

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION  
OF STATE HIGHWAY AND  
TRANSPORTATION OFFICIALS

# AASHTO

## Transportation Vanguard Award Nomination Form

**2016**

**INFORMATION ON NOMINEE:**

Last Name: Neemann	First Name: Brandie	Date: July 19, 2016	
Email: Brandie.Neemann@nebraska.gov		Position Title: Planning & Project Development Division Head	
Department: Planning & Project Development		Phone: 4024794795	
Street Address: 1500 Hwy 2	City: Lincoln	State: NE	Zipcode: 68509
AASHTO Committee Membership (optional) <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>			

**NOMINATOR INFORMATION:**

Last Name: Jaber	First Name: Khalil	Date: July 19, 2016	
Email: Khalil.Jaber@nebraska.gov		Position Title: Deputy Director - Engineering	
Department: Nebraska Department of Roads		Phone: 402-479-4671	
Street Address: 1500 Highway 2	City: Lincoln	State: NE	Zipcode: 68502
Endorsement of Member Department Secretary/Director: See email from Moe Jamshidi, NE			

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

Using a maximum of 2 additional single-sided pages, please provide reasoning as to why this individual should be selected as the Transportation Vanguard Award recipient. Please include as much specific information about the candidate as possible, including special projects, personal attributes, dedication, etc.

Send nominations by **Monday, July 25, 2016**, via e-mail to [mvitale@ashto.org](mailto:mvitale@ashto.org). Nominations must be submitted as a single file in MS Word format using **TVA2016\_Nomination\_Nominee\_Name.doc** as the file name.

Brandie Neemann has dedicated her career to public service beginning at a young age. She began her career at the Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) in 1998 as a student intern in the Location Studies Section in the Planning and Project Development Division. She went on to both the Roadway Design and Bridge Divisions before graduating in 2001. At that time, she continued her career at NDOR, holding positions in the Roadway Design and Project Scheduling and Program Management Divisions, until her promotion to a Unit Head of the Project Scoping Unit in the Planning and Project Development Division in 2008, and later the Project Scoping & Utilities Engineer (Section Head) in 2012.

At the time of her promotion, NDOR was facing lean economic times, along with the rest of the nation. High costs and limited funds resulted in an inability for NDOR to reconstruct road and bridge projects as originally programmed. NDOR faced a situation where project scopes needed to be reduced, preservation of current assets had to be prioritized, and ultimately, more, lower cost, project options had to be programmed to replace the former high cost options. Recognizing the need to evaluate and refine the scope of work and cost estimate prior to approving a project for programming, Brandie worked with internal and external stakeholders to devise a new innovative strategy that would provide a better foundation for developing NDOR's highway improvement program and optimize resources.

In order to achieve this, Brandie relied upon the established trust and relationships that she had fostered throughout NDOR's leadership team and key members of other divisions as well as building new partnerships to achieve the goals set out for her. The use of these partnerships, both established and new, helped pave the way for NDOR to define a new method to establish the scope of work and cost estimate for nearly all construction projects that NDOR programs. Based on Brandie's work, prior to implementation of this process, NDOR created a very simplistic work description for projects and a general estimate of cost, allowing for ease of decision making. This resulted in a simplified report that allowed a streamlined approval process with signatures, saving additional time and money.

The new process created a "Scoping Report" for projects that became a supplement to the project approval form. Because of the partnerships that had been created and maintained, Brandie was able to receive honest input from partners throughout NDOR, as well from the Federal Highway Administration, to create a template report which addresses concerns while incorporating the project scope elements that would affect the project survey needs, the need for design exceptions or relaxations, project cost, resource impacts, and project schedule. The report also defined a "Purpose and Need" and "Project Description" that would facilitate consultations with resource agencies regarding environmental impacts resulting from the project.

Based on the work that Brandie accomplished in the approval process, NDOR was able to develop an electronic workflow solution with relative ease. This workflow automatically routes the project approval form to appropriate task owners who needed to provide input into the project scope as the development progressed. The electronic workflow solution also eliminated the need for actual wet signatures as well as storing documents in a central electronic location for ease of access. This solution not only created an organizational structure for hundreds of projects that are active at any one time, but it also created accountability for task owners without whose input, the project scope could not be properly defined.

In addition to overseeing the development of project "Scoping Reports" and estimates, Brandie is also relied upon to review and prioritize NDOR capital improvement projects. This process provides a comprehensive review of each of the projects that have been identified as a capital improvement project. The results of this analysis provide an index of how the projects compare to one another based on factors such as traffic information, economic factors, crash information and their associated costs, as well as other cost factors to the Department. She utilized best practices including using the [AAHSTO User](#)

Benefit Analysis of Highways procedures, as partnered with guidance from an internally developed report, to assist NDOR with a methodology of allocating funds to certain highway improvement projects.

Due to declining revenues, many of the identified capital improvement projects were left unfunded. However, in 2011, the Nebraska Legislature passed the Build Nebraska Act (BNA) that provided \$1.2 billion to NDOR over a 20-year horizon. This funding has enabled NDOR to expand and reconstruct its designated Expressway System and federally designated high priority corridors, as well as construct new highways and other high priority projects. In response to the passing of the legislation, NDOR administration made project plans for the first ten years of the bill, using the results of the prioritization that had already been complete as one of the selection factors.

In the summer of 2015, Brandie was chosen to lead the effort to develop an enhanced process to prioritize capital improvement projects for the second ten years of BNA funds. This responsibility grew with the 2016 passage of LB 960, The Transportation Innovation Act, which included an additional \$450 million for capital improvement projects. Additionally, the legislation authorized accelerated project delivery methods allowing Brandie's team to reevaluate delivery timelines and methods. Although the process will continue to consider many of the same factors that were used in the previous prioritization methodology, Brandie and her team were required to use innovative practices to gather stakeholder input and effectively communicate candidate projects engineering performance and economic impact to stakeholders across the state.

This effort, while currently underway, has become a very public, transparent process and has brought the building external partners into focus. Brandie and her team have worked countless hours developing concepts, researching alternatives, and preparing for presentations and public meetings. Beginning last November, Brandie launched NDOR's initial outreach, introducing the concept of project prioritization, and what a new process may look like, to NDOR's Innovation Task Force, a group of leaders and stakeholders from around the state that NDOR is consulting with to identify new and innovative opportunities. She continued the public outreach in January, and again in July, by leading over 15 public meetings across the state where stakeholders and citizens were able to provide input on the new process, and submit project ideas.

Brandie is also collaborating with individuals throughout NDOR, the industry and consultants to develop creative solutions to best address the concerns of stakeholders, as well as other State agencies to identify knowledge and data sharing opportunities. She was successful in assimilating the complete list of projects, developing project data, and refining the prioritization methodology. Her coordination and presentation were key to applying the new process to the identified capital improvement project list, and the rollout of information during a series of statewide public meetings. In the coming weeks, Brandie will make final recommendations to the NDOR Director and Nebraska Governor Pete Ricketts based on her strategic findings. These recommendations will include the largest update to the state's transportation system in decades.

Brandie has also participated on several NDOR teams that have been responsible for developing NDOR's Strategic Goals, as well as the associated performance measures. She was particularly involved in our "Project Delivery" goal and its measures. She has also served on NDOR's Project Delivery Efficiency Team which evaluated areas to streamline the project delivery process.

Based on her contributions to successful project delivery at NDOR, her outstanding efforts to engage our stakeholders, both internal and external, and her commitment to developing innovative ways to include feedback and key measures, NDOR is proud to nominate Brandie Neemann for the Vanguard award.

**From:** [Jamshidi, Moe](#)  
**To:** [Vitale Marty](#)  
**Cc:** [Jaber Khalil](#)  
**Subject:** RE: 2016 Vanguard Award - Nominations  
**Date:** Friday, July 22, 2016 8:33:00 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.jpg](#)  
[TVA2016\\_Nomination\\_Nominee\\_Neemann\\_Brandie.docx](#)

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Good morning Marty,

Attached please find Nebraska's nomination form for Brandie Neeman. Please let me know if you have any questions. Thanks,

Moe Jamshidi  
Deputy Director-Operation  
Nebraska Dept of Roads  
402-479-4671

NDOR Brand2\_400px



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**From:** Vitale Marty [mailto:MartyV@ashto.org]  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 14, 2016 10:24 AM  
**To:** Vitale Marty <MartyV@ashto.org>  
**Subject:** 2016 Vanguard Award - Nominations

At its meeting in November 2016 in Boston, Massachusetts, the Standing Committee on Highways will present the new Vanguard Award winner. We are presently accepting nominations from member departments. Please remember that the nomination must be endorsed by your director/secretary of your member department. Information and the nomination form are available online. I've attached the form in Word, if you prefer to submit it in Microsoft Word. The deadline will be July 25, 2016.

- [Transportation Vanguard Award](#) - deadline July 25, 2016
  - [Transportation Vanguard Award Nomination Form](#)

Marty Vitale  
Engineering Program Specialist  
AASHTO  
[mvitale@ashto.org](mailto:mvitale@ashto.org); 202-624-5862