



Six Southern States Receive Top Awards in National Competition



State department of transportation projects that swiftly addressed a spike in wrong-way driving fatalities and that used safety improvements to encourage

pedestrian and bicycle travel were winners in the southern regional America's Transportation Awards competition.

Now in its 10th year, the competition attracted 21 project nominations from 10 southern states. Six of those states today received awards for eight winning projects at the Southern Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials Annual Meeting in Norfolk, Va.

"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 were chosen by an independent panel of judges from within the transportation industry.

Two state DOTs took home awards in the Quality of Life/Community Development category. Virginia DOT won in the small project group (projects costing under \$25 million) for its Route 50 Traffic Calming project through Middleburg. The winner in the medium project group (projects costing between \$25 million and \$200 million) was South Carolina DOT's Broad River Road Bridge project.

In the Best Use of Technology and Innovation category, three winners were named. Florida DOT won in the small project group for its Wrong-Way Driving Mitigation Initiative. Arkansas DOT won in the medium project group for the Broadway Bridge over Arkansas River project. And Georgia DOT's I-75 South Metro Reversible Express Lanes project won in the large project group (projects costing more than \$200 million).

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About The FDOT

The goal of the DBE Supportive Services Program is to increase the number of DBEs participating on FDOT contracts and facilitate the opportunity for DBEs to obtain contracts. The services are designed to:

- Assist established construction firms to move them from bidding as a subcontractor to bidding as a Prime Contractor to produce sound bids.
- Provide access to training increases DBE expertise in handling of daily business operations.

About The Program

The Construction Estimating Institute (CEI) works with FDOT as the statewide provider of the federally funded Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) Supportive Services Program. We want to increase the number of certified DBEs participating in highway and bridge construction, as well as assist DBEs in growing and eventually becoming self-sufficient. Additionally, CEI provides supportive services by assisting prime contractors and consultants with identifying DBEs for subcontracting opportunities on priority projects.

Orlando area wins \$11.9 million grant for safer walking, better traffic



A federal transportation grant of nearly \$12 million has been awarded to the Orlando area to develop technology protecting pedestrians and cyclists, along with

lessening traffic woes. Much of that grant will be used near and at University of Central Florida as a test site for safety and efficiency applications that, ideally, would be expanded in the region. The technology is new and unfolding, while the challenges of pedestrian and cycling safety in Central Florida are entrenched.

“Not by any stretch” will the grant immediately solve risks for people walking and riding bikes, said Jeremy Dilmore, a Florida Department of Transportation program manager in traffic operations. But the cash infusion will give the state and region a chance to try out and expand technologies that incorporate sensors, phones and data management to alert drivers, pedestrians and cyclists of a possible collision, Dilmore said. Eric Hill of the region’s transportation planner, MetroPlan Orlando, said the technology development also will be done in Pine Hills, the community west of Orlando with a higher rate of pedestrian accidents.

Getting the grant was a victory; it was awarded by the U.S. Department of Transportation’s “Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment Program.”

The program is awarding as much as \$60 million annually from 2016 through 2020; grants went to 10 projects nationally this year, with the \$11.9 million directed to Central Florida as the largest. The grant will apply to five years of development of four programs.

To Read More See Excerpt: <http://www.orlandosentinel.com/news/os-federal-grant-smart-streets-20171005-story.html>

Gov. Scott Directs FDOT to Examine Interstate Improvements From I-75/Florida Turnpike Interchange to Florida-Georgia Border

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Today, Governor Rick Scott directed the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to begin examining ways to help expedite evacuation routes from the I-75/Florida Turnpike Interchange near Wildwood to the Florida-Georgia border during times of emergencies such as hurricanes. FDOT’s report will be submitted in January 2018.

Governor Scott said, “In preparation for Hurricane Irma, the state worked closely with local emergency management, transportation and law enforcement partners to successfully oversee the largest evacuation in U.S. history. Anytime a natural disaster threatens our state, we must do all we can to ensure Floridians can evacuate safely. That is why today, I am directing FDOT and their traffic experts to begin a comprehensive evaluation on ways to help expedite evacuation routes on I-75 from Wildwood to the Florida-Georgia border. This roadway is a major evacuation route, and it is crucial that residents and visitors can quickly and safely travel in this area during emergencies. We will continue to work with all our partners to make sure we are doing everything we can to ensure our state is fully prepared for all emergencies so we can keep our families and visitors safe.”



To Read More See Excerpt: <http://www.flgov.com/2017/10/12/gov-scott-directs-fdot-to-examine-interstate-improvements-from-i-75florida-turnpike-interchange-to-florida-georgia-border/>

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