



Monday Morning Report

February 10, 2020

INTERNAL

The **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council Executive Committee is scheduled to meet on Wednesday, February 19, 2:00 pm at the Corridor Council offices, 304 North C.M. Allen Parkway, in **San Marcos**. To RSVP or add an item to the agenda, email council@thecorridor.org.

INFRASTRUCTURE

A delivery robot vehicle by Nuro has won the first federal safety approval for a purpose-built self-driving vehicle, significantly advancing the autonomous vehicle industry and potentially charting a course for how such vehicles will be deployed at fleet strength across the country. Nuro says it will begin testing in **Houston** soon. [Story](#).

Developing: As **Washington DC** plods toward a re-authorization of the central federal transportation-financing measure, FAST (Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act), which expires this Sept. 30th, interest groups are already lobbying to thwart language proposed by the trucking industry that would increase truck weights and sizes. They say changes to current limits would cost billions in damage to highways and bridges. [Details](#).

Austin Bergstrom International Airport continues to break all kinds of local records. Officials say an annual record 17.3 million passengers used the facility in 2019, a year-over-year increase from 2018 of nearly 10%. But there's more: airport restaurants sold 1.6 million breakfast tacos, 71,798 pounds of brisket, '489 kegs of Real Ale Axis' beer, and more than 12,000 Lone Star souvenir guitar picks. [Details](#).

A globally-focused transportation consultant says 2020 will see seven major trends in urban mobility: increased focus on travel times as a success metric; mobility-as-a-service goes multi-modal; autonomous public transit; artificial intelligence utilization in transit; seamless 'complete trip' public policies; curbside management improvements; and 'open' transportation digital platforms. She cites projects in **Washington, Singapore, Los Angeles** and **London**, among others. [Story](#).

The new Brightline private passenger rail service between **Miami** and **West Palm Beach**, Fla. has had a lot of glowing publicity lately, particularly with their announcement of a proposed high speed rail project between California and **Las Vegas**, but Bloomberg news service has published a more skeptical look at the company's financing and prospects [here](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

The Continental automotive group will invest \$110 million in a 215,000 square-foot facility in **New Braunfels** to manufacture products for advanced driver-assistance systems, adding over 100 jobs to the regional economy. The new facility will be about 15 miles from the company's current power-train division plant in **Seguin**, where they employ nearly 450 people. [Story](#).

Local media in **Lockhart** report that construction of a 42-inch, 430-mile natural gas pipeline that would run from West Texas to the Gulf Coast will begin soon in **Caldwell County** - despite lawsuits and regulatory actions launched by other cities and counties throughout Central Texas. A company spokesman for Kinder Morgan, developers of the pipeline, said 100% of the right of way had already been acquired. Interestingly, the company says development along State Highway 130 has overtaxed local gas supplies, which the new pipeline could supplement. [Details.](#)

More than 200 **San Antonio** residents, including the mayor and city council members, were in **Washington DC** last week lobbying for federal participation (read as dollars) for transportation, military facilities, cyber-security programs, tourism, education, and community development. For details, go [here.](#)

Voter registration has swelled by almost 2 million people in Texas in the last four years, but nowhere is the increased interest in election participation more pronounced than in the Interstate 35 Corridor from **Austin-San Antonio** to **Dallas**, where more voters have been added to the rolls than the rest of the state combined. [Story.](#)

The Twitter-sphere went ballistic when President Trump mentioned the iconic Alamo in **San Antonio** during his State of the Union address to a joint session of the US Congress in **Washington** last week. The **Express-News** collected some of the public's heated and sometimes hilarious responses [here.](#)

Thought of the Week

"No artist is ahead of his time. He is his time. It is just that the others are behind the time."

- Martha Graham

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