

## **Forrest Claypool Biography**

Chicago Transit Authority President Forrest Claypool, 56, is the former Superintendent of the Chicago Park District. He has also served as deputy state treasurer; deputy commissioner on the Cook County Board of Appeals; twice as chief of staff to Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley; and was elected to two terms as a commissioner on the Cook County Board.

As parks chief, Forrest transformed an agency described as “dysfunctional” by the Civic Federation, a “string of ghost towns” by the Chicago Tribune, and “a patronage system for employees, not citizens” by Friends of the Parks. Forrest wiped out large budget deficits, restored park facilities after decades of neglect, and dismantled a vast patronage empire-- resulting in lower property taxes even as record amounts of money were invested in neighborhood parks.

On the county board, Forrest passed whistleblower legislation to ferret out fraud, and led the opposition to multiple tax increases. He won funding for expansion of the county’s child advocacy center for abused kids, and passed an ordinance requiring disclosure of hidden interests in government contracts.

Forrest also passed budgetary legislation to expand Access to Care, an organization that multiplies public funding by organizing networks of physicians to provide free and discounted health care to the working poor. He championed a new vision of health care delivery anchored in primary care.

In his first two years as transit chief, Claypool wiped out a \$308 million deficit while protecting rail and bus service, negotiated a historic new labor agreement, and launched the most ambitious infrastructure modernization campaign in CTA history.

Forrest is a graduate of Southern Illinois University and the University of Illinois College of Law, where he was editor-in-chief of the law review.