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## 2019 TRANSPORTATION POLICY STATEMENT

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- 1 Critical investments are needed to maintain 42  
2 and improve Virginia’s transportation 43  
3 network. The structural imbalance between 44  
4 critical needs and available resources 45  
5 persists. Even with past actions taken by the 46  
6 General Assembly to enact a transportation 47  
7 and public transit funding bill, the 48  
8 challenges abound for all transportation 49  
9 modes. The federal Highway Trust Fund, 50  
10 which pays for roads and transit, is barely 51  
11 solvent, and Congress has proven unable to 52  
12 develop a long-term solution. 53  
13 54  
14 VML is mindful of and acknowledges the 55  
15 contribution of the legislation enacted in the 56  
16 2013 session (HB2313) and in the 2014 57  
17 session SMART SCALE (HB 2) as 58  
18 important first steps in addressing the 59  
19 transportation needs of Virginia’s localities. 60  
20 Future legislative and administrative 61  
21 initiatives should be based on these 62  
22 principles: 63  
23 64  
24 A. Sustainable Funding. A stable and 65  
25 predictable plan which is 66  
26 comprehensive, which addresses 67  
27 investment across the state and 68  
28 which does not rely upon general 69  
29 fund revenue. 70  
30 B. Fiscal responsibility. Dedicated 71  
31 revenues, which are activity-based, 72  
32 will strengthen as the economy does. 73  
33 C. Statewide focus. Transportation is a 74  
34 statewide issue, not a regional, urban 75  
35 or rural issue. Every area of the state 76  
36 is economically hampered by 77  
37 insufficient infrastructure 78  
38 management. However, if the 79  
39 General Assembly chooses a funding 80  
40 approach that emphasizes regional 81  
41 efforts, then such opportunities 82  
83
- should be made available across the Commonwealth.
- D. Shared responsibility. Transportation planning and authority are delegated to regional bodies where they exist and to localities. These bodies prioritize and authorize individual projects within their jurisdictions, an essential element of equity which does require coordination among involved localities.
- E. Project prioritization. VML supports the collaborative approach taken by the Commonwealth Transportation Board to seek input from regional and local bodies to develop a statewide prioritization process to leverage the highest value of scarce resources by measuring targeted projects that expand capacity, address congestion mitigation, economic development, accessibility, safety, and environmental quality. VML recognizes the importance of having an objective, quantifiable, and consistent process that also takes the different needs of regions into consideration and recognizes the significant progress made on this issue through SMART SCALE implementation.
- F. Infrastructure modernization. Our transportation efforts must include a comprehensive statewide plan to provide transportation options for rail passenger and transit systems. Such plans must ensure that all Virginians — rural, suburban and urban – are able to contribute to and benefit from statewide economic opportunities.

1 G. Congestion mitigation. Alleviation of  
2 commuter congestion is essential to  
3 economic development and to  
4 enhance citizens' quality of life.  
5 Corridor-wide solutions which  
6 promote alternative modes including  
7 highways, transit and non-traditional  
8 solutions still need to be developed.  
9

## 10 REVENUES

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

- 19
- 20 • Raising revenue from those who use the
- 21 transportation and transit systems;
- 22 • Identifying new revenue streams for
- 23 state-wide, regional, and local
- 24 transportation needs while preserving
- 25 existing funding sources;
- 26 • Increasing dedicated funding for public
- 27 transportation to meet transit operating
- 28 and capital expenses and make Virginia
- 29 competitive for federal transport funds;
- 30 • Providing or extending as a local option
- 31 transportation impact fee authority to all
- 32 localities;
- 33 • Authorizing practical options for using
- 34 long-term financing for major
- 35 transportation projects;
- 36 • Providing full state funding for the
- 37 revenue sharing program as provided for
- 38 in § 33.2-357; and
- 39 • Seeking equity among various road users
- 40 by ensuring that trucks pay their share of
- 41 road costs. VML also advocates for
- 42 increased local influence when the state
- 43 considers mitigating negative impacts
- 44 resulting from truck traffic.
- 45

## 46 PASS-THROUGH OF FEDERAL 47 FUNDS

48 Localities are often successful in receiving  
49 federal funds such as special appropriations  
50 and enhancement funds. These funds  
51 are passed through the State to localities  
52 and the transfer of these funds is often  
53 delayed. The federal government and the  
54 state need to streamline the transfer of these  
55 funds and allow localities to move forward  
56 with these projects. Additionally, localities  
57 with limited experience with federal projects  
58 should be provided training to reduce  
59 administrative risks.  
60

## 61 SAFETY

### 62 Vision Zero

63 Vision Zero approaches road safety through  
64 aggressive casualty reduction goals,  
65 coordinated and interdisciplinary actions,  
66 increased priority and resources allocated  
67 towards road safety improvement, and an  
68 overarching policy framework. VML  
69 supports the state's Vision Zero approach to  
70 transportation safety in state highway safety  
71 plans and encourages VDOT to collaborate  
72 and provide resources where appropriate to  
73 reach the Arrive Alive goal and the intent of  
74 Vision Zero.  
75

### 76 Pedestrian

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

### 88 Bicycling

89 VML also recommends changes to the Code  
90 of Virginia clarifying the rights and  
91 responsibilities of bicyclists in their use of

1 public streets in order to ensure the safety of  
2 all road users.

3  
4 **PRESERVATION OF RIGHTS-OF-  
5 WAY**

6 Transportation projects take many years  
7 from the planning stage to  
8 construction. Localities need additional  
9 authority to reserve miles of right-of-way  
10 years in advance of any funding availability  
11 for these projects, or risk development in the  
12 path of these transportation projects.

13  
14 **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

15 Smaller communities and regions require  
16 additional and enhanced transportation  
17 planning and technical assistance from the  
18 state. This includes establishing equitable  
19 equipment rental rates and administrative  
20 costs.

21  
22 **TRAFFIC CALMING**

23 VML supports continued improvements to  
24 VDOT's traffic calming program to improve  
25 safety for users of public streets.  
26 Additionally, VML has supported, and  
27 continues to support, expanding the  
28 availability of photo-camera traffic  
29 enforcement for all localities in the context  
30 of a defined transportation safety program  
31 that includes engineering, enforcement,  
32 education, and emergency response  
33 elements while respecting civil rights.

34  
35 **METROPOLITAN PLANNING  
36 ORGANIZATIONS (MPOs)**

37 VML opposes broadening MPO voting  
38 membership to include private sector  
39 representatives. VML believes that  
40 representation by public officials makes  
41 MPOs accountable to citizens.

42  
43 **PUBLIC TRANSIT**

44 Mass transit is critical to the state's  
45 economy and the quality of life for all  
46 Virginians. Public transit includes all  
47 available multiple occupancy vehicle

48 services and technologies designed to  
49 transport passengers on local and regional  
50 routes.

51  
52 VML supports:

- 53 1) increased federal and state funding for
- 54 public transit;
- 55 2) policies that allow for the equitable
- 56 distribution of such funding;
- 57 3) a dedicated source of funding to support
- 58 public transit; and
- 59 4) state legislation to provide localities with
- 60 additional taxing authority to adopt
- 61 regionally-based or local taxes to address
- 62 transit capital needs.

63  
64 VML also appreciates congressional actions  
65 taken to restore and make permanent the  
66 \$260 per month parity between employer-  
67 sponsored benefits for parking and for mass  
68 transit riders. (The federal tax deduction  
69 taken by employers for providing these  
70 benefits ended under the Tax Cuts and Job  
71 Act enacted in December 2017.)

72  
73 **RAIL TRANSPORTATION**

74 VML recommends the expansion of  
75 interstate and intra-state passenger and  
76 freight rail service corridors, with no  
77 requirement for local match to provide  
78 transportation alternatives, and to help to  
79 stimulate economic development and  
80 tourism.

81  
82 State government and railroad executives  
83 must work cooperatively with local officials  
84 to improve and enhance railroad  
85 maintenance, safety, traffic and conflicts  
86 (for example at at-grade crossings).

87  
88 The Commonwealth needs to:

- 89 • Work with railroad executives to provide
- 90 greater access for passenger service (for
- 91 commuters and tourists).
- 92 • Strengthen funding for cost-effective
- 93 intercity passenger service and high-

1 speed rail operations to complement  
2 federal construction funding.  
3 • Work with surrounding states to foster  
4 greater interstate passenger rail service  
5 and to promote the development of the  
6 Northeast high-speed rail corridor, the  
7 New York to Atlanta corridor and  
8 services to Western Virginia, where  
9 these systems provide meaningful  
10 reduction of travel times, higher than  
11 historic reliability and needed coverage  
12 to vital business districts which are in  
13 close proximity to population centers.  
14  
15 VML believes the state needs to work with  
16 rail executives and the commuter rail system  
17 to permit commuter system extension and  
18 expansion throughout the Commonwealth  
19 and to develop a source of funds to  
20 accomplish.

21  
22 **AIR TRANSPORTATION**

23 VML wants the state and federal  
24 governments to actively work to develop  
25 and sustain comprehensive air service  
26 throughout the Commonwealth, connecting  
27 it to the mid-Atlantic region as well as the  
28 entire country. Additionally, VML wants  
29 the state and federal government to invest in  
30 and deploy new technologies intended to  
31 improve air service and safety.

32  
33 The federal government is urged to  
34 appropriate federal funds for airport  
35 infrastructure improvements at authorized  
36 levels and to develop a national airport  
37 access strategy intended to stimulate local  
38 economic development opportunities.  
39 Additionally, the state is urged to  
40 complement federal infrastructure  
41 investments as well as expand state support  
42 for capital improvements.

43  
44 **PORTS AND WATER**  
45 **TRANSPORTATION**

46 VML requests the protection and promotion  
47 of an effective port and water transportation  
48 system by:  
49 a. developing alternative water  
50 transportation mechanisms to  
51 alleviate congestion, such as ferries,  
52 that will move people, goods and  
53 vehicles as an alternative to road  
54 travel;  
55 b. enhancing rail service to move goods  
56 in and out of ports;  
57 c. deepening major water ports and  
58 navigable rivers;  
59 d. relieving congestion in the ports by  
60 enhancing rail and highway access  
61 out of ports; and  
62 e. developing policies on the  
63 disposal/reuse of shipping  
64 containers.

65  
66 Concerning the deepening of channels,  
67 VML requests the state to work closely with  
68 local governments regarding spoils disposal  
69 from channel deepening.

70  
71 The revenues derived from Virginia's public  
72 ports are dedicated exclusively to the state.  
73 Some portion should be shared with  
74 localities to account for street and road  
75 maintenance and police and fire protection  
76 services directly related to the impacts of  
77 tax-exempt port properties.

78  
79 VML urges a significant study of the state's  
80 water transportation system, including the  
81 expanded use of barge traffic for freight  
82 transportation.

83  
84 **REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION**  
85 **AUTHORITIES**

86 **Facilities**  
87 VML supports by-right authority for the  
88 creation of regional transportation  
89 authorities to promote coordination of  
90 transportation and related facilities.

91  
92 **Town voting membership**

1 VML supports town voting membership on  
2 regional transportation authorities  
3  
4 **Protective floor gas tax**  
5 VML thanks the General Assembly for  
6 amending Virginia Code § 58.1-2295 to  
7 establish a protective floor price for the 2.1  
8 percent regional gas tax, much as was done  
9 for the statewide fuels tax in §58.1-2217.  
10 Such a floor concept is essential to provide a  
11 more stable, dedicated revenue source  
12 needed for long-term financing of regional  
13 projects as well as bus and commuter rail  
14 operations.

15  
16 **LIVABILITY**  
17 Streets do much more than move cars; they  
18 often define community character and serve  
19 as important public spaces. Small towns and  
20 larger cities alike are using complete streets  
21 policies to reclaim public space and solve  
22 traffic problems at the same time. Many  
23 complete street solutions are low-cost—  
24 some are as simple as changing paint-  
25 striping on pavement. VML supports  
26 securing mainstream transportation funds for  
27 non-motorized improvements and policy  
28 changes that result in construction of  
29 complete streets and improved bicycle and  
30 pedestrian infrastructure within the existing  
31 right of way.

32  
33 **TRANSPORTATION NETWORK**  
34 **COMPANIES**  
35 VML supports state licensing of Internet-  
36 based transportation network companies  
37 (TNCs) as contained in HB 1662 (2015  
38 session) which establishes safety and  
39 insurance standards for vehicles and drivers.  
40 VML acknowledges that state licensing is  
41 preferable to local licensing recognizing the  
42 wide area of operations of TNCs, the need to  
43 avoid conflicting or competitive licensing  
44 among jurisdictions, the need to establish a  
45 functional basis for taxation, the need to  
46 provide consistent driver credentials and the  
47 need to ensure all segments of the

48 transportation industry are treated fairly.  
49 VML supports open market pricing for  
50 TNCs rather than fixed pricing, somewhat  
51 like variable toll pricing on major highways.  
52 VML also supports development of data-  
53 sharing agreements with TNCs to require the  
54 companies to share general trip information  
55 with DMV and which would be made  
56 available to all jurisdictions.