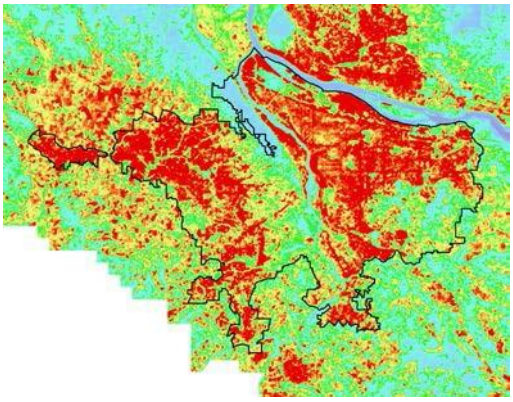
December 2024

Cooling Corridors Study

This project offers the opportunity to develop a data informed approach on ways to increase regional resilience to extreme heat in future work, including an updated 2040 Vision.

Introduction

The Portland-Vancouver region, like many places in the world, is experiencing the impact of global climate change in the form of more frequent and longer periods of extreme heat at higher temperatures, with higher impacts to people of color, older adults, and low-income and unhoused people. These effects on people are compounded by damage to the natural environment and critical infrastructure, such as buckling roads and transit rail lines, and heat-related power outages.



Metro heat mapping analysis

Project description

The project team will engage and partner with subject matter experts, community-based organizations, and other jurisdictions to learn how other places across the country and the world are addressing more frequent, intense and prolonged extreme heat events. The project team will identify areas of heat risk, paired with potential intervention strategies. The strategies will be identified through best practices research, a review of federal guidance and governmental tools and programs, and engagement with expert panels and community-based organizations. This work will identify the benefits of a regional approach and how it could guide future policies and investment decisions.

Project outcomes

Research findings and recommendations will be summarized in a final report that includes:

- **Research on existing efforts and best practices** in the region and among peer regions, including cost-effectiveness and benefits of different approaches.
- **Regional geographic information system (GIS) analysis** (e.g., heat island mapping, topography, hydrology, meteorology, land cover, tree canopy) to visualize heat risk areas, existing cooling corridors and potential opportunities to connect existing cooling corridors.
- **Equity analysis** to understand which geographic areas and communities in the region are disproportionately affected by urban heat.
- **Implementation recommendations** on opportunities to help make the region cooler and provide relief during extreme heat events.
- **A network of subject matter experts, community-based organizations, and jurisdictions** to engage in heat resiliency projects and strategies for funding.

Cooling Corridors study timeline