Five Mid-America States Win Top Honors in National Competition
10th Annual Contest Recognizes America’s Best Transportation Projects

CLEVELAND – State department of transportation projects that used high-tech tools like Bluetooth sensors to make work zones safer and that improved pedestrian access to heavily traveled corridors were winners in the mid-America regional America’s Transportation Awards competition.

Now in its 10th year, the competition attracted 22 project nominations from nine mid-America states. Five of those states received awards for nine projects during an awards luncheon held today at the Mid America Association of State Transportation Officials Annual Meeting in Cleveland.

“Every project nominated in this competition represents the hard work and dedication of state DOTs across the country to meet the transportation needs of the communities we serve,” said David Bernhardt, president of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials and commissioner of the Maine Department of Transportation. “For 10 consecutive years, the America’s Transportation Awards have given state DOTs the recognition they deserve for providing the essential connections that keep people, goods and our economy moving forward.”

Sponsored by AASHTO, AAA, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the competition recognizes transportation projects in three categories: Quality of Life/Community Development, Best Use of Technology and Innovation and new this year, Operations Excellence. Winners are chosen by an independent panel of judges from within the transportation industry.

Three state DOTs took home awards in the Quality of Life/Community Development category. Minnesota DOT won in the small category (projects costing under $25 million) for its Highway 61/Main Street Project. The winner in the medium category (projects costing between $25 million and $200 million) was Missouri DOT’s U.S. 60 Freeway Project near Rogersville. Indiana DOT won in the large category (projects costing more than $200 million) for its Ohio River Bridges—East End Crossing.

In the Best Use of Technology and Innovation category, two winners were named. Missouri DOT won in the small category for its Columbia I-70 Bridges Design Build Project. Minnesota DOT’s Interstate 35E MnPASS Project won in the medium category.

In the Operations Excellence category, three state DOTs won awards. Iowa DOT’s Council Bluffs Interstate System Rail Relocation project won in the small category while Kansas DOT’s K-10 South Lawrence Trafficway East Leg Project won in the medium category. Two projects tied and were named
The final regional winners will be announced in August. The three highest-scoring projects from each region will advance to the “Top 12.” Those 12 projects will compete for the Grand Prize, determined by an independent panel of expert judges, and the People’s Choice Award, selected by the general public through online voting. The top two winning prizes also come with a $10,000 check, to be donated to a charity or scholarship of the state DOT’s choosing. Online voting begins Aug. 21. The winners of the top two awards will be announced at the AASHTO Annual Meeting in Phoenix in September.

Learn more about the nominees and the competition at www.AmericasTransportationAwards.org.

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials represent State Departments of Transportation in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. AASHTO is a nonprofit, nonpartisan association serving as a catalyst for and excellence in transportation. On Twitter: http://twitter.com/aashtospeaks.