



Brookfield Office Properties

**PLAN:** An architect's rendering of the renovated shopping center at Figueroa and 7th streets that will be renamed Figat7th. Changes will include adding a wide staircase leading to a Target store on the middle level.

## Upgrade starts for downtown L.A. mall

**\$40-million makeover aims to better connect the site to the busy surrounding sidewalks.**

ROGER VINCENT

Work has commenced on a long-anticipated upgrade of one of the biggest shopping centers in downtown Los Angeles, its owners said Tuesday.

Crews are carving into the former 7th & Fig retail center in a \$40-million upgrade intended to enhance its connection to the busy sidewalks around 7th and Fi-

gueroa streets, landlord Brookfield Office Properties said.

"We're really opening it up to the streetscape and urban fabric so it's not as insular as it once was," said Ed Hogan, national director of leasing for New York-based Brookfield.

The makeover will add a wide staircase leading to a Target store on the middle level of the three-story mall, doing away with the circuitous layout that forced visitors to travel past as many storefronts as possible on their journey inside.

Such mall layouts were common when the mall opened in 1986, Hogan said,

but are no longer in favor. "We've modernized the design."

Most of the mall's tenants had left by the time their leases expired at the end of last year. Businesses that will remain open are Starbucks, Morton's steakhouse, California Pizza Kitchen, Adoro Mexican Grille restaurant and Gold's Gym.

Target announced in November that it would take over space formerly occupied by Macy's and Bullock's department stores. Hogan declined to speak about other potential new tenants for the mall, which has been renamed Figat7th, but said that clothing stores are likely

now that downtown has a residential base.

"The demographic is young, hip and urban," he said, "and we are talking to retailers that appeal to that demographic."

When the makeover is completed in fall 2012, the mall may also have another full-service restaurant, such as a gastro pub, along with a planned 500-seat indoor-outdoor dining center served by 15 local restaurants.

Architecture firm Gensler, which designed the nearby L.A. Live entertainment center, will be lead architect, Brookfield said.

roger.vincent@latimes.com