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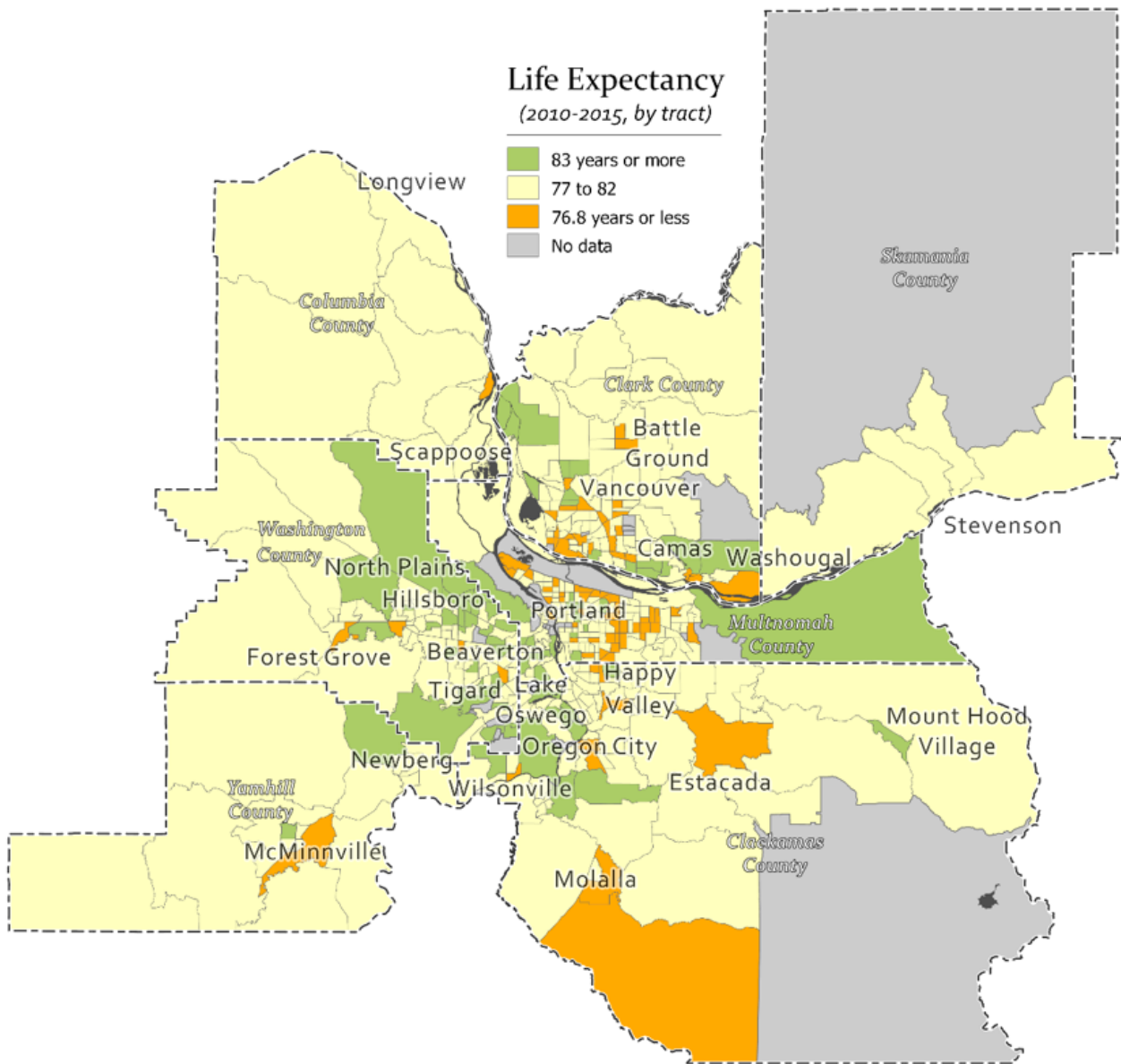
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Institute of Portland Metropolitan Studies, "Life Expectancy" (2019). *Metroscape*. 142.
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Life Expectancy



Life expectancy is an estimate of the average age that a person can expect to live. Within the United States, life expectancy has increased since 1900 by roughly thirty years due to public health interventions (e.g., sanitation, vaccinations) and medical advancements.(1) However, life expectancy can vary significantly even within small geographies due to differences in our social and physical environments. Where we live, work, and play is equally, if not more, important to our health and well-being than our

individual choices and access to health care.(2)

Using Center for Disease Control data, we can visualize the spatial distribution of life expectancy estimates. For reference, the life expectancy of an average adult within the United States born in 2016 is 78.6 years.(3) In the Portland Metropolitan region, 34 percent of the population lives in tracts with an average life expectancy below the United States average. These tracts are clustered largely in east Portland and Gresham. Future research should consider exploring other factors related to life expectancy such as race, income, and education.(4)

1. David Cutler, Angus Deaton and Adriana Lleras-Muney, "The Determinants of Mortality," *Journal of Economic Perspective*, 20 no. 3, (2006), 97–120.

2. Theodor R. R. Marmor, Morris L. Barer, and Robert G. Evans, *Why Are Some People Healthy and Others Not? The Determinants of Health of Populations (Social Institutions and Social Change)*, (New Jersey: Aldine Transaction, 1994).

3. Jiaquin Xu et al., "Final data for 2016." *National Vital Statistics Reports*, 67 no. 5, (Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics, 2018).

4. Robert A. Hummer and Elaine M Hernandez, "The Effect of Educational Attainment on Adult Mortality in the United States," *Population Bulletin* 68 no. 1 (2013), 1–16; US National Center for Health Statistics, Report No.: 2012-12322012, (Hyattsville, MD, May 2012).