
2012 TRANSPORTATION POLICY STATEMENT

<p>1 Critical investments are needed to maintain</p> <p>2 and improve Virginia’s transportation</p> <p>3 network; the structural imbalance between</p> <p>4 critical needs and available resources</p> <p>5 continues to worsen. On the revenue side</p> <p>6 non-general funds, more than half of which</p> <p>7 are dependent upon fuel purchases and auto</p> <p>8 sales, have significantly declined due to</p> <p>9 increased fuel efficiency, reduced sales</p> <p>10 volume, and inflation. Meanwhile demand</p> <p>11 for transportation improvements, both in</p> <p>12 road capacity and transit, increases as</p> <p>13 reflected in population growth and vehicle</p> <p>14 miles traveled. Essentially new road</p> <p>15 construction, and in many instances</p> <p>16 maintenance of existing infrastructure, has</p> <p>17 been left to local government but without a</p> <p>18 revenue source to fund this requirement. The</p> <p>19 Commonwealth’s inability to address this</p> <p>20 imbalance has led to a deteriorating</p> <p>21 transportation infrastructure that is</p> <p>22 exemplified by potholes, bridge and tunnel</p> <p>23 closures, congestion and an overall decline</p> <p>24 in quality of life that threatens our economic</p> <p>25 prosperity. VML urges the Governor and</p> <p>26 General Assembly to fix the imbalance. The</p> <p>27 following principles should lead these</p> <p>28 efforts:</p> <p>29</p> <p>30 A. <u>Sustainable Funding.</u> The</p> <p>31 commonwealth should adopt</p> <p>32 transportation funding plan that is</p> <p>33 comprehensive and addresses</p> <p>34 investment across the state. Critical</p> <p>35 to this plan is a new dedicated and</p> <p>36 ongoing source of non-general fund</p> <p>37 revenue to support \$65 billion</p> <p>38 dollars in transportation needs as</p> <p>39 identified in VTrans2035, Virginia’s</p> <p>40 statewide long-range multimodal</p> <p>41 transportation plan.</p> <p>42</p> <p>43 B. <u>Fiscal responsibility.</u> Any new or</p> <p>44 enhanced funding must be fiscally</p>	<p>45</p> <p>46</p> <p>47</p> <p>48</p> <p>49</p> <p>50</p> <p>51</p> <p>52</p> <p>53</p> <p>54</p> <p>55</p> <p>56</p> <p>57</p> <p>58</p> <p>59</p> <p>60</p> <p>61</p> <p>62</p> <p>63</p> <p>64</p> <p>65</p> <p>66</p> <p>67</p> <p>68</p> <p>69</p> <p>70</p> <p>71</p> <p>72</p> <p>73</p> <p>74</p> <p>75</p> <p>76</p> <p>77</p> <p>78</p> <p>79</p> <p>80</p> <p>81</p> <p>82</p> <p>83</p> <p>84</p> <p>85</p> <p>86</p> <p>87</p> <p>88</p>	<p>responsible by meeting the state’s</p> <p>needs to reduce congestion, enhance</p> <p>access, foster safety and/or achieve</p> <p>other critically identified service</p> <p>elements, while being sensitive to</p> <p>current economic conditions.</p> <p>Phasing in revenues and spending so</p> <p>they increase as the economy grows</p> <p>should be part of any plan.</p> <p>Additionally, any federal and state</p> <p>transportation trust funds must be</p> <p>dedicated to improving</p> <p>transportation and should not be</p> <p>diverted to non-transportation related</p> <p>purposes. Lastly, the state must</p> <p>provide local governments the</p> <p>financial tools to meet transportation</p> <p>needs where the state relinquishes</p> <p><u>abdicates</u> its fiscal responsibility.</p> <p>C. <u>Statewide focus.</u> Transportation</p> <p>should be viewed as a statewide</p> <p>issue, not a regional, urban or rural</p> <p>issue. Every area of the state is</p> <p>hampered economically by a failure</p> <p>to meet critical infrastructure</p> <p>challenges.</p> <p>D. <u>Shared responsibility.</u> Transportation</p> <p>planning and authority should</p> <p>include local government as a</p> <p>partner in identifying needs and</p> <p>committing resources, but the state</p> <p>should not shift its funding</p> <p>responsibilities to localities.</p> <p>E. <u>Infrastructure modernization.</u> Our</p> <p>transportation efforts must include a</p> <p>comprehensive statewide plan for</p> <p>transportation infrastructure that</p> <p>responds to increased fuel prices by</p> <p>providing transportation options, like</p> <p>rail and transit, which minimize the</p> <p>use of petroleum. Such a plan must</p>
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1 ensure that all Virginians – rural,
2 suburban and urban – are able to
3 contribute to and benefit from
4 statewide economic opportunities.

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6 F. Congestion mitigation. Virginia’s
7 leaders must move to alleviate
8 commuter congestion as a matter of
9 economic development and to
10 enhance citizens quality of life.
11 Corridor-wide solutions and
12 incentives that promote alternative
13 modes including highways, transit
14 and non-traditional solutions need to
15 be developed.

16 **REVENUES**

17 VML urges the General Assembly to
18 develop specific initiatives that are fiscally
19 sound and well documented to serve local,
20 regional and statewide needs by:
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- 22
- 23 • Adjusting existing funding sources and
24 ~~imposing~~ effecting appropriate increases
25 in state transportation-related taxes and
26 fees to keep pace with fuel efficiency;
- 27 • Increasing dedicated funding for public
28 transportation in order to meet transit
29 operating expenses and make Virginia
30 competitive for federal transit funds;
- 31 • Providing or extending as a local option
32 transportation impact fee authority to all
33 localities;
- 34 • Authorizing practical options for using
35 long-term financing for major
36 transportation projects;
- 37 • Providing full state funding for the
38 revenue sharing program as provided for
39 in §33.1-23.05;
- 40 • Authorizing at the request of a locality,
41 region or regions specific funding
42 solutions intended to address local or
43 regional project needs. Moreover, towns
44 should be treated as partners in regional
45 initiatives;

- 46 • Seeking equity among various road users
47 by ensuring that trucks pay their share of
48 road costs. VML also advocates for
49 increased local influence when the state
50 considers mitigating negative impacts
51 resulting from excessive truck traffic.

52 53 54 **PASS-THROUGH OF FEDERAL 55 FUNDS**

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

67 **SAFETY**

68 **Photo-red Technology**

69 VML has supported, and continues to
70 support, expanding the availability of
71 photo-camera traffic enforcement for all
72 localities.
73

74 **Pedestrian**

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

86 **PRESERVATION OF RIGHTS-OF- 87 WAY**

88 Road projects take many years from the
89 planning stage to construction. Localities
90 need additional authority to reserve miles of
91 right-of-way years in advance of any
92

1 funding availability for these projects, or
2 risk development in the path of these road
3 projects.

4
5 **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**
6 Smaller communities and regions require
7 additional and enhanced transportation
8 planning and technical assistance from
9 VDOT. VDOT, therefore, has a continuing
10 obligation to assist these areas, including
11 establishing equitable equipment rental rates
12 and administrative costs.

13
14 **TRAFFIC CALMING**
15 VML supports continued improvements to
16 VDOT's traffic calming program to improve
17 safety for users of public streets.

18
19 **METROPOLITAN PLANNING**
20 **ORGANIZATIONS (MPOs)**
21 VML opposes broadening MPO voting
22 membership to include private sector
23 representatives. VML believes that
24 representation by public officials makes
25 MPOs accountable to citizens.

26
27 **PUBLIC TRANSIT**
28 Public transit includes all available multiple
29 occupancy vehicle services and technologies
30 designed to transport passengers on local
31 and regional routes.

32
33 VML urges 1) increased federal and state
34 funding for public transit, and 2) policies
35 that allow for maximum use of such
36 funding. A larger, dedicated source of
37 federal and state funding for transit --
38 including funds for existing operating and
39 capital needs, including start-ups -- remains
40 a critical priority.

41
42 **RAIL TRANSPORTATION**
43 VML recommends the expansion of
44 interstate and intra-state passenger and
45 freight rail service corridors, with no
46 requirement for local match *to provide*
47 *transportation alternatives, and to help to*

48 stimulate economic development and
49 tourism.

50
51 State government and railroad executives
52 must work cooperatively with local officials
53 to improve and enhance railroad
54 maintenance, safety, traffic and conflicts
55 (for example at at-grade crossings).

56
57 The Commonwealth needs to:
58 • Work with railroad executives to provide
59 greater access for passenger service (for
60 commuters and tourists).
61 • Fund the operating costs for intercity
62 passenger rail along with the federal
63 government.
64 • Work with surrounding states to foster
65 greater interstate passenger rail service
66 and to promote the development of the
67 Northeast high-speed rail corridor, the
68 New York to Atlanta corridor and the
69 TransDominion Express.

70
71 While the state has plans for specific high-
72 speed rail projects, it does not have funds to
73 support the operation of a system of high-
74 speed trains. The federal government is
75 unlikely to provide billions of dollars to
76 construct a system that has no source of
77 operating funds. VML urges the state to
78 develop a source of funds for high-speed rail
79 operations.

80
81 **AIR TRANSPORTATION**
82 VML wants the state and federal
83 governments to actively work to develop
84 and sustain comprehensive air service
85 throughout the Commonwealth, connecting
86 it to the mid-Atlantic region as well as the
87 entire country. Additionally, VML wants
88 the state and federal government to invest in
89 and deploy new technologies intended to
90 improve air service and safety.

91
92 The federal government is urged to
93 appropriate federal funds for airport
94 infrastructure improvements at authorized

1 levels and to develop a national airport
2 access strategy intended to stimulate local
3 economic development opportunities.
4 Additionally, the state is urged to
5 complement federal infrastructure
6 investments as well as expand state support
7 for capital improvements.

8

9 **PORTS AND WATER**

10 **TRANSPORTATION**

11 VML requests the protection and promotion
12 of an effective port and water transportation
13 system by:

- 14 a. developing alternative water
15 transportation mechanisms to
16 alleviate congestion, such as ferries,
17 that will move people, goods and
18 vehicles as an alternative to road
19 travel;
- 20 b. enhancing rail service to move goods
21 in and out of ports;
- 22 c. deepening major water ports and
23 navigable rivers; and
- 24 d. relieving congestion in the ports by
25 enhancing rail and highway access
26 out of ports.

27

28 Concerning the deepening of channels,
29 VML requests the state to 1) work closely
30 with local governments regarding spoils
31 disposal from channel deepening, and 2)
32 develop policies on the disposal/reuse of
33 shipping containers.

34

35 The revenues derived from Virginia's public
36 ports are dedicated exclusively to the state.
37 Some portion should be shared with
38 localities to account for street and road
39 maintenance and police and fire protection
40 services directly related to the impacts of
41 tax-exempt port properties.

42 VML urges a significant study of the state's
43 water transportation system, including the
44 expanded use of barge traffic for freight
45 transportation.

46

47 **REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION**

48 **AUTHORITIES**

49 VML supports by-right authority for the
50 creation of regional transportation
51 authorities to promote coordination of
52 transportation and related facilities.

53

54 **LIVABILITY**

55 Streets do much more than move cars, they
56 often define community character and serve
57 as important public spaces. Small towns and
58 larger cities alike are using complete streets
59 policies to reclaim public space and solve
60 traffic problems at the same time. Many
61 complete street solutions are low-cost--some
62 are as simple as changing paint-striping on
63 pavement. Complete streets policies, in
64 general, do not add cost but shift and
65 enhance the use of existing funds. VML
66 supports securing mainstream transportation
67 funds for non-motorized improvements and
68 policy changes that result in construction of
69 complete streets and improved bicycle and
70 pedestrian infrastructure within the existing
71 right of way.

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