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Contact:
Danny Straessle/David Nilles

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ARDOT'S BROADWAY BRIDGE PROJECT COMPETING FOR BEST IN AMERICA

LITTLE ROCK (8-22) – The recently opened Broadway Bridge (U.S. Highway 70) spanning the Arkansas River between Little Rock and North Little Rock is among twelve finalists announced in the *2017 America's Transportation Awards* competition sponsored by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), AAA and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

The three highest scoring projects in four regional contests held across the country became the competition's Top 12 and are now competing for the national Grand Prize and the People's Choice Award, both of which come with a \$10,000 check for a charity or transportation-related scholarship of the winners' choosing.

Online voting for the People's Choice Award began on August 21, and continues through midnight eastern time on Thursday, September 21, at <http://AmericasTransportationAwards.org>. Individuals can vote once a day.

"We're honored to be a part of this competition," ARDOT Director Scott Bennett commented. "In addition to being a memorial to our military veterans, the new Broadway Bridge is an iconic part of the downtown areas of Little Rock and North Little Rock.

The Broadway Bridge project was awarded to Massman Construction Company of Kansas City in 2014 for \$98.4 million. Implosion of the old bridge and its removal from the river bottom were a part of the project. The new bridge features four lanes, a bicycle/pedestrian path, two 450-foot spans and incorporates basket handle arches.

"We're proud of everyone that was involved in the design and construction of the new bridge," Bennett added. "They got the job done on time and only closed the bridge to traffic for 152 days. That's quite an accomplishment."

Joining ARDOT in the competition are the Colorado Department of Transportation, Connecticut Department of Transportation, Idaho Transportation Department, Indiana Department of Transportation, Iowa Department of Transportation, Kansas Department of Transportation, Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, Maine Department of Transportation, Massachusetts Department of Transportation, Montana Department of Transportation and Virginia Department of Transportation.

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ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ArDOT.gov | IDriveArkansas.com | [Twitter: @myARDOT](https://twitter.com/myARDOT)

10324 Interstate 30 | P.O. Box 2261 | Little Rock, AR 72203-2261 | Phone: 501.569.2227

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Now in its 10th year, the competition judges projects in three categories and sizes: Quality of Life/Community Development, Best Use of Technology & Innovation, and new this year, Operations Excellence. The projects are also divided into three sizes: small projects (less than \$25 million); medium projects (\$25 million to \$200 million); and, large projects (more than \$200 million).

The competition's Grand Prize will be determined by an independent panel of transportation industry experts. The People's Choice Award will be selected through online voting by the general public. This year, online votes will be weighted to each state's population, allowing for greater competition between states with larger and smaller populations. The winners will be announced at the AASHTO Annual Meeting in Phoenix on Wednesday, September 27.

"We're excited about the high level of participation in this year's competition," said AASHTO Executive Director Bud Wright. "Transportation departments in the District of Columbia and 38 states submitted a record 92 project nominations. Not every nominee takes home a prize but the programs and projects being implemented and constructed across the country such as roads, bridges, bike and pedestrian trails are making communities safer, healthier and more prosperous, so the big winners are the American people."

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