

# VIRGINIA

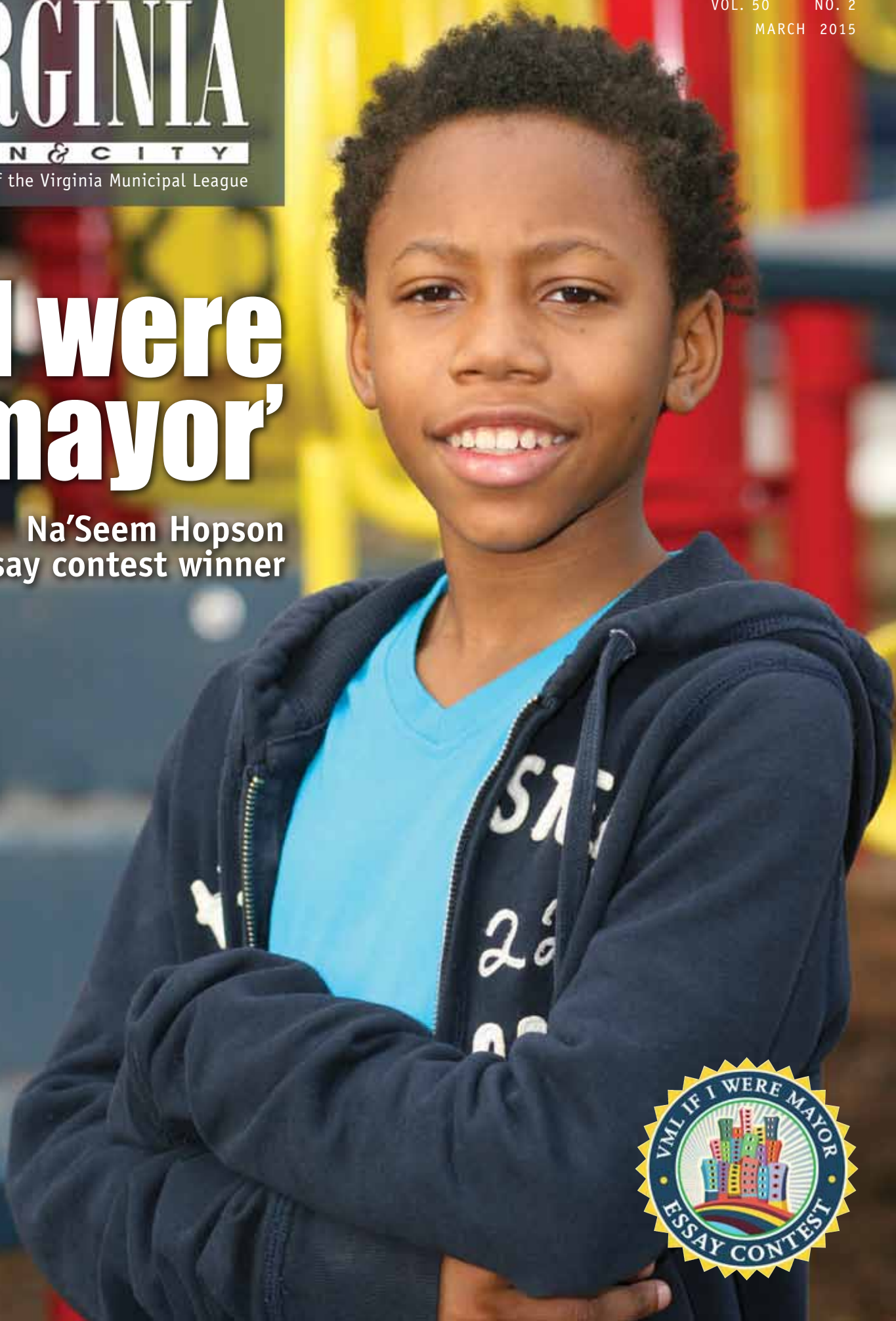
TOWN & CITY

The magazine of the Virginia Municipal League

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# 'If I were mayor'

Na'Seem Hopson  
Essay contest winner







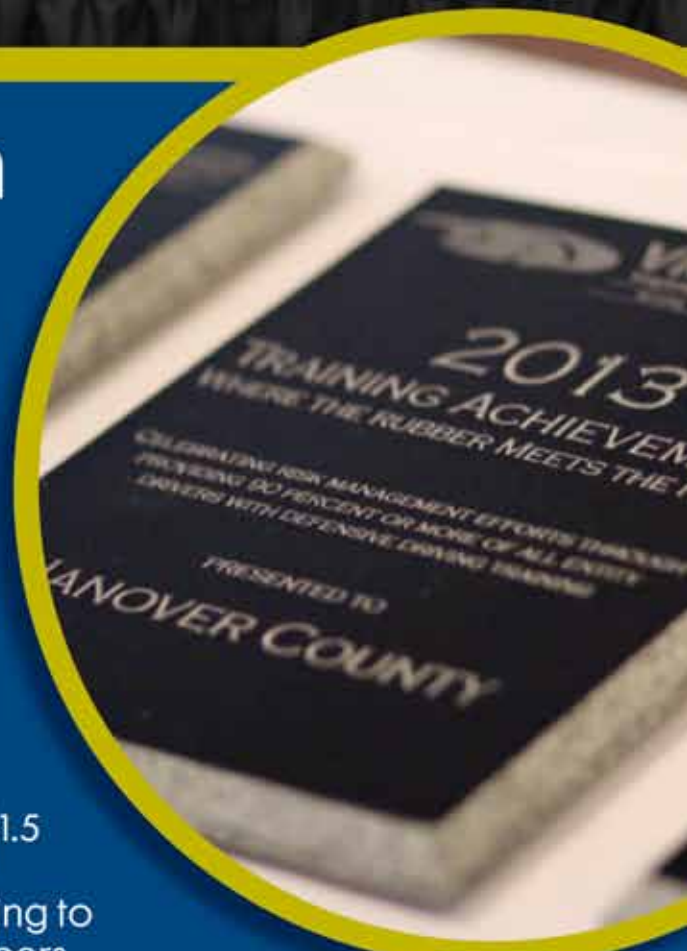
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### About the cover

Na'Seem Hopson, an 11-year-old seventh grader from Hopewell, was the first statewide winner in the Virginia Municipal League's "If I Were Mayor" contest.



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### 324 Places: Build support to help with crumbling infrastructure fixes

Much of the infrastructure in Virginia – roads, bridges, dams, drinking water, parks, schools and wastewater – is in serious disrepair. For leaders in towns, cities and counties across the state, this news comes as no surprise. Awareness of the size and scope of the aging infrastructure issue isn't the problem. For most, finding ways to fund the necessary improvements and getting citizen support are the real challenges.

By John W. Martin and Matt Thornhill Page 6

### If they were mayor, these kids would change a thing or two ...

Reading nearly a thousand essays submitted by seventh graders from across Virginia turned out to be a learning experience for two VML staff members. After the entries were judged, staffers Mary Jo Fields and David Parsons culled through all 999 submittals in hopes of spotting some words of wisdom from the children that local elected officials might find illuminating. They were not disappointed.

By Mary Jo Fields and David Parsons Page 19

### Governor presents 8 awards for winning entries in VML essay contest

The Virginia Municipal League received nearly 1,000 entries from seventh graders across the state in its first ever "If I Were Mayor" essay contest. Statewide winner Na'Seem Hopson and seven other regional winners were recognized by Gov. Terry McAuliffe for their achievements during the VML Day at the Capitol program on Jan. 28 in Richmond. Read all eight winning essays. Page 10



### Call for entries: 2015 VML Achievement Awards

VML is soliciting entries for its 2015 Achievement Awards program. The deadline for submittals is Friday, May 29. Winners will be featured in an upcoming issue of *Virginia Town & City*. The awards will be presented at the 2015 VML Annual Conference in Richmond on Tuesday evening, Oct. 6. Page 23

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# Two brothers: One big appreciation of Virginia

**I**N THIS MONTH'S *Virginia Town & City* we are celebrating our youth and promoting civics education. I have a passion for teaching children about government and their role as citizens and leaders. The "If I Were Mayor" essay contest is the first VML initiative in this area. We believe that our association has a role to play and we plan to do more civics education programs in the future.

While I believe that schools and associations like ours are important partners in teaching civics, I also firmly believe that parents have an obligation in this area. It is critical that we incorporate history and civics in learning activities. I've told you in previous columns that we are huge history geeks in our family. We've made sure that our two children have a strong understanding of history and their role as citizens of this great country.

So, in honor of this month's issue and student writers, I asked my sons to complete this column. I asked them to think about our move to Virginia a little over a year ago and to write about their favorite things.

## Christopher Winn 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Short Pump Elementary School

THESE ARE THE FEW REASONS that I love living in Virginia. First, Mount Vernon was my favorite President's house to visit. I liked it because I got to see the chair where George Washington actually sat and the fan that he invented to keep himself cool. I also like the Mount Vernon Inn. It was a great restaurant.

I liked the Air and Space Museum (Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center) because I got to see the awesome Space Shuttle Discovery. And, I got to see very cool airplanes, including the Enola Gay. We also got to see an IMAX movie that showed the Discovery in space.

I enjoyed our day at Fort Monroe because we got to see a beach. And, there was an amazing seafood buffet at the Chamberlin Hotel. The fort was cool because there was a moat like a castle and a museum with the history of the fort. Then, when we went outside, there was The Lincoln Gun, which is a cannon that was named for President Lincoln in 1862.

Our trip to Newport News was awesome because we met up with Dr. Pat (Woodbury) and the museum director (Mariners' Museum) for lunch. Also, I got to see my favorite Civil War ironclad, the Monitor. We saw the real gun turret that is being cleaned. And, we got to go outside and walk on a model of the Monitor.



Well-traveled brothers Christopher (l) and Quinton Winn.

One of my favorite things is baseball. Right after we moved to Virginia, we found Tuckahoe Little League. My team, the Red Sox, went all the way to the local World Series and we won! I loved my coach and my teammates.

## Quinton Winn 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Short Pump Elementary School

HI, I'M QUINTON WINN. These are some of my favorite things from my first year in Virginia. To start, my favorite thing was spending time on the beach at Virginia Beach. It was the first time I saw the real ocean. There were big waves that knocked me over! Also, I flew kites on the beach.

Monticello was a great place to see. It was the home of Thomas Jefferson, the third president of the United States. His house is really cool and his birthday is the same day as my mom's. We ate at Michie Tavern – talk about good food!

We also went to the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts to see the Hollywood costume Exhibit. I saw Harry Potter's clothes, Spiderman's and Batman's costumes. It was very cool.

Recently my family attended a Richmond Spiders basketball game on scouting night. I got to high-five the Spiders players when they came out to the court for the game. Unfortunately, they lost.

It's great for my family to be living so close to Washington, D.C. We have been to Ford's Theater to learn about my favorite president, Abraham Lincoln. I had my first calamari at Old Ebbitt (Grill). It was delicious! And we toured the White House with all the Christmas decorations up.

The End.



## VML names Chafin communications specialist


VML HAS NAMED **Nancy Chafin** to lead its communications program. Chafin has worked in public relations and communications in Richmond for nearly 25 years. She has served several regional non-profits. Most recently, she worked as corporate communications manager for Media General, one of the nation's largest local broadcasting companies. She has also taught public relations at Virginia Commonwealth University.

- Chafin -

"I'm excited to return to the non-profit arena, and specifically to VML, where our work is all about providing local governments with the resources they need as they work to improve the quality of life for their citizens," Chafin said.

A graduate of Randolph-Macon College in Ashland, Chafin lives with her husband Byron and daughter Charlotte in Richmond's Westover Hills neighborhood.

"Nancy brings years of experience and a great enthusiasm to VML," said VML Executive Director Kim Winn. "I look forward to working with her to continue our standard of excellence while enhancing our overall communications strategy for the future."

Chafin succeeds **David Parsons**, the league's director of communications since 1994, who retired. 

## Leesburg promotes Notar to town attorney

Leesburg Town Council promoted **Barbara Notar** to town attorney. She had



- Notar -

been serving since July as interim town attorney following the selection of former Town Attorney **Jeanette A. Irby** as a Circuit Court judge. Notar served as deputy town attorney since 2008.

Prior to her service with the county, Notar served as president of the board of Loudoun Interfaith Relief, Inc., Loudoun County's largest food pantry, and was also the founder and president of Save the Trail, Inc., a citizen-based group formed to preserve the W&OD Trail.

## Portsmouth's Rowe retiring as manager

Portsmouth City Manager **John L. Rowe Jr.** will retire June 30.

A native of Portsmouth, the 71-year-old Rowe took over as city manager in



- Rowe -

Forge, Emporia and Windsor.

## Winchester fills development post

Winchester hired **Kimberly Murray**, the Town of Strasburg's economic



- Murray -

development and planning manager for nearly two years, as economic redevelopment director effective March 23.

In Strasburg, Murray oversaw economic development and handled planning duties such as permitting and zoning. "I'm going to be able to focus (in Winchester) strictly on economic redevelopment and be able to pursue that 100 percent of the time," Murray told the *Northern Virginia*

*Daily* newspaper.

Murray worked in local and regional government jobs in Vermont before her time in Strasburg.

## LaFollette to lead Leesburg's DPW&CP

**Renée LaFollette** was selected to lead the newly-combined Department



- LaFollette -

of Public Works and Capital Projects in Leesburg effective July 1. She currently serves as the town's director of capital projects, a position she has held since June 2012.

LaFollette came to work for the town in 2000 as a senior engineer in the Department of Engineering and Public Works' Office of Capital Projects Management. In 2004, the office was separated into its own department. She was promoted to deputy director of capital projects in 2009 and served as acting director for eight months in 2011-2012.

When the departments of Public Works and Capital Projects are merged on July 1, the current director of public works, **Tom Mason**, will move into the Town Manager's Office as assistant town manager.

## Richmond names Durham police chief



- Durham -

Richmond named **Alfred Durham** chief of police effective Feb. 21. Durham, who served as deputy police chief, succeeded **Ray Tarasovic**, who retired.

Durham, a graduate of the FBI National Academy, served in the Marine Corps for 17 years, before joining the Metropolitan Police Department in Washington, D.C. There he led several departments and rose to the rank of assistant chief.

### Alexandria names planning director

**Karl W. Moritz** was named director of planning and zoning in Alexandria effective Feb. 10. He had served as acting director since July.

Moritz joined the city in 2008 as deputy director for long range and strategic planning. In that position, he was responsible for neighborhood planning, community development, demographics and forecasting, and geographic information systems. In 2013, he became deputy director for current planning and assumed oversight of development, land use and zoning, and historic preservation.

Prior to his work in Alexandria, Moritz served for 16 years with the Montgomery County, Md., Planning Department and eight years with the Northern Virginia Regional Commission.

### VAPDC honors 3 for outstanding service

The Virginia Association of Planning District Commissions (VAPDC) presented three long-serving regional planning advocates with awards at the association's annual winter conference in Richmond last month.

**David Blount**, who has worked for the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission since 1999, was presented with the Gordon N. Dixon Award that recognizes a VAPDC commissioner or executive director who has provided leadership and made outstanding contributions to promoting the concept of regionalism.

**F. Woodrow "Woody" Harris**, who has served on the Crater Planning District Commission and its Executive Committee since 1989, was presented the Robert W. Baker Achievement Award that recognizes people who

have been involved directly in planning district commission activities and who have contributed significantly to promoting regional planning and development. Harris serves on Emporia City Council and is a former president of VML.

**James A. Baldwin**, who has served the Cumberland Plateau Planning District Commission during a 42-year career as a regional planner, director of planning and ultimately executive director, was presented the President's Award. The award recognizes an individual who has been involved directly in planning district commission activities and who has contributed significantly to promoting regional planning and VAPDC activities.

*Have news about a person in your local government? Submit items to Nancy Chafin at [nchafin@vml.org](mailto:nchafin@vml.org)*

## News & notes

### Cameras reduce Newport News crashes

A three-year city study in Newport News shows that a program using cameras to reduce incidents of drivers running red lights and crashes at three busy intersections is paying dividends.

In 2010, the city implemented a program called PhotoSafe that uses red-light violation cameras that operate continuously. The study found that since the PhotoSafe program's implementation crashes related to red-light running at the three monitored intersections are down 45 percent. Overall serious crashes (angle and head on) were reduced by 39 percent. Crashes directly related to the running of red-lights have been reduced by 56 percent.

In short, as motorists have become accustomed to the presence of the red-light cameras, violations have reduced in number without increase in crashes.

### Vienna boosts use of solar energy

Vienna Town Council voted unanimously Feb. 23 to approve a resolution

that will make it easier and more affordable for residents and businesses to purchase solar energy systems.

The council resolution cleared the way for the establishment of Solarize Vienna, a community-based pilot project jointly sponsored by the Northern Virginia Regional Commission and the Local Energy Alliance Program.

Through June 30 the greater Vienna community can take advantage of free home solar assessments and bulk purchasing discounts to reduce the cost of powering their homes and businesses with solar energy. To assist homeowners who may not be candidates for solar, the program also offers a free home energy checkup to any resident who registers before June 30. "This program offers something for everyone," said Mayor Laurie DiRocco.

Solarize Vienna will be featured at the town's Green Expo to be held April 23. The Expo will be a one-stop shop for residents to learn about solar power options, meet installers or to sign up for a home energy checkup. Visit [solarizevienna.org](http://solarizevienna.org).

### Roanoke launches social media center

The City of Roanoke launched its first ever Social Media Center recently.

By clicking on the "Social Media Center" icon at the top of the [roanokeva.gov](http://roanokeva.gov) homepage, citizens have the option of viewing combined Facebook posts from city departments on one page, or selecting streams from individual departments through the "City Facebook Streams" drop-down menu.

Citizens can also view Twitter streams, city videos, news releases and sign up for MyRoanoke e-mail alerts and the city's electronic newsletter.

"The city has more than 30 different social media pages and nearly 90,000 followers. By combining all of our posts into one central Social Media Center, residents can easily view the latest news from different city departments without having to jump from page to page," said Public Information Specialist Timothy Martin.

The Social Media Center can also be accessed by visiting [roanoke.uberflip.com](http://roanoke.uberflip.com). According to online provider Uberflip, Roanoke is the first govern-



ment agency in Virginia to feature its product.

**PTI cites Norfolk for citizen engagement**

Public Technology Institute (PTI) recently designated Norfolk as a Citizen-Engaged Community for 2014-2016. Citizen-Engaged Communities is a designation program for cities and counties to recognize excellence in multi-channel contact centers and best practices for the use of Citizen Relationship/Records

Management (CRM) systems, 311 systems, web portal technology, telephone systems and mobile communications infrastructure.

PTI, affiliated with the National League of Cities, the National Association of Counties and the International City/County Management Association, helps develop technologies that support communities by advancing communications capabilities.

**City of Roanoke adds mobile GIS features**

Roanoke GIS is one of the most popular features on the city’s website. Last year alone, the GIS portion of the website was accessed by more than 34,000 people. Because of that popularity, Roanoke has made GIS information accessible through mobile devices.

“This is a big time saver for the many people trying to access property information on the go,” says Tracey Leet, Roanoke GIS project manager.

Both computer and mobile users can access GIS information by visiting <http://gisre.roanokeva.gov>. For mobile users, through new technology, the site recognizes the type of device being used and adjusts the display and functionality automatically. The new mobile site is also easy to navigate and allows users to reposition the map based on their location.

“Adding the mobile option is a big plus to those working in the field, real estate industry, or looking to buy a new home in the city,” said Roanoke City Manager Chris Morrill.

Along with the mobile component, those who use a computer to access GIS in Roanoke will see new enhanced features.

Computer users now have access to 360-degree oblique imagery, a new buffer tool that allows users to select multiple parcels, and an export to PDF option with both detailed and basic report options.

Other features to Roanoke’s GIS include: past sales, assessed values and building layouts.

**ELSEWHERE ...**

**Arlington County** is making it simpler and more predictable to do business in the county by introducing online business registration and one-stop check, debit or credit card payments for building permits.

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- Commercial Paper
- Virginia Investment Pool
- Pooled OPEB Trust
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*VML/VACo Finance has been serving Virginia local government since 2003. MSRB-registered.*

# Build support to help with crumbling infrastructure fixes

By John W. Martin and Matt Thornhill

**M**UCH OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE in Virginia – roads, bridges, dams, drinking water, parks, schools and wastewater – is in serious disrepair. The good news is that the 2015 rating for Virginia from the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) is a C-, up from a score of D in 2013. The bad news is that ASCE describes a C- as “mediocre.”

For leaders in towns, cities and counties across the state, this news comes as no surprise. Awareness of the size and scope of the aging infrastructure issue isn't the problem. For most, finding ways to fund the necessary improvements and getting citizen support are the real challenges.

## Virginia infrastructure grades

As these critical systems continue to age and deteriorate, leaders of Virginia's “324 Places” are struggling to pay for maintenance and upkeep, not to mention investments in much-needed upgrades and new projects. Changes are needed across the infrastructure industry, and these must be supported by new thinking, approaches and policies among government, financial and community participants. In this way, a sustainable vision and path forward for managing, maintaining and improving Virginia's aging infrastructure can be created.

Much has to happen over the next 10 years if Virginia hopes to see any improvement in its ASCE scores for aging infrastructure. We will attempt to present a course forward, based on some of the best and brightest thinking from around the United States. We'll also share with you a new resource few local municipalities have embraced: your Millennial-age citizens.

## Shaping things to come

Fortunately, the next generation shaping public policy and local investment in infrastructure in Virginia will be the Millennials, ages 14 to 32 in 2015. At some 82 million strong, this is America's largest generation, and by 2025, when they are 24 to 42 years old, they will be the shapers of our society and culture. In many ways, they're not like the prior generations – Boomers and Generation X – and they're more likely to be hard-wired to get engaged in community issues.

That's partly because Millennials came of age in a time when the green movement took root and the Great Recession created a new appreciation for frugality. This generation is naturally receptive to innovative and sustainable approaches to infrastructure issues. Having collaborated in teams on projects from middle school onward, they place more value in the wisdom of the crowd than the thoughts of a few. They believe the best way to solve problems is to work together.

In addition, they are the generation creating a “sharing economy,” where one doesn't own something outright, but can share assets like cars, bikes and even bedrooms. They created “crowdsourcing” as a way to raise money in order to accomplish goals.

Compared to the label of the “Me” generation for Boomers, Millennials are the “We” generation, oriented toward making a difference in their community. Yet few local leaders realize such an asset even exists.

Tapping into this emerging generation is the first step Virginia's 324 towns, cities and counties can take to address the aging infrastructure issue. That requires new ways of engaging citizens, especially those wired together through mobile and internet technologies. Millennials may not attend a public

## About this series

THIS IS THE SECOND in a series of articles on the future of Virginia's cities, towns and counties, a VML initiative for 2015 called *324 Places*. The 10 topic areas to be covered in the series were identified from a survey of VML members in late 2014. To bring this program to the league membership, VML has partnered with the Richmond-based Southeastern Institute of Research and its nationally renowned research-based think tank, GenerationsMatters. The goal is to provide local government leaders across Virginia with the information, insights and tools needed to understand and respond to the trends that will shape their communities over the next decade.





# Virginia infrastructure

Grades	2015
Bridges	C
Dams	C
Drinking water	C
Parks and recreation	C+
Rail and transit	C-
Roads	D
Schools	C-
Solid waste	B-
Storm water	C-
Wastewater	D+
<b>Overall</b>	<b>C-</b>

SOURCE: ASCE / Virginia Section



meeting in person, but they will participate online and in ongoing discussions on a website afterward.

Successful infrastructure projects over the next 10 years will likely be the ones that engage and involve Millennial citizens from the first step. If you don't have a strategy in place to do that, now is the time to start.

## National strategies to improve infrastructure planning

Last year, experts from 45 companies across the U.S. infrastructure industry – planning, engineering, construction and technology – came together with local governments, professional organizations, think tanks, financial advisers and aca-

demical institutions to develop a plan of action. In this plan, called “Making the Grade,” participants identified key drivers of change and areas for improvement. Their action plan recommended six strategies local communities should embrace:

**Start with integrated infrastructure planning:** The days of addressing a specific infrastructure issue individually are over. Planners need to think about specific projects as part of a larger and more comprehensive network of integrated systems. With the availability of data and rapidly evolving technologies, planners need to view projects more broadly, within the framework of the whole system supporting a community.

For example, planners focused on aging water pipes in a community need to consider more than their own project. They should consider the money, time and work that can be

## 324 Places

saved by planning, developing and financing interconnected water, sewer, gas and electric lines at the same time that the surface streets and sidewalks are being developed, replaced or modernized. Everything is connected to everything else. Thinking that way might enable a community to implement smart electric meters, self-reporting leaky pipes, and intelligent pavement as part of a water pipes project.

Private sector organizations have harnessed technology to integrate processes and services, recording dramatic increases in efficiency and productivity. Why shouldn't the public sector? The technology is available; new engineering design and management techniques are tested and ready. All that's needed is the political and policy leadership to make it happen.

Most importantly, applying a "whole picture" approach appeals to Millennials in your community – a group that can help you build broad public support. Holistically approaching infrastructure and involving communities of interest in the planning and development process will stimulate innovation and generate even more ideas.

**Modernize project planning and delivery approaches:** The purpose for and demands on infrastructure have changed, but the protocols for developing public projects have not kept pace. For example, outdated policies, often required by law or regulation, prevent contractors from working directly with planners and designers during the initial phases. This results in misalignments and errors that must be corrected in the field rather than in the office, forcing costly and time-consuming redesigns and change orders.

**Apply the triple bottom line:** Combining the economic, social and environmental benefit of an infrastructure project is often referred to as the triple bottom line. Private developers have embraced measuring the return of a project across all three areas. Public projects should be doing the same.

**Seek new investment and financing options:** The business and financial models supporting infrastructure projects need to be modernized. Infrastructure needs to be positioned as essential to the local economy, to job growth and to supporting sustainable and resilient communities. We need more financing options that encourage private sector and direct public pension fund investment into infrastructure. A project that is fully funded at the federal level offers no incentive to the private sector – let alone to governors, state legislatures or mayors – to change approaches or try innovative methods.

Nationally, the Obama administration has recently announced new funding options for infrastructure needs. First, the Build America Transportation Investment Center – housed at the Department of Transportation – serves as a one-stop shop for cities and states seeking to use innovative financing and partnerships with the private sector to support transportation infrastructure. Second, the administration proposed the creation of a new kind of municipal bond, the Qualified Public Infrastructure Bonds (QPIB), for municipalities seeking public-private partnerships. Whether or not they become law remains to be seen.

One new funding option for the ongoing maintenance of infrastructure assets is to sell naming rights, that is, to sell ad-

vertising space. Three examples:

VDOT sells naming rights to the state's 42 rest areas and welcome centers in an attempt to help offset the \$20 million annual cost for maintenance.


San Diego County is currently selling naming rights to its public parks, ball fields, skate parks and trails. The county envisions raising \$3.6 million.

Philadelphia anticipates raising millions by selling space for display ads on public library and recreation center buildings, as well as ad wraps on city-owned cars and trucks.

**Nurture public-private partnerships:** Public-private partnerships, known as PPPs and categorized as shared risk-reward approaches, are transforming how infrastructure contracts are formed. They're also emerging as a reliable way to bridge funding gaps. Importantly, PPPs are innovative in that they can reduce lifecycle costs, speed up delivery and improve long-term operation and maintenance. This is because PPPs are focused on the long-term performance of the asset and its availability to provide a level of service to the public.

**Tap into community vision:** Today, cloud, mobile and social computing are changing how we design, interact and think about our future infrastructure needs. Collaborative engagement is an important aspect needed in all infrastructure projects. Citizens who don't want to attend a public meeting in person can view it online and participate in ongoing discussions via websites. They can use computer simulations to "experience" a project first, helping them better understand and evaluate the impact of a particular infrastructure project on their lives, homes, and businesses. These tools can help both the citizens and the agency responsible for the project understand the potential impact long before construction begins.

## Virginia's infrastructure future

Looking ahead, these strategies can help Virginia's "324 Places" address infrastructure issues. There's no question the task is significant and will require new policies, approaches and advocates. Tapping into Millennial-aged citizens is one way leaders in Virginia's towns, cities, and counties can engage lasting support for the decisions needed to improve the aging infrastructure across the state. 

### About the authors

*John W. Martin is the president and CEO of the Southeastern Institute of Research Inc., a 50 year-old full service marketing research firm headquartered in Richmond. Matt Thornhill, founder and president of GenerationsMatter, is a leading national authority on Baby Boomers. The two have conducted studies, held workshops or presented for a number of association in Virginia, including VML. Recent consulting engagements include assignments for the cities of Richmond, Norfolk, Lexington, Buena Vista and Winchester, as well as the counties of Arlington, Henrico and Rockbridge. National clients include AARP, Google, NASA, the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, and Walmart. Visit [sirresearch.com](http://sirresearch.com) or [generationsmatter.com](http://generationsmatter.com) for more information.*

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# Governor presents 8 awards for winning entries in VML essay contest

**A** HOPEWELL 7<sup>TH</sup> GRADER was the statewide winner of the Virginia Municipal League's first-ever "If I Were Mayor" essay contest. Na'Seem Hopson's 500-word essay was judged the best of eight regional winners from across the Commonwealth.

Gov. Terry McAuliffe, assisted by VML President Bill Euille, presented the eight students with their awards on Wednesday afternoon, Jan. 28, in the Lecture Hall of the Library of Virginia in downtown Richmond. The awards were presented following the governor's remarks to approximately 220 local government officials who attended the association's VML Day at the Capitol program. In addition to family members, many of the students were accompanied by the mayors from their home towns.

The "If I Were Mayor" contest drew nearly 1,000 essays from 7th graders across the Commonwealth. It was the first of a number of upcoming VML initiatives that will involve civics education for students across the state.

The regional winners were:

**Region 1** Bailey Nash, Jonesville Middle School (Lee County)

**Region 2** Kendryek Wheeler, Woodrow Wilson Middle School (City of Roanoke)

**Region 3** Macalister Gordon, Daniel Morgan Middle School (Winchester)

**Region 4** Garrett Love, Buckingham County Middle School

**Region 5** Logan Kurtz, Manassas Park Middle School

**Region 6** Adele Masson, Culpeper Middle School

**Region 7** Na'Seem Hopson, Hopewell Redevelopment & Housing Authority

**Region 8** Sophie Freiling, Berkeley Middle School (Williamsburg)

In addition to a framed certificate, each regional winner received a check for \$150. The statewide winner received a certificate and \$250.

Read all eight of the winning entries and an assortment of illuminating excerpts from some of the other 991 entries on the pages that follow.



MICHAEL L. WHITE, GOVERNOR'S OFFICE



With Gov. Terry McAuliffe are winners (l-r) Sophie Freiling, Adele Masson, Logan Kurtz, Garrett Love, Na'Seem Hopson, Macalister Gordon, Kendryek Wheeler and Bailey Nash.

# Region 7 and Statewide Winner



## **If I Were Mayor ...**

**By Na'Seem Hopson**

*Hopewell Redevelopment and Housing Authority*

If I were mayor, I would improve the lives of children living in Hopewell. I would begin by addressing bullying because it has a negative impact on children and some die. I would try to convince those children to talk to their parents about their feelings and problems. I would promote anti-bullying campaigns throughout my city and have events where everyone could come together to solve this problem.

I see a lot of problems in my community even though I am a child. I live in public housing and know that my community needs a lot of help. I would promote peace in my neighborhood. I hear gunshots sometimes and am afraid. It is hard to tell how close the gunshots are to my house and if they are coming from the military base or not. I would work with the Police Department to begin new safety programs with community officers. I would increase their budget so that more officers could be hired to ensure the safety of citizens. As mayor, I would also attend the community meetings to connect to the residents.

My neighborhood is filled with litter every day. I would start a campaign that would teach people about the environment and recycling. I would have a community clean-up day and invite citizens to clean up all the litter and plant trees. My campaign would be part of Disney's Big Green program. I believe that no one cares about my neighborhood because there is always trash on the ground. Living in a clean neighborhood would make me feel happy.

More activities are needed for the youth in my neighborhood. If there were more activities for us, so many children would not be doing things that could get them into trouble. If we had people to help us, I believe that there would be less children dropping out of high school. High school dropouts have less chance at succeeding in life.

There needs to be different procedures used in the schools to teach children. Everyone does not learn the same and many struggle with the SOL testing focus. School can be very boring and students spend a lot of time there. I would add technology into teaching for all students. I would use games, websites, and mobile apps to teach lessons. I would make sure that the school budget included money for every student to have access to a tablet or computer. I would also encourage students to be themselves and use their voices to bring attention to issues they may be dealing with. I would encourage them to focus on completing their education so that they could have careers as adults.

My term as mayor would be focused on children because we are the future. Every child does not have the same access to opportunity. I would work with churches, agencies and organizations to close the divide so that all children might have better futures.

# Region 1 Winner



## If I Were Mayor ...

**By Bailey Nash**

*Jonesville Middle School*

Being mayor sounds really interesting. The mayor has the privilege of helping the community. The mayor can't be fired. Even though the pay is not high, the rewards are great. If I were mayor, I would make some improvements to the town of Jonesville.

As mayor, with the approval of council, I would improve the playground equipment at the park. I would also use the amphitheater at the park more often to raise money for other projects. I would use the baseball field much more and work on constructing a football and soccer field as well as sports teams for the Town of Jonesville.

If elected mayor, I would encourage more businesses to come to the area. To do that I would exempt them from town taxes for a year. If I could get more businesses to come to this town, I would try to convince them to use recycling bins and half of the proceeds will be donated to special causes and charities. That is just a portion of what I would do as mayor.

I, as mayor, would require more advanced training for the police squad and more advanced training for the fire department. I would have better buildings built for both of the services. I would also have better equipment purchased for the police squad as well as the fire department.

While being in the mayor's position, I would promote the airport much more than it is. If the airport was advertised more, it could be good for the economy of Jonesville. We could have businesses encouraged even more to come here. So if I were mayor, some of my goals would be to increase revenue and population.

These are some of the things I would do as mayor. If you want these changes and improvements to happen here in Jonesville, then elect me as mayor.



# Region 2 Winner

## If I Were Mayor ...

By **Kendryek Wheeler**

*Woodrow Wilson Middle School*



In the late 1880s, Roanoke was proclaimed the “magic city” of the New South because of the population boom resulting from a railroad merger. Today, I believe that Roanoke still is a magic city but for different reasons. Roanoke has majestic views of the Blue Ridge Mountains, a thriving healthcare industry, Greenway bike and running trails, and a beautiful parkway that allows people to view all that the Roanoke Valley has to offer. I will run for mayor in order to preserve these great attributes of Roanoke as well as make some changes to enhance our magic city.

As soon as I am elected mayor, I will improve two main areas in the magic city of Roanoke. These areas are raising the minimum wage and improving transportation. People deserve to be paid more money for the jobs that they do. Also, our city is clean and beautiful, and we need to cut down on pollution from vehicle exhaust to keep our city that way. Enhancing these areas will help improve the economy and make Roanoke more progressive and inviting to its current residents, as well as attracting even more newcomers to the area.

Today, Roanoke’s current minimum wage is \$7.25 an hour. I will double the minimum wage to \$14.50 an hour because of a really deserving reason. Roanoke is mostly a health care industry, and because of that, Roanoke has a plentiful amount of healthcare support workers who work hard to help doctors and nurses cure illnesses and diseases and help save people’s lives. The health care workers literally save LIVES, and therefore, they all deserve a reward for working hard to save Roanokers.

With healthy Roanokers, we need healthy transportation options. As soon as I become mayor, I will add healthy options to the already functional transportation outlets. With such an influential healthcare system in Roanoke that focuses on a healthy lifestyle, I think that Roanoke should have some type of electric bike share program. People could rent a bike from one station and park it at another station close to their destination. Electric bike stations could be located near neighborhood schools so that people could walk from their homes to the station and then ride the electric bike to their destination. This would allow people to exercise, get fresh air, and save the city from pollution. I think electric bikes would serve Roanokers well because some people want to exercise but may not have the stamina to go really far, so they could switch from pedaling to turning on the electric motor. I would call this program *iBike Magic Share Program* and ask Apple Inc. to be a sponsor along with developing an app for it. I would also offer tax incentives to people who commit to using this program since it would help the environment.

In conclusion, enhancing Roanoke’s transportation options will make our magic city more eco-friendly, and we could become nationally known for our commitment to a clean environment. With a higher minimum wage, we could attract more outsiders to move here and join our workforce. The newcomers would buy goods and services in Roanoke, which would boost our economy. Natives of Roanoke would continue to be proud to show off our magic city, with its heritage and progress. If I were mayor of Roanoke, I would help create more magic in this magic city!

# Region 3 Winner



## If I were mayor ...

**By Macalister Gordon**

*Daniel Morgan Middle School*

If I were mayor, I would focus on making the city of Winchester a better and more appealing community. As mayor, I would work closely with the city council to ensure that decisions made and implemented would be based on what's best for the overall good of the community and citizens. During my term as mayor to make the city of Winchester a better place to live, I would concentrate on improving the economy, our education system and our sports facilities.

My first priority would be to help grow the city's economy. I would advertise the many historical events hosted in Winchester to bring people outside of the city to attend and eat at our local restaurants. I would help create more jobs and make sure that local employees are ready and prepared for the jobs. While working with the city council, I will make sure that good decisions are made on how money is spent for the city.

A very important priority of a community is to ensure an educational experience that will prepare students to be functioning citizens with employable skills. I would help implement a business partnership with schools so that business employees could come into schools and volunteer and mentor our future leaders. Students would have the opportunity to spend time in businesses to be exposed to different types of jobs available within companies which would help direct students on a career path of interest to them. I would also focus on making sure that our students had updated technology and instruction to be able to compete in a world that advances in technology every day.

Another area that I would focus on would be planning and building a new soccer complex for our city. Hundreds of Winchester families are involved in recreational and travel soccer programs. A new soccer complex would allow more opportunities for local citizens and would help create new jobs. The city could host soccer tournaments which would bring families to our community and help make money for our city by people paying for hotels and food and visiting our rich historical city. This complex could also be rented for other events which would help bring in more revenue for the city.

With my focus for the city, I think I could fulfill the job of mayor. I would be ready for anything and driven to help make Winchester the best city for its citizens and students. The ideas that I have could bring the attention to our city by improving our city school, creating new sports opportunities and increase the number of visitors and revenue. Welcome to the wonderful city of Winchester!

# Region 4 Winner



## If I were mayor ...

By **Garrett Love**

*Buckingham County Middle School*

If I were mayor of Dillwyn I would build a bike trail, so Dillwyn can be known all around the country and the state of Virginia. Also, I would build a bike shop to provide things for people that ride on the trails.

Here are some of my reasons to build a bike trail. One of my reasons is so people can get exercise and just have fun. Also, people can get jobs to maintain the trail and build it. To add to that, people can find out about Dillwyn and come here for the experience and to ride on the bike trail. This can also make money for Dillwyn to add new things to the town! The money can also go to the people in need in the area. And those are a few of my reasons to build a bike trail.

We could build different trails for different things. We could build a sightseeing trail for people to take a relaxing ride on a paved trail. Then, we could build an easy trail for younger and less experienced people. After that, we could build an intermediate trail with steeper hills and a harder trail to ride on that is longer than the one before. Then, we could build an expert trail for really good riders and making everything harder on this trail. After that, we can build a mountain biking trail with jumps. Those are some trails that I would build in Dillwyn.

I would build a bike shop to supply the bikes for people to ride on the trails and supply things that they need, like helmets and water bottles. Also, it will give people jobs to run the bike shop. This shop could help out people in need in the Buckingham area. The shop could take up one of the vacant shops in the town, so it can be in use again!

So now, you see what I would do if I were mayor of Dillwyn. It would help the community, it would make money to help people in need and it would help build more things in Dillwyn. It also would create jobs for people that don't have one and for people to have fun and learn about Dillwyn and help make it known.



# Region 5 Winner

## If I were mayor ...

By Logan Kurtz

*Manassas Park Middle School*



What would I do if I were mayor? If people were asked this question, especially in my age group, they'd have all sorts of answers. Some would build amusement parks based around themselves. Others would say something silly, like banning little siblings from their rooms, or city-wide holidays. Although these ideas may seem extreme, and definitely what other students would enjoy, being mayor has nothing to do with actions like that. Being a mayor deals with solving problems and accomplishing goals that would benefit everyone for the better.

First of all, I'd make a balance of housing and natural areas in the city. There are about sixty new students in my school, and they're still building houses! Of course it's great to have so many new people in the city, but in order to construct the houses they had to cut down lots of trees. I would plant more trees in another area to make up for the trees as well, making Manassas Park a better place to live.

I would also add a sidewalk that leads to schools. Many students walk to school, even though there's no sidewalk. Then, students will still have a way to get to school if they miss the bus, even if their parents are unable to drive them.

Another action I would take as mayor is to work with the local School Board and raise the salaries of teachers, police officers and firemen. The average starting salary for the teachers is about \$36,700 a year, which is too small for the amount of work that they do! Firefighters and police officers also get a small amount, with only about \$47,500 annually! They help our community for the better, and deserve to be treated with higher salaries and respect from the people they serve. I want to make sure that they get the thanks that they deserve for helping the city.

I would also enforce recycling throughout the city. I care deeply about making the city more environmentally-friendly. Recycling would be a great way to help! Manassas Park is already taking great steps forward in this direction by putting recycling bins in every classroom, and the elementary school is using actual silverware so that they could stop throwing out so much plastic. It is great that the schools are environmentally-friendly, but once students leave, they might continue to throw recyclable objects away. As mayor, I would make recycling available to everyone. I would make recycling services free, so more people would start to do it.

There is more to being mayor than amusement parks, silly laws and mansions. Mayors help out with real problems and work with and for real people.

# Region 6 Winner



## If I were mayor ...

**By Adele Masson**

*Culpeper Middle School*

If I led Culpeper as mayor, I would do more than the normal mayor jobs, such as running and representing the town, attending ceremonies and advertising Culpeper. I would try to help the needy by doing food drives and such, give more town services, and do more to help us become a better place as a whole. We have a great town here, and I would try to make it even better, no matter how hard it may be.

As mayor I would help the immigrants and people who do not speak English to learn the English language. I would set up a program to help them so they can get better jobs. In Culpeper, almost every day you can see laborers standing by the street, trying to get jobs and money so they can support their families. If they spoke English, they would more likely get a steady income and a better job. Sometimes they get cheated out of money, but it would be easier to stop people from doing that if the worker could understand what was happening.

Our town has good services, including garbage collection, schools, town police and highway maintenance. To these services I would like to add more carnivals and festivals, a public art gallery, and I would replace traffic lights with traffic circles, along with other things. To make our environment better I would organize groups to pick up trash and help them, personally, to carry this task out. I would promote recycling and compost, and help find ways to decrease the amount of pollution we have.

In order to supply more money, my job would be to advertise the history aspect of our town more, especially the Civil War period. I would put signs up about the Graffiti House and other places, and possibly set up a website about it! I would also advertise our setting to people looking for houses, and build houses with good view of the Blue Ridge Mountains. I would tell people about our ideal location, about one hour away from D. C., but not in a city. Hopefully, we would attract more people here and raise the population.

I would add more fun things for the teenagers and kids in Culpeper, such as an arcade. I would bring in more stores, and maybe some restaurants. I would like to add a Macys and possibly a toy store, like "Toys R Us". To make even more money, I would open an Olive Garden. I would put inns, hotels, and motels in better locations than the ones they are in now. These things might attract more visitors here.

If I were mayor, I would try my best to make Culpeper the best place to be. As mayor I would be doing all these things to help make our relatively poor town richer. Adding more of these industries will make us better. Culpeper is a great town with amazing potential, and I would carry out my ideas to help us fulfill it.

# Region 8 Winner

## If I were mayor ...

By **Sophie Freiling**

*Berkley Middle School*



After living in Williamsburg my whole life, if I were mayor some of the key issues I would address are the struggling tourism economy, the need for an additional middle school, the cost of healthcare for the city and local businesses, and transportation. If I were mayor, I would suggest making the first hour of the Prince George Parking Garage free to encourage more people to park and shop downtown to help the tourism economy. Another way to boost the tourism economy is to have development or investment companies redevelop the Williamsburg Shopping Center. A way to draw more people out for food would be to have more outdoor seating to create vibrancy, especially in Merchants Square. One more way to boost the tourism economy would be to create a focal point for the Arts District, a chance for more small businesses and another attraction for tourists.

Another thing I would like to do if I were mayor would be to address the need for an additional middle school. I would work more closely with James City County and the School Board to ensure that future middle school students don't suffer overcrowding.

Adding on to the middle schools we have now would be a cheaper alternative to building a new middle school. The additions could add about one hundred students to each school with enough space for everyone and leave money that the teachers could use in the future. The cost of healthcare for city and local businesses is another issue I would focus on. A way to fix this would be to buy Country Road from Colonial Williamsburg and turn it into a fitness park where people could run, bike, or just take a relaxing walk. This would promote exercise and would keep people healthier, lowering the amount of healthcare they need.

Another way to keep people healthy would be to have chain restaurants publish nutritional data on menus so people are aware of what they are eating. People will then have the option to choose healthier meals when they go out to eat and not consume empty calories. One more way to lower the cost of healthcare would be to build more hiking, walking, biking, and kayaking infrastructure. This would give the potential for more fitness areas and trails to exercise on.

The final issue I would address would be improvements on transportation. I would expand the train service so there are more trains running faster. This would allow people to travel without backing up the roads. When people do drive their cars, I-64 gets backed up very easily. Widening I-64 with two more lanes on each side would keep the traffic moving and make it easier and safer for tourists to travel to Williamsburg. By boosting the economy, preventing overcrowding in schools, lowering the cost of healthcare, and creating more transportation options I would make Williamsburg a better place if I were mayor.



# If they were mayor, these kids would change a thing or two ... or three ... or four

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Reading nearly a thousand essays submitted by seventh graders from across Virginia turned out to be a learning experience for two VML staff members. After the entries were judged, Mary Jo Fields and David Parsons culled through all 999 submittals in hopes of spotting some words of wisdom from the children that local elected officials might find illuminating. They were not disappointed. Some of their favorite lines – many thoughtful and some funny – follow below. Enjoy!

*A mayor has to be confident, optimistic, open-minded and a loud speaker.*

*This county needs someone who takes responsibility.*

*I would let the voters know they would have a say in our government as long as it isn't superfluous.*

*I want to be a mayor for the people, not just a politician who struts around talking but not acting.*

*I would show everyone that my family and I are normal people just like them and send my children to a public school.*

*If I was mayor, I would have a lot of thoughts on my mind. First of all, I would wonder what I was thinking.*

*Anyone applying for this high-ranking job must be intelligent, ambitious and have the ability to work with others. I, in fact, fit this description.*

*A mayor can't go wrong with focusing on our children.*

*I'm not going to talk so much about traffic and that sort of thing, but how to make this city a home – built on a rock of love, peace, agreement and appreciation.*

*I hope people realize that even the places we love – they're not exactly perfect.*

*You can't make a city better if you leave it alone.*

*Some of this bad stuff can be fixed with a good leader.*

*A leader must be intelligent to lead their people in the right direction. They must be kind and listen to the people in times of trouble. They must be focused, honest and persistent.*

*I'd put all my heart and soul into the people of my city.*

*Citizens in the community may not believe it, but being a mayor can be fastidious at times.*

*Students deserve more than a pile of rocks to walk on to get to school.*

*Every city has a dark side.*

*A mayor should not be a show-off; instead they need to show a sense of leadership in order to shape up a community.*

*I will show the world what kindness is and what being mayor is all about.*

*I also would like to take action in trying to lower our taxes and still offer the same services.*

*Our school budget could use a boost.*

*I am NOT a politician. I don't think of just myself.*

*We should add a dog park in the city. There would be tons of trees and fire hydrants for the dogs to ... well ... um ... you know.*

*There is nothing better than keeping the people in my town safe.*

*There would be no trash on the streets. There would be no bumps on the streets. It will be sidewalks everywhere.*

*I would put a public bathroom beside the playground. When your kid says, "Mommy, I need to go to potty," you wouldn't have to go very far.*

*I will not take bribes and will never text and drive.*

*My plan of action involves first, raising taxes. You may not be excited about this.*

*I would try to lower those taxes because they are too dang high!*



*I am fully aware that we will have parades, but I bet they would love a little "after party."*

*Housing is overpriced so I want to make it affordable and cheaper.*

*Mayor isn't exactly the most popular position of the government. A lot of people probably don't even know their mayor's name. My point is, mayor doesn't really mean anything. If I were mayor, I would either change that or go out of office trying.*

*Tickets would be given out like candy to those who are parked with overdue license plates or inspection stickers. Order will be kept.*

*I would try and prevent teen pregnancy as much as possible. It is a public health issue.*

*I would take ideas from the citizens. Their minds are so bright and beautiful.*

*Who would want to live in a beat up town? Not me.*

*I would have nobody complaining about how I run things.*

*A healthy citizen is a happy, hard-working citizen.*

*We will grow!  
We will grow!*

*Recently, a cow was spotted on the sidewalks, which also created hazardous conditions for students.*

*I would like to focus on health care and make sure my citizens have opportunities to visit a doctor when they are sick.*

*One of my objectives would be to involve more people in local government. Right now, most people don't even know the current mayor's name, much less how the government works.*





*If I were mayor, I would also straighten up the school board.*

*I leave you with a thought anyone can live by: Any small town can explode with big ideas.*

*I'm not being the mayor because of the money.*

*I have no intention of being mayor, but I do like giving out ideas that I think about on a daily basis. What if they did this, what if they did that, that sort of thing.*

*I see a load of run-down buildings... the creepy look of these buildings needs to go.*

*First, I would make the population grow.*

*The people of our town deserve a building worth living in, not surviving in a cardboard box. They need a place they can call home.*

*Before I did too much as mayor, I would buy myself a top hat, but I would start working after that. ... I would grow a mustache.*

*I will not kick someone out of their house just to build a new mall.*

*Factories and small businesses would all be brought back.*

*I will not allow marijuana to become legal in any way.*

*We'd all like to think our little city is perfect as is, but behind closed doors we clearly see the true condition.*

*It's time to discipline this city.*

*Recently, we have had a Wal-Mart, Kohl's, CVS, a movie theater, and a handful of new restaurants and shops built nearby. This makes shopping sprees and grocery runs rapid and easy, but is it the right thing for our town? Are we moving in the right direction?*

*I would not focus on playing politics.*



VML IS SOLICITING ENTRIES for its 2015 Achievement Awards program. The deadline for submittals is Friday, May 29, 2015. Please take a few minutes to look over the rules and guidelines that follow. The winners of the five Population Categories, the Communications Award and the President's Award will be featured in an issue of *Virginia Town & City* magazine this fall. The awards will be presented at the 2015 VML Annual Conference in Richmond on Tuesday evening, Oct. 6.



THE 2015 VML ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS recognize the accomplishments of member local governments for innovative problem-solving, excellence in management, increasing citizen participation and striving toward higher service levels.

## Population awards

The VML Achievement Awards competition includes five categories based on population so that local governments compete with other local governments of comparable size. The population categories are: (1) under 5,000; (2) 5,000-10,000; (3) 10,001-35,000; (4) 35,001-90,000; and (5) more than 90,000.

A local government may submit up to three entries in its population category. One winner will be selected from each population category to receive an Achievement Award. The winner of the President's Award – the entry that does the best job of fulfilling the criteria set forth below – will be chosen from the five population category winners.

Entries in the five population categories will be evaluated on the following criteria, which emphasize innovation, efficiency and entrepreneurship:

- Generally speaking, accomplishing projects and implementing programs that enhance the vitality and quality of life in cities, towns or counties;
- developing more innovative ways of delivering government services;
- implementing new or improved approaches in addressing a significant community need, or significantly improving an existing program;
- reflecting excellence in management;
- increasing citizen participation;
- striving toward higher service levels;
- possessing ideas and approaches that make a project or program relevant to other local governments;
- having a long-term value to the community; and
- showing a documented record of effectiveness that illustrates how a project or program has achieved its goals.

**NOTE: All submittals in a population category must list one of the five population brackets on the cover page of the entry. For entries that represent significant improvements to existing programs, the improvements must have been made between Jan. 1, 2014 and May 1, 2015.**

## President's award

The winner of the President's Award – the entry that does the best job of fulfilling the criteria set forth above – will be chosen from the five population category winners. The winning entry will, in effect, be the equivalent of a best-in-show selection.

## Communications award

The Communications Award recognizes the best in local government communications programs. Local governments of all sizes may submit one entry for this award.

Projects may include publications, audio-visual productions, special events, speeches, crisis plans, websites, social media initiatives, etc. CDs, DVDs and flash drives also may be submitted.

**NOTE: All submittals in this category must list the entry as "Communications Award" on the cover page of the entry.**

## The judging

Entries will be screened by the VML staff and judged by a panel selected for its expertise in local government.

## The winners

All winning entries will be featured in stories published in an issue of *Virginia Town & City* this fall. The Population Category winners, the winner of the President's Award and the winner of the Communications Award will be recognized and presented with their awards at the 2015 VML Annual Conference in Richmond on Tuesday, Oct. 6.

## Rules for entering ...

The competition is open to all Virginia Municipal League local government members.

Entries must describe programs or projects brought to conclusion or showing significant results between Jan. 1, 2014 and May 1, 2015.

Each entry must include a cover page bearing the title of the entry, the category of entry, the name of the locality submitting the entry, and the signature of the local government's chief administrative or elected official.

All entries must be typed double-spaced, and the





body of the entry, which does not include the cover page, appendices or any supplemental materials, must be at least two pages and not more than eight pages.

All entries must be bound or submitted in a notebook or presentation folder.

Submit one complete bound copy of your entry, including the cover page, all appendices and supplemental materials.

Entries may be accompanied by photographs, artwork, CDs, DVDs or flash drives.

A local government may submit up to four entries: three in its population category and one in the Communications category.

An entry that is entered in a population category may not be entered in the Communications category.

Entries must be postmarked by May 29, 2015.

## The 4 possibilities

Each VML local government has the opportunity to submit up to four entries in this year's competition: three in its population category, plus one entry for the Communications Award. The winner of the President's Award will be selected from the winners of the five population categories.

## Writing & presentation

Although the presentation of your entry will not be the most important consideration of the judges, it will be taken into account. Therefore your entries should have a neat appearance and should be well-written. Photographs or artwork are encouraged.

In writing your entry, be succinct and clear. State the program's goals and objectives; explain how the project or program was accomplished; and provide as much relevant information about quantifiable results as possible.

Write your entry so that it progresses in a logical manner and tells a story. Your introduction should include background information, such as the need for the project, how it originated, and the goals and objectives. Clearly explain how the project or program was carried out or how a program operates. Also include how the project or program is financed and staffed. Your conclusion should state the results of the project or program.

## Helpful reminders

The staff person who assembles an entry should read all of these instructions in their entirety.

The entry must be signed on the cover page by the chief administrative officer or the chief elected official.

The cover page must show the category of entry, (e.g. Achievement Award - Population 35,001-90,000; or Communications Award.)

Only one copy of each entry needs to be submitted.

## Final checklist

Does each entry have a cover page showing:

- The title of the entry? The category of the entry? The name of the locality? The signature of the chief administrative officer or elected official?
- Are your entries neatly and securely bound?

Entries will not be returned.

## Deadline & address

All entries must be postmarked by May 29, 2015 and mailed to:

VML Achievement Awards  
P.O. Box 12164  
Richmond, VA 23241

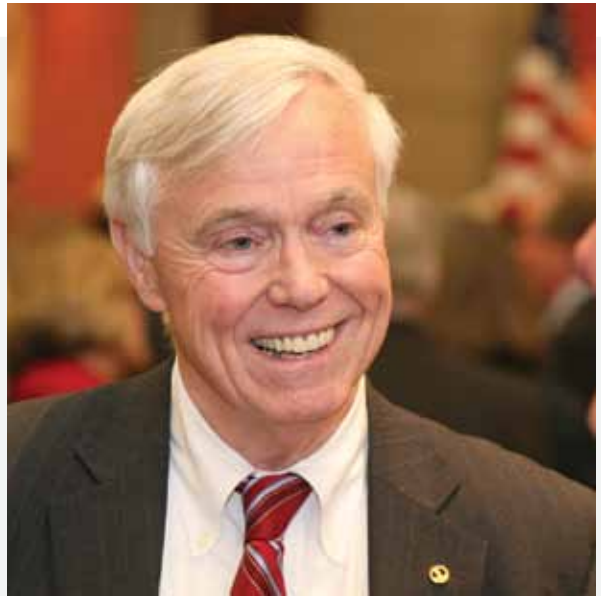
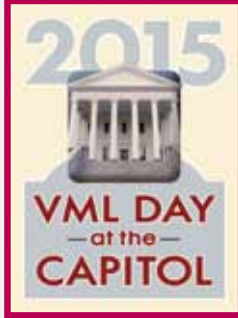
or shipped (UPS, FedEx, etc.) to:

VML Achievement Awards  
13 E. Franklin St.  
Richmond, VA 23219

Entries will not be returned. If you have any questions, contact Nancy Chafin after April 1 at [nchafin@vml.org](mailto:nchafin@vml.org) or by telephone at 804/523-8527.

# VML Day at the Capitol draws crowd

MORE THAN 50 delegates and senators joined about 200 local government officials at the reception following the VML Day at the Capitol program on Wednesday, Jan. 28. Gov. Terry McAuliffe delivered the keynote address at the Library of Virginia. Secretary of Transportation Aubrey Layne also addressed the local officials as did VML legislative staff. Among those attending the evening reception in the library's foyer were Lt. Gov. Ralph Northam, Attorney General Mark Herring and House Speaker William Howell.



**House Speaker Bill Howell**



**Attorney General Mark Herring (l-r), Virginia Beach City Council Member Amelia Ross-Hammond and Sen. John Miller**



**Transportation Secretary Aubrey Layne**



**Gov. Terry McAuliffe**



**Lt. Gov. Ralph Northam**



**Del. Dickie Bell**





**Del. Daun Hester**



**Roanoke City Council Member Bill Bepitch**



**Blacksburg Mayor Ron Rordam**



**Del. Rip Sullivan**



**Vienna Council Member Carey Sienicki**



**Suffolk Council Member Roger Fawcett**



**More than 200 local government officials attended the VML Day at the Capitol event at the Library of Virginia.**





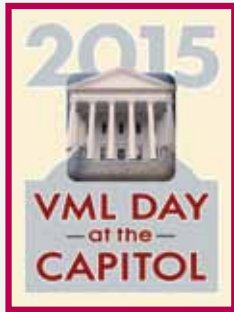
**Del. Rob Krupicka**



**Haymarket Mayor David Leake**



**Del. Patrick Hope**



**Sen. Frank Ruff**



**Sen. Barbara Favola**



**Del. Mark Keam**



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