



**Austin-San Antonio
Corridor Council**

P.O. Box 1618
San Marcos, Texas 78667

Phone: 512-558-7360
Fax: 512-558-7365
council@thecorridor.org

www.thecorridor.org

Monday Morning Report – June 1, 2010

Internal

The Texas Greenbelt Coalition quarterly meeting will be held on Thursday, June 17 in **New Braunfels** from 1:30 to 3:30 pm. RSVP to TGBCinfo@thecorridor.org.

The Corridor Council's Economic Development Committee will meet on Wednesday, June 23 at **Kyle** City Hall from 9:30 – 11:30 am. More information is forthcoming. Please RSVP to council@thecorridor.org.

Infrastructure

The **Lone Star Rail District**'s Board of Directors meets *this* Friday, June 4, 10:00 am at the **San Marcos Activity Center** on 501 East Hopkins.

A Sunset Committee-mandated management and organizational review of TxDOT was presented to the Texas Transportation Commission last week (6/27) and we'll probably be hearing a lot about it during the upcoming legislative session. The report is highly critical of what it calls TxDOT's insular management and lack of transparency. For a copy of the report click [here](#).

I-35 in **Austin** is the 4th most-congested truck corridor in the nation, according to new studies by the American Transportation Research Institute and the Federal Highway Administration. **Austin** and **San Antonio** account for 3 of the top 100 most congested spots for trucks in America. [Details](#).

Meanwhile, IH-35 has 20 times more trucks than State Highway 130 and TxDOT studies show that if tolls were 25% lower on SH 130 truck volumes would increase 33% while overall revenue to the toll road would remain unchanged. Another interesting note from yesterday's Ben Wear column: IH-35 at US 183 in **Austin** had 24,000 trucks per day in 2007. [Details](#).

VIA Metropolitan Transit is slated to begin work on its estimated \$57.2 million bus rapid transit service. The environmentally friendly amenity, known as VIA Primo, will connect downtown to the South Texas Medical Center in **San Antonio**. VIA Primo is scheduled to be operational by late 2012. [Details](#).

Regents recently approved the design for the \$46 million North Campus Housing Complex at Texas State University in **San Marcos**. [Details](#).

Elected officials in **Seattle** say that *all* of their freeways will be tolled by 2030, according to "*Transportation 2040*," a plan approved by a consortium of local governments. By 2040, an estimated 1.5 million people are expected to move into the four-county region, which may need \$200 billion in new road and transit projects. [Story. Report](#).

Threatened by surging populations that are strangling economic development, fast-growing **Atlanta** is scheduled to vote - finally - on whether or not to add a one-penny sales tax for new transportation infrastructure. (Sound familiar?) The system they've devised involves regional 'roundtables' to pick projects, a ten-year limit on the tax, and some other ideas that might be tried in Texas. Neal Peirce outlines some of the issues that have prompted the move [here](#).

Economic Development (and 'Other News')

A new report by the Institute for Health Promotion Research at the University of Texas Health Science Center at **San Antonio** shows that a proposed smoking ban in **San Antonio** would have minimal affect on businesses, bars and restaurants within the city limits. [Article](#). [Full Report](#)

Austin Community College continues buying land. Adding to its recent purchases in **Elgin** and **Leander**, ACC has purchased 18 acres as well as a building once housing a Dillard's at the Highland Mall facility in **Austin**. [Details](#).

Even though a majority of the shellfish consumed in the US comes from sources outside the Gulf of Mexico, restaurants are seeing a rise in prices for shrimp, oysters and other seafood due to changes in demand. [Details](#).

Forbes magazine ranked **Austin** as the 2nd most innovative city in the US, just behind **San Jose**, CA. Cities were rated according to the number of new patents issued-per-person, venture capital investment per capita, and finally, the ratio of high-tech, science and "creative" jobs. [Details](#).

HostGator.com, a website hosting company, has announced a new office in **Austin** that will employ 200 people and could add an additional 100 over the next year. [Details](#).

A recent analysis ranked **Austin** as the 5th best location for recent college graduates. The study looked at nine variables ranging from the unemployment rate to youth-oriented amenities. **Austin's** low crime rate, concentration of high tech firms, and diverse cultural scene led to the high ranking. [Article](#) and [Rankings](#)

San Antonio's delegation to the **Shanghai** World's Expo is making strides towards developing relationships for investment and business partnerships. Many firms in the delegation are already discussing investment opportunities and the city's representatives are holding investment seminars and visiting with officials, hoping for a piece of Chinese expansions into the US market. [Details](#).

Austin was buzzing last week about the potential of seeing a Formula One race tour stop in the years 2012-2021 ("Grand Prix or Grand Prius?" was the local joke) cited, according to the promoters, along the State Highway 130 Corridor, but the *American-Statesman* was at least editorially a little skeptical: "Show us the money." Read more [here](#).

Thought for the week:

Let us therefore brace ourselves to our duties, and so bear ourselves that, if the British Empire and its Commonwealth last for a thousand years, men will say, "This was their finest hour."

- Winston Churchill, June 18, 1940