

Chapter 9. Historic Preservation

“Until Longview gives every man, woman and child within its limits an opportunity to live happily, to improve mind, soul, and body, to have healthful surroundings, honest work to do, and a home in which to live, Longview has an unfinished task.” ~ Robert A Long, 1925 at the dedication of the Longview Library

“Longview is based on not only a blueprint of its origin but an existing condition that should serve as a valuable component of the community’s future. Recognizing the rich history of many structures, Longview should promote the preservation as well as adaptive use of that history. Quality of life and promotion of further development are proven by-products of historic preservation.” ~ 2006 Sustainable Design Assessment¹

Introduction

This comprehensive plan element coordinates and directs the protection of sites, objects, and buildings central to Longview’s founding. It also provides for coordinated protection of sites 50 years or older with architectural, cultural, historical, and/or community heritage. This chapter brings together basic concepts and components to preserve and restore our historic heritage, which is a key link to city values, promotion, livability, tourism, downtown revitalization, neighborhood pride, and economic vitality.

Historical Background

The Cowlitz tribe, members of the Chinook nation, occupied the area where Longview is now located prior to white explorers’ arrival. The tribe belonged to the coastal division of the Salishan linguistic family, yet it shared a lifestyle with the inland tribes. It consisted of two distinct groups, of which the Lower Cowlitz (*Kwalhiokwa*) lived in 30 villages along the Cowlitz River from modern-day Mossyrock southward toward the Columbia River.² The name Cowlitz means "seeker" in a spiritual sense, according to some Cowlitz living today. *Place Names of Washington* offers the alternate spelling "Ta-wa-l-litch," meaning “capturing the medicine spirit” in reference to the Cowlitz practice of sending their youths to the river’s prairies to seek their *tomanawas*, or spirit power.³

The Cowlitz Valley was among the records of Lewis and Clark, who camped at the mouth of what they called the “Cow-elis-kee” River. Lewis and Clark called the Cowlitz people the “Skillutes,” (or “Skilloots,” as some sources spell it) in their earliest historical notations of the Lower Cowlitz, recorded as transient visitors to Fort Clatsop in 1805-06; but the tribe’s earliest “home territory” encounters appear to have started with fur traders who began arriving in 1811.⁴

¹ *Integrating Smart Growth and LID into Longview’s Municipal Code and Comprehensive Plan: A Sustainable Design Assessment Team Report*. AIA Center for Communities by Design, May 2006

² Alchin, L.K., Native American Tribes at <http://www.warpaths2peacepipes.com/indian-tribes/cowlitz-tribe.htm>

³ Irwin, Judith. <http://www.cowlitz.org/index.php/38-history>. Irwin’s work, hosted by this official tribal website, offers a much more expansive history focused on the tribe, its culture, and its traditional products.

⁴ Ibid.

Exposure to the diseases that accompanied whites' entrance into the region (called at the time "Gray Fever," but thought to be influenza or smallpox) wiped out all but about 500 of the Cowlitz population during 1829-30. Longview was the location of the tribe's *memaloose illahee* (cemetery), where it practiced above-ground interment of its deceased on a rock feature that stood along the Columbia River shoreline that is, today, Longview's industrial waterfront. Named "Mount Coffin" in 1792 by Lieutenant William Robert Broughton of George Vancouver's expedition, the burial site reportedly contained canoes bearing the bodies of tribal members wrapped in blankets, along with personal effects such as jewelry, clothes, blankets, baskets, weapons, and tools. In 1841, the burial canoes were accidentally destroyed by Navy Lieutenant Charles Wilkes, a member of the U.S. Exploring Expedition who used Mount Coffin as a point from which to make astronomical observations, when his campfire set them ablaze.⁵ Numerous other explorers and settlers recorded observations about the site during the 1800s. Insensitive to the import of the tribal burial grounds, Longview's earlier generations dynamited and quarried the promontory over a 40-year period beginning around the time the Weyerhaeuser mill was built.⁶ The Longview Daily News and Cowlitz Historical Society erected a memorial marker at the site in 1955.

The Cowlitz Tribe of Indians was not officially recognized by the federal government until 2000.⁷ Five years later, tribal members conducted a sanctification ceremony near the former Mount Coffin site.⁸ Today, the tribe's administrative offices are located in downtown Longview.



Figure 9-1. Mount Coffin in 1900
(Source: Wikipedia)

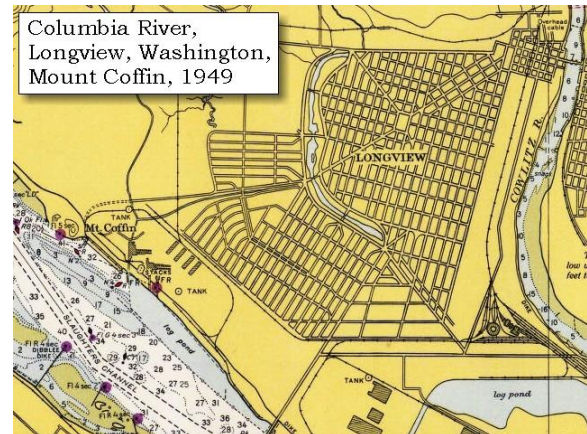


Figure 9-2. Mount Coffin Location
(Source: United States Geological Survey)

Following the explorers, missionaries and Hudson's Bay Company employees arrived. The first party of pioneers, led by Darby Huntington, paddled up the river in 1849, filed claims on land that would be bought by Long-Bell Lumber Company and established a trading post near the spot where Lewis and Clark had camped. Huntington named the settlement "Monticello" in honor of Thomas Jefferson's Virginia estate. It was the site of the 1852 Monticello Convention, where leading citizens of the portion of the Oregon Territory lying north of the Columbia met to petition Congress for separation, finally persuading Congress to create the Washington Territory in 1853. The Washington Territorial Legislature formed Cowlitz County on April 21, 1854⁹, and Monticello became the first county seat. It grew as a transportation stop between Vancouver and the Puget Sound area when the most efficient means of travel

⁵ http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file_id=7482

⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mount_Coffin. Sources vary as to when the promontory was destroyed; some say 1924, but the historic plaque states "1922-1954" which is more in keeping with a quarry operation.

⁷ An expansive tribal history is included in the federal report at <http://www.bia.gov/cs/groups/xofa/documents/text/idc-001352.pdf>.

⁸ "Cowlitz Sanctify Coffin Rock." *The Daily News*, October 17, 2005.

⁹ http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file_id=7482

was by boat. In 1867, most of Monticello was destroyed by a major flood, and by the 1880s almost nothing remained of the town site.¹⁰ The Monticello Convention is memorialized today by a sign visible from State Route 432¹¹ that is near a historic tree thought to date back to the time when the convention occurred.



Figure 9-3. Historic Monticello Sign

(Source: Waymarking.com)

Besides Monticello, Freeport is the other historic community located in present-day Longview. It was named by Nathaniel Stone, who had a Donation Land Claim (DLC) on the site, after his hometown of Freeport, Indiana. Freeport became Cowlitz County's second county seat in 1866, following a public vote the year before.

The development of Longview as we know it today began after eastern timber barons began buying up lands in the new territories. Longview is a planned city born out of the City Beautiful movement and R.A. Long's vision as its founder. As chairman of Long-Bell Lumber Company, Long envisioned this new city to be not just a factory town to house its workers, but a permanent and model city. He assembled a team of nationally recognized city planners directed by his close personal friend, J.C. Nichols. Nichols chose George Kessler, after whom Kessler Boulevard and Kessler Elementary School were named, to assist. Kessler was a city planner noted for his contributions to Kansas City, Mexico City, and the 1904 St. Louis Exposition. The respected landscape architecture and planning firm of Hare and Hare and architecture firm Hoit, Price and Barnes, both of Kansas City, were also hired. Together they drafted the actual plan and plats for the new city.

Naming the new city proved problematic. Longview was Long's final choice among names such as Long-Bell and Longport – all options featuring his surname – but there was already a Long View, Washington, so the Post Office Department rejected the planners' application. Long-Bell representatives convinced the three families of Long View, described as “a desolate flag stop on the Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railroad,” to change its name.¹²

¹⁰ https://www.sos.wa.gov/legacy/cities_detail.aspx?i=40

¹¹ http://www.columbiariverimages.com/Regions/Places/longview_kelso.html

¹² http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file_id=7482

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Figure 9-4. R.A. Long's Planned City of Longview (1926)

(Source: City of Longview)

The City of Longview was dedicated and the Monticello Hotel opened on July 14, 1923. The final Longview plans were implemented in a flurry of construction between 1922 and 1927. Longview's heritage is directly tied to the work of R.A. Long with his team of planners and engineers. Long's work remains in many of Longview's buildings, street patterns, boulevards, and parks; including the library, Monticello Hotel, Civic Center, Columbia Theatre, churches, downtown buildings, the (Old) West Side, St. Helens, Highlands neighborhoods, and public works infrastructure we have today. When J.C. Nichols spoke at Long's funeral in 1934, he called Longview's schools, hospitals, parks, playgrounds, and churches Long's gifts to his employees.¹³

Long, Kessler, and the Hare father-and-son team¹⁴ also tie our Longview to Lee's Summit, Missouri, where they worked on and, even after Washington's Longview began developing, Long resided at his large personal retreat called Longview Farm. About 325 acres of the farm and a handful of its historic buildings remain; in recent decades, it was replatted into a development known as New Longview.¹⁵ This connection back in time explains why, today, an internet search for "Longview" frequently turns up information about the Missouri property. The R.A. Long Historical Society¹⁶, operated out of Olathe, Kansas, maintains an online history of Long's life including Long-Bell Lumber and the building of Longview, Washington.

Identification of Historical Trends

The model city and its permanence are being challenged daily. Modernization, renovation, and energy conservation issues regarding original window removal are primary factors. Changes in the intensity of land use, short-plats, zoning, and traffic projects also contribute to this challenge. Only through sound

¹³ <http://shs.umsystem.edu/manuscripts/kansascity/nichols/JCN026.pdf>

¹⁴ Worley, William S. "A Legacy to a City: Kansas City Architects George Kessler, Henry Wright, and Sid and Herbert Hare." *Kansas History*, Autumn 1997, pp. 192-205; at https://www.kshs.org/publicat/history/1997autumn_worley.pdf.

¹⁵ "Longview Farm Introduction and Overview." *Archives of Kansas City* at <http://archkc.com/2011/11/longview-farm-introduction-and-overview/>.

¹⁶ <http://www.ralonghistoricalsociety.org/>

historic preservation principles, community recognition, and a respect for our City's heritage can we continue to maintain our historic identity and historic resources.

Over the years, there have been some significant losses of historical sites. The Longview train station, Kessler School, St. Helens School, downtown buildings, and an Old West Side residence have been demolished. However, the Monticello Hotel, Library, Post Office, several downtown buildings, the Shay Locomotive and the Columbia Theatre have been restored.

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Largely the same except for a few technical updates, Longview's Historic Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 16.12 LMC) was adopted in 1987 and provides a framework for historic preservation within the city. The ordinance created a historic preservation commission. It enables property owners to nominate a building, structure, site, object, or district for historic designation, which the commission may list if it meets specific criteria. It also requires that listed properties comply with certain regulations if they are renovated or become they can be demolished. As with any regulation, the code's efficacy should be periodically reevaluated, particularly if state or federal preservation practices or grant stipulations warrant it.

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The City of Longview's Certified Local Government (CLG) status was attained through the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation in 1988. Maintaining CLG status offers the City certain advantages, such as the ability to access certain funding. This has provided grants over the years for an historic video of Longview, plaques for historic buildings, and inventories. It also enables locally listed properties to qualify for a special tax valuation program for renovations tied to their historic status.

Assessment of Historic Preservation Needs

Assessment of Existing Data

Numerous resources and inventories have been compiled on Longview that form the basis of historic preservation data. Inventoried and designated historic places may be viewed on the Washington Information System for Architectural and Archeological Records (WISAARD) at <http://www.dahp.wa.gov/learn-and-research/find-a-historic-place>.

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There are a great many more inventoried properties than those that are listed; full inventories are available in the Community Development Department, and some are available at the Longview Public Library. They may also be viewed on the interactive WISAARD map.

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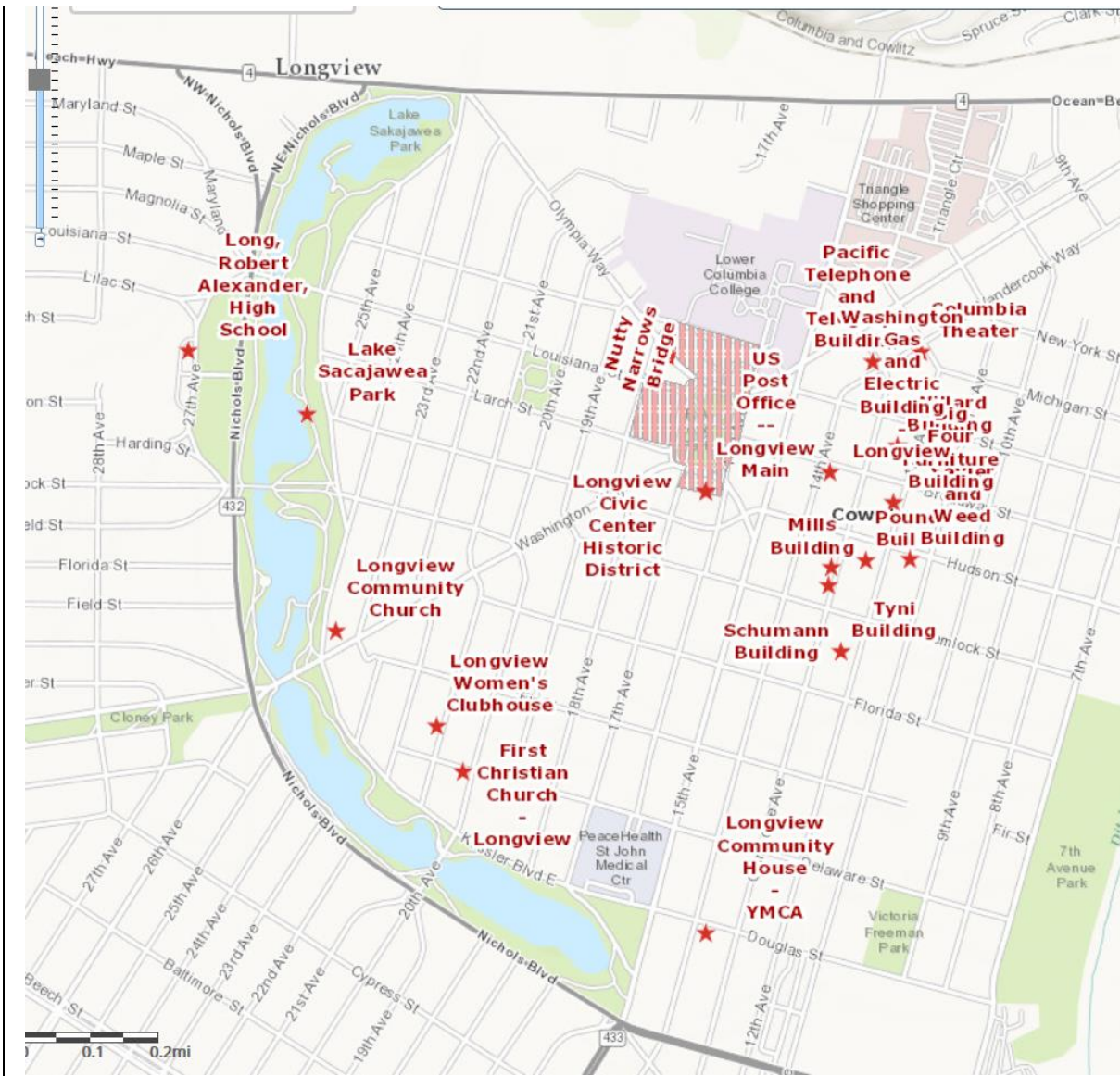


Figure 9-4. Designated Longview Historic Sites¹⁷.

(Source: WISAARD 6-29-16)

¹⁷ Not all sites are labeled but may be viewed by scoping in on the interactive WISAARD map at the link included.

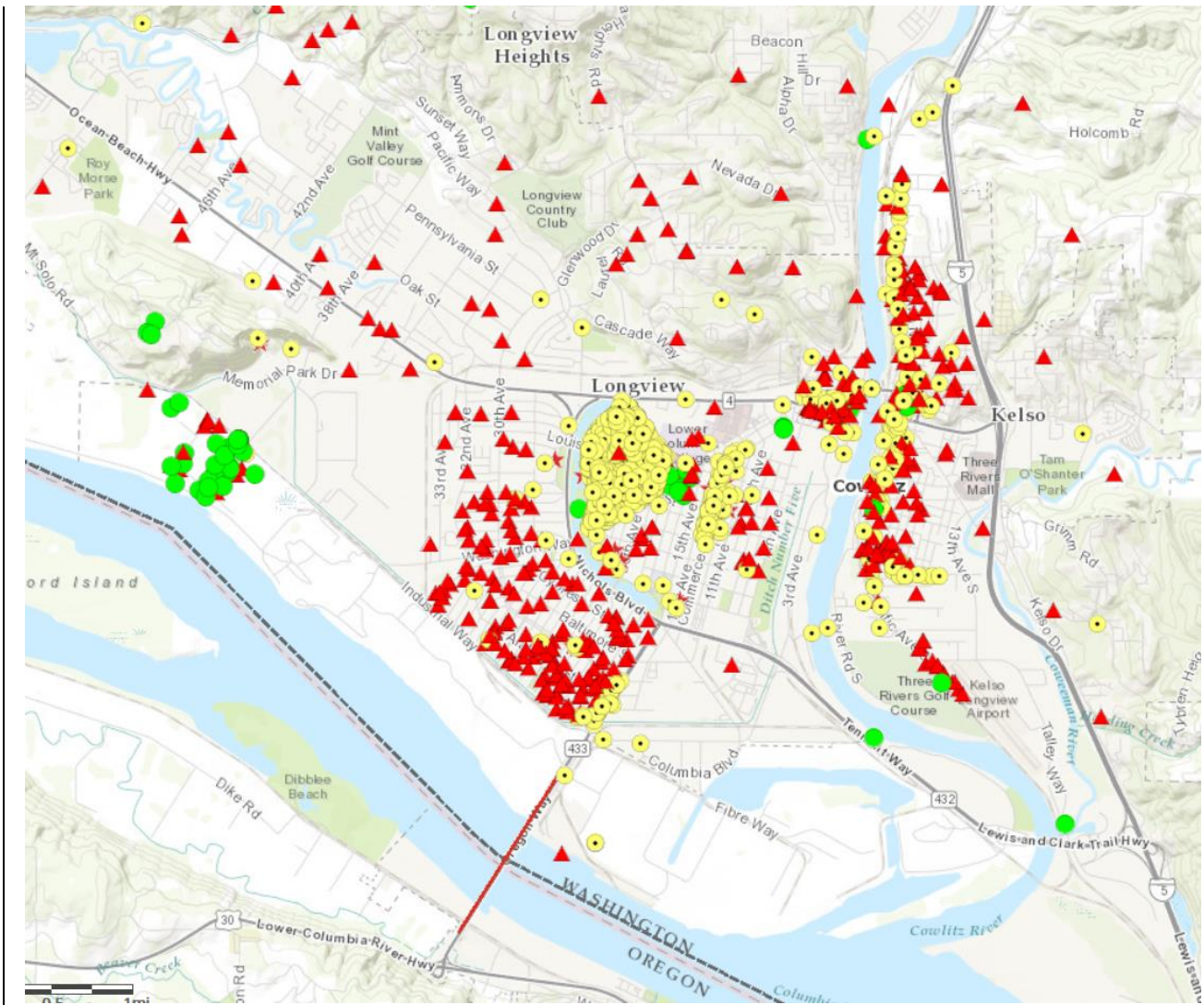


Figure 9-5. Inventoried Longview Historic Properties and Sites.

(Source: WISAARD 6-29-16)

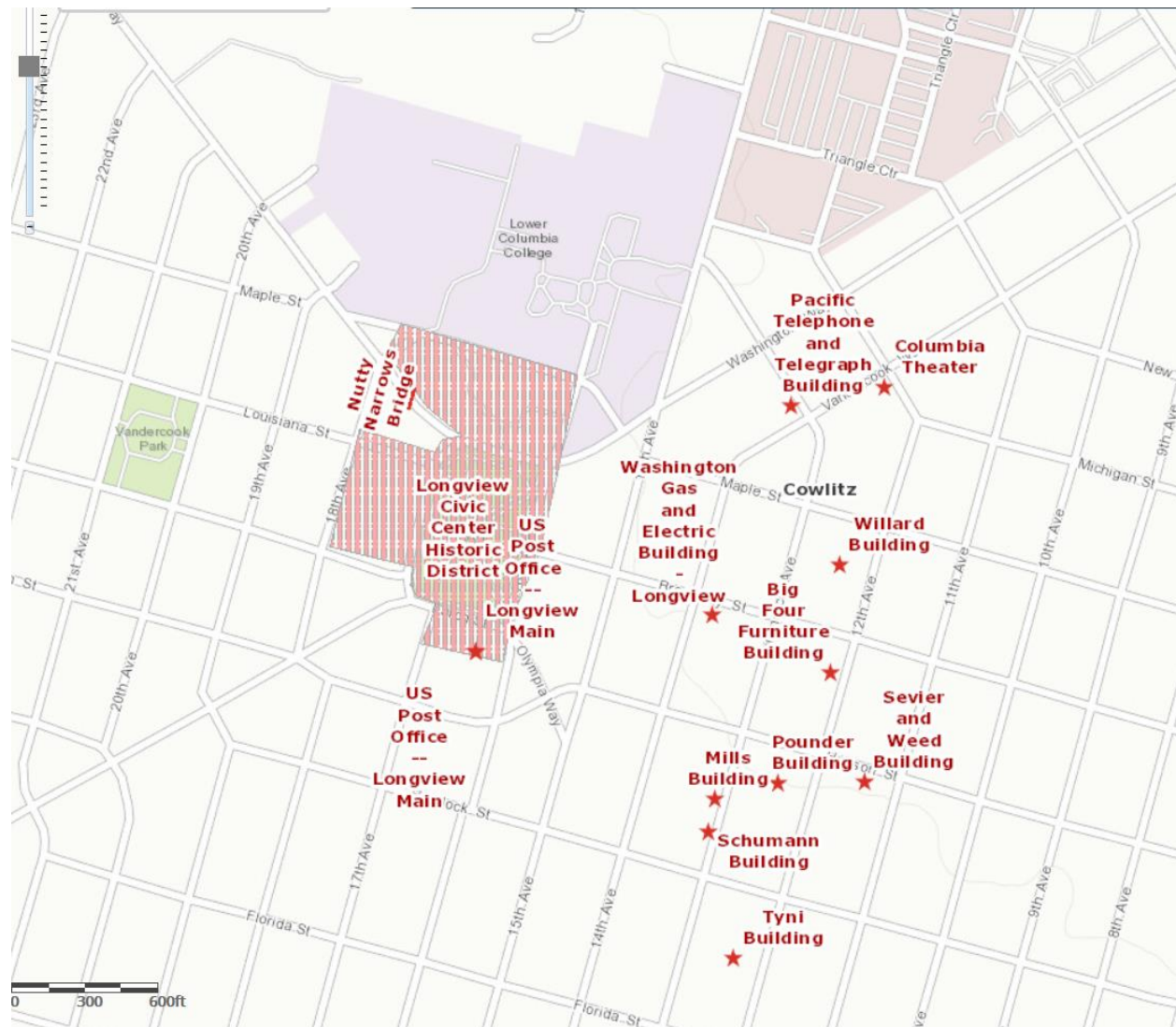


Figure 9-6. Designated Longview Historic Sites- downtown Longview and Civic Center.

(Source: WISAARD 6-29-16)

Inventories and Historic Registers include the following:

□ National Register of Historic Places (state listings and historic districts)

<http://www.nationalregisterofhistoricplaces.com/wa/cowlitz/state.html>

□ Early Commercial Area: Downtown Longview Survey and Inventory, 1988

□ Old West Side Inventory, Phase 1 1600 Blocks, 2004; Phase 2 1200 Blocks, 2005; Phase 3 1500

Blocks, 2008; Phase 4 2008; Phase 5 2009; Phase 6 2011, Phase 7 2012; Phase 8 2013-2014.[See map below].

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Figure 9-7. Designated Longview Historic Sites- downtown Longview and Civic Center.

(Source: Artifacts Inc. presentation “OWS Neighborhood Workshop #1” January 2016)

- ☐ R.A. Long Park Master Plan, February 25, 2010
- ☐ Lake Sacajawea Park Preservation Plan March, 2009
- ☐ Longview Register of Historic Places
- ☐ Washington State Register of Historic Places

Other Documents and Records include the following:

- ☐ Historic Preservation Ordinance, Longview Municipal Code (LMC) 16.12
- ☐ Building Records, Community Development Department
- ☐ Longview Room and Polk Directories, Longview Public Library
- ☐ Long-Bell Room (private), 1339 Commerce Avenue
- ☐ Draft Downtown Historic Preservation District Ordinance and Brochure
- ☐ Longview Central Commercial Redevelopment Plan, 1982
- ☐ Design Guidelines: Downtown Longview, Action Design Team, 1983
- ☐ Longview’s Downtown Plan, 2001
- ☐ A video titled “The Planned City – The History of Longview, Washington” (1989) is available for checkout at the Longview Public Library or Longview Community Development Department
- ☐ Discover Downtown Longview, Self-guided Walking Tour (Revised 2011)
- ☐ Explore historic Longview, Walking Tour of Longview’s Civic Center (Revised April 2011).

The City of Longview completed a digital archiving project in 2010 which included scanning all existing paper files of Longview Historic Register properties into a digital archive format (Laserfiche). This effort creates a backup of the information and provides for ease of access for staff reference and property owner reviews. Each file contains the original property owners signed nomination forms, the historic information about the property and the specific features to be preserved. Going forward, newly created Historic Register files must be added to this digital archive to maintain the digital resource and protect the information from chance destruction or loss.

Status of Local Preservation

The Longview Historic Preservation Commission is the body charged with identifying, evaluating, and protecting Longview's historic resources through placement on the Longview Register of Historic Places. These properties are subject to obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Commission, which assists owners in the decisions concerning restoration of their buildings, sites and objects; or their demolition. The reviews are intended to preserve and/or minimize negative impacts to the historic aspects that made specific properties or sites significant and eligible for local designation.

Special Valuation Tax Program

The Cowlitz County Assessor administers the Special Valuation Tax Program for Historic Properties in Longview. This program allows a credit to historic renovation and rehabilitation projects for substantial improvements to buildings listed on the National Register or Longview Register of Historic Places for a period of ten years. The work must exceed 25 percent of the building's value (excluding land value) to become eligible for application. The Longview Historic Preservation Commission must authorize the initial plans through issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness. "Before" and "after" pictures are taken to verify the work by the owner. The owner submits all receipts and photos of eligible work for verification by the Commission, which then approves or modifies the amount of tax valuation requested by the owner. Staff coordinates with the County Assessor's Office.

Downtown Longview

Downtown Longview continues to be a centerpiece for preservation in Longview. The historic character of the buildings provide for an opportunity to create economic synergy through restoration and sensitive remodeling. The primary focus of historic restoration is to maintain and restore buildings to their original architectural character. This would create a special sense of place for downtown, unlike shopping malls or big box retail developments. Regional and national tourism could also be captured when the area officially becomes a Historic District. An official Historic District would stimulate and encourage all downtown building owners to not only unify their vision of downtown but to implement it. District status would, by its nature, create a coordinated effort to restore buildings highlighting their original character, which is the basis for National Main Street programs. This has been already proven through the successful building renovation and historic signage guidelines for Longview's current historic downtown buildings.

Without an official Historic District, haphazard renovation and improvements will continue on the majority of buildings. This pattern will undermine the work to accomplish a unified approach and will forego the vision and economic opportunity that other cities and Historic Districts capture.

The City of Longview has constructed streetscape improvements on Commerce Avenue to better the appearance, safety, accessibility and re-create small town charm in downtown. Improvements include

new lighting, sidewalks, benches, landscaping, irrigation, public art and outdoor gathering places to make downtown more attractive to visitors, shoppers, bicyclists and pedestrians. The first phase of the construction was completed in 2014 and improved three blocks of Commerce from Washington Way to Broadway. Construction of Phase 2 began in September, 2015, extending the streetscape improvements to Hudson Street. A third and final phase of construction is planned in Spring, 2017.

The Old West Side Neighborhood

The Longview Historic Preservation Program has been dedicated for over 14 years to architecturally and historically documenting the properties within the Old West Side (OWS) Neighborhood, one of the older areas in the city. The West Side, now referred to as the "Old West Side", is one of seven original neighborhoods planned by the Longview Company, a subsidiary of the Long-Bell Lumber Company. The West Side neighborhood was the elite neighborhood of Longview, designed for executives and managers of Long-Bell and other professionals who came to live in the new City of Longview in 1923. This neighborhood consists of approximately 1000 properties, many built prior to 1940.

With the conclusion of this inventory project in 2014, the City held 3 public workshops for education and outreach efforts to engage neighborhood residents in the idea of preserving and honoring the neighborhood through formation of a historic district. Between 60 and 80 residents attend each of the three workshops held in early 2016 and had questions answered about the possibility of forming a Local or National Historic District in their neighborhood. At the conclusion of the workshop series the City Council was engaged in a workshop and reiterated support for having individual property owners list their homes to the Local Historic Register. The City Council directed that if sufficient interest in forming a historic district is shown by residents in the future, the idea could be examined. Future steps include continued engagement with residents of the OWS neighborhood on the topics of individual listings and historic district formation through neighborhood meetings, mailings, a dedicated website, historic preservation events and promotion of a neighborhood walking tour.

Issues Affecting Local Historic Properties in the Future

- The Longview Historic Preservation program has several challenges. The staffing limitations do not enable a preservation program to comply with ordinance requirements to survey the entire City boundaries and protect resources. Funding also limits the amount of marketing and projects that can be accomplished.
- Community perception plays a paramount role in the value of Historic Preservation within our Community. Although City promotions show the historic aspects of Longview directly tied to livability, owners of buildings must value the underlying aspects of the building's architectural and historical character. Many people believe Longview is not old enough to have historic value. New residents and property owners may know enough about local history to value how Longview was designed for livability and the historical significance of its founding. A whole new era of building styles are now eligible for preservation, those built between 1935 and 1965, adding to the complexity of informing property owners about what is eligible for preservation and why these buildings are important examples of those periods in our community.

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- Adding a property to the local Longview Historic Register honors that place and preserves it for future generations to appreciate. With that designation is a requirement to have all changes, except routine maintenance, documented on a Certificate of Appropriateness and approved by the Historic Preservation Commission. The Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation and Treatment of Cultural Landscapes guide these design review decisions. Preservation program marketing describing the value of Longview historic preservation and its benefits should be targeted annually to the owners of registered historic properties, downtown, and the general public. Old buildings require continued maintenance. Lack of maintenance creates a great opportunity to renovate and rehabilitate buildings, especially downtown. However, the City's Unfit Dwelling Code (which applies to all buildings) does not require owners to maintain buildings unless there is a hazardous condition. As the buildings age, there is a greater chance for deterioration of eligible historic properties.
- Civic Center zoning adjacent to the Civic Center National Register Historic District between 16th Avenue and Olympia Way was changed to General Commercial during a rezone request. A change of ownership and use of the general commercial property may detrimentally affect the character of the National Historic Civic Center District in the future.

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Historic Preservation Goals, Objectives, and Policies

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Goal HP-A Achieve state and national recognition of Longview's unique place in the history of American city planning.

Objective HP-A.1 By the end of 2020, facilitate the nomination of a historic district for the commercial downtown area along Commerce Avenue. Or support the creation of a Business Improvement District, or joining the Washington State Main Street Association or implementation of façade design standards for downtown buildings.

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Objective HP-A.2 By the end of 2020, conduct a reconnaissance inventory of all original Long-Bell plats in residential, commercial and industrial areas for future historic registration.

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Policy HP-A.2.1 Continue development of the register of historic buildings for the early commercial area of downtown and other historic properties within the city through the Historic Preservation Commission.

Policy HP-A.2.2 Add to the historical structures inventory, the inventory forms prepared for structures included in the thematic group nomination. The registered locally defined district should be reflected in the inventory as well.

Policy HP-A.2.3 Encourage and assist owners of historic properties within the Longview planning area to apply for individual listing on the local, State, and national registers of historic places.

Goal HP-B Preserve and enhance the notable buildings, parks, and other sites established by or associated with the Long-Bell Lumber Company and notable local examples of architectural styles of more recent times.

Objective HP-B.1.1 By 2020 develop an inventory of City properties and assets eligible for preservation and prepare nominations to list onto the local Longview Historic Register.

Objective HP-B.1.2 By 2020 develop and adopt a Preservation Plan for the City of Longview to support the City's Certified Local Government (CLG) status and facilitate the development of the City's historic preservation program and priorities. The Plan should provide staff and the Historic Preservation Commission with a strategy to meet preservation goals, enhance outreach efforts, and benefit historic preservation and quality of place efforts in Longview.

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Objective HP-B.3 By the end of 2018, develop a program to implement and maintain an inventory of historic sites and potential historic sites electronically on a Geographic Information System database and make information available to the public through maps online.

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Policy HP-B.3.1 Promote preservation of local historic properties and materials as desirable for public awareness concerning the City's beginnings and its uniqueness in City planning history, aesthetic appreciation of architecture and landscape architecture, maintenance of community identity, and furtherance of tourism and economic activity.

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| **Policy HP-B.3.2** Encourage historic renovation of buildings and sites 50 years or older through public awareness, neighborhood and business partnerships, the involvement of residents, brochures, reference materials and internet sites, and incorporating historic preservation planning in City departments.

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| **Policy HP-B.3.3** Encourage owners of both registered and unregistered historic properties to take advantage of rehabilitation tax incentives and any available grants.

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Policy HP-B.1.4 Enforcement measures should be periodically evaluated and the search for mechanisms and resources to enhance enforcement needs to be an ongoing process.