
2009 TRANSPORTATION POLICY STATEMENT

1	VML calls upon the Governor and the	45	
2	General Assembly to make transportation a	46	
3	primary focus of the General Assembly.	47	
4	Virginia must address critical infrastructure	48	
5	needs, and it must do so now. Failure to act	49	
6	will unquestionably put future general fund	50	
7	and other state and local revenue growth at	51	
8	risk, and will harm Virginia's economic	52	
9	future. The following principles should lead	53	
10	these efforts:	54	
11		55	
12	A. Statewide focus. Transportation	56	
13	should be viewed as a statewide	57	
14	issue, not a regional, urban or rural	58	
15	issue. Whether it is through general	59	
16	fund revenue allocation or direct	60	
17	economic activity, every area of the	61	
18	state is hampered by a failure to meet	62	
19	critical infrastructure challenges.	63	
20		64	
21	B. Infrastructure modernization. Our	65	
22	transportation efforts must include a	66	
23	comprehensive statewide plan for	67	
24	transportation infrastructure that	68	
25	responds to increased fuel process by	69	
26	providing transportation options, like	70	
27	rail and transit, which minimize the	71	
28	use of petroleum. Such a plan must	72	
29	ensure that all Virginians – rural,	73	
30	suburban and urban – are able to	74	
31	contribute to and benefit from	75	
32	statewide economic opportunities. A	76	
33	failure to respond to and plan for a	77	
34	world with higher fuel process puts	78	
35	Virginia's long-term economic	79	
36	viability at risk.	80	
37		81	
38	C. Job creation. With a struggling	82	
39	national and state economy, our	83	
40	transportation funding and planning	84	RESOURCES
41	efforts should emphasize immediate	85	VML urges Virginia's leaders to develop
42	opportunities to create jobs for	86	enhanced and/or new funding strategies for
43	Virginia's families.	87	all modes of transportation including non-
44		88	traditional solutions (for example, live-near-

1 where-you-work programs, telecommuting
2 and telework options from regional centers
3 and homes, flextime schedules, car-pooling
4 and car-sharing programs).

6 REVENUES

7 VML urges the state's leaders to increase
8 state revenues in maintenance and capital
9 funding by:

- 11 • Adjusting funding sources, such as the
12 motor fuels tax, to keep pace with
13 inflation and fuel efficiency;
- 14 • Imposing appropriate increases in
15 state transportation-related taxes and
16 fees, including the motor fuels tax at
17 the regional level, the road use tax,
18 the motor vehicles sales and use tax,
19 motor vehicle license fees, and motor
20 vehicle rental tax;
- 21 • Providing or extending as a local
22 option transportation impact fee
23 authority to all localities;
- 24 • Authorizing practical options for using
25 long-term financing for major
26 transportation projects;
- 27 • Providing full state funding for the
28 revenue sharing program as provided
29 for in §33.1-23.05;
- 30 • Authorizing at the request of a locality,
31 region or regions specific funding
32 solutions intended to address local or
33 regional project needs. (Moreover, towns
34 should be treated as equal partners in
35 regional initiatives);
- 36 • Seeking equity among various road users
37 by ensuring that trucks pay their share of
38 road costs. VML also advocates for
39 increased local influence when the state
40 considers mitigating negative impacts
41 resulting from excessive truck traffic.
- 42 • Additionally, VML encourages greater
43 rail transport of freight; and
- 44 • Without the diversion of state resources,
45 develop specific initiatives that are
46 fiscally sound and well documented to

47 serve local, regional and statewide
48 needs.

50 TRANSPORTATION TRUST FUNDS

51 The federal and state transportation trust
52 funds must be dedicated to improving
53 transportation and should not be diverted to
54 non-transportation related purposes.

56 PASS-THROUGH OF FEDERAL FUNDS

58 Localities are often successful in receiving
59 federal funds such as special appropriations
60 and TEA 21 Enhancement grants. These
61 funds are passed through the State to
62 localities and the transfer of these funds is
63 often delayed. The State needs to streamline
64 the transfer of these funds and allow
65 localities to move forward with these
66 projects. The state needs to anticipate
67 increases in federal funding and prepare to
68 raise and dedicate matching funds.

70 SAFETY

71 Photo-red Technology

72 VML has supported, and continues to
73 support, the availability of
74 photo-camera traffic enforcement for all
75 localities, and commends the General
76 Assembly for authorizing it as a means to
77 improve public safety.

79 Pedestrian

80 VML recommends that the Virginia Code be
81 amended to clarify the respective rights and
82 duties of pedestrians and vehicle drivers.
83 Drivers should be required to stop, not just
84 yield, for pedestrians in all marked and
85 unmarked crosswalks. In addition, police
86 need the ability to issue simpler citations
87 than currently allowed under Virginia law to
88 more effectively enforce the laws against jay
89 walking.

91 Young Drivers

92 VML urges Virginia's lawmakers and
93 leadership to study a Graduated Drivers

1 License program with intermediate testing
2 and review after 1 year and to study a more
3 extensive and challenging driver’s education
4 program to better prepare young drivers.

5
6 **Primary Seatbelt Law**

7 VML strongly endorses adoption of a
8 Primary Seat Belt Law in the
9 Commonwealth in an effort to save lives,
10 reduce injuries on our roads, and be eligible
11 to receive \$16.5 million in grant money for
12 law enforcement.

13
14 **PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION**

15 VML urges VDOT and FHWA to streamline
16 their processes by improving the delivery of
17 all projects on time and within budget.

18
19 **STREET STANDARDS**

20 Municipalities in the urban system and the
21 Counties of Henrico and Arlington should
22 receive greater flexibility in regard to the
23 Virginia Department of Transportation
24 (VDOT) roadway acceptance criteria. VML
25 recommends the establishment of a formal
26 process that allows VDOT’s Director of
27 Local Assistance to grant waivers to the
28 street acceptance criteria in regard to both
29 pavement width and right of way width
30 based on justification provided for by the
31 local governing body. (Currently there is
32 not such a waiver for roadways constructed
33 prior to 1994.)

34
35 **PRESERVATION OF RIGHTS-OF-
36 WAY**

37 Road projects take many years from the
38 planning stage to construction. Often
39 localities need to reserve miles of right-of-
40 way years in advance of any funding
41 availability for these projects, or risk
42 development in the path of these road
43 projects. Localities need tools to enable
44 them to reserve rights-of-way for longer
45 periods of time. The official map legislation
46 allows reservation but localities are often
47 unable to provide for the upfront funding

48 needed to purchase these rights-of-way in
49 the allotted timeframe.

50
51 **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

52 Smaller communities and regions require
53 additional and enhanced transportation
54 planning and technical assistance from
55 VDOT. VDOT, therefore, has a continuing
56 obligation to assist these areas, including
57 establishing equitable equipment rental rates
58 and administrative costs.

59
60 **TRAFFIC CALMING**

61 VML requests enhanced recognition by
62 VDOT of traffic calming projects as a
63 means of reducing the negative effects of
64 motor vehicle use, altering driver behavior
65 and improving conditions for users of public
66 streets.

67 **ITS TECHNOLOGY**

68 VML urges the adaptation of “smart”
69 technologies for use in all forms and modes
70 of transportation. Local governments must
71 be included in the discussion of the use and
72 location of such technologies throughout the
73 Commonwealth.

74
75 **METROPOLITAN PLANNING
76 ORGANIZATIONS (MPOS)**

77 VML opposes broadening MPO voting
78 membership to include private sector
79 representatives. VML believes that
80 representation by public officials makes
81 MPOs accountable to citizens.

82
83 **WELFARE-TO-WORK INITIATIVES**

84 VML urges the coordination of the federal
85 and state welfare-to-work program funding
86 that includes transportation solutions to
87 assist segments of the population that are
88 unable to drive, such as the elderly and
89 disabled, and those without personal
90 vehicles.

91

1 **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**
2 VML urges feasible actions to preserve and
3 expand public transportation services
4 through additional dedicated funding.
5
6 Public transportation includes all multiple
7 occupancy vehicle services designed to
8 transport passengers on local and regional
9 routes. These services include: private and
10 public buses; trolleybuses; vanpools; jitneys;
11 demand response services; heavy and light
12 rail; commuter rail; automated guideway
13 transit; inclined plane; cable cars; monorails;
14 tramways and ferryboats.
15
16 VML urges 1) increased federal and state
17 funding for public transportation, and 2)
18 policies that allow for maximum use of such
19 funding. A larger, dedicated source of
20 federal and state funding for transit --
21 including funds for existing operating and
22 capital needs, including start-ups -- remains
23 a critical priority, particularly as local
24 participation (local match) increases.
25
26 **RAIL TRANSPORTATION**
27 VML recommends the expansion of
28 interstate and intra-state passenger rail
29 service corridors (separate from transit
30 services such as commuter rail initiatives) in
31 Virginia, such as construction and
32 completion of the Heartland Corridor
33 project, to help to stimulate economic
34 development and tourism.
35
36 VML recommends greater rail transport of
37 freight along major corridors. State leaders
38 and railroad executives must work
39 cooperatively with local leaders to improve
40 and enhance railroad maintenance, safety,
41 traffic and conflicts (for example at at-grade
42 crossings).
43
44 VML recommends that the federal and state
45 governments to fund new passenger rail
46 services without negatively impacting vital
47 commuter congestion funding (including

48 funding for local and regional transit
49 services).
50
51 State and railroad executives also must work
52 cooperatively to provide greater access for
53 passenger service (for commuters and
54 tourists). The state should fully fund the
55 operating costs for intercity passenger rail.
56
57 Virginia's leaders need to work with
58 surrounding states to foster greater interstate
59 passenger rail service and to promote the
60 development of the Northeast high-speed
61 rail corridor, the New York to Atlanta
62 corridor and the TransDominion Express.
63
64 VML recommends that the General
65 Assembly to accelerate action to get a
66 "starter train" running between Bristol and
67 Richmond to be operated by a governing
68 body with full-funding from the federal and
69 state governments.
70
71 **AIR TRANSPORTATION**
72 VML wants the state and federal
73 governments to actively work to develop
74 and sustain comprehensive air service
75 throughout the Commonwealth, the mid-
76 Atlantic region as well as the entire country.
77 Additionally, VML wants the state and
78 federal governments to invest in and deploy
79 new technologies intended to improve air
80 service and safety.
81
82 The federal government is urged to
83 appropriate federal funds for airport
84 infrastructure improvements at authorized
85 levels and to develop a national airport
86 access strategy intended to exploit local
87 economic development opportunities.
88 Additionally, the state is urged to
89 compliment federal infrastructure
90 investments as well as expand state support
91 for capital improvements.
92
93

1 **PORTS AND WATER**
2 **TRANSPORTATION**
3 VML requests the protection and promotion
4 of an effective port and water transportation
5 system by:
6 a. developing an alternative water
7 transportation mechanisms to
8 alleviate congestion, such as ferries,
9 that will move people, goods and
10 vehicles as an alternative to road
11 travel;
12 b. enhancing rail service to move goods
13 out of ports;
14 c. deepening major water ports and
15 navigable rivers; and
16 d. relieving congestion in the ports by
17 enhancing rail and highway access
18 out of ports.
19 Additionally, the state should expedite the
20 deepening of channels. VML requests the
21 state to 1) work closely with local
22 governments regarding spoils disposal from
23 channel deepening, and 2) develop policies
24 on the disposal/reuse of shipping containers.
25
26 The revenues derived from Virginia's public
27 ports are dedicated exclusively to the state
28 and should be shared with localities in the
29 form of reimbursement to fully fund the
30 impacts of tax-exempt port properties.
31 VML urges a significant study of the state's
32 water transportation system, including an
33 examination of maintenance issues.
34 Additionally, the replacement of
35 drawbridges with span bridges should be
36 expedited.
37
38 VML requests a study of a permanent water
39 transportation link between the mainland,
40 the Eastern Shore and the islands of
41 Virginia.
42
43 **ADDITIONAL FEDERAL ISSUES**
44 Compliance with federal regulations is a
45 major cost factor for all transportation
46 systems. VML requests the repeal of

47 burdensome regulations, requirements, and
48 policies that discourage innovation.
49
50 **REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION**
51 **AUTHORITIES**
52 VML supports the creation of regional
53 transportation authorities by the state to
54 promote coordination of transportation and
55 related facilities.