



2018 TRANSPORTATION POLICY STATEMENT

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

1 use of petroleum. Such plans must
2 ensure that all Virginians — rural,
3 suburban and urban – are able to
4 contribute to and benefit from
5 statewide economic opportunities.

6 G. Congestion mitigation. Alleviation of
7 commuter congestion is essential to
8 economic development and to
9 enhance citizens’ quality of life.
10 Corridor-wide solutions which
11 promote alternative modes including
12 highways, transit and non-traditional
13 solutions still need to be developed.

14 **REVENUES**

15 Since the transportation needs of the state
16 are so much greater than the current funding
17 provisions, it remains essential that the
18 General Assembly continue and expand
19 transportation and infrastructure investment
20 which is fiscally sound, well documented
21 and serves local, regional and state-wide
22 needs by:

- 23 • Raising revenue from those who use the
24 transportation and transit systems;
- 25 • Increasing dedicated funding for public
26 transportation to meet transit operating
27 expenses and make Virginia competitive
28 for federal transport funds;
- 29 • Providing or extending as a local option
30 transportation impact fee authority to all
31 localities;
- 32 • Authorizing practical options for using
33 long-term financing for major
34 transportation projects;
- 35 • Providing full state funding for the
36 revenue sharing program as provided for
37 in §33.1-23.05;
- 38 • Seeking equity among various road users
39 by ensuring that trucks pay their share of
40 road costs. VML also advocates for
41 increased local influence when the state
42 considers mitigating negative impacts
43 resulting from truck traffic.
- 44
- 45
- 46

47 **PASS-THROUGH OF FEDERAL** 48 **FUNDS**

49 Localities are often successful in receiving
50 federal funds such as special appropriations
51 and enhancement funds. These funds
52 are passed through the State to localities
53 and the transfer of these funds is often
54 delayed. The federal government and the
55 state need to streamline the transfer of these
56 funds and allow localities to move forward
57 with these projects.

58 **SAFETY**

59 **Pedestrian**

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

70 **Bicycling**

71 VML also recommends changes to the Code
72 of Virginia clarifying the rights and
73 responsibilities of bicyclists in their use of
74 public streets in order to ensure the safety of
75 all road users.

76 **PRESERVATION OF RIGHTS-OF-** 77 **WAY**

78 Transportation projects take many years
79 from the planning stage to
80 construction. Localities need additional
81 authority to reserve miles of right-of-way
82 years in advance of any funding availability
83 for these projects, or risk development in the
84 path of these transportation projects.

85 **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

86 Smaller communities and regions require
87 additional and enhanced transportation
88 planning and technical assistance from

1 VDOT and DRPT. VDOT and DRPT,
2 therefore, have a continuing obligation to
3 assist these areas, including establishing
4 equitable equipment rental rates and
5 administrative costs.

6

7 **TRAFFIC CALMING**

8 VML supports continued improvements to
9 VDOT's traffic calming program to improve
10 safety for users of public streets.

11 Additionally, VML has supported, and
12 continues to support, expanding the
13 availability of photo-camera traffic
14 enforcement for all localities while
15 respecting civil rights.

16

17 **METROPOLITAN PLANNING 18 ORGANIZATIONS (MPOs)**

19 VML opposes broadening MPO voting
20 membership to include private sector
21 representatives. VML believes that
22 representation by public officials makes
23 MPOs accountable to citizens.

24

25 **PUBLIC TRANSIT**

26 Mass transit is critical to the state's
27 economy and the quality of life for all
28 Virginians. Public transit includes all
29 available multiple occupancy vehicle
30 services and technologies designed to
31 transport passengers on local and regional
32 routes.

33

34 VML supports:

- 35 1) increased federal and state funding for
- 36 public transit;
- 37 2) policies that allow for the equitable
- 38 distribution of such funding;
- 39 3) a dedicated source of funding to support
- 40 public transit; and
- 41 4) state legislation to provide localities with
- 42 additional taxing authority to adopt
- 43 regionally-based or local taxes to address
- 44 transit capital needs.

45

46 VML also appreciates congressional actions
47 taken to restore and make permanent parity
48 between employer-sponsored benefits for
49 parking and for mass transit riders.

50

51 Beginning in 2019, transit in Virginia faces
52 a 44 percent decrease in capital funding due
53 to the phasing out of Capital Project
54 Revenue (CPR) bond funds approved in
55 2007. VML supports the provisions of HB
56 1359 (2016 Session) that will issue a report
57 to the General Assembly by mid-2017 that
58 identifies possible sources of replacement
59 revenue and examines methodologies for
60 setting priorities for capital projects.

61

62 **RAIL TRANSPORTATION**

63 VML recommends the expansion of
64 interstate and intra-state passenger and
65 freight rail service corridors, with no
66 requirement for local match to provide
67 transportation alternatives, and to help to
68 stimulate economic development and
69 tourism.

70

71 State government and railroad executives
72 must work cooperatively with local officials
73 to improve and enhance railroad
74 maintenance, safety, traffic and conflicts
75 (for example at at-grade crossings).

76

77 The Commonwealth needs to:

- 78 • Work with railroad executives to provide
- 79 greater access for passenger service (for
- 80 commuters and tourists).
- 81 • Develop a source of funds for cost-
- 82 effective intercity passenger service and
- 83 high-speed rail operations to
- 84 complement federal construction
- 85 funding.
- 86 • Work with surrounding states to foster
- 87 greater interstate passenger rail service
- 88 and to promote the development of the
- 89 Northeast high-speed rail corridor, the
- 90 New York to Atlanta corridor and the
- 91 TransDominion Express, where these

1 systems provide meaningful reduction of
2 travel times, higher than historic
3 reliability and needed coverage to vital
4 business districts which are in close
5 proximity to population centers.

6
7 VML believes the state needs to work with
8 rail executives and the commuter rail system
9 to permit commuter system extension and
10 expansion throughout the Commonwealth
11 and to develop a source of funds to
12 accomplish.

13 14 **AIR TRANSPORTATION**

15 VML wants the state and federal
16 governments to actively work to develop
17 and sustain comprehensive air service
18 throughout the Commonwealth, connecting
19 it to the mid-Atlantic region as well as the
20 entire country. Additionally, VML wants
21 the state and federal government to invest in
22 and deploy new technologies intended to
23 improve air service and safety.

24
25 The federal government is urged to
26 appropriate federal funds for airport
27 infrastructure improvements at authorized
28 levels and to develop a national airport
29 access strategy intended to stimulate local
30 economic development opportunities.
31 Additionally, the state is urged to
32 complement federal infrastructure
33 investments as well as expand state support
34 for capital improvements.

35 36 **PORTS AND WATER** 37 **TRANSPORTATION**

38 VML requests the protection and promotion
39 of an effective port and water transportation
40 system by:

- 41 a. developing alternative water
42 transportation mechanisms to
43 alleviate congestion, such as ferries,
44 that will move people, goods and
45 vehicles as an alternative to road
46 travel;

- 47 b. enhancing rail service to move goods
48 in and out of ports;
49 c. deepening major water ports and
50 navigable rivers;
51 d. relieving congestion in the ports by
52 enhancing rail and highway access
53 out of ports; and
54 e. developing policies on the
55 disposal/reuse of shipping
56 containers.

57
58 Concerning the deepening of channels,
59 VML requests the state to work closely with
60 local governments regarding spoils disposal
61 from channel deepening.

62
63 The revenues derived from Virginia's public
64 ports are dedicated exclusively to the state.
65 Some portion should be shared with
66 localities to account for street and road
67 maintenance and police and fire protection
68 services directly related to the impacts of
69 tax-exempt port properties.

70
71 VML urges a significant study of the state's
72 water transportation system, including the
73 expanded use of barge traffic for freight
74 transportation.

75 76 **REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION** 77 **AUTHORITIES**

78 **Facilities**

79 VML supports by-right authority for the
80 creation of regional transportation
81 authorities to promote coordination of
82 transportation and related facilities.

83 84 **Town voting membership**

85 VML supports town voting membership on
86 regional transportation authorities

87 88 **Protective floor gas tax**

89 VML supports an amendment to Virginia
90 Code § 58.1-2295 which would establish a
91 protective floor price for the 2.1 percent
92 regional gas tax, much as was done for the

1 statewide fuels tax in §58.1-2217. Such a
2 floor concept is essential to provide a more
3 stable, dedicated revenue source needed for
4 long-term financing of regional projects as
5 well as bus and commuter rail operations.
6 The need is also highlighted by the drop in
7 fuel prices since FY 2013. (In FY 2016, the
8 absence of a floor price shrunk total gas tax
9 revenues in Northern Virginia by \$35.0
10 million, requiring localities to find other
11 resources to meet commitments made to
12 WMATA, VRE and PRTC commuter and
13 local bus services. In Hampton Roads,
14 regional gas taxes accounted in FY 2017 for
15 17.0 percent of the Hampton Roads
16 Transportation Fund. Actual collections fell
17 to one-third of the revenue projections,
18 affecting the progress of the region’s
19 transportation projects.)

20

21 **LIVABILITY**

22 Streets do much more than move cars; they
23 often define community character and serve
24 as important public spaces. Small towns and
25 larger cities alike are using complete streets
26 policies to reclaim public space and solve
27 traffic problems at the same time. Many
28 complete street solutions are low-cost—
29 some are as simple as changing paint-
30 striping on pavement. VML supports
31 securing mainstream transportation funds for
32 non-motorized improvements and policy
33 changes that result in construction of
34 complete streets and improved bicycle and
35 pedestrian infrastructure within the existing
36 right of way.

37

38 **TRANSPORTATION NETWORK** 39 **COMPANIES**

40 VML supports state licensing of Internet-
41 based transportation network companies
42 (TNCs) as contained in HB 1662 (2015
43 session) which establishes safety and
44 insurance standards for vehicles and drivers.
45 VML acknowledges that state licensing is
46 preferable to local licensing recognizing the

47 wide area of operations of TNCs, the need to
48 avoid conflicting or competitive licensing
49 among jurisdictions, the need to establish a
50 functional basis for taxation, the need to
51 provide consistent driver credentials and the
52 need to ensure all segments of the
53 transportation industry are treated fairly.
54 VML supports open market pricing for
55 TNCs rather than fixed pricing, somewhat
56 like variable toll pricing on major highways.