

2019 represents an important milestone for the Central Garage. In my office is a 1946 report which notes:

“The Vermont State Garage, which is the central garage of the Highway Department, was established in 1919 as the result of a grant of World War I surplus equipment from the Federal Government... The principal functions of the State Garage are to furnish equipment, on a rental basis, to the Highway Districts for use in the construction, maintenance, and operation of highways; to maintain such equipment; and to furnish supplies for the operation of the equipment.”

One hundred years later, the Central Garage continues to provide and maintain the trucks and heavy equipment that VTrans uses to fulfill its mission. Then as now, an appropriate and well-maintained fleet supports our broader efforts to strengthen Vermont’s economy, minimize costs to taxpayers, and provide mobility for all of Vermont’s residents and visitors.

Our proposed FY '19 budget supports our “back-to-basics” priorities: maintaining a cost-effective replacement cycle of our most critical equipment, performing thorough preventive maintenance to ensure that equipment is ready to go to work, and promptly repairing any unforeseen breakdowns.

The proposed FY '19 Central Garage budget is \$20.7M; a 3.1% increase over that approved for FY '18. Noteworthy elements of the Central Garage’s proposed FY '19 budget include:

- A 2.3% increase for the regular replacement of vehicles and equipment, for a total of \$8.08M. Our investment in replacement equipment is specified by statute to be the sum of the annual depreciation of our assets, our auction proceeds from retired equipment, and a “supplemental transfer” meant cover inflationary cost increases.
 - With those funds we anticipate buying approximately 30 new plow trucks, 30 pick-ups, and a handful of loaders and excavators to replace aging equipment.
- A 12% (\$325K) increase for vehicle parts, plow equipment, and tires. Costs for these items continue to creep up. The budgeted amount is commensurate with our recent expenditures.
- Continued funding for shop tools, training, and facilities necessary to support service activities.
- Modest reductions in other line items have been identified to preserve funding for the most “mission critical” activities.
- Fuel costs are budgeted at the same levels as in FY '18: \$2.25/gallon for gasoline, and \$2.75/gallon for Diesel.

The VTrans fleet is generally in good shape and ready for work. Central Garage staff are skilled, equipped, and dedicated to keeping our trucks up and running.

We have a long history of support from this committee for which we are grateful. For further information, or if you have any questions, please contact Ken Valentine, VTrans Fleet Manager, at 802-279-7782, or ken.valentine@vermont.gov.