Exploring How Smart Infrastructure Can Help Ford Build A Great Self-Driving Service for Miamians

As Ford brings together a self-driving commercial business in Miami-Dade, the company is thinking about all the complex pieces needed to build its service. One of the most critical pieces is being built by our partner Argo AI: A robust self-driving system that will drive safely, fit in with the natural traffic flow and local driving behaviors and provide a great ride experience for customers.

Self-driving vehicles need to be prepared to navigate intersections, some of which can be particularly tricky with obstructed views due to buildings or street designs. That’s why, in Miami-Dade County, our autonomous vehicle research team at Ford is exploring how emerging technology like smart infrastructure can provide a self-driving vehicle with an extra layer of information before it even arrives at an intersection.

Researching smart infrastructure and self-driving vehicles: To set the groundwork for our new research in Miami-Dade County, Ford recently installed a new, Ford-designed infrastructure node at two intersections in Saline, Michigan. The node is equipped with sensors like radar, LiDAR and cameras and situated above the intersection, so it can offer a birds-eye view of the area to support a self-driving vehicle as it analyzes its surroundings at a street level. While it is not required for a Level 4 self-driving vehicle to operate safely, this sensor node can quickly relay even more information to a self-driving vehicle, providing additional context about the situation it’s about to encounter long before it approaches the intersection.

In Miami Beach, we’ve now installed the same type of smart infrastructure node to communicate with our Ford and Argo AI self-driving test vehicles.

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