
2017 TRANSPORTATION POLICY STATEMENT

1	Critical investments are needed to maintain	46	4.	Shared responsibility. Transportation
2	and improve Virginia’s transportation	47		planning and authority are delegated
3	network. The structural imbalance between	48		to regional bodies where they exist
4	critical needs and available resources	49		and to localities. These bodies
5	persists. Even with actions taken by the	50		prioritize and authorize individual
6	General Assembly to pass a transportation	51		projects within their jurisdictions, an
7	and public transit funding bill, the	52		essential element of equity which
8	challenges abound for all transportation	53		does require coordination among
9	modes. Beginning in FY 2018, transit	54		involved localities.
10	capital funding will permanently decline by	55	5.	Project prioritization. VML supports
11	62.0 percent without additional resources,	56		the collaborative approach taken by
12	according to the Department of Rail and	57		the Commonwealth Transportation
13	Public Transportation. The federal Highway	58		Board to seek input from regional
14	Trust Fund, which pays for roads and transit,	59		and local bodies to develop a
15	is barely solvent, and Congress has proven	60		statewide prioritization process for
16	unable to develop a long-term solution.	61		measuring projects that expand
17		62		capacity. Scarce resources should be
18	VML acknowledges the contribution of the	63		targeted to projects that address
19	legislation enacted in the 2013 session	64		congestion mitigation, economic
20	(HB2313) and in the 2014 session (HB 2) as	65		development, accessibility, safety,
21	important first steps in addressing the	66		and environmental quality. VML
22	transportation needs of Virginia’s localities.	67		recognizes the importance of having
23	Future legislative and administrative	68		an objective, quantifiable, and
24	initiatives should be based on these	69		consistent process that also takes the
25	principles:	70		different needs of regions into
26		71		consideration and recognizes the
27	1. Sustainable Funding. - A stable and	72		significant progress made on this
28	predictable plan which is	73		issue through HB 2 implementation.
29	comprehensive, which addresses	74	6.	Infrastructure modernization. Our
30	investment across the state and	75		transportation efforts must include a
31	which does not rely upon general	76		comprehensive statewide plan to
32	fund revenue.	77		provide transportation options for
33	2. Fiscal responsibility. - Dedicated	78		rail and transit which minimize the
34	revenues, which are activity-based,	79		use of petroleum. Such plans must
35	will strengthen as the economy does.	80		ensure that all Virginians — rural,
36	Further, revenues will be allocated to	81		suburban and urban – can contribute
37	jurisdictions in proportion to their	82		to and benefit from statewide
38	transportation tax contribution,	83		economic opportunities.
39	preserving a balance of equity.	84	7.	Congestion mitigation. Alleviation of
40	3. Statewide focus. Transportation is a	85		commuter congestion is essential to
41	statewide issue, not a regional, urban	86		economic development and to
42	or rural issue. Every area of the state	87		enhance citizens’ quality of life.
43	is economically hampered by	88		Corridor-wide solutions which
44	insufficient infrastructure	89		promote alternative modes including
45	management.			

1 highways, transit and non-traditional
2 solutions still need to be developed.

3 4 **REVENUES**

5 Since the transportation needs of the state
6 are so much greater than the current funding
7 provisions, it remains essential that the
8 General Assembly continue and expand
9 transportation and infrastructure investment
10 which is fiscally sound, well documented
11 and serves local, regional and state-wide
12 needs by:

- 14 • Raising revenue from those who use
15 the transportation and transit
16 systems;
- 17 • Increasing dedicated funding for
18 public transportation to meet transit
19 operating expenses and make
20 Virginia competitive for federal
21 transport funds;
- 22 • Providing or extending as a local
23 option transportation impact fee
24 authority to all localities;
- 25 • Authorizing practical options for
26 using long-term financing for major
27 transportation projects;
- 28 • Providing full state funding for the
29 revenue sharing program as provided
30 for in §33.1-23.05;
- 31 • Seeking equity among various road
32 users by ensuring that trucks pay
33 their share of road costs. VML also
34 advocates for increased local
35 influence when the state considers
36 mitigating negative impacts resulting
37 from truck traffic.

38 39 **PASS-THROUGH OF FEDERAL** 40 **FUNDS**

41 Localities are often successful in receiving
42 federal funds such as special appropriations
43 and enhancement funds. These funds
44 are passed through the State to localities
45 and the transfer of these funds is often
46 delayed. The federal government and the
47 state need to streamline the transfer of these

48 funds and allow localities to move forward
49 with these projects.

50 51 **SAFETY**

52 **Pedestrian**

53 VML recommends that the Virginia Code be
54 amended to clarify the respective rights and
55 duties of pedestrians and vehicle drivers.
56 Drivers should be required to stop, not just
57 yield, for pedestrians in all marked and
58 unmarked crosswalks. In addition, police
59 need the ability to issue simpler citations
60 than currently allowed under Virginia law to
61 more effectively enforce the laws against jay
62 walking.

63 64 **Bicycling**

65 VML also recommends changes to the Code
66 of Virginia clarifying the rights and
67 responsibilities of bicyclists in their use of
68 public streets in order to ensure the safety of
69 all road users.

70 71 **PRESERVATION OF RIGHTS-OF-** 72 **WAY**

73 Transportation projects take many years
74 from the planning stage to
75 construction. Localities need additional
76 authority to reserve miles of right-of-way
77 years in advance of any funding availability
78 for these projects, or risk development in the
79 path of these transportation projects.

80 81 **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

82 Smaller communities and regions require
83 additional and enhanced transportation
84 planning and technical assistance from
85 VDOT and DRPT. VDOT and DRPT,
86 therefore, have a continuing obligation to
87 assist these areas, including establishing
88 equitable equipment rental rates and
89 administrative costs.

90 91 **TRAFFIC CALMING**

92 VML supports continued improvements to
93 VDOT's traffic calming program to improve
94 safety for users of public streets.

1 Additionally, VML has supported, and
2 continues to support, expanding the
3 availability of photo-camera traffic
4 enforcement for all localities while
5 respecting civil rights.

6
7 **METROPOLITAN PLANNING**
8 **ORGANIZATIONS (MPOs)**

9 VML opposes broadening MPO voting
10 membership to include private sector
11 representatives. VML believes that
12 representation by public officials makes
13 MPOs accountable to citizens.

14
15 **PUBLIC TRANSIT**

16 Public transit includes all available multiple
17 occupancy vehicle services and technologies
18 designed to transport passengers on local
19 and regional routes.

20
21 VML supports:

- 22 1) increased federal and state funding for
- 23 public transit;
- 24 2) policies that allow for the equitable
- 25 distribution of such funding; and
- 26 3) a dedicated source of funding to support
- 27 public transit.

28
29 VML also appreciates congressional actions
30 taken to restore and make permanent parity
31 between employer-sponsored benefits for
32 parking and for mass transit riders.

33
34 Beginning in 2019, transit in Virginia faces
35 a 44 percent decrease in capital funding due
36 to the phasing out of Capital Project
37 Revenue (CPR) bond funds approved in
38 2007. VML supports the provisions of HB
39 1359 (2016 Session) that requires a report to
40 the General Assembly by mid-2017 that
41 identifies possible sources of replacement
42 revenue and examines methodologies for
43 setting priorities for capital projects.

44
45 **RAIL TRANSPORTATION**

46 VML recommends the expansion of
47 interstate and intra-state passenger and

48 freight rail service corridors, with no
49 requirement for local match to provide
50 transportation alternatives, and to help to
51 stimulate economic development and
52 tourism.

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

59
60 The Commonwealth needs to:

- 61 • Work with railroad executives to
- 62 provide greater access for passenger
- 63 service (for commuters and tourists).
- 64 • Develop a source of funds for cost-
- 65 effective intercity passenger service
- 66 and high-speed rail operations to
- 67 complement federal construction
- 68 funding.
- 69 • Work with surrounding states to
- 70 foster greater interstate passenger rail
- 71 service and to promote the
- 72 development of the Northeast high-
- 73 speed rail corridor, the New York to
- 74 Atlanta corridor and the
- 75 TransDominion Express, where these
- 76 systems provide meaningful
- 77 reduction of travel times, higher than
- 78 historic reliability and needed
- 79 coverage to vital business districts
- 80 which are in close proximity to
- 81 population centers.

82
83 VML believes the state needs to work with
84 rail executives and the commuter rail system
85 to permit commuter system extension and
86 expansion throughout the Commonwealth
87 and to develop a source of funds to
88 accomplish.

89
90 **AIR TRANSPORTATION**

91 VML wants the state and federal
92 governments to actively work to develop
93 and sustain comprehensive air service
94 throughout the Commonwealth, connecting

1 it to the mid-Atlantic region as well as the
2 entire country. Additionally, VML wants
3 the state and federal government to invest in
4 and deploy new technologies intended to
5 improve air service and safety.

6 The federal government is urged to
7 appropriate federal funds for airport
8 infrastructure improvements at authorized
9 levels and to develop a national airport
10 access strategy intended to stimulate local
11 economic development opportunities.

12
13 Additionally, the state is urged to
14 complement federal infrastructure
15 investments as well as expand state support
16 for capital improvements.

17
18 **PORTS AND WATER**
19 **TRANSPORTATION**

20 VML requests the protection and promotion
21 of an effective port and water transportation
22 system by:

- 23 • developing alternative water
24 transportation mechanisms to
25 alleviate congestion, such as ferries,
26 that will move people, goods and
27 vehicles as an alternative to road
28 travel;
- 29 • enhancing rail service to move goods
30 in and out of ports;
- 31 • deepening major water ports and
32 navigable rivers;
- 33 • relieving congestion in the ports by
34 enhancing rail and highway access
35 out of ports; and
- 36 • developing policies on the
37 disposal/reuse of shipping
38 containers.

39
40 Concerning the deepening of channels,
41 VML requests the state to work closely with
42 local governments regarding spoils disposal
43 from channel deepening.

44
45 The revenues derived from Virginia's public
46 ports are dedicated exclusively to the state.
47 Some portion should be shared with

48 localities to account for street and road
49 maintenance and police and fire protection
50 services directly related to the impacts of
51 tax-exempt port properties.

52
53 VML urges a significant study of the state's
54 water transportation system, including the
55 expanded use of barge traffic for freight
56 transportation.

57
58 **REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION**
59 **AUTHORITIES**

60 **Facilities**

61 VML supports by-right authority for the
62 creation of regional transportation
63 authorities to promote coordination of
64 transportation and related facilities.

65
66 **Town voting membership**

67 VML supports town voting membership on
68 regional transportation authorities

69
70 **Protective floor gas tax**

71 VML supports an amendment to Virginia
72 Code § 58.1-2295 which would establish a
73 protective floor price for the 2.1 percent
74 regional gas tax, much as was done for the
75 statewide fuels tax in §58.1-2217. Such a
76 floor concept is essential to provide a more
77 stable, dedicated revenue source needed for
78 long-term financing of regional projects as
79 well as bus and commuter rail operations.
80 The need is also highlighted by the recent
81 drop in fuel prices which has decreased gas
82 tax revenue available for regional projects in
83 Northern Virginia by about 40 percent since
84 2013. In Hampton Roads, transportation
85 planners have had to cut 14 projects because
86 of missed projections.

87
88 **LIVABILITY**

89 Streets do much more than move cars; they
90 often define community character and serve
91 as important public spaces. Small towns and
92 larger cities alike are using complete streets
93 policies to reclaim public space and solve
94 traffic problems at the same time. Many

1 complete street solutions are low-cost—
2 some are as simple as changing paint-
3 striping on pavement. VML supports
4 securing mainstream transportation funds for
5 non-motorized improvements and policy
6 changes that result in construction of
7 complete streets and improved bicycle and
8 pedestrian infrastructure within the existing
9 right of way.

10

11 **TRANSPORTATION NETWORK**

12 **COMPANIES**

13 VML supports state licensing of Internet-
14 based transportation network companies
15 (TNCs) as contained in HB 1662 (2015
16 session) which establishes safety and
17 insurance standards for vehicles and drivers.
18 VML acknowledges that state licensing is
19 preferable to local licensing recognizing the
20 wide area of operations of TNCs, the need to
21 avoid conflicting or competitive licensing
22 among jurisdictions, the need to establish a
23 functional basis for taxation, the need to
24 provide consistent driver credentials and the
25 need to ensure all segments of the
26 transportation industry are treated fairly.
27 VML supports open market pricing for
28 TNCs rather than fixed pricing, somewhat
29 like variable toll pricing on major highways.