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It All Begins at 1st and Main...

Your street address is determined by where you work and live in relation to the historic corner of 1st and Main streets in downtown's Civic Center.

First and Main is ground zero for the city's and county's unified house-numbering system—the manner in which government determines the addresses of large numbers of homes and businesses.

Streets are numbered according to their distance from that intersection.

The city and Los Angeles County are divided into quadrants: east, west, north and south. The numbering of the blocks of streets, in groups of 100, begins at 1st and Main.

Long before city and county officials decided in 1945 to center the numbering system at 1st and Main, the intersection was at the center of Los Angeles' growth.

It is nearly three blocks south of the place where El Pueblo de Nuestra Senora la Reina de Los Angeles de Porciuncula was founded in 1o781.

Main, a north-south street that was originally named Calle Principal, is the oldest street in the city. It is the first official survey of the area, done in 1854, four years after California became the 31st states.

The city's first post office was on Main. The 27 story City Hall (now in the midst of a four-year remodeling), built in 1928 for \$9.7 million, is at the northwest corner of 1st and Main. The federal courthouse was built in the 1930's on Main, a block north of 1st.

It should be noted that not all addresses in Los Angeles County are part of the system originating at 1st and Main.

Cities such as Pasadena, Long Beach, Beverly Hills and Glendale have their own numbering systems.

For the record, Los Angeles' longest street is Sepulveda Boulevard, which runs from the Golden State Freeway in the San Fernando Valley to Willow Street near Long Beach. The shortest is Powers Place, south of downtown, which is all of 13 feet long.

The steepest is Fargo Street in Silver Lake, which is at a 32-degree angle.