

Our Roots

Our city is unique. At the time of its conception, Longview was the only entirely planned city of its magnitude to have been conceived of and built entirely with private funds; it was completely planned down to the very districts, every last sidewalk and the street name before a single load of concrete was poured or brick was laid.



A downtown Longview mural honors the founders of our city.

The city was dedicated in 1923 and incorporated in 1924.

When the city was new, 25 or more of its founders were Lions Club members in their home cities; they provided the cultural, scholastic, sporting and civic leadership necessary for development. They formed a Lions Club in the new City of Longview even before it had been completed. Its membership was made up of operations managers, merchants, doctors, tax consultants, lawyers, a newspaper publisher, fire chief, pastor, engineers, printers and real estate developers who shaped the direction of the new city.



Many of the planners and builders of the infrastructure and first buildings constructed in Longview were Lions. The club that became Pioneer Lions was formed in the first year of the city's existence.

Chartered in November 1923, the Longview Lions Club was instrumental in building the new city and its surroundings. Members donated time, talent and money and became true pioneers of this planned city. Working with RA Long and the new city's officials, Lions helped build many miles of new road running between the city and the Pacific Ocean. They sponsored a baseball team; promoted the city's professional performing arts theater, helped develop the construction of a community center that became the YMCA, still in operation. In 1968, out of respect for those who led the way, the Longview Lions become known as the Longview Pioneer Lions Club.

Pioneer Lions built two Girl Scout camps and were active in building a Camp Fire Girls camp, the Toutle River Boys Ranch, and the old Spirit Lake YMCA camp at Mt. Saint Helens.