building has an ornate terra cotta façade. The luxurious interior showrooms featured murals of Versailles and Art Nouveau-inspired display cases. Clifton's Silver Spoon cafeteria occupied the space from 1974-1997, keeping many of the interior details intact. The second floor reopened in 2007 as Seven Grand, one of many hip new bars revitalizing the nightlife scene downtown. The ground floor reopened as the restaurant Mas Malo in 2010.

#14 Bank of Italy (Giannini Place)

505 W. Seventh Street

*Morgan, Walls and Morgan (1922)**Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #354*

Built for the Bank of Italy (which later merged with Bank of America), this formal, Neoclassical structure was designed by Morgan, Walls and Morgan, an influential architecture firm with roots in Los Angeles dating back to the 1870s. Notice the whimsical images of American coins sculpted in the terra cotta that frames the elaborate bronze front doors.



Annie Laskey

#15 Ville de Paris (L.A. Jewelry Mart)

420 W. Seventh Street

Dodd and Richards (1917)

Founded by Frenchman A. Fusetot in 1893, the Ville de Paris had a Broadway address until the construction in 1917 of this brick and terra cotta-clad six-story store on Seventh Street. The business and building were sold two years later to B. H. Dyas, a sporting goods retailer. Advertised as "The Most Interesting Store in California," Dyas' store featured a log cabin, an indoor rifle range, and an aquarium of rainbow trout, as well as stuffed and mounted game animals.



Bruce Boehner

#16 Huntsberger-Mennell Building (International Jewelry Mart)
412 W. Seventh Street
Dodd and Richards (1917)

Dodd and Richards, architects of many of the buildings on Seventh Street, designed this two and a half-story structure. According to a newspaper article at the time of its construction, the delicate and colorful terra cotta ornamentation represents the “fruits and flowers of California.”



Annie Laskey

#17 Foreman and Clark Building (Jewelry Design Center)
400 W. Seventh Street
Curlett and Beelman (1928)

This Gothic Revival-style structure was built for Foreman and Clark, a company that manufactured and sold men’s clothing. In a novel approach, Foreman and Clark’s retail store was on the second floor, while the ground floor was available as income-producing rental space. In 1978, the building was remodeled for jewelry retail.



Bruce Boehner

#18 Los Angeles Athletic Club
431 W. Seventh Street
Parkinson and Bergstrom (1912)
Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #69

The Los Angeles Athletic Club has been a local institution since its founding in 1880. The current structure was built as a clubhouse, athletic facility, and hotel. Immediately famous for the engineering feat of placing a nearly Olympic-size pool on the sixth floor, the building has hosted innumerable celebrities over the years. Several remodels have changed the street-level façade and parts of the interior, yet the building, including the historic pool and gymnasium, retains its historic character.



Bruce Boehner

#19 Pantages Theatre (Jewelry Theater Center)
401 W. Seventh Street
B. Marcus Priteca (1920)

Elaborate floral decoration and Greek-inspired sculpture cover the façade of this twelve-story L-shaped office building, which wraps around the theatre’s auditorium. Designed by prolific theatre architect B. Marcus Priteca for the Pantages vaudeville circuit, it was sold in 1929 to Warner Bros. In 1977, as Hill Street was transforming into the important jewelry district it is now, the building and auditorium were converted into a jewelry center. A significant amount of the theatre’s original decoration remains, including the former stage, original balcony, and decorative ceiling.



Bruce Boehner

#20 Sun Drug Building (Great Western Jewelry Plaza)
700 S. Hill Street
Curlett and Beelman (1922)

The Sun Drug Company built and owned many properties downtown, several of which housed Sun Drug stores at street level, as this one did. Great Western Savings was a major tenant of the twelve-story Beaux Arts structure for many years. The building now houses jewelry manufacturing and retail.



Bruce Boehner

#21 Dunn-Williams Building (Spreckels Building)
714 W. Seventh Street
Samuel Heiman (1922)
Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #984

Developed by real estate speculators, this uniquely designed L-shaped building fronts both Seventh and Hill Streets. It was sold in 1924 to the prominent Spreckels family, famous throughout California for their sugar, real estate, and railroad ventures. Despite many owners and tenants over the years, the building remains remarkably intact.



Annie Laskey

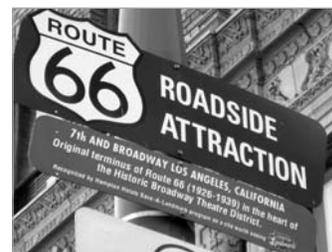
#22 Loew’s State Theatre
300 W. Seventh Street
Weeks and Day (1921)
Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #522/
National Register of Historic Places
(Broadway Historic Theatre and Commercial District)

The corner of Broadway and Seventh was reputed to be the busiest intersection in Los Angeles when this theatre was built. Boasting entrances on both streets, the Loew’s State was enormously successful, due partly to its location and partly to its presentation of MGM films and live performances. The twelve-story office building that wraps around the auditorium was reportedly one of the largest brick-clad structures in the city when built. The theatre now hosts church services, while the upper floors house jewelry manufacturers.



Security Pacific National Bank Collection/Los Angeles Public Library

#23 Western Terminus of Route 66
Seventh Street at Broadway
(1926-1936)



Annie Laskey

Historic Route 66, also known as the “Mother Road,” was established in 1926. Starting in Chicago, Route 66 originally ended at Seventh Street and Broadway in downtown Los Angeles (and was later extended to Santa Monica). Route 66 was officially removed from the U.S. Highway system in 1985, but it is memorialized in many places with historic markers and National Scenic Byway status.

#24 Bullock's (St. Vincent Jewelry Center)

319 W. Seventh Street

*Parkinson and Bergstrom (1906)**National Register of Historic Places**(Broadway Historic Theatre and Commercial District)*

Broadway Department Store owner Arthur Letts bankrolled his top manager, John Bullock, to open a new store in which Letts would be a silent partner. Specializing in high-end merchandise and customer service, Bullock's opened on the northwest corner of Broadway and Seventh Streets, eventually expanding to six adjoining structures. The downtown store closed in 1983, about the time that most department stores were leaving the city center. After an extensive remodel, the complex reopened later that year as a jewelry center.



Bruce Boehner

#25 St. Vincent's CourtAlley off Seventh Street between Broadway and Hill
California State Landmark #567

Annie Laskey

St. Vincent's Court, the small alley that runs through the center of the former Bullock's complex, dates back to the 1860s, when the site was occupied by St. Vincent's College (now Loyola Marymount University). This alley was the main entrance into campus. In 1956, a coalition of city boosters funded a remodel of the alley

that added murals, awnings, and flowers, precursors of the cafe scenes that line the alley today.

#26 I. N. Van Nuys Building (Van Nuys Apartments)

210 W. Seventh Street

*Morgan, Walls and Morgan (1911)**Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #898/**National Register of Historic Places**(Spring Street Financial District)*

Reportedly the largest and most expensive office block constructed in Los Angeles at the time, this Beaux Arts structure was financed by I. N. Van Nuys, who, with his partner Isaac Lankershim, had made a fortune on land in the San Fernando Valley. The building was converted to apartments in 1982. The exquisite elevator lobby remains, complete with marble, stained glass skylight, and bronze elevator doors.



Bruce Boehner

#27 Haas Building

219 W. Seventh Street

Morgan, Walls and Morgan (1915)

Built by businessman Abraham Haas as an office building, this twelve-story structure was designed in the classical Beaux Arts style, with terra cotta ornamentation typical of its era. The current metal skin was added in the 1970s, although a small portion of the original terra cotta is still visible on the Seventh Street façade. The building was converted in 2009 into sixty-eight apartment units, with a rooftop penthouse.



LAC Archives

#28 Union Oil Building (The Bartlett)

215 W. Seventh Street

*Parkinson and Bergstrom (1911)**National Register of Historic Places (Spring Street Financial District)*

A classic Beaux Arts office block, the Union Oil Building was sold to prominent businessman and civic leader A. G. Bartlett in 1921. The look of the building significantly changed in 1937 when the first three floors received a Moderne facelift. The building was converted in 2002 into 139 condominiums.



Security Pacific National Bank Collection / Los Angeles Public Library

#29 Financial Center Building

140 W. Seventh Street

*Norton and Wallis (1924)**National Register of Historic Places (Spring Street Financial District)*

Located in the heart of the then-financial district, this building was originally designed to house financial offices. In classic Beaux Arts tradition, contrasting stories of terra cotta and pressed brick define the base, shaft, and attic of this office building. Delicate metal detailing still graces the façade.



Annie Laskey

#30 Hellman Commercial Trust and Savings Bank (SB Spring)

650 S. Spring Street

*Schultze and Weaver (1925)**National Register of Historic Places (Spring Street Financial District)*

Isaias Hellman spared no expense in the design, materials, or amenities for the new headquarters of his bank, which cost a reputed \$2.5 million to construct. The main banking area remains



LAC Archives

mostly intact, with elaborate marble, wood, and metal details in a Spanish Revival style. In 2009, the offices above were converted into 174 apartments. The former banking lobby now serves as an event space and a popular filming location.

#31 Board of Trade Building (SB Main)
111 W. Seventh Street
Curlett and Beelman (1926)

Large winged creatures guard the attic-level corners of the Board of Trade building, later known as the California Stock Exchange. Converted into 200 loft-style apartments, the building reopened in 2009.



LAC Archives

#32 Heywood Bros. & Wakefield Company (Dearden's Home Furnishings)
700-710 S. Main Street
Architect unknown (ca. 1899); John Parkinson remodel (ca. 1902)
Hulse, Bradford & Company (Dearden's Home Furnishings)
712-718 S. Main Street
R. B. Young (1901)

Dearden's Home Furnishings was founded in 1909, a few doors south of its current location, in what was then a bustling furniture district. The present store comprises three buildings, all of which previously housed furniture stores: Heywood Bros. & Wakefield Company (circa 1899) on the corner, which became Overell's in 1906; Hulse, Bradford & Company (1901) just to the south; and a third industrial structure to the rear. For over a century, Dearden's has specialized in personal service, eventually expanding to nine stores across Los Angeles County.



Brent C. Dickerson Archive. Used by permission.

#33 Transportation Building (Mercantile Center)
122 E. Seventh Street
Walker and Eisen (1924)

Now home to various fashion industry tenants, this building was originally named for the many transportation companies that had offices here, including the Pullman Company and the American-Hawaiian Steamship Company.



Annie Laskey

#34 Builders' Exchange Building (Terminal Plaza Building)
209 E. Seventh Street
Walker and Eisen (1925)

This thirteen-story Beaux Arts office building was commissioned by the Los Angeles Builders' Exchange, which originally occupied its two top floors. Architects Walker and Eisen designed many buildings in the downtown area, including the nearby Transportation Building (1924) and the Fine Arts Building (1926) on Seventh near Figueroa.



Annie Laskey

#35 Santee Court
714, 716, 720, and 724 S. Los Angeles Street
Arthur W. Angel (1911)
Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #710

An ambitious adaptive reuse project begun in 2003, Santee Court and Village transformed a large block of industrial buildings into a mixed-use complex with residential, commercial, retail, and arts tenants, facing onto a courtyard.



Annie Laskey

#35a Cooper, Coate & Casey Dry Goods Company (Connell Building, Santee Court)
714 S. Los Angeles Street
Arthur W. Angel (1911), William Kernan (1935, Moderne remodel)
Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #710

Originally designed in an understated Italianate style as a wholesaler's warehouse, this structure was given a Moderne façade in a 1935 remodel.



Annie Laskey

#35b & c Brownstein-Louis Company [factory] (Bailey Hat Building, Santee Court)
716 S. Los Angeles Street
Brownstein-Louis Company [warehouse] (Brownstein-Louis Building, Santee Court)
720 S. Los Angeles Street
Arthur W. Angel (1911)
Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #710

Developer M. J. Connell built seven buildings on Los Angeles Street between Seventh and Eighth Streets. Two were for the Brownstein-Louis company, a manufacturer of overalls and sportswear. The building at 720 S.

Los Angeles Street was intended as a wholesale showroom. The rear building, 716 S. Los Angeles Street (now known as the Bailey Hat Building after a later tenant), served as the factory.



Annie Laskey



Annie Laskey

#35d Brodin Millinery Company (Brownstein-Louis Building, Santee Court)
724 S. Los Angeles Street
Frank Stiff (1912)
Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #710

This building, which served as Brodin's Millinery, was an addition to the Brownstein-Louis building directly to the north. As a result, the former exterior walls are now interior walls featuring Brownstein-Louis "ghost signs."



Myk Mishoe

About the Los Angeles Conservancy

The Los Angeles Conservancy is a membership-based nonprofit organization that works through advocacy and education to recognize, preserve, and revitalize the historic architectural and cultural resources of Los Angeles County. The Conservancy was formed in 1978 as part of the community-based effort to prevent demolition of the Los Angeles Central Library. It is now the largest local historic preservation organization in the U.S., with 6,000 members and hundreds of volunteers.

For more information, please visit laconservancy.org.



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- The Roosevelt:* Milbank Real Estate Services, Randelle Green, Raymond Yashouafar
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- SB Spring:* Barry Shy
- Seven Grand:* 213, Cedd Moses, Stephen Dorame, Tiffany Haugen
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Tour booklet printed by Jano Graphics



Bank of Italy (Annie Laskey)



Bronson Building (Bruce Boehner)



Fine Arts Building (Bruce Boehner)



Fine Arts Building (Annie Laskey)



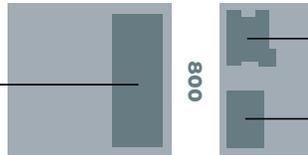
Union Oil Bldg./
The Bartlett
(Annie Laskey)



7th street

FIGUEROA

#01 Barker Bros. Bldg. |

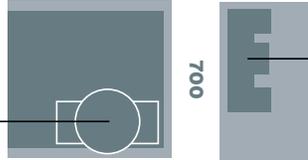


| Home Savings of America Tower #02

| Fine Arts Bldg. #03

FLOWER

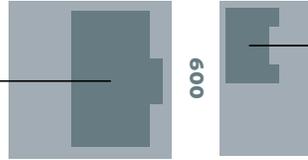
#04 Broadway Plaza |



| Roosevelt Bldg. #05

HOPE

#06 J. W. Robinson Company |



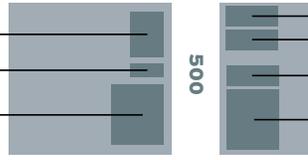
| Union Oil Bldg. #07

GRAND

#08 Brockman Bldg. |

#09 Henning Bldg. |

#10 Coulter Dry Goods Co. |



| Quinby Bldg. #11

| Bronson Bldg. #12

| Brock and Co. Bldg. #13

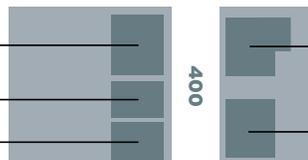
| Bank of Italy #14

OLIVE

#15 Ville de Paris |

#16 Huntsberger-Mennell Bldg. |

#17 Foreman and Clark Bldg. |



| Los Angeles Athletic Club #18

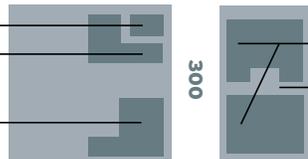
| Pantages Theatre #19

HILL

#20 Sun Drug Bldg. |

#21 Dunn-Williams Bldg. |

#22 Loew's State Theatre |



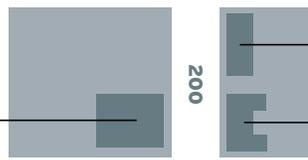
| Bullock's #24

| St. Vincent's Court #25

#23 Western Terminus of Route 66 |

BROADWAY

#26 I. N. Van Nuys Bldg. |

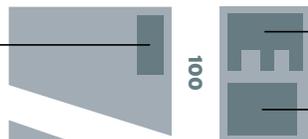


| Haas Bldg. #27

| Union Oil Bldg. #28

SPRING

#29 Financial Center Bldg. |

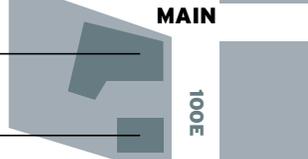


| Hellman Commercial Trust and Savings Bank #30

| Board of Trade Bldg. #31

#32 Heywood Bros. & Wakefield Co./
Hulse, Bradford & Co. |

#33 Transportation Bldg. |



MAIN

#35a Cooper, Coate & Casey Dry Goods Co. |

#35b/c Brownstein-Louis Co. |

#35d Brodin Millinery Co. |



LOS ANGELES

| Builders' Exchange Bldg. #34

