



**Austin-San Antonio
Corridor Council**

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Monday Morning Report – February 15, 2010
President's Day Edition

Internal

The Executive Committee will meet *this* Wednesday, Feb. 17 at the Corridor Council offices in **San Marcos** at 2:00 pm. RSVP to council@thecorridor.org. Discussion will include our 2010-2015 goals and results of our January 26, 2010 strategy session.

The Texas Greenbelt Coalition (TGC) met in **New Braunfels** (2/11). This was the first meeting since being fully included under the Corridor Council. Led by Rusty Brockman (**New Braunfels'** EDC), the meeting included presentations by a number of Corridor Council members including GVEC, CPS, AACOG, and McGinnis, Lochridge, & Kilgore, LLP. The next quarterly meeting for the TGC is planned for June and watch for a new informational website. To get involved with the TGC, e-mail TJ@thecorridor.org

Save the date: The Economic Development Committee will hold its first 2010 Economic Development Field Trip, "Behind the Scenes at the River Walk," in **San Antonio** on April 16th. The event will be free for Corridor Council members with a small fee for non-members. Additionally, if you or your organization is interested in being a sponsor for this or other Corridor Council events, contact tj@thecorridor.org

Infrastructure

With Texas facing a \$16 billion budget shortfall next year, 41% of Texans said in a new poll that their preference was to make up some of the deficit by slicing highway spending. The poll, conducted by major statewide news organizations, found the most popular of five options to be more toll roads (but only 21% favored them), one in five said they'd favor raising taxes or fees; local option gas taxes fared poorly. See interpretations of the poll from **Dallas** [here](#), **Ft. Worth** [here](#).

Chairman John Carona (R-**Dallas**) and Vice-Chairman Kirk Watson (D-**Austin**) of the Senate Transportation and Homeland Security Committee continued their calls for transportation funding reforms over the weekend with op-ed pieces in several newspapers. Their theme: end funding diversions, reform TxDOT, re-write the gas tax, and provide more local options on funding. [Here's](#) the **Houston Chronicle** version.

26-year old Lucy Johnson won election over the weekend as mayor of **Kyle**, replacing former mayor Mike Gonzalez, whose term expires in May, 2011.

San Marcos officials plan to boost their water and electricity conservation efforts by expanding efficiency rebate programs; giving more appliances and money to qualifying residents willing to change their less-efficient devices. [Story](#).

Envision Central Texas will host a Regional Infrastructure Forum, "*More People. Less Money. What Now?*" to explore infrastructure challenges and opportunities at the Four Season Hotel **Austin** on Wednesday, March 31. For more information click [here](#).

Nationally-recognized tax expert Billy Hamilton, former deputy comptroller of public accounts for the State of Texas, has joined Capitol Metro as a financial consultant. Hamilton will focus on financial planning, financial performance measurements, budget processes and communication to various stakeholder groups. [Details.](#)

Economic Development (and ‘Other News’)

The Texas A&M University System regents formally approved the appointment of Dr. Maria Hernandez Ferrier as the inaugural president Texas A&M University-**San Antonio**. Ferrier had been serving as interim president since June 2009.

Austin launched a new online survey asking citizens about their transportation priorities. The survey mirrors the workshop exercises conducted at the six **Austin** Mobility Forums across the city this week. [Survey](#)

The Alamo Area Council of Governments (AACOG) will host a five-day Grantsmanship Training workshop March 1-5, 2010. The training will cover all aspects of researching and writing grant proposals. The event is at the Northeast Community Learning Center; 8750 Tesoro Drive, **San Antonio**. [Details.](#) Click [here](#) to register.

US retail sales rose 3.6% from January 2009, *USA TODAY* reported. That increase followed a 4.8% gain in December and a 2.1% gain in November. While consumers are still borrowing less (and paying down credit card debt) there are indications that they are starting to buy a variety of bigger ticket items like clothing and footwear. [Details.](#)

Gallup Inc. recently released its “State of the States” Job Creation results for 2009. Without surprise, energy-producing states such as Texas were home to some of the top job markets in the US in 2009, as they were in 2008. [Details.](#)

Austin City Council approved an \$835,000 construction contract to build a new 1,480 square foot meeting room and hallway at the **Austin** Convention Center. This renovation will enable the facility to book larger events. [Details.](#)

Marble Falls recently unveiled an online interactive mapping system. According to Caleb Kraenzel, Director of Development Services, the system is designed for small cities like **Marble Falls** to provide its citizens with access to geographic data and mapping capabilities. [Details.](#)

KUT (**Austin** Public Radio) ran an interesting story last week on the new **Cedar Park** Center, the variety of programs that have been attracted to the new center, and some other initiatives the city has recently unveiled. [Details.](#)

Thought for the week:

” If past history was all there was to the game, the richest people would be librarians.”

~ Warren Buffett