This city is located in the southwest corner of Washington State in Cowlitz County, and is approximately only 2.3 miles from the Oregon-Washington borderline. [Figure 1]. It is nestled at the confluence of two rivers, the Cowlitz River to the east, and the Columbia to the southwest. It's longitude and Latitude are: Latitude: 46.14 N, Longitude: 122.96 W.¹ The city is approximately 2.2 miles from the Columbia River and is about 1.5 miles from the Cowlitz river, as measured from the city center. [Figure 2]. The nearest city is Kelso. The distance from Longview to the state's capitol, Olympia, is 57 miles (as the Crow Flies, taken from http://www.geobytes.com/CityDistanceTool.htm). Near the center of the city, bordering the original gridded downtown area, is Lake Sacajawea. [Figure 3]. Lake Sacajawea is fed by pumped water from the Cowlitz River. It is believed that the lake is a remnant from an old river path. Since the establishment of the city in 1924, the lake and it's surrounding area has been made into an up-kept park, except during a brief period, from 1932 to 1952, during which the park had fallen into disrepair, due to the Great Depression and the outbreak of World War 2. In the following years the lake was treated to kill the carp that lived in it, and trout were introduced. Today, the lake's fish population includes stocked trout, large mouth bass, Bluegill, and some Yellow perch. (© City of Longview, Washington, 2003)

¹ (From http://www.city-data.com/city/Longview-Washington.html)
**Pre-history**

Historically, the area around the confluence of the Columbia and Cowlitz Rivers, where Longview now is, was home to a Salish-speaking tribe of American Indians, called the Cowlitz. There were actually two bands of Cowlitz, the Lower and the Upper. The Lower lived in the aforementioned area, while the Upper lived farther east. It is estimated that area that was traditionally Cowlitz, may have taken up as many as 3,750 square miles. The Lower Cowlitz typically lived along the Cowlitz river, in 30 villages. From north to west, they ranged from about a mile north of the Columbia River, all the way to what is now the town of Mossyrock. In the winter the Cowlitz lived during streams in cedar longhouses, but during the spring they would move to the prairies in search of Camus bulbs and wapato. Fish was another major part of their diet. Even though the tribe was traditionally more “tight-knit” than other Salish-speaking tribes, they did engage in trade with neighboring tribes. To aid in trading, they had “snub-nosed canoes” that could even travel through rapids. They also used land routes. The tribe has been officially recognized and has tribal headquarters in Longview. It is estimated that most of the enrolled members still live within a two-hour drive of the Cowlitz River. (© 1995-2008 Online Highways)

Another tribe known to live in the area was the band of Chinook called the Skilloot. They were also a Salish tribe. Their territory existed on both sides of the Columbia River, and near the confluence of the Columbia and the Cowlitz. (Gaston Ch. 3.1 XXX) The Chinook were not nomadic and they too lived in plank houses, and their main sustenance came from rivers and the sea, in fish and whale meat. They were extensive traders and the famous “Chinook Jargon” descended from their language. (Jennifer Lagergren 9/8/2008) Another Chinook group that may have lived in the area are the Kathlamit. [Figure 4]
Discovery and Founding

The first Europeans to visit Cowlitz County were the men aboard the H.M.S. *Chatham* in October of 1792; they were part of the Capt. George Vancouver Expedition, however it is not clear that they made it as far up the Columbia as the Mouth of the Cowlitz River. The next explorers to visit the area would be Lewis and Clark, as leaders of the U.S. Army’s Corps of Discovery. They came in November of 1805, and mapped the mouth of the Cowlitz river. In 1849, settlers began to come and file homestead claims; they were lead by the pioneers Harry and Rebecca Jane Huntington. The settlement was named “Monticello”, and it was located about two miles south of what is now Longview’s civic center. In 1852, many residents from all over what was at that time Oregon Territory [Figure 5], came to draft a petition to Congress for separation and statehood, which was met favorably. There is a now a memorial, not far from the Longview Civic Center in honor of that “Monticello Convention.” (© City of Longview, Washington, 2003) In 1867, the town of Monticello was destroyed by a flood, very little of the town site remained by the 1880s. (Cowlitz County Historical Museum). Not much happened in this frequently flooded area until after WW1.

The Planned City

Longview was the largest privately-funded, planned city for its time. It was “born out of the City Beautiful Movement”(Chapter 9. Historic Preservation Element), the movement that had originally started as a way to try and abate some of the squalor found in cities around America in the late 1800s. Longview was in many ways the brain child of “timber baron” R. A. Long. [Figure 6]. Long was the principle stockholder and general manager of Long-Bell Lumber Company. After the company’s lumber holdings had become depleted, they began looking for a new place to set up shop. From a variety of locations, they chose the swampy farmland area at the confluence of the Columbia and Cowlitz rivers, to build their milling operation. In 1921, this location was chosen for it’s “rail access in nearby Kelso, deep water access on the Columbia River, and close ... source of timber.” They bought 14,000 acres of land, more than enough for their logging operations, and acquired logging rights from the Weyerhaeuser Timber Company, to log in Cowlitz and Lewis counties. (Daryl C. McClary, July 02, 2008).

In the beginning, the Long-Bell company had not planned to build a city, but rather just two large sawmills in the area. Wesley Vandercook, Long-Bell's Chief Engineer, was sent to survey the new purchase in 1921. After surveying the land and creating a detailed contour map, it was decided that the small near-by town of Kelso would not be able to handle the large influx of so many workers (around 14,00). (© City of Longview, Washington, 2003) After the initial survey, it was also determined that a large dike would be needed to protect the building site from periodic flooding, due to the area's high water table. A 15-
foot dike was constructed, financed by bonds that were issued and sold by Long-Bell. Vandercook made several recommendations to Long-Bell concerning the need for worker accommodations, and Long decided that rather than allow a “squalid” mill town to develop, that they would create a modern metropolis. (McClary, July 02, 2008)

In 1922, nationally renowned landscape architect George B. Kessler, real-estate developer Jesse C. Nichols, and the Hare & Hare architectural firm were hired by Long, and under the direction of Nichols, began to plan the city. It was decided that the city's layout would be “classic European, with boulevards with esplanades and wide streets”. The city would be separated into zones which would dictate what could be built there. The original plan for the city was for 50,000 residents, which has yet to be reached today. In order to create revenue for Long-Bell, they created a real-estate subsidiary called Longview Development Company, who was run by Benjamin Letcher Lambuth of Seattle, and whose primary focus was to sell pieces of property to incoming business and workers. After the city was platted, they began preparations for paving the streets and for building the first permanent building, the Hotel Monticello. The city was now well on its way. The town was officially dedicated on July 12, 1923, and the Hotel Monticello opened for business soon after, on July 23, 1923. Finally, on February 14, 1924, Longview was incorporated as a third-class city.

Construction was began on “the largest sawmill in the world” [Figure 7] in 1923 on “2,000 acres of Columbia River waterfront.” The sawmill was finished by July of 1924, and began employing some 3000 workers. (McClary, July 02, 2008).

Figure 7

The Purchase of a Name

Long had wanted to name the planned community after his Missouri horse ranch, but when he applied for a post office, he was denied because it turned out that there already was a Long View, Washington, that was a railroad flag stop that serviced three families. Long-Bell agreed to build them a covered platform to protect the tossed mail sacks, in exchange for them relinquishing the name of Long View. The cost of the platform was $25. In 1923, Long view, Cowlitz County, got its post office, and its name became official. (McClary, July 02, 2008).

Growing Longview

The Port of Longview

The Port of Longview, located 66 miles from the ocean on the Columbia River, had once been
located on the shallower Cowlitz, near the town of Kelso. At that time it was named the Port of Kelso, after the then biggest town in the area. The port serviced shallow-draft steamboats. In 1923, with the establishment of Longview, Long-Bell pushed to have the port moved to the deeper Columbia River, next to the new Long-Bell sawmill. Kelso objected to this, but eventually Longview won out. In 1925, it was the vote moved the port to the end of Oregon way near the sawmill, and construction began. During this time, Long decided to pave the Oregon Way from the downtown of Longview, all the way to the port. When the port was first being built, its boundary only covered part of Longview, but a vote later increased its coverage to include all of the new Longview community. On April 15, 1926, the port was dedicated and moved 72,000 tons of freight. By 1929, the community of Longview had outgrown Kelso, and in December the voters voted to change the name to The Port of Longview.

Besides the dock, another mode of shipping was introduced into Longview, to further benefit Long-Bell Lumber Company. When permission was denied the Long-Bell company to use the Northern Pacific tracks that ran between Tacoma and Kalama to ship lumber, they proceeded to build their own tracks, and called the new line the Longview, Portland and Northern Railroad (LP&N). [Figure 8]. Besides lumber shipping, the new tracks were a way to try and grow Longview by creating passenger access to the city. Long's private holding company, R. A. Long Properties, built a beautiful railway station in 1925 and leased to the LP & N line. The line was since sol and is now abandoned.

Figure 8 LP & N R.R.  
http://home.comcast.net/~olyferris/np/map25b.jpg

Conclusion

The city of Longview began a planned community to support lumber mills of the Long-Bell Lumber Company. The site was chosen by Long himself. Many surveys were made of the area to see what would need to be done to make the area viable for the lumber mills. A town was the only solution to support the large workforce that would be needed to operate the mills. The location was strategic in that it had two rivers to support shipping of lumber and old growth tree were bountiful. The Columbia River especially, supplied deep water transport capable of servicing ocean-going vessels. The community was completely privately funded and at the time, was the largest one to have been built. The two mills have since been sold and dismantled. Longview has since shifted from primarily lumber-based industry to manufacturing. ( McClary, July 02, 2008).

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