



**Austin-San Antonio
Corridor Council**

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Monday Morning Report – March 15, 2010

Internal

Executive Committee Members Please Note Location/TIME Change: The Executive Committee AND the Economic Development Committee will meet *this* Wednesday, (3/17) at 1:30 pm at the **San Marcos Activity Center**. This joint meeting will include a presentation from **Bexar County** Economic Development officials on the Texas-Mexico Automotive SuperCluster. For information contact TJ@thecorridor.org.

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. If you or your organizations are interested in being a sponsor for this or other Corridor Council events, contact TJ@thecorridor.org

Corridor Council's Economic Development Director, TJ Costello, will be presenting a seminar on Market Research at BiG **Austin** on Tuesday March 16 at 11:30 am. **Registration.**

Infrastructure

The Spy Who Came In From The Riverwalk? The *New York Times* ran a blockbuster front page story this morning (3/15) about a Pentagon-financed 'hit squad' of military contractors targeting Middle Eastern militants that was led by a man, Michael D. Furlong, operating with other contractors out of **San Antonio**. Juicy details include references to the US's "Jason Bourne..." whose Robert Ludlum-created identities sparked a series of Matt Damon movies. Read it [here](#).

The state's top transportation official, Diedre Delisi of TxDOT, told KLBJ radio last week that freight and passenger rail were essential to the future of Texas transportation and that the department was moving rapidly in that direction: "We're actually in the process of changing our strategic plan at TxDOT to include rail, both passenger and freight, to improve air quality and to improve congestion on the roads," Delisi said. Read and hear the interview [here](#).

Solar San Antonio: The city will acquire 134 solar-powered parking pay stations to replace existing coin-operated meters in the city's busiest parking zones. Also, the city won a \$3.7 million federal stimulus grant to install solar panels that will triple the **San Antonio's** large-scale solar generation capacity, according to *Texas Government Insider*.

Austin leaders decided last week to postpone a proposed November bond election for a downtown light rail system, citing the need for more organizational and engineering planning. Other concerns included the condition of the bond and financial markets.

Comal County will relocate their offices along with 20 county employees to a former school in the Comal Independent School District when work begins in April on an \$8 million renovation of the **Comal County** Courthouse. The courthouse renovation should be complete in the spring of 2012.

The **Central Texas** Regional Mobility Authority broke ground on the new **Manor** Expressway. This new tollway will take motorists from US 183 in East **Austin** along US 290 to SH 130 and into **Manor**. The project is anticipated to be completed in 2013. Read stories [here](#) and [here](#).

VIA Metropolitan Transit received two separate ARRA federal stimulus grants totaling \$6 million that will be used to support energy-efficiency efforts at the transit authority. One grant will go towards electric busses and a recharging station. The other will go towards a park-and-ride lot near the Ingram Park Mall as well as a replacement bus. [Details](#).

Economic Development (and ‘Other News’)

The 2010 Census is coming and it's important that all Texans participate: each question helps to determine how approximately \$400 billion in Federal funds will be allocated. The 2010 Census survey is the shortest in census history, with just 10 questions, and will arrive at homes in mid-March for an April deadline. For more information visit 2010.census.gov.

CPS Energy's planned \$378.8 million gas and electric revenue bond offering was recently assigned an AA+ grade. This rating was based on CPS' financial performance and outlook. **San Antonio's** municipal utility will use the proceeds to finance the completion of the company's JK Spruce 2 unit and other various generation, transmission and distribution improvements. [Details](#).

The New York Times ran an article last week illustrating the promise and pitfalls of an over-emphasis on a renewable energy strategy without a forward thinking plan. The article looks at Spain's attempts to get involved with the solar industry and one town's boom, then bust, then renewal again. [Story](#).

San Antonio recently completed a retrofit of the HemisFair Park Fountains so they can run on reclaimed rather than potable water, thus saving millions of gallons of water each year as well as hundreds of thousands of dollars for the city and the **San Antonio** Water System. [Details](#).

According to *Forbes Magazine*, **Texas** has four of ten cities it states are easing out of the recession. **Austin** tied for first and **San Antonio** was seventh. The article cited the diversity of the **Texas** economy and the fact that the housing bubble never really hit **Texas** like other areas. [Details](#).

The US Army Corps of Engineers has awarded a \$16.9 million contract to renovate the historic theater at Fort Sam Houston in **San Antonio**. The building will become the new home of the Family, Morale, Welfare and Recreation Command's Army Entertainment Division, which is moving to Fort Sam Houston from Virginia. [Details](#).

Travis County has issued two RFP's: Traffic Data Count Collection Services and Replacing seats at the **Travis County** Exposition Center. **Georgetown** is soliciting proposals from qualified firms of certified public accountants to audit the city's financial statements for the fiscal year. [Details](#).

Taylor will celebrate the Grand Opening of their **Taylor** Regional Park and Sports Complex on March 27. [Details](#).

Citing the continued growth of the I-35 Corridor, Baptist Health System announced its plans to build a new, \$110 million hospital in **New Braunfels** in 2012. The project will be located just off I-35 near FM 360. [Details](#).

The **San Marcos** Chamber will sponsor a "Green Living Showcase" at the City of **San Marcos** Conference Center on Saturday, March 20th from 10:00 am – 4:00 pm. There will be tips on green building, energy efficiency, water conservation, recycling, commuting solutions, alternative energy ideas and earth-friendly products. [Contact the Chamber](#) or call 512-393-5900 for more information.

[Thought for the week:](#)

“You can tell a lot by a fellow's character by the way he eats jelly beans.”

Ronald Reagan (1911 - 2004)