

Nathaniel P. Ford Sr.
CEO
Jacksonville Transportation Authority

It is an honor to nominate Nathaniel Ford, CEO of the Jacksonville Transportation Authority, for the 2025 ITS World Congress Lifetime Achievement Award. During his nearly 40 years in the transportation industry, Ford has developed an impeccable track record as a visionary, leader, distinguished public servant, and change agent who has positively transformed every authority he has led. He is a respected transportation advocate and epitomizes the mission and ideals of the ITS.

Mr. Ford has worked at three of the top 10 transportation authorities in the nation, and served as CEO at two of them – the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) and the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA). His unparalleled experience and industry contributions are fueled by a desire to go above and beyond the mandated requirements of making sure buses, trains, rail and shuttle services take individuals where they need to go safely and on time, ensuring fiscal responsibility for operations and multi-million dollar capital budgets, and employing a talented workforce.

What makes Mr. Ford stand out among his peers at authorities of every size and scope is his legacy of embracing technology, innovations, partnerships, and procedures that have made organizations he has led best-in-class. He is known for being the first. From launching the first 100% transit smart card at MARTA in 2004 (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Breeze_Card) to the first real-time parking app (<https://www.sfmta.com/getting-around/drive-park/demand-responsive-pricing/sfpark-evaluation>) and transit-only lanes at SFMTA (<https://www.itskrs.its.dot.gov/2020-b01514>), to the first full AV deployment in the US with the NAVI ultimate urban circulator (U2C) at the JTA in June (<https://u2c.jtafla.com/>), Ford has taken transportation organizations where none have gone before. As a testament to his industry influence, he was instrumental in bringing German-based AV manufacturer Holon to Jacksonville to build an AV shuttle plant, a move that will create hundreds of jobs and stimulate the economy. <https://www.benteler.com/en/press-media/latest-news/holon-to-establish-autonomous-shuttle-manufacturing-facility-in-jacksonville-florida-pioneering-the-future-of-mobility-in-the-united-states/>

In recognition of his visionary leadership, Mr. Ford was appointed Chair of APTA's new AV Committee to lead the development and advocacy of autonomous vehicle technology to full scale deployment in public transportation throughout the nation.

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His record of volunteerism, industry service, ITS involvement, and commitment to provide transportation excellence for people of all cultures, backgrounds, and economic levels make him a one-of-a-kind leader who is most deserving of the ITS 2025 Lifetime Achievement Award.

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