
2019 TRANSPORTATION POLICY STATEMENT

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|----|--|----|----|---|
| 1 | Critical investments are needed to maintain | 45 | D. | Shared responsibility. Transportation |
| 2 | and improve Virginia’s transportation | 46 | | planning and authority are delegated |
| 3 | network. The structural imbalance between | 47 | | to regional bodies where they exist |
| 4 | critical needs and available resources | 48 | | and to localities. These bodies |
| 5 | persists. Even with past actions taken by the | 49 | | prioritize and authorize individual |
| 6 | General Assembly to enact a transportation | 50 | | projects within their jurisdictions, an |
| 7 | and public transit funding bill, the | 51 | | essential element of equity which |
| 8 | challenges abound for all transportation | 52 | | does require coordination among |
| 9 | modes. The federal Highway Trust Fund, | 53 | | involved localities. |
| 10 | which pays for roads and transit, is barely | 54 | E. | Project prioritization. VML supports |
| 11 | solvent, and Congress has proven unable to | 55 | | the collaborative approach taken by |
| 12 | develop a long-term solution. | 56 | | the Commonwealth Transportation |
| 13 | | 57 | | Board to seek input from regional |
| 14 | VML is mindful of and acknowledges the | 58 | | and local bodies to develop a |
| 15 | contribution of the legislation enacted in the | 59 | | statewide prioritization process to |
| 16 | 2013 session (HB2313) and in the 2014 | 60 | | leverage the highest value of scarce |
| 17 | session SMART SCALE (HB 2) as | 61 | | resources by measuring targeted |
| 18 | important first steps in addressing the | 62 | | projects that expand capacity, |
| 19 | transportation needs of Virginia’s localities. | 63 | | address congestion mitigation, |
| 20 | Future legislative and administrative | 64 | | economic development, accessibility, |
| 21 | initiatives should be based on these | 65 | | safety, and environmental quality. |
| 22 | principles: | 66 | | VML recognizes the importance of |
| 23 | | 67 | | having an objective, quantifiable, |
| 24 | A. Sustainable Funding. A stable and | 68 | | and consistent process that also takes |
| 25 | predictable plan which is | 69 | | the different needs of regions into |
| 26 | comprehensive, which addresses | 70 | | consideration and recognizes the |
| 27 | investment across the state and | 71 | | significant progress made on this |
| 28 | which does not rely upon general | 72 | | issue through SMART SCALE |
| 29 | fund revenue. | 73 | | implementation. |
| 30 | B. Fiscal responsibility. Dedicated | 74 | F. | Infrastructure modernization. Our |
| 31 | revenues, which are activity-based, | 75 | | transportation efforts must include a |
| 32 | will strengthen as the economy does. | 76 | | comprehensive statewide plan to |
| 33 | C. Statewide focus. Transportation is a | 77 | | provide transportation options for |
| 34 | statewide issue, not a regional, urban | 78 | | rail passenger and transit systems. |
| 35 | or rural issue. Every area of the state | 79 | | Such plans must ensure that all |
| 36 | is economically hampered by | 80 | | Virginians — rural, suburban and |
| 37 | insufficient infrastructure | 81 | | urban – are able to contribute to and |
| 38 | management. However, if the | 82 | | benefit from statewide economic |
| 39 | General Assembly chooses a funding | 83 | | opportunities. |
| 40 | approach that emphasizes regional | 84 | G. | Congestion mitigation. Alleviation of |
| 41 | efforts, then such opportunities | 85 | | commuter congestion is essential to |
| 42 | should be made available across the | 86 | | economic development and to |
| 43 | Commonwealth. | 87 | | enhance citizens’ quality of life. |
| 44 | | 88 | | Corridor-wide solutions which |
| | | 89 | | promote alternative modes including |

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

3 **REVENUES**

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

- 13
- 14 • Raising revenue from those who use the
- 15 transportation and transit systems;
- 16 • Identifying new revenue streams for
- 17 state-wide, regional, and local
- 18 transportation needs while preserving
- 19 existing funding sources;
- 20 • Increasing dedicated funding for public
- 21 transportation to meet transit operating
- 22 and capital expenses and make Virginia
- 23 competitive for federal transport funds;
- 24 • Providing or extending as a local option
- 25 transportation impact fee authority to all
- 26 localities;
- 27 • Authorizing practical options for using
- 28 long-term financing for major
- 29 transportation projects;
- 30 • Providing full state funding for the
- 31 revenue sharing program as provided for
- 32 in § 33.2-357; and
- 33 • Seeking equity among various road users
- 34 by ensuring that trucks pay their share of
- 35 road costs. VML also advocates for
- 36 increased local influence when the state
- 37 considers mitigating negative impacts
- 38 resulting from truck traffic.
- 39

40 **PASS-THROUGH OF FEDERAL** 41 **FUNDS**

42 Localities are often successful in receiving
43 federal funds such as special appropriations
44 and enhancement funds. These funds
45 are passed through the State to localities
46 and the transfer of these funds is often

47 delayed. The federal government and the
48 state need to streamline the transfer of these
49 funds and allow localities to move forward
50 with these projects. Additionally, localities
51 with limited experience with federal projects
52 should be provided training to reduce
53 administrative risks.

54 **SAFETY**

55 **Vision Zero**

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

69 **Pedestrian**

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

81 **Bicycling**

82 VML also recommends changes to the Code
83 of Virginia clarifying the rights and
84 responsibilities of bicyclists in their use of
85 public streets in order to ensure the safety of
86 all road users.
87

88 **PRESERVATION OF RIGHTS-OF-** 89 **WAY**

90 Transportation projects take many years
91 from the planning stage to
92 construction. Localities need additional
93

1 authority to reserve miles of right-of-way
2 years in advance of any funding availability
3 for these projects, or risk development in the
4 path of these transportation projects.

5
6 **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

7 Smaller communities and regions require
8 additional and enhanced transportation
9 planning and technical assistance from the
10 state. This includes establishing equitable
11 equipment rental rates and administrative
12 costs.

13
14 **TRAFFIC CALMING**

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

18 Additionally, VML has supported, and
19 continues to support, expanding the
20 availability of photo-camera traffic
21 enforcement for all localities in the context
22 of a defined transportation safety program
23 that includes engineering, enforcement,
24 education, and emergency response
25 elements while respecting civil rights.

26
27 **METROPOLITAN PLANNING**

28 **ORGANIZATIONS (MPOs)**

29 VML opposes broadening MPO voting
30 membership to include private sector
31 representatives. VML believes that
32 representation by public officials makes
33 MPOs accountable to citizens.

34
35 **PUBLIC TRANSIT**

36 Mass transit is critical to the state's
37 economy and the quality of life for all
38 Virginians. Public transit includes all
39 available multiple occupancy vehicle
40 services and technologies designed to
41 transport passengers on local and regional
42 routes.

43
44 VML supports:

45 1) increased federal and state funding for
46 public transit;

47 2) policies that allow for the equitable
48 distribution of such funding;

49 3) a dedicated source of funding to support
50 public transit; and

51 4) state legislation to provide localities with
52 additional taxing authority to adopt
53 regionally-based or local taxes to address
54 transit capital needs.

55
56 VML also appreciates congressional actions
57 taken to restore and make permanent the
58 \$260 per month parity between employer-
59 sponsored benefits for parking and for mass
60 transit riders. (The federal tax deduction
61 taken by employers for providing these
62 benefits ended under the Tax Cuts and Job
63 Act enacted in December 2017.)

64
65 **RAIL TRANSPORTATION**

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

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

79
80 The Commonwealth needs to:

- 81 • Work with railroad executives to provide
82 greater access for passenger service (for
83 commuters and tourists).
- 84 • Strengthen funding for cost-effective
85 intercity passenger service and high-
86 speed rail operations to complement
87 federal construction funding.
- 88 • Work with surrounding states to foster
89 greater interstate passenger rail service
90 and to promote the development of the
91 Northeast high-speed rail corridor, the
92 New York to Atlanta corridor and
93 services to Western Virginia, where

1 these systems provide meaningful
2 reduction of travel times, higher than
3 historic reliability and needed coverage
4 to vital business districts which are in
5 close 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 thanks the General Assembly for
90 amending Virginia Code § 58.1-2295 to
91 establish a protective floor price for the 2.1
92 percent regional gas tax, much as was done
93 for the statewide fuels tax in §58.1-2217.

1 Such a floor concept is essential to provide a
2 more stable, dedicated revenue source
3 needed for long-term financing of regional
4 projects as well as bus and commuter rail
5 operations.

6
7 **LIVABILITY**

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

23
24 **TRANSPORTATION NETWORK**
25 **COMPANIES**

26 VML supports state licensing of Internet-
27 based transportation network companies
28 (TNCs) as contained in HB 1662 (2015
29 session) which establishes safety and
30 insurance standards for vehicles and drivers.
31 VML acknowledges that state licensing is
32 preferable to local licensing recognizing the
33 wide area of operations of TNCs, the need to
34 avoid conflicting or competitive licensing
35 among jurisdictions, the need to establish a
36 functional basis for taxation, the need to
37 provide consistent driver credentials and the
38 need to ensure all segments of the
39 transportation industry are treated fairly.
40 VML supports open market pricing for
41 TNCs rather than fixed pricing, somewhat
42 like variable toll pricing on major highways.
43 VML also supports development of data-
44 sharing agreements with TNCs to require the
45 companies to share general trip information
46 with DMV and which would be made
47 available to all jurisdictions.