



**Austin-San Antonio
Corridor Council**

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Monday Morning Report – July 12, 2010

Internal

The Executive Committee meets *next* week, July 21, 2:00 pm, Corridor Council offices in **San Marcos**. Please RSVP to council@thecorridor.org.

The Corridor Council's Transportation Task Force Steering Committee will meet on July 21, 12:30 pm to discuss developing a program to manage IH-35, US 281 and SH 130 as a corridor system to reduce congestion, deal more effectively with incident management, and meet present and future highway needs in the **Austin-San Antonio** corridor. RSVP to council@thecorridor.org.

Mark Your Calendars: The **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Growth Summit, sponsored by the *AUS-SAT Business Journals*, is scheduled for Friday, September 17, 11:30 am at the **New Braunfels** Civic/Convention Center Exhibit Hall at 345 S. Castell Ave. Stay tuned for updates.

Infrastructure

Hays County has unanimously adopted a *Five Year Strategic Policy Plan* covering such pressing local concerns as improved transportation, growth management, economic development, and 'quality of life' issues. The Lower Colorado River Authority's Chris Holtkamp, Pedernales Electric Coop, and Texas State University helped develop the document, which includes short, medium, and long term goals. **Story**. [Download the plan](#).

Regional leaders will meet Wednesday (7/14) in **New Braunfels** to discuss road and rail solutions to address growing population and trade movements in the **Austin-San Antonio** I-35 Corridor. The group, known as TxDOT's I-35 Corridor Segment Committee Three, is part of a larger effort to develop a comprehensive, long-range mobility plan for the entire corridor. Scheduled meetings and more information [here](#).

Beginning today, the **San Antonio** Water System is sending crews and supplies to **Laredo** to aid the city in its flood recovery efforts. With electricians, safety specialists, trucks, and generators they'll help restore flooded neighborhoods and the city's wastewater treatment plant. [Details from the SAWS website](#).

Election season has already started in **San Marcos**, roiled by the sudden recent firing of their city manager. Council member John Thomaidis has announced that he will challenge two-term mayor Susan Narvaiz in November and Texas State University employee Kim Porterfield will run for a second city council term. [Details](#).

"*Hangman's Tree*," "*Renaissance Oak*," and "*Renaissance Tree*" were just three of the names for a 500-year old oak tree sawed into firewood near **Lockhart** in **Caldwell County** last month to accommodate State Highway 130. Anyone familiar with the MMR knows we're big backers of SH 130, but was this bone-headed play really necessary? The legendary oak was not in but 'near' the right of way and, citing safety issues, officials had it removed. Bad idea. Local reaction was outrage, read [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

Economic Development (and ‘Other News’)

The University of Texas at **Austin** was picked by Gov. Rick Perry to assist a new group being formed to devise safer offshore drilling and oil production practices in the Gulf of Mexico. The project will focus on developing and testing equipment and technologies for the next generation of oil and gas drilling, and will also develop better monitoring and training to prevent and respond to oil spills. *Details.*

Round Rock was chosen as one of the nation's Top 10 towns for families, according to *Family Circle* magazine. The national publication chose communities with affordable housing, good neighbors, green spaces, strong public school systems and giving spirits. *Family Circle* analyzed 1,700 cities with populations between 15,000 and 150,000. *Details.*

Intel computer scientists are developing intelligent cars fitted with aircraft-style black boxes that can record vehicle speed, steering and braking information along with video footage from inside and outside the vehicle, and even take over control from motorists (an excellent idea in some cases we can think of). *Details.*

The Echelon building in **Austin**, which sustained structural, smoke and water damage during the Feb. 18 aerial attack on its IRS offices by a local man killed at the scene, will begin exterior repairs. The building should be ready for tenants by the end of the year according to the building management. *Details.*

We've all heard about online marketing magic, but new group discounts triggered by a critical mass of consumers who want a specific product are something new, and dazzlingly successful in some cases. Companies like Groupon use discount coupons that become active only when a designated minimum number of consumers sign up to take advantage of them. Here's an *example* out of **San Antonio**.

Round Rock's Chamber of Commerce hired an executive recruiting firm to find a new president and CEO to replace Tom Manskey, who resigned in April. Former city official Joe Vining has been filling the role on an interim basis. *Story.*

The global debt crisis has a threat that has not garnered much notice: trillions of dollars in short-term borrowing that banks around the world must repay or roll over in the next two years. International institutions are warning of a looming credit crunch as finance-hungry banks compete with governments in the bond markets. Borrowing costs for both could rise, says the *New York Times* in a story *here*.

Thought for the week:

"Don't worry about the world coming to an end today. It is already tomorrow in Australia."

~ Charles Schulz