



Virginia's Urban Crescent

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WILLIAMSBURG
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September 4, 2012

The Honorable Robert F. McDonnell
Governor
Commonwealth of Virginia

The Honorable William T. Bolling
Lieutenant Governor

The Honorable Thomas K. Norment, Jr.
Majority Leader
Senate of Virginia

The Honorable M. Kirkland Cox
Majority Leader
Virginia House of Delegates

Fredericksburg Area General Assembly Delegation
Hampton Roads General Assembly Delegation
Northern Virginia General Assembly Delegation
Petersburg Area General Assembly Delegation
Richmond Area General Assembly Delegation

The Honorable William J. Howell
Speaker of the Virginia House of Delegates

The Honorable Richard L. Saslaw
Minority Leader
Senate of Virginia

The Honorable David J. Toscano
Minority Leader
Virginia House of Delegates

Dear Governor McDonnell, Lieutenant Governor Bolling and Members of the Virginia General Assembly:

As local elected officials within the Urban Crescent, we appreciate your past efforts to address transportation funding. However, we have become increasingly alarmed by the transportation funding crisis currently facing the Commonwealth. We are writing to you to highlight the necessity for additional funding to address transportation infrastructure needs throughout our state.

On June 7, 2012, local elected officials from throughout the Crescent, which encompasses localities from Northern Virginia through the Richmond region to Hampton Roads, met to discuss these critical issues that affect the daily lives of all our residents. The consensus at the meeting was that Virginia's transportation system is significantly underfunded and the situation continues to deteriorate, as evidenced by some startling facts:

- State secondary and urban system construction funds have been eliminated.
- By 2017, no state funds will be available for highway construction, and the Commonwealth will be unable to fully match federal funds.
- Approximately 26 percent of VDOT-maintained roadways statewide are in poor condition, according to VDOT. However, that number is 34 percent for the Urban Crescent, including 39 percent in Northern Virginia, 36 percent in Hampton Roads and 31 percent in Richmond.

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- Only 66 percent of Virginia's secondary roads currently meet pavement performance targets. The cost, using VDOT's estimates, of meeting VDOT's goal of 82 percent of secondary roads in fair or better condition could be \$1.3 billion to \$1.8 billion.
- As localities continue to address congestion by providing more transit options, transit funding provided by the Commonwealth is far short of what is needed.
- In the Richmond area, commuters waste 20 hours per year stuck in traffic.
- In Hampton Roads, commuters waste 34 hours, and in
- Northern Virginia, commuters waste 74 hours.
- The morning and evening rush hours in the Urban Crescent last as long as two and a half to seven hours each day.

While a strong transportation system is important to all regions of the Commonwealth, it is particularly critical to the Urban Crescent. Although the Urban Crescent only comprises 24 percent of the land area in Virginia, it comprises 68 percent of the population and generates 79 percent of the gross product of Virginia. We also experience some of the worst traffic in the nation, and the condition of our roads and bridges continues to decline.

Virginians from all walks of life depend on a strong transportation network – allowing residents to travel to job sites, educational institutions, leisure activities and other places they need to reach in daily life. An efficient transportation network links communities; sustains our important tourism industry; maintains Virginia's critical role as a hub of national security efforts; allows businesses to move goods and provide services; and spurs economic development by drawing new businesses and revenues to our state every year. The Urban Crescent's economic health is vital to the Commonwealth, and without new investments in multimodal transportation, each of our regions' economies will decline, resulting in less revenue available to meet the myriad of Virginia's needs. These repercussions are already beginning to be felt, as evidenced by the recent CNBC Rankings of "America's Top States for Business." In the study, which was released on July 13, 2012, the Commonwealth's overall ranking in state competitiveness dropped from #1 to #3, and its ranking for Infrastructure and Transportation dropped from #10 to #33.

Though various efforts have been made in recent years to address the Commonwealth's transportation needs, adequate and sustainable solutions have not been achieved. We believe that the time for action is now, and that inaction is a "traffic tax" on our localities, our residents, our visitors, and our businesses, through decreased productivity, diminished quality of life, higher fuel costs, higher maintenance costs, and increased pollution. In that regard, we have endorsed the attached "Statement of Purpose," which asserts the need for further state investment in transportation infrastructure spending for all transportation modes. It is essential that this new investment come from stable, reliable, permanent, and balanced sources.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss our concerns with you and to assist you with the development of a solution. We look forward to your leadership on this issue. We understand that our representatives cannot solve this problem alone, and it is our intention to engage our business communities and residents in support of this effort. It is our hope that, with all of us working together, we can come to a solution that truly addresses our transportation needs.

Sincerely,

The Mayors and Chairs
of Virginia's Urban Crescent

Attachment – Statement of Purpose

Nader Baroukh, Mayor, City of Falls Church

Linda T. Johnson, Mayor, City of Suffolk

Sharon Bulova, Chair, Fairfax County

Dwight C. Jones, Mayor, City of Richmond

James H. Burrell, Chairman, New Kent County

Frank Jones, Mayor, City of Manassas Park

Alan E. Casteen, Chairman, Isle of Wight County

Mary K. Jones, Chair, James City County

Ned S. Creasey, Chairman, Goochland County

Alan P. Krasnoff, Mayor, City of Chesapeake

William D. Euille, Mayor, City of Alexandria

Robert W. Lazaro, Mayor, Town of Purcellville

Gerald M. Foreman, Mayor, Town of Dumfries

Judy S. Lyttle, Chair, Surry County

Paul D. Fraim, Mayor, City of Norfolk

Lisa C. Merkel, Mayor, Town of Herndon

Richard W. Glover, Chairman, Henrico County

Harry J. Parrish, II, Mayor, City of Manassas

Mary Katherine Greenlaw, Mayor City of Fredericksburg

McKinley L. Price, Mayor, City of Newport News

Clyde A. Haulman, Mayor, City of Williamsburg

Faye O. Prichard, Mayor, Town of Ashland

W. Eugene Hunt, Mayor, City of Poquoson

Carita J. Richardson, Mayor, Town of Windsor

Mary Hughes Hynes, Chair, Arlington County

M. Jane Seeman, Mayor, Town of Vienna

William D. Sessoms, Mayor, City of Virginia Beach

Kristen C. Umstattd, Mayor, Town of Leesburg

Thomas G. Shepperd, Chairman, York County

G. Ed Via, III, Chairman, Hanover County

R. Scott Silverthorne, Mayor, City of Fairfax

Molly J. Ward, Mayor, City of Hampton

Gilbert A. Smith, Chairman, Charles City County

Kenneth I. Wright, Mayor, City of Portsmouth

Corey A. Stewart, Chairman, Prince William County

Scott K. York, Chairman, Loudoun County

Carter M. Borden, Chairman, Gloucester County

T. Carter Williams, Town of Smithfield

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- A modern, efficient multimodal transportation system is essential to the Commonwealth, and is intrinsically tied to continued economic development, growth, job creation and the ability to compete in a global economy. Continued inaction, or a piecemeal approach, to the issue of transportation funding imposes an additional tax on our residents, families and businesses, through decreased productivity, diminished quality of life, higher fuel costs, higher vehicle maintenance costs and increased pollution and a lowered attraction to tourists and business leaders.
- Current state transportation revenues are vastly insufficient to maintain and build the multimodal infrastructure Virginia needs to remain an active and dynamic participant in a 21st Century economy. The gap identified between transportation needs and available revenues continues to widen dramatically each year.
- Transportation is fundamentally a state responsibility. As such, the Commonwealth must lead the efforts to provide more revenue for our transportation infrastructure.
- The Commonwealth of Virginia is facing a transportation funding crisis that must be addressed. Virginia needs real transportation solutions that provide significant increases in state transportation funding for all modes from new stable, reliable, permanent, and balanced source(s).
- Individual representatives from the Urban Crescent cannot solve this crisis alone. We, the mayors and chairs of the Urban Crescent, support the General Assembly and encourage our elected state leaders to take bold action to address this crisis.