

HIGH RISE WITH A HEART

BY JOHN BOAL

Modern rusticity is the byword in the new architecture that incorporates gentle designs, natural materials and a renewed respect for the human scale

In an era that seems almost obsessed with passing out bouquets to blandness, a random sample of new buildings and development reveals that perhaps architects and developers are hedging against homogeneity.

The collective rationale embraces the notion that stark structures are becoming dinosaurs. And in their place more and more "humanistic" landmarks are coming off the blueprints and onto the landscape, designs meant to inspire their users to their fullest potential.

Office buildings are being planned around lower heights to reduce intimidation; more warmth is emanating from soft, rustic-colored exteriors; and a certain homeyness is spun into these work environments by the inclusion of wide-open and airy skylights and lobbies.

In other projects, too—a People Mover, a Victorian village, even a convention center over a freeway—there's a movement that integrates spatial aesthetics with user appreciation and empathy. We've all tromped through the cold tombs of the past. Now our day is being gladdened with unconventional cheeriness.

HIGH STAKES IN HIGH TECH

Despite the prevailing attitude that Las Vegas is solely a glitter-and-gaming economy, Ford Aerospace & Communication Services last September became the anchor tenant in the new four-hundred-acre City of Las Vegas Technology Center.

Located in the northwest section of the city, the business park will be specially geared to the needs of defense/aerospace/energy-related firms. Ford Aerospace & Communication Services

located there because it was awarded the operations and maintenance contract for the nearby Nellis Air Force Base, the largest training complex in the Tactical Air Command.

City planners expect it will take eight to fifteen years and \$200 million to \$300 million to produce the projected three million square feet of developed space.

"The Las Vegas Technology Center is one component of the city's overall economic development strategy, which also includes the development of downtown Las Vegas and the ongoing effort to recruit clean industry to southern Nevada," says City Councilman Wayne Bunker.

A CONTEMPORARY METAPHOR FOR LOS ANGELES

Heralded as "a private museum with a public conscience," the \$22-million Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) will not only signify the coming of age of downtown Los Angeles as a bustling art center but, by its eclectic ingredients, will symbolize the colorful multiplicity of international stock that stirs the cultural stew of Los Angeles.

Using red sandstone plucked out of the bedrock in India and then fabricated into slabs in Japan and India, the exterior effect will reflect the natural pattern of fracture, like the face of a mountain. This sandstone will integrate with a dramatic copper-clad Romanesque barrel-vaulted roof and rows of pyramidal skylights, which immediately point to an Egyptian influence and the linking of one "desert" civilization with another. All of this was cooked up by the famed Japanese architect Arata Isozaki in association with Gruen Associates.

Schedule to open in December 1986, the 100,000-square-foot, four-story artistic centerpiece in the California Plaza will dazzle patrons with works from the world's most distinguished contemporary artists, architects, photographers and scholars. MOCA has already acquired eighty major artworks of the Abstract Expressionist and Pop Art periods (of the late forties, fifties and early seventies) from the prized collection of Italian Count Giuseppe Panza di Biumo and over three hundred artworks in all.

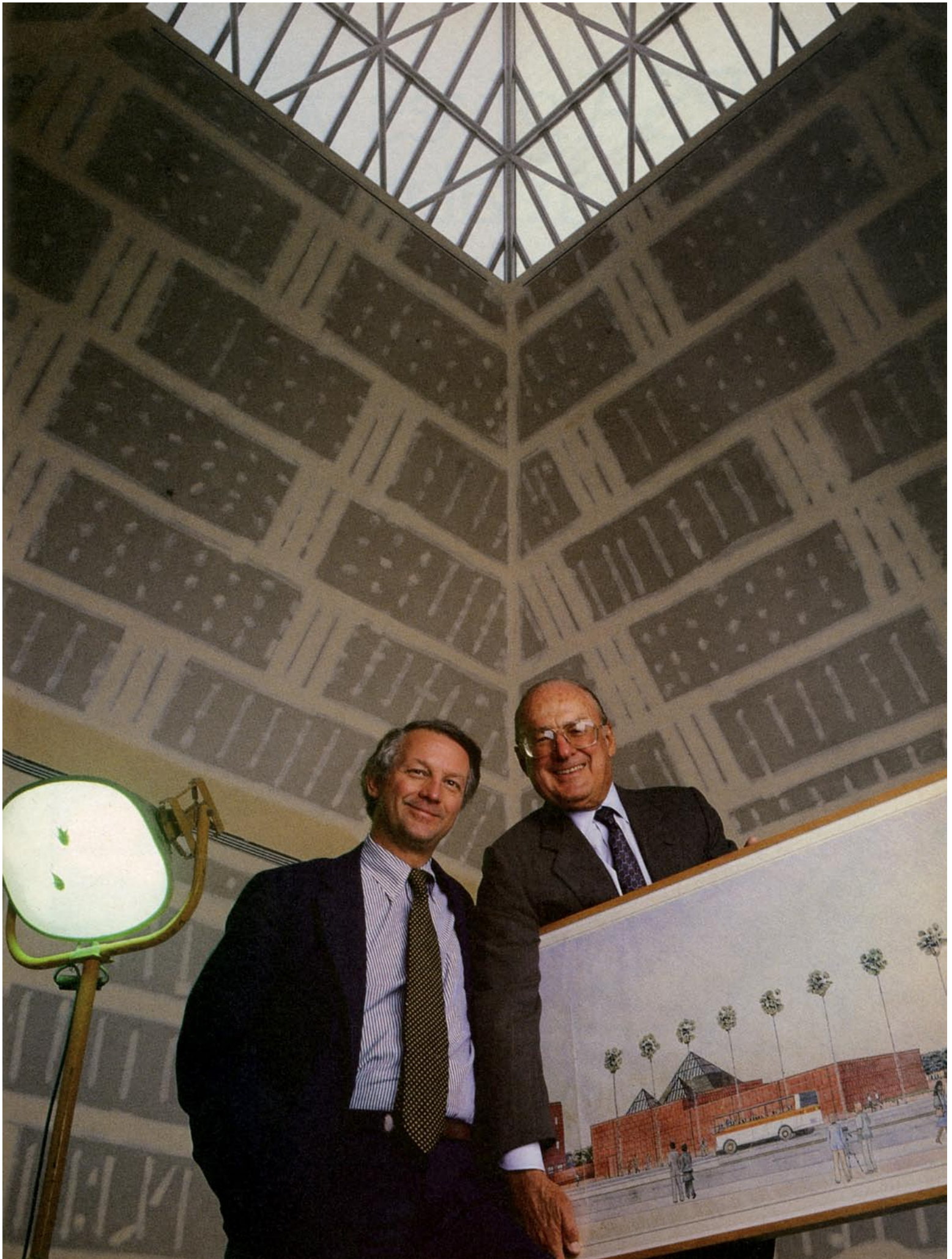
OAKLAND REDEVELOPMENT: PRESERVATIVES ADDED

Continually refuting the notion that "there is no there there," Oakland is completing a unique \$10-million urban renewal project that incorporates a dose of Victorian architecture.

Twelve Victorian homes, threatened with demolition from freeway and other nearby construction, have been moved into Preservation Park, which was already the permanent site for many of Oakland's historic buildings.

Located as the end anchor of the proposed 13th Street Mall, linking Preservation Park through City Center to Broadway and BART, the project is being developed by Preservation Venture, a partnership initiated by the city's redevelopment agency and divided between Chamber Center Developers, an Oakland-based minority development group, and a Chicago group, Preserva-

Director Richard Koshalek and Vice-Chairman of the Board Frederick M. Nicholas display an artist's rendering of the Museum of Contemporary Art, scheduled to open December 1986, and anticipated as downtown L.A.'s coming of age as an art center.



tion Park Limited Partnerships.

Besides the historic homes already rooted there, Preservation Venture will be developing eighteen Victorian buildings for commercial office and restaurant use. In addition, the grounds are being landscaped to integrate nineteenth-century fencing, fountains and street lamps. A long stroll into the past should be possible by the end of the year.

GRAND PRIX OF PACIFIC RIM TRADE

This April, Long Beach hosts its eleventh annual Grand Prix auto race, whose competitors always attract international attention. That global cynosure will brighten even more this summer when ground is broken on the \$550-million Greater Los Angeles World Trade Center, at Long Beach.

When completed in the early nineties, the center will sprout four office towers and a yet-to-be-awarded world-class hotel. But more important, it will be strategically positioned next to the burgeoning Los Angeles/Long Beach Port Complex

and will unify the myriad financial and governmental services needed to facilitate Pacific Rim trade.

As a member of the World Trade Center Association, the Long Beach facility will take advantage of a number of trade services available, such as director computer access to U.S. Customs information, which will aid in freight forwarding and customs clearances.

There's a network of some forty-two international facilities designated as "official" World Trade Centers by the World Trade Center Association. Although the only existing one on the West Coast of the U.S. is in Tacoma, Washington, centers are planned for San Francisco and Seattle. Los Angeles lost its designation early last year when the downtown office "wasn't providing enough trade information services," according to a spokesperson at the association in New York.

That shouldn't happen in Long Beach. M.J. Choppin, president of the local IDM Corporation, which is in partnership with Kajima International in the volumi-

nous venture, says, "The elements which will differentiate this center from other office developments will be its international telecommunications systems, satellite hook-ups, the World Trade Institute and the synergy of a multitude of tenants involved in world trade."

SEATTLE SHUTTLES COMMUTERS UNDERGROUND

After years of experiencing rush-hour bus speeds of five miles per hour and more than ten years of comprehensive planning, Seattle's Metro Council has approved test borings for a \$415-million electric transit tunnel that will use dual-power diesel-electric buses over a modest 1.3-mile route. At least 50 percent of the cost is expected to come from the federal government.

Billed as "the preferred alternative" and described as "a cost-effective solution to the region's transportation problems," the Downtown Seattle Transit Project will purchase some 236 dual-



This summer will witness the ground breaking on the \$550-million Greater Los Angeles World Trade Center at Long Beach. When completed in the early nineties, the center will sprout four office towers and a yet-to-be-awarded world-class hotel, but more important, its strategic position next to the burgeoning Los Angeles/Long Beach Port Complex promises to make the center the financial pivot point of Pacific Rim trade.

power trolley buses, which, when approaching the downtown tunnel, would switch from diesel to electric power and enter the tunnel in platoons of 3 or 4 buses along a two-lane underground roadway.

The transit tunnel will displace some thirty-six businesses and eighteen residents while disrupting the already highly congested downtown traffic for three years during its construction. Tunnel operation should begin in 1990.

Reasons mentioned as to why this project was the preferred alternative include "requires fewer transfers," "reduces conflicts with autos and pedestrians" and "builds on a successful all-bus system."

TAMING TALL BUILDINGS IN SAN FRANCISCO

After twenty years of experiencing a fairly stiff and pompous forestation from generally unimaginative developers, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors last July approved its nationally recognized "Downtown Plan."

The main provisions include a limit of two or three office towers a year, and those approved (south of Market Street) must be no more than forty stories and have stepped setbacks, surface orna-

ment and a decoratively tapered top to contrast sharply with the look of so many flat-top high rises.

"The plan puts a definite damper on development, and I think that's good," declared Mayor Dianne Feinstein, who sponsored the proposal. "This is a small and delicate city," she told *Time* magazine. "I'm only sorry it took us so long to learn the lesson."

Although designed prior to approval of the Downtown Plan, the just-completed \$60-million, twenty-three-story Stevenson Place is the first postmodern building to reflect the taming of the city's skyline.

Alternating lines and squares of light and dark and a pointy top give the luminous landmark a cheery cathedral look. The contrasting coloring comes from red granite and cream-colored limestone. The building also features recessed solar bronze windows, stepped-back corners (providing twice as many corner offices) and, at the apex, a copper-clad, church-frame steeple effect in the penthouse. At night, the rooftop and escaping steam from the cooling towers will be floodlit.

Designed by Kaplan/McLaughton/Diaz, Stevenson Place harmoniously blends into the city's evolving philoso-

phy. "San Francisco's architectural concern has not been for the hot thrust of visually dramatic change," contends Herb McLaughton, a partner in the design firm, "but rather with comfort, a certain rusticism and, above all, a gentle humanity."

ALONG COLUMBIA CORRIDOR

In perhaps the largest tract of industrial area within a major U.S. urban center—

Continued on Page 102

SNAPSHOTS OF THE FUTURE

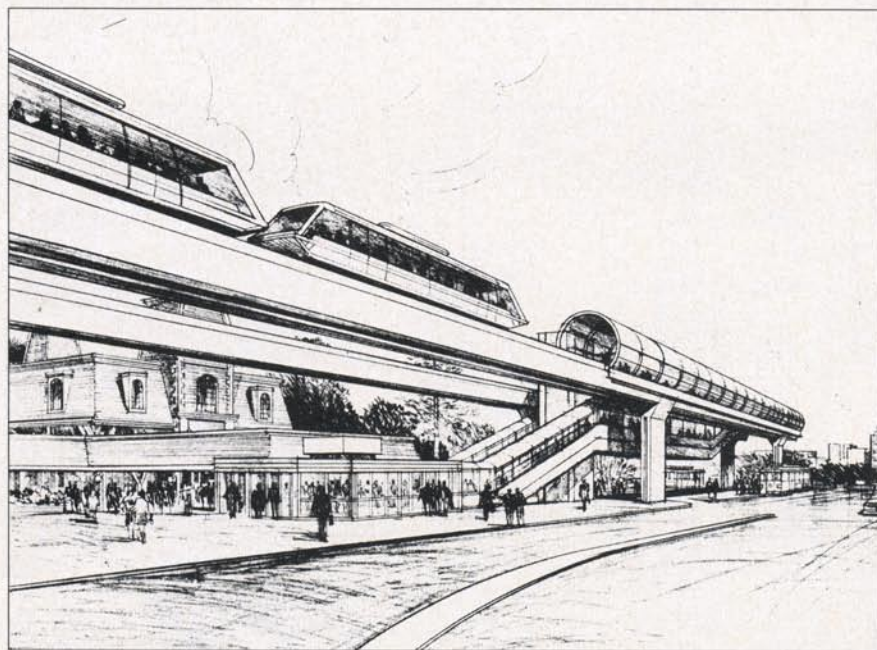
JOEL KOTKIN, West Coast Editor, *Inc.* magazine:

California is not becoming a colony of Japan, Korea and China; we're becoming something different. American enterprise, Asian spirit—that's what California's about. California will blend American individualism, innovativeness, with Japanese "kiri," the obligation of one individual to another. Tandem Computers, Selectron, AST Research, Action Instruments are California companies exemplifying this new, different capitalism. Many firms like them are influenced by Asia, with Asians in key positions or Asian founders. Key California industries, such as microelectronics and agriculture, are heavily involved in Asia: eight of the ten largest semiconductor firms in the world are located on the Pacific Rim. At such firms, workers feel more obligation to the organization, but in return are not viewed as just fixed costs, expendable at a downturn in the economy.

We're already seeing the California-led divorce of American culture from Europe in lifestyle: Japanese-style, very airy buildings with plants and a white rather than dark face; sushi bars; the minimalist ways Californians decorate their homes; interest in Buddhism. What's next? Mixing on levels that can't be identified in dollars and cents, such as increased intermarriage between middle-class Asians and middle-class whites. If we're smart, we'll import technology from Japan on how to work together, turning factory workers into knowledge workers.

California approaches the future with a Japanese market that views its products as not like the rest of America, as on the cutting edge, whether in microprocessing, software, biotechnology, agriculture, aerospace, fashion, fitness, cosmetics, vacationing, films, television, radio. China, on the other hand, is sending people here to learn daily management skills: How do you run a computer training course? Set up a retail network? Improve the tourist industry? How do you manage an information system? Train word processors?

—Andrew D. Basiago



Scheduled to break ground this summer, the nation's first magnetically levitated people mover will carry passengers from downtown Las Vegas to the Convention Center area. Elevated seventeen feet off the ground, the one-mile track will whisk people inside futuristic-looking vehicles with German M-Bahn technology. Dave Walliser, chief architect for the city of Las Vegas, is said to be giving odds the \$25-million project will be open for business in 1987.

There's more to Cajun cuisine
than Blackened Redfish



Since 1981 at the Elite Cafe on Fillmore.

532 Columbus at Union, San Francisco • 397-1509 • Valet Parking/Banquets Available

New Developments

Continued from Page 60

the 16-mile-long, 1.5-mile-wide area east and west of Portland International Airport known as the Columbia Corridor—representatives from ten public and private organizations have formed the Portland Development Commission to map out a coordinated twenty-year development of the potential 6,400 acres.

Extending from the Willamette River on the west to the Sandy River on the east, the project is significant on several counts:

- It reflects true long-range planning for the Portland metropolitan region.
- It's an excellent example of how private enterprise and local governments can and must work in tandem with each other's plans.
- It foresees that the predominant land uses will be light-medium industrial, business parks and warehousing/distribution, which reflects the changing structure of the national economy.

MESOPOTAMIAN MAGIC FOR MIRACLE MILE

Rising just west of a string of sad sack shops along the once famed "Miracle Mile" section of Wilshire Boulevard will be a dramatically lacquered and layered, six-story, one-million-square-foot office complex called the Wilshire Courtyard.

Don't let the understated name of the project belie the structure's future stature. A definite departure from tradition, this building will not be just another faceless skyscraper defacing the Los Angeles basin.

Looking somewhat like a futuristic low rise from the lost island of Atlantis, Wilshire Courtyard will consist of two C-shape, tiered buildings in the style of an ancient Mesopotamian ziggurat, with each succeeding floor jutting back to form private office terraces, where green metal planters serve as rails. Here the perk will not be an office with a view but an office with an executive porch and plants.

Interestingly, the design style is an updated amalgamation of the Art Deco, Zig-Zag Moderne and Streamline Moderne architecture that made the Miracle Mile district the business address of the thirties in Los Angeles. Now it's being refreshingly recycled.

Other highlights include a central courtyard connecting the two C-shape buildings; matching six-story atrium lob-

COUPON

Las Vegas

LIVELY ACTION, GREAT VALUE
and FREE CASINO PARTIES!



WESTWARD-HO
FREE
CHAMPAGNE OR
BLOODY MARYS
24 HOURS EVERYDAY

Dazzling NEW CASINO

**FREE FOOD! FREE DRINKS!
FREE ENTERTAINMENT! Amazing!**

Single Deck '21' • Craps
Roulette • \$50,000 Keno
5¢ Video Poker • 25¢ Draft
Beer • 99¢ Breakfast

1000 ROOMS
FROM \$16.50
per person/dbl. occup.
plus tax

MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS • DIAL FREE

1-800-634-6803

OR CALL YOUR TRAVEL AGENT

BRING THIS COUPON

to the Westward Ho Coupon Desk for your
FREE CASINO PARTY BOOK

**FREE 2 FREE DELI FOOD SPECIALS • FREE 10 FREE SLOT
PLAYS • FREE FREE SOUVENIR • FREE FREE DISCOUNT
TICKETS • FREE A 10 PAGE BOOK OF VALUES—YOURS FREE!**

VALID REGARDLESS WHERE YOU STAY

2900 Las Vegas Blvd. So./Las Vegas, Nev. 89109
Next Door to Stardust and Circus Circus

Adults Only • All rights
reserved by management.

PSA 1/86

WESTWARD-HO
CASINO / LAS VEGAS

bies; sculptured fountains faced in green slate; a quarter-mile jogging track, and a landscaped urban park.

Developed in partnership with the J.H. Snyder Co. and California Federal Savings (which will move its headquarters into the eastern "C"), the \$150-million flat-top twin plazas will have an early 1987 completion date, with a minor miracle or two along the way.

CONVENTION CENTER IN THE FAST LANE

In early 1988, out-of-state travelers cutting through downtown Seattle on Interstate 5 may be confused at the monstrous structure over their heads. After all, most people aren't accustomed to seeing a convention center on top of a freeway.

That's right—the new Washington State Convention Center will be located on top of I-5. Presently, convention delegates meeting in Seattle are usually ferried in shuttle buses, as the Seattle Center and the Kingdome are situated at opposite ends of town. Now, instead of being in traffic, they can walk all over it.

After conducting 126 public meetings, the center's board of directors chose the freeway site because of the proximity of five thousand hotel rooms within a five-block radius of the location.

The lavishly landscaped \$135-million center will connect and blend with the adjacent world-renowned Freeway Park, making a combined seventeen-acre midtown monument. And as an indication of the interest it has generated, over 120 national convention groups have already requested space in the fashionable facility.

But what about those loud traffic decibels down below? Well, the "lidding effect" of the center itself is said to provide significant insulation from the often frenzied freeway.

SURF'S UP IN THE VALLEY

The park-starved San Fernando Valley will finally experience an expansion in recreational facilities, as the Army Corps of Engineers last year received a \$2.6-million federal appropriation for development of parkland in the Sepulveda Flood Control Basin. The initial phase will be a 30- to 50-acre recreational lake and a 280-acre "informal park/multipurpose play" area southeast of the intersection of Victory and Balboa boulevards. But don't line up for boat slips just yet. The first section of the lake is not expected to be competed until fall 1987.

**WITH EVERY ASC SUNROOF
WE PROMISE YOU THE MOON.**



With a touch of a switch, we'll give you the Sun. And the Moon. And the Stars. With one easy installation we'll enhance any car you drive. With a touch of your phone, we'll guide you into a whole new experience. Call **1-800-872-9287 ext. 325 ask for Lisa** and we'll send you our free brochure. We install pop-tops beginning at \$200.00 and electric sunroofs from \$825.00.



ASC Inc. American Sunroof Products. Only Genuine with Red ASC Logo.

SAN FRANCISCO AIRPORT

**You'll Know
You've Made the
Best Choice.**

At the Best Prices...

- All Grosvenor Executive Rooms include:
- Whirlpool Bath or Thermasol® Steam Bath
 - King-size Bed/Executive Recliner Chairs
 - Morning Newspaper & Club Breakfast
 - 24-Hour Airport Shuttle Service

Not good with other discounted rates.
Mention this ad upon checking in.



GROSVENOR AIRPORT INN

380 South Airport Blvd. at Bayshore
South San Francisco, CA 415/873-3200