
2022 DRAFT TRANSPORTATION POLICY STATEMENT

1 Critical investments are needed to maintain 46 available across the
2 and improve Virginia’s transportation 47 Commonwealth.
3 network. The structural imbalance between 48
4 critical needs and available resources 49
5 persists. Even with past actions taken by 50
6 the General Assembly to enact a 51
7 transportation and public transit funding 52
8 bill, the challenges abound for all 53
9 transportation modes. The federal 54
10 Highway Trust Fund, which pays for roads 55
11 and transit, is barely solvent, and Congress 56
12 has proven unable to develop a long-term 57
13 solution. 58
14 59
15 VML is mindful of and acknowledges the 60
16 contribution of the legislation enacted in 61
17 the 2013 session (HB2313), and in the 2014 62
18 session SMART SCALE (HB 2) and the 63
19 2020 session (HB1140/SB890) as 64
20 important first steps in addressing the 65
21 transportation needs of Virginia’s localities. 66
22 Future legislative and administrative 67
23 initiatives should be based on these 68
24 principles: 69
25 70
26 A. Sustainable Funding. A stable and 71
27 predictable plan which is 72
28 comprehensive, which addresses 73
29 investment across the state and 74
30 which does not rely upon general 75
31 fund revenue. 76
32 B. Fiscal responsibility. Dedicated 77
33 revenues, which are activity-based, 78
34 will strengthen as the economy 79
35 does. 80
36 C. Statewide focus. Transportation is a 81
37 statewide issue, not a regional, 82
38 urban, or rural issue. Every area of 83
39 the state is economically hampered 84
40 by insufficient infrastructure 85
41 management. However, if the 86
42 General Assembly chooses a 87
43 funding approach that emphasizes 88
44 regional efforts, then such 89
45 opportunities should be made

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
2 of commuter congestion is essential
3 to economic development to
4 enhancing citizens' quality of life
5 and improving resilience to the
6 impacts of a changing climate.
7 Corridor-wide solutions which
8 promote alternative modes
9 including highways, transit and
10 non-traditional solutions still need
11 to be developed.

12 H. Resilience. Decisions to construct
13 or modify transportation facilities
14 and other infrastructure
15 improvements must assess the
16 benefits and costs of adapting to sea
17 level rise and extreme events and
18 disturbances. Transportation
19 funding and plans must anticipate
20 the impacts of pandemics which
21 impact how Virginians use the
22 transportation network as well as
23 transportation revenues.

24 I. Locally Administered Projects. Any
25 performance metrics tied to locally
26 administered projects or attempt to
27 compare local completion of locally
28 administered projects should not
29 diminish the ability of localities to
30 continue to administer projects.

31 **REVENUES**

32 Since the transportation needs of the state
33 are so much greater than the current
34 funding provisions, it remains essential that
35 the General Assembly continue and expand
36 transportation and infrastructure investment
37 which is fiscally sound, well documented
38 and serves local, regional and statewide
39 needs by:
40

- 41
- 42 • Raising revenue from those who use the
43 transportation and transit systems;
- 44 • Identifying new revenue streams for
45 statewide, regional, and local
46 transportation needs while preserving
47 existing funding sources;

- 48 • Increasing dedicated funding for public
49 transportation to meet transit operating
50 and capital expenses and make Virginia
51 competitive for federal transportation
52 funds;
- 53 • Providing or extending as a local option
54 transportation impact fee authority to
55 all localities;
- 56 • Authorizing practical options for using
57 long-term financing for major
58 transportation projects;
- 59 • Encouraging the restoration of Revenue
60 Sharing projects for localities and
61 removal of emergency cash flow
62 mitigation strategies implemented as a
63 response to the 2020 recession as soon
64 as possible while also returning to the
65 pre-recession funding cycle.
- 66 • Providing full state funding for the
67 revenue sharing program as provided
68 for in § 33.2-357; and
- 69 • Seeking equity among various road
70 users by ensuring that trucks pay their
71 share of road costs. VML also
72 advocates for increased local influence
73 when the state considers mitigating
74 negative impacts resulting from truck
75 traffic.

76 Any attempt at repurposing state funds
77 distributed to localities should allow
78 impacted localities the opportunity to
79 provide input in the legislative process at
80 the committee level when proposals
81 directly impact annual transportation
82 funding. VML opposes the redirection of
83 the local share of state transportation funds
84 distributed to localities across multiple
85 regions for transportation projects in a
86 single region.

87 **PASS-THROUGH OF FEDERAL FUNDS**

88 Localities are often successful in receiving
89 federal funds such as special appropriations
90 and enhancement funds. These funds
91 are passed through the state to localities
92 and the transfer of these funds is often
93
94

1 delayed. The federal government and the
2 state need to streamline the transfer of these
3 funds and allow localities to move forward
4 with these projects. Additionally, localities
5 with limited experience with federal
6 projects should be provided training to
7 reduce administrative risks.

8

9 **SAFETY**

10 **Vision Zero**

11 Vision Zero approaches road safety through
12 aggressive casualty reduction goals,
13 coordinated and interdisciplinary actions,
14 increased priority and resources allocated
15 towards road safety improvement, and an
16 overarching policy framework. VML
17 supports the state's Vision Zero approach
18 to transportation safety in state highway
19 safety plans and encourages VDOT to
20 collaborate and provide resources where
21 appropriate to reach the Arrive Alive goal
22 and the intent of Vision Zero.

23

24 **Pedestrians**

25 VML recommends that the Code of
26 Virginia be amended to clarify the
27 respective rights and duties of pedestrians
28 and vehicle drivers. VML appreciates
29 efforts by the General Assembly to require
30 drivers to stop, not just yield, for
31 pedestrians in all marked and unmarked
32 crosswalks. In addition, police need the
33 ability to issue simpler citations than
34 currently allowed under Virginia law to
35 more effectively enforce the laws against
36 jay walking.

37

38 VML supports maintaining the authority of
39 localities to design, upgrade, improve, and
40 maintain crosswalks on locally owned and
41 maintained streets and rights of way.

42

43 **Bicycling**

44 VML recommends changes to the Code of
45 Virginia updating the rights and
46 responsibilities of drivers and bicyclists in

47 their use of public streets in order to ensure
48 the safety of all road users.

49

50 To encourage the continued development
51 of multi-modal trails, paths, and
52 infrastructure VML supports state and
53 federal funding formulas that do not
54 penalize multi-modal infrastructure that is
55 not constructed adjacent to existing roads.

56

57 **Multi-Modal Transportation Options**

58 VML supports multi-modal transportation
59 options, including but not limited to
60 scooters, mopeds, and electric bicycles, at
61 both the local and regional levels. This
62 support is conditioned in that local input
63 and local rights, including regulation, on
64 access to multi-modal facilities are
65 recognized by the state.

66

67 **PRESERVATION OF RIGHTS-OF-** 68 **WAY**

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

76

77 **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

78 Smaller communities and regions require
79 additional and enhanced transportation
80 planning and technical assistance from the
81 state. This includes establishing equitable
82 equipment rental rates and administrative
83 costs.

84

85 **TRAFFIC CALMING**

86 VML supports continued improvements to
87 VDOT's traffic calming program to
88 improve safety for users of public streets.
89 Additionally, VML has supported, and
90 continues to support, expanding the
91 availability of photo-camera traffic
92 enforcement for all localities in the context
93 of a defined transportation safety program

1 that includes engineering, enforcement,
2 education, and emergency response
3 elements while respecting civil rights.

4
5 **METROPOLITAN PLANNING**
6 **ORGANIZATIONS (MPOs)**

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

12
13 **PUBLIC TRANSIT**

14 Mass transit is critical to the state's
15 economy and the quality of life for all
16 Virginians. Public transit includes all
17 available multiple occupancy vehicle
18 services and technologies designed to
19 transport passengers on local and regional
20 routes.

21
22 VML supports:

- 23 1) increased federal and state funding for
24 public transit;
25 2) policies that allow for the equitable
26 distribution of such funding;
27 3) a dedicated source of funding to support
28 public transit; and
29 4) state legislation to provide localities with
30 additional taxing authority to adopt
31 regionally-based or local taxes to address
32 transit capital needs.

33
34 VML also appreciates congressional
35 actions taken to restore and make
36 permanent the \$260 per month parity
37 between employer-sponsored benefits for
38 parking and for mass transit riders. (The
39 federal tax deduction taken by employers
40 for providing these benefits ended under
41 the Tax Cuts and Job Act enacted in
42 December 2017.)

43
44 **RAIL TRANSPORTATION**

45 VML recommends the responsible
46 expansion of interstate and intra-state
47 passenger and freight rail service corridors,

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

52
53 State government and railroad executives
54 must work cooperatively with local
55 officials to improve and enhance railroad
56 maintenance, safety, traffic, emergency
57 response and conflicts (for example at at-
58 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 • Strengthen funding for cost-effective
65 intercity passenger service and high-
66 speed rail operations to complement
67 federal construction funding.
68 • Work with surrounding states to foster
69 greater interstate passenger rail service
70 and to promote the development of the
71 Northeast high-speed rail corridor, the
72 New York to Atlanta corridor and
73 services to Western Virginia, where
74 these systems provide meaningful
75 reduction of travel times, higher than
76 historic reliability and needed coverage
77 to vital business districts which are in
78 close proximity to population centers.

79
80 VML believes the state needs to work with
81 rail executives and the commuter rail
82 system to permit commuter system
83 extension and expansion throughout the
84 Commonwealth, as well as transportation
85 innovations that improve the speed of
86 service and to develop a source of funds to
87 accomplish this goal

88
89 **[Virginia Passenger Rail Authority](#)**
90 **[In recognition of the newly created](#)**
91 **[Passenger Rail Authority and their role in](#)**
92 **[improving and upgrading intercity](#)**
93 **[passenger rail service across the](#)**
94 **[commonwealth it is critical that localities](#)**

1 retain local land use control and that the
2 authority provide opportunities for
3 localities to provide input on rail projects
4 and improvements. It is also important to
5 consider using right of way for multi-modal
6 transportation corridors along right of way
7 that is acquired by the Authority

8
9 **AIR TRANSPORTATION**

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

19
20 The federal government is urged to
21 appropriate federal funds for airport
22 infrastructure improvements at authorized
23 levels and to develop a national airport
24 access strategy intended to stimulate local
25 economic development opportunities.
26 Additionally, the state is urged to
27 complement federal infrastructure
28 investments as well as expand state support
29 for capital improvements.

30
31 **PORTS AND WATER**
32 **TRANSPORTATION**

33 VML requests the protection and
34 promotion of an effective port and water
35 transportation system by:
36 a. developing alternative water
37 transportation mechanisms to
38 alleviate congestion, such as ferries,
39 that will move people, goods and
40 vehicles as an alternative to road
41 travel;
42 b. enhancing rail service to move
43 goods in and out of ports;
44 c. deepening major water ports and
45 navigable rivers;

46 d. relieving congestion in the ports by
47 enhancing rail and highway access
48 out of ports; and
49 e. developing policies on the
50 disposal/reuse of shipping
51 containers.

52
53 Concerning the deepening of channels,
54 VML requests the state to work closely
55 with local governments regarding spoils
56 disposal from channel deepening.

57
58 The revenues derived from Virginia's
59 public ports are dedicated exclusively to the
60 state. Some portion should be shared with
61 localities to account for street and road
62 maintenance and police and fire protection
63 services directly related to the impacts of
64 tax-exempt port properties.

65
66 VML urges a significant study of the state's
67 water transportation system, including the
68 expanded use of barge traffic for freight
69 transportation.

70
71 **REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION**
72 **AUTHORITIES**

73 **Facilities**
74 VML supports by-right authority for the
75 creation of regional transportation
76 authorities to promote coordination of
77 transportation and related facilities.

78
79 **Town voting membership**

80 VML supports town voting membership on
81 regional transportation authorities

82
83 **Protective floor gas tax**

84 VML thanks the General Assembly for
85 amending Code of Virginia § 58.1-2295 to
86 establish a protective floor price for the 2.1
87 percent regional gas tax, much as was done
88 for the statewide fuels tax in §58.1-2217.
89 Such a floor concept is essential to provide
90 a more stable, dedicated revenue source
91 needed for long-term financing of regional

1 projects as well as bus and commuter rail
2 operations.

3
4 **Annual Adjustment for Inflation**
5 VML thanks the General Assembly for
6 amending §58.1-2217 to ensure the motor
7 fuels tax grows with the rate of inflation as
8 measured by the U.S. Department of Labor.
9 This will ensure transportation revenues
10 keeps up with the increasing cost of goods
11 and services.

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

29
30 **TRANSPORTATION NETWORK**
31 **COMPANIES**
32 VML supports state licensing of Internet-
33 based transportation network companies
34 (TNCs) as contained in HB 1662 (2015
35 session) which establishes safety and
36 insurance standards for vehicles and
37 drivers. VML acknowledges that state
38 licensing is preferable to local licensing
39 recognizing the wide area of operations of
40 TNCs, the need to avoid conflicting or
41 competitive licensing among jurisdictions,
42 the need to establish a functional basis for
43 taxation, the need to provide consistent
44 driver credentials and the need to ensure all
45 segments of the transportation industry are
46 treated fairly. VML supports open market
47 pricing for TNCs rather than fixed pricing,

48 somewhat like variable toll pricing on
49 major highways. VML also supports
50 development of data-sharing agreements
51 with TNCs to require the companies to
52 share general trip information with DMV
53 and which would be made available to all
54 jurisdictions.

55
56 **Personal Delivery Devices**
57 Autonomous delivery devices often
58 operating as “personal delivery devices”
59 have legal authority to operate on sidewalks
60 owned, maintained by local governments.
61 VML supports local control of locally
62 owned sidewalks and the authority of
63 localities to regulate, tax, license, and
64 prohibit the use of devices on sidewalks.

65
66 **Technological Innovation**
67 VML supports research and
68 implementation of new technologies that
69 increase the efficiency, effectiveness, and
70 equity of the transportation system. Such
71 technologies should not create additional
72 fiscal burdens or bypass local decision
73 making.