Problem Statement

The City of Corvallis is experiencing transportation issues as a result of a higher volume of traffic traveling into and out of the city. While Oregon State University enrollment has peaked, the transportation problems facing the City of Corvallis continue. The problems in Corvallis have regional origins and implications, and a regional solution will be required to address them. Transportation policy-making organizations up and down the valley will need to collaborate in order to create a regional transportation policy that produces optimal results. This policy brief defines the transportation region, list transportation policy actors, and discusses possibilities for collaboration.

Background

Corvallis’ central location in the Willamette Valley enables individuals to commute by public transport from as far east as Sweet Home and as far west as Newport. However, for the purposes of discussing a governable Greater Corvallis Transportation Shed in this brief, this region will be condensed to include communities that are in close geographic proximity to Corvallis, have high levels of economic interconnectivity with Corvallis, and contain high concentrations of regional transit users. This region would ideally include the cities of Corvallis, Albany, Lebanon, Philomath, and Adair Village, with connections to North Albany and South Corvallis. Certain communities may be able provide more resources to assist with transit systems, so collaboration patterns will need to consider funding patterns.

The federal government makes funding decisions that affect transportation policy at every level. The U.S. Department of Transportation’s decisions affect state and local policy. The federal government also allocates funding to Amtrak to provide rail service. At the state level, the Oregon state legislature makes funding decisions that affect policy at the state and local levels. State agencies make statewide transportation, land use, and greenhouse gas policy. Transportation regulations, statewide planning, and funding for transit affect Amtrak, counties, and communities. County and community laws and policies provide context for Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). In our case, the Corvallis Area
Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO), Albany Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO), and advisory boards influence policy at the local level. Private enterprise also influences policy and planning decisions from the statewide level down to the local level.

**Analysis**

The current transportation system has noticeable gaps in connectivity and convenience. For example, Google Maps predicts a drive from Philomath to Adair Village will take 23 minutes. Without a car, however, one is restricted by time and availability of different transportation modes. It is possible to take the Philomath Connection or the Coast to Valley Express into Corvallis and take the 99 Express up to Adair Village. However, the Philomath Connection only runs six times a day and the Coast-to-Valley Express only runs twice a day. This trip can take anywhere from 1 hour, 51 minutes to 2 hours, 30 minutes. While some collaboration does exist here, as Benton County runs the Coast to Valley Express and the 99 Express while the City of Corvallis maintains the transit hub in Corvallis, increased collaboration could potentially reduce commuting time. The development of a regional transportation body that oversees collaboration between regional transportation actors would expedite collaboration and deliver optimal results.

**Policy Recommendations**

1) Develop Regional Transportation Committee to provide a venue for collaboration.

2) Develop Regional Transportation Plan to integrate existing and developing plans.

3) Increase regional transportation information through survey research, data collection, and joint analysis of current policies on transportation connectivity.

4) Develop potential partnerships/increase communication between MPOs, counties, communities, and employment hubs.