



**Austin-San Antonio
Corridor Council**

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Monday Morning Report – June 28, 2010

Internal

The Corridor Council's Economic Development Committee met (6/23) at **Kyle** City Hall to discuss the results of the recent **San Antonio** Riverwalk tour and plan events for the rest of the year. Next up: 'Backstage at the Wurstfest' in **New Braunfels** and an **Austin** Train/Rail Event. For a summary of this meeting please email council@thecorridor.org.

The Executive Committee meets next on July 21, 2:00 pm, Corridor Council offices in **San Marcos**. Forward any suggested agenda items to council@thecorridor.org.

Infrastructure

Texas notched five of the top 10 spots for population growth among cities with over 100,000 people, according to new census estimates for 2009. **New York** (45,087) led the way in numerical growth, followed by **Los Angeles** (30,294), **San Antonio** (24,394) and **Phoenix** (23,775). Other Texas cities in the top 10 were No. 7 **Dallas** (20,004), No. 8 **Houston** (19,743) and No. 9 **Austin** (19,183).

The Lone Star Rail District's Public Information Committee meets *this* Wednesday, June 30, 10:00 am at the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council on 304 CM Allen Parkway.

Bexar County Judge Nelson Wolff has chosen Ruby Webb as his new chief of staff, effective July 19. Webb currently is manager of the Small, Minority and Women Business Program at SAWS and is a former assistant to **San Antonio** Mayor Julian Castro and former Mayor Phil Hardberger.

The Sunset Advisory Commission will meet Tuesday, July 6, at 9 am in the Senate Finance Committee Room of the Capitol Extension in **Austin** to issue decisions related to the Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority, among others.

Fireworks in San Marcos: In a surprise move, city council members fired city manager Rick Menchaca last week (6/24) on a 4-3 vote but Menchaca may not be going quietly; he's seeking legal advice. Menchaca said he believed it had to do with local politics (council elections are upcoming in November); council members said it was over management style and a new approach to road projects. Here's the local *story*.

With tax revenues down, some **Tarrant County** cities have begun consolidating services to save money. **Keller** and **Southlake** merged their police dispatching services and started using the same jail. Next month, **Coleville** may join them. The moves have saved each city \$100,000. *Details*.

Former Texas House Appropriations Committee chairman Talmadge Heflin is calling on the state's transit agencies to post their financial statements, budgets, and check registers online. It's interesting that out of 55 counties, local agencies and municipalities awarded the State Comptroller's Leadership Circle Awards citing local governments for transparency, not one award has gone to a transit agency. See editorial [here](#).

Austin's city council voted to spend \$100,000 last week (6/24) to pay a consulting firm, Public Financial Management, for suggestions on how to pay for an inner city light rail system that could potentially cost \$1.3 billion and \$25 million per year to operate. [Details](#).

Major urban redevelopment projects frequently result in disrupted neighborhoods and uprooted families, but the Anne E. Casey Foundation has been doing some groundbreaking work in east **Baltimore** that could serve as a model for how to contain the human costs of urban revitalization. The plan involves more, not less public involvement, and systematic assistance over time for displaced families. Read more [here](#).

Bee Caves sculptor Damian Priour has launched an extremely cool art & charity effort with a global reach, the Global Chair Project, which calls on artists all over the world to contribute their unique designs for chairs - that's right, chairs - that are then displayed and auctioned off on the Web. Proceeds go to charity. [Details](#).

Economic Development (and 'Other News')

Amy Madison of Economic Development **San Marcos** received certification as an Economic Development Finance Professional from the National Development Council. Congrats Amy!

City of **Austin** posted a detailed inventory of its online purchasing contracts through a new launched [Online Contract Catalog](#) which provides details on each of the city's active purchasing contracts. "The database is a tool for local vendors to help them prepare for city business opportunities," say city officials. [Details](#).

Austin Energy is giving media tours of two new energy turbines at its **Del Valle** natural gas plant. The turbines are powered by 747 jet engines and provide enough energy to power 75,000 homes and are meant to generate power when demand peaks during extreme weather. [Details](#).

The Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) has an iPhone application designed to help organize outdoor recreational experiences and provide weather, news and event updates. [Details](#).

Fox TV hit American Idol will be scouring **Austin** August 11 in search of its next singing 'sensation.' The summer auditions have been opened up to contestants as young as 15 for the first time this year. The **Austin** tryouts will be held at the Frank Erwin Center. [Details](#).

Thought for the week:

"When a man sits with a pretty girl for an hour, it seems like a minute. But let him sit on a hot stove for a minute - and it's longer than any hour. That's relativity."

~Journal of Exothermic Science and Technology (JEST, Vol. 1, No. 9; 1938)