



Monday Morning Report

July 9, 2018

INTERNAL

Mark Your Calendars: Wednesday July 18, at 2:00 pm, is the next meeting of the Executive Committee of the Austin-San Antonio Corridor Council. Be sure to come by and meet our new chairman, San Marcos mayor John Thomaides, at the Council offices at 304 C.M. Allen Parkway in San Marcos. Please RSVP to council@thecorridor.org.

INFRASTRUCTURE

The two chairmen of the **Austin** and **San Antonio** Metropolitan Planning Organizations have laid out their vision for the future of Interstate 35 from **Georgetown** to **San Antonio**. In a preview of anticipated results from a joint study of IH-35 the two MPO's are conducting with TxDOT, the plan involves building two new - largely elevated - lanes in each direction along the entire length of the Corridor. One of the two new lanes would initially be designated for High Occupancy Vehicles but could eventually be converted to use by autonomous (self-driving) vehicles or high capacity fleet and bus movements. Work on the project would begin in 2020 - at the earliest - and no specific immediate cost estimates or funding were made available. [Story](#).

Self-driving cars are not just years away, but decades away, according to a Wharton School (**Philadelphia**) management expert, other than for experimental or pilot program projects. He also believes that a snarl of competing federal and state legislation will hamper development. If you're unfamiliar with the various levels of autonomous vehicle technologies, this article provides a handy primer, as well. [Story](#).

That contentious proposal by **Dripping Springs** to dump treated sewage into a tributary of Onion Creek near Austin appears close to resolution. Most environmental groups opposed to the permit granting approval to a more limited discharge have announced their agreement with a settlement worked out with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. The Save Our Springs Alliance remains the sole holdout. [Details](#).

Volkswagen will enter the ride-sharing market competition next year (2019) with an all-electric fleet company called WE. They begin the on-demand service in Germany, then roll out in major cities across Europe, North America, and Asia by 2020. They're also moving into the e-scooter and something they call e-skater space. [Details](#).

Go Rio, **San Antonio**'s river barge franchise, is encouraging downtown commuters to try the river-ride service over the next three months with special monthly passes that start at \$25. It's part of a pilot program to see if there's a market for the limited run commuter service. [Details](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and 'Other' News)

Austin columnist Ken Herman wonders why Austinites don't visit **San Antonio** more as tourists often and asks his readers to weigh-in on why that is - if it's true at all. Is it just him? [Opinion](#).

A former Mexican ambassador to the US, Arturo Sarukhan, argues that the future of US-Mexico relations will largely depend on how President Trump treats his newly-elected counterpart, López Obrador, in the months to come. [Opinion](#).

City council members in **New Braunfels** get their first look tonight at a new, two-years-in-the-making comprehensive plan for the city dubbed Envision New Braunfels. The local planning commission approved a first draft last week. [Details](#).

The Bipartisan Platform: Why haven't we accomplished the things we all agree should be done? A **Harris County** delegate to the state Republican Party convention has identified more than a dozen issues on which the Democratic and Republican party platforms agree - at both the state and federal level - and explores why there's been no action on issues where there is no disagreement. [Opinion](#).

Thought of the Week

"When you reach for the stars, you may not quite get them, but you won't come up with a handful of mud either."

-Leo Burnett

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