

Rod Diridon, Sr., to receive 2014 Lifetime Achievement Award from Council of University Transportation Centers

To be given Saturday, January 11, 2014 in Washington DC

San Jose, Calif., December 12, 2013 – The Board of Trustees of the Mineta Transportation Institute (MTI) takes pleasure in congratulating executive director Rod Diridon, Sr., who has been chosen to receive the 2014 Lifetime Achievement Award from the national Council of University Transportation Centers (CUTC). The award will be presented Saturday, January 11, during a banquet at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington DC.

“The trustees were very happy to hear that Rod will be given this honor,” said Steve Heminger, MTI board chair and CEO of the San Francisco Bay Area’s Metropolitan Transportation Commission. “He has long been dedicated to improving mobility for Californians and for people all over the world. Rod has become an expert on mass transit and on high-speed rail, and his enthusiasm is contagious. We are delighted that CUTC recognizes his lifetime of advocacy.”

After receiving his BS and MBA in statistics from San Jose State University (SJSU) and completing two combat tours in Vietnam as a naval officer, Mr. Diridon founded Decision Research Institute and conducted needs assessment surveys throughout the US.

He also taught ethics and decision theory as an adjunct professor at SJSU’s graduate school of business for more than ten years. As the only person to chair all three regional agencies (Association of Bay Area Governments, Bay Area Air Quality Management District, and Metropolitan Transportation Commission) in 1978-79, he guided the creation of the nation’s first comprehensive regional air quality, land use, and transportation master plan.

Silicon Valley had no rail transit in the 1970s to serve the rapidly growing population. As chair of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors and the Transit Board, he led the creation in 1977-78 of the county’s first multi-modal transportation master plan and chaired three successful transportation tax campaigns. The result is a 600-bus system, over 50 miles of light rail, three expanding commuter rail lines, Amtrak, and a BART extension in construction. The master plan includes an interchange of all modes at the main train station, which was rededicated the San Jose Diridon Station upon his retirement from public office in 1994.

After serving 20 years as transportation lead on the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, Mr. Diridon was chosen in 1995 to become executive director of MTI. Under his leadership, it has become one of the world’s leading policy research centers.

He frequently provides legislative testimony, has written numerous articles, and has spoken at conferences throughout the world on sustainable transportation. He chaired CUTC in 2008 and has been appropriately chosen to receive this year’s Lifetime Achievement Award.

CUTC was established in 1979 by the major transportation research centers and institutes in the United States. It provides a forum for the universities and centers to interact collectively with government and industry.

ABOUT THE MINETA TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE (MTI):

MTI conducts research, education, and information transfer programs focusing on surface transportation policy and management issues, especially related to transit. MTI was established by Congress in 1991 as part of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act and won

national re-designation competitions in 2002, 2006 and 2011. The Institute is funded by Congress through the US DOT Research and Innovative Technology Administration, by the California Legislature through Caltrans, and public and private grants. In 2006 the US Department of Homeland Security selected MTI as a National Transportation Security Center of Excellence. The internationally respected members of the MTI Board of Trustees represent all major surface transportation modes. MTI is the lead institute for the Mineta National Transit Research Consortium, an affiliation of nine university transportation research centers. MTI is affiliated with San Jose (CA) State University's College of Business. Visit transweb.sjsu.edu

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