

B O O M

In its scale and character, Western Avenue typified arterial development in Los Angeles during the 1920s. The rate of growth was now quicker than in previous years, the competition among business nodes was greater, and the advantages some such places had over others could be more conclusively demonstrated when they were selected for branch banks and chain store outlets. However, the basic physical pattern was no more than an extension of what was well established in the decade prior to World War I.

By the early 1920s, a number of real estate speculators sought undertakings of a larger scale. Based on anticipated growth, they believed that market demand soon would be great enough to spawn multistory business centers throughout the metropolitan area—places that were substantial “downtowns” in their own right. Most projections were inflated. One firm exhorted *Times* readers to “visualize tomorrow,” when adjacent

Visualize Tomorrow

Do You Know

That a Million People Pass Beverly Vista every Month?
 That Beverly Vista will be the Very Heart of Beverly in the Near Future?
 That Beverly is the Finest Residential District in America?

Do You Know You Can Buy a Lot in Beverly Vista On a Concrete-Paved Boulevard For \$1575?

(Cheaper than you can buy a lot on an ordinary oil and gravel street away out in the southwest.)

No doubt you think a lot in this wonderful home section of Beverly will cost you many thousands of dollars. Quite the reverse is true.

Wilshire Boulevard at Beverly Drive undoubtedly will be the heart—the main business section—of Beverly in two years. Think of what lot values will be at that time!

FREE AIRPLANE RIDES SUNDAY!

Come out and get a sky-high view of what we have to offer you in Beverly Vista in the way of homesites at \$1575! Register Early for This Thrill of Thrills!

\$10,000 House and Chandler Touring Car FREE!

There are no strings tied to this offer. Anyone 18 years or older is eligible to register. But you must REGISTER EARLY!

Underd. John A. McGarr-Vaughan-Evans Corporation

Office: 6820 Wilshire Blvd. and S. W. Cor. Wilshire and Pico Road
 Phone: 786-0700-786-1111-786-1288

How to Get There:
 Drive out Wilshire or Pico Boulevard to Pico Road and you are right at the main tract office.

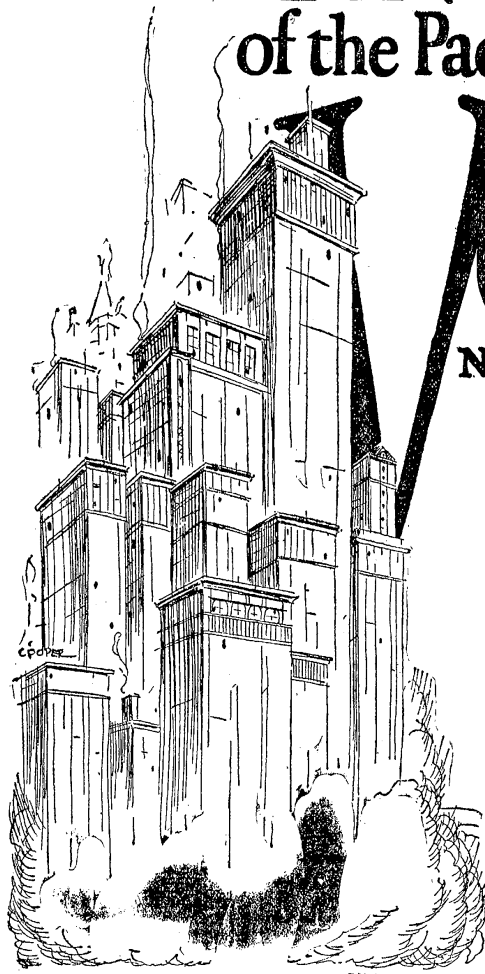
Beverly Vista

48
 Security Trust & Savings Bank, 2100 W. Pico Boulevard, Los Angeles, ca. 1923, John and Donald B. Parkinson, architects; burned 1992. (*Shapes of Clay*, January 1926, V.)

49
 “Visualize Tomorrow,” Beverly Vista advertisement. (*Los Angeles Times*, 29 April 1928, V-11.)

Oliver & Carver

Are selling the heart of
the ATLANTIC CITY
of the Pacific Coast



Venice

NEW BUSINESS DISTRICT

FIRST STEPS are now being taken to make Venice the ATLANTIC CITY of the Pacific Coast.

This community is the NEAREST beach to the heart of Los Angeles. It is now included within the Los Angeles city limits and has been definitely chosen for intensive development by the Los Angeles City Planning Commission and Playground Commission.

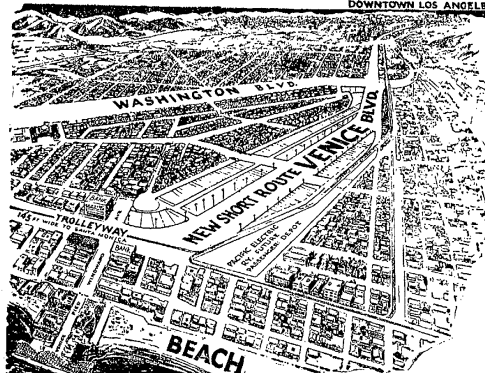
Today a NEW and MODERN business center is being developed in the exact center of the present business district.

Here will be erected the best of the new office buildings, hotels and shopping centers that are already necessary to meet the existing needs of Venice.

Here TODAY you may still secure FULLY IMPROVED business property at low OPENING PRICES to be increased 10% or more on November 1st, in line with the rapid increase in values that is now occurring.

The purchase to date of more than \$500,000 worth of this property by leading Los Angeles business men is sufficient reason for giving careful consideration to the unusual opportunity for profitable investment now presented.

Drive to Venice today over Washington and Venice Boulevards and see for yourself the actual situation.

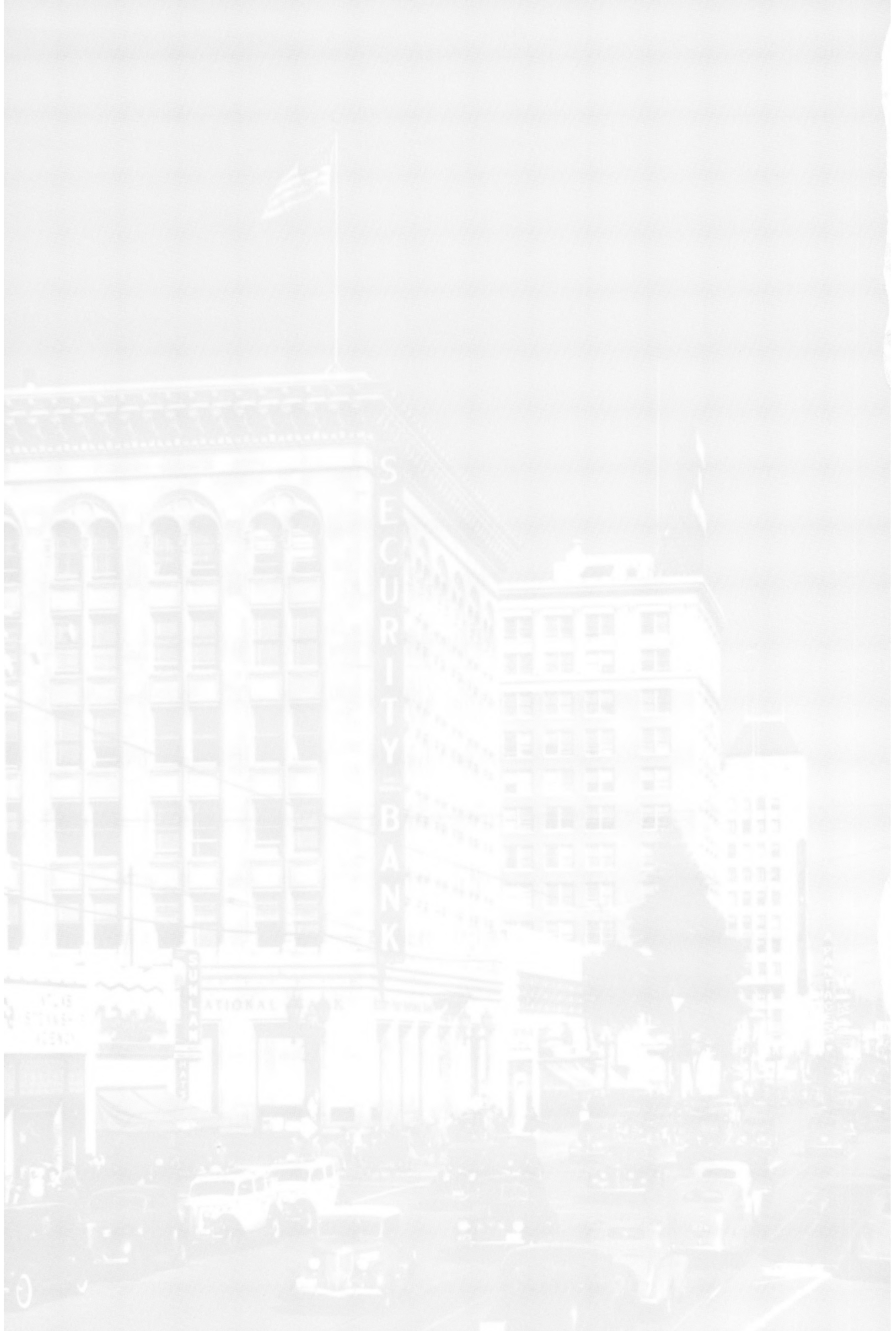


OLIVER & CARVER
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VENICE
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Tucker 8476

Jones & Norell
Hollywood Representatives
Suite 912 Guaranty Building
Telephone GRanite 6718

blocks of Wilshire Boulevard (then still open land) would become the core of a major business district (figure 49). Now was the time to buy house lots, the advertisement coaxed, before the building boom that surely would soon occur. Industrial development was also seen as a stimulus. Boulevard frontage along one thoroughfare extending southeast of downtown into the new Central Manufacturing District was promoted as the “key to millions”; the profits made from office and retail development there would be comparable to those made in the expansion of the urban core a decade or two earlier. The ocean was yet another draw. The beach community of Venice was destined to become “the Atlantic City of the Pacific Coast,” according to another firm, presenting a vision of skyscrapers well above the Los Angeles height limit in an area that had persistently failed to attract a stable population (figure 50). Sometimes no pretext was used other than the implied one that all major arterial intersections would one day become latter-day Times Squares. A tract along Pico Boulevard at the fringe of the metropolis, thirteen miles from downtown, was heralded as the future “Great White Way of Western Los Angeles.” “There’ll be skyscrapers at Imperial Center,” its promoters insisted.⁴⁴

While such speculative visions were improbable, the idea of future dense urban growth in outlying areas was shared by many respected business interests as well. Even the depression failed to extinguish the idea fully. Writing in 1935, Charles Cohan, long-standing real estate editor of the *Times*, described at length how the city a hundred years hence would extend from Santa Barbara to San Diego and be laced with skyscraper business centers at frequent intervals.⁴⁵ Los Angeles was to be not just a lateral metropolis of enormous proportion, but also a multicentered vertical one. The intense building program that had transformed downtown was forecast to occur again and again, if not always at the same magnitude. Just as the business community projected images of the core area as a mighty forest of skyscrapers, equivalent to those of New York and Chicago, so they were fond of depicting the whole region in a similarly titanic, urban cast. To justify such dreams, boosters had more than wildly optimistic projections; they had the example of Hollywood.



Longstreth, Richard W. *City Center to Regional Mall: Architecture, the Automobile, and Retailing In Los Angeles, 1920-1950*. E-book, Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1998, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/heb05829.0001.001>. Downloaded on behalf of 3.135.193.191

IV

HOLLYWOOD — LOS ANGELES'S OTHER HALF

Just as the term “parkless” was used by the press to discuss parking problems rather than a dearth of municipal open space, so the “other half” referred not to the city’s poor, as Jacob Riis had popularized the term among east coast reformers, but rather to potential area of real estate growth. “Hollywood,” gloated a 1927 account in the *Los Angeles Realtor*, was rapidly becoming “a gateway between . . . new and old Los Angeles.” Lying to the northwest of downtown in an area roughly bounded by Vermont Avenue on the east, Beverly Boulevard on the south, La Brea Avenue on the west, and the Santa Monica Mountains on the north, the Hollywood district “has for a decade played the leading role in the suburban growth of Los Angeles during [the city’s] most remarkable period of development.” But this surge in metropolitan expansion “simply foreshadow[s] the big activity that is yet to come.” The author asked his readership to imagine a giant fan, its handle positioned near Hollywood’s business heart. If oriented to the southeast, the fan’s ribs “will point to everything that Los Angeles’ present ‘half’ has done in the last fifty years. Turn the fan around and it will spread over the San Fernando Valley, Los Angeles’ ‘other half,’ and Hollywood thus becomes the connecting link or gateway between the two.”¹

This buoyant prophecy did not materialize to a significant extent until the late 1940s; prior to then most of Los Angeles’s growth took place west and south of Hollywood. Yet the idea that Hollywood was destined