



INFORMATION RELEASE

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ARDOT Earns America's Transportation Award For U.S. Highway 70 Improvements

PULASKI COUNTY (8-20) – The Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) has received a 2019 America's Transportation Award from the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), according to Department officials.

The award is in recognition of the U.S. Highway 70 widening project extending from Interstate 30 westward to Hot Springs. The project tied for first place in the "Operations Excellence, Medium Project" category.

The \$78.5 million Highway 70 project widened 17.5 miles of the highway to five lanes and replaced four bridges. Motorists' safety was also improved by constructing wider shoulders, straightening curves, flattening hills and installing a traffic signal at the intersection with State Highway 128. The project was completed three months ahead of schedule.

"We are thrilled to accept this recognition from our peers at AASHTO," ARDOT Director Scott Bennett commented. "The Department commends McGeorge Contracting Company for their excellent job on these improvements especially considering that the highway remained open to traffic during the entire project."

As a regional winner, the Highway 70 project will be considered for inclusion in the competition's "Top 12." The Top 12 compete for the top two prizes – the Grand Prize, chosen by an independent panel of judges, and the People's Choice Award, which is determined by the public through online voting. Both carry a \$10,000 cash prize to support a transportation-related scholarship or charitable cause and will be announced at the AASHTO Annual Meeting in St. Louis this October.

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This year, 39 state transportation departments are participating in the competition, nominating 81 projects in one of three categories: “Quality of Life/Community Development,” “Best Use of Technology & Innovation” and “Operations Excellence.”

“For 12 years, the America’s Transportation Awards have recognized state DOT projects for making communities safer, less congested, and better connected,” said Carlos Braceras, executive director of the Utah Department of Transportation and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials 2018-2019 president. “Today’s regional winners demonstrate how state DOTs collaborate with local communities and partners to develop innovative, multimodal solutions that keep people and goods moving by motor vehicle, scooters, bicycle, and on foot.”

Sponsored by AASHTO, the American Automobile Association (AAA) and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the America’s Transportation Awards competition was created to showcase all tremendous projects delivered by our State departments of transportation every year in order to tell the broader story on the importance of transportation.

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