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69 WEST WASHINGTON STREET CHICAGO 2, ILLINOIS

Release at Will

CHICAGO, February 15 -- Latest real estate development in the program of The North Michigan Avenue Association to improve the area from the Chicago River to Oak Street and from Lake Shore Drive to State Street is the announcement by B. Leo Steif, architect, of the construction of a \$500,000 shopping center. The development which began in December, 1948 and is expected to be completed by the end of May occupies the southeast corner of Rush Street and Walton Place. The project comprises 45 feet on Rush Street, 200 feet on Walton Place and 135 feet on Ernst Court and will encompass 13 shops.

The architectural treatment of this one-story development will follow the colorful motif of conservative modernism, so successfully embodied in similar developments in California and through the Southwest. External trim will feature California Red Wood and the entire facade will be of full vision glass. Wood-beam ceilings will be an interior decorative feature of all the shops.

The major portion of the building will set back three feet from the sidewalk on Walton Place, to permit a continuous canopy or facia projecting over eight shop fronts.

Ernst Court, heretofore undeveloped as a retail thoroughfare, will provide the frontage for four "garden shops" set back approximately 10-feet from the walk to permit an inviting landscaping treatment.

This development, handled in its entirety by B. Leo Steif for the American National Bank as Trustees, will be the largest one-story shop unit in the North Michigan Avenue area. He has also been commissioned by the ownerships of 58 and 71-75 East Walton Street to make studies for new shopping and office improvements to go forward in the immediate future.

The development of North Michigan Avenue with major tenancies such as the Bonwit-Teller department store and contemplated projects of similar size, has given an impetus to "off-the-Avenue" shops on streets such as Walton, Oak and Delaware, in much the same manner as that of certain streets off upper Fifth Avenue, New York. According to Steif merchants who require the exclusive locale of North Michigan Avenue, but who cannot absorb the higher rental demands of a Michigan Avenue shop, find in these off-the-Avenue units the solution to their problem.

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