



**Austin-San Antonio
Corridor Council**

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Monday Morning Report – April 26, 2010

Internal

The Corridor Council Executive Committee met last week (4/21) to discuss a series of issues, including whether or not to participate in a statewide advocacy coalition for a new gas tax, high voltage power lines going into the right of way on State Highway 130, developments on our rail projects and rail relocation certification efforts, participation in the Shanghai Expo with **San Antonio**, and combining the **San Antonio** and **Austin** Metropolitan Statistical areas. We also welcomed new Executive Committee members John Kelley (AECOM) and Michelle Dippel (HNTB).

Executive Committee member Bruce Todd – former mayor of **Austin** – will be honored for ‘*Outstanding Leadership And Service*’ by **Austin** Community College’s Center for Public Policy and Political Studies at a May 7th luncheon at the AT&T Conference Center in **Austin**. Congratulations, Bruce! [Details](#).

Infrastructure

TxDOT will host seven ‘Rail Visioning Workshops’ next month to help develop a statewide rail plan for Texas: **El Paso** - May 6, **Corpus Christi** - May 7, **Dallas** - May 10, **Lubbock** - May 13, **Austin** - May 14, **Houston** - May 17, **Longview** - May 20. More details as we get them. [Press Release](#).

The Texas Sunset Advisory Commission had some tough words for **Austin**’s Capital Metro last week, criticizing the agency’s planning processes, board oversight, plunging financial reserves, and employee compensation and retirement schemes. But the most important critique was of the agency’s relationship with its union contractors – and that’s where the hard work stands ahead for the new board and interim director Doug Allen. For an editorial, click [here](#). The report, click [here](#).

According to the White House and the Council of Economic Advisors, Texas added 205,000 jobs due directly to the American Recovery Reinvestment Act (Stimulus Bill). Read the [Article](#) and the [Report](#).

The Statewide Transportation Advocates Coalition meets today at 11:00 am in **Austin**, 1210 San Antonio St. 4th floor. The group is pressing for a local option gas tax during the 2011 Legislative Session.

Economic Development (and ‘Other News’)

The 2010 Envision Central Texas Community Stewardship Awards Luncheon will be Friday, May 7 beginning at 11:30 am. The event is being hosted honoring innovative people, projects and processes that help to preserve and enhance quality of life, natural resources and economic vitality. [Details](#).

The **San Antonio** Mobility Coalition (SAMCo) will sponsor a Transportation Leadership Luncheon on May 25 at the Witte Museum in **San Antonio**. Texas Transportation Commissioner Fred Underwood will be the guest speaker. [Details](#). [Registration](#).

Austin-based Whole Foods Markets has received grants from the US Department of Energy and will work with the National Renewable Energy Labs in an effort to reduce its energy use by 25%. [Details](#).

Kohl's Department Stores will open a customer operations center in **San Antonio** this year, initially employing 200 people and up to a possible total of 1,000 jobs over three years. The state will contribute \$750,000 from the Texas Enterprise Fund to assist Kohl's in its expansion. [Details](#).

The Texas State Capitol building will undergo renovations starting May 1. The project includes work in the Texas House chamber and on the Capitol dome. Work should be completed by December 31, in time for the next legislative session. [Details](#).

The Nature Conservancy will hold its 2010 Voices of Conservation Luncheon - which celebrates nature and honors the spirit of conservation in Texas and around the world - on Wednesday, September 15 at the Hilton **Austin**. [Details](#).

[RelocateAmerica.com](#) ranked **Austin** the third best city to move to in the US, just behind **Huntsville**, Alabama and **Washington DC**. **Austin** was also listed as the fifth-best "earth-friendly" location. [Details](#).

Information on a new tax credit associated with the recent healthcare reform bill will be sent out in the next few weeks. According to US Rep. Lloyd Doggett, many small businesses in Texas will be eligible for this tax credit. [Details](#).

CAPCOG announced a request for applications for the TCEQ solid waste grants for fiscal year 2011. \$442,000 in municipal solid waste implementation grant funding is available. A grant application workshop is scheduled for Wednesday, May 19, 2010. For more information go to the CAPCOG [website](#) or e-mail kfreeman@capcog.org.

Thought for the week:

"When you come to the end of your rope, tie a knot and hang on."

~Franklin D. Roosevelt
(1833 – 1945)