



**Austin-San Antonio
Corridor Council**

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Monday Morning Report – November 2, 2009

Internal

The Economic Development Committee is scheduled to meet on Friday, December 11 at 10:00 am at the Corridor Council offices in **San Marcos**. Members are asked to submit agenda suggestions no later than November 13. *Email* or call 512-558-7360 for questions or concerns. An agenda is forthcoming.

The Texas Greenbelt Coalition is scheduled to meet on Wednesday, November 18 at 1:30 pm at the Greater **New Braunfels Chamber of Commerce Honors Hall** located at 390 S. **Seguin** Avenue. Please RSVP to rusty@nbcham.org or call 830-625-2385 for more information.

SAVE THE DATE: The Council's Transportation Task Force will hold a full committee meeting on November 10 at 1:30 pm at the *San Marcos Activity Center*. Reports include new ITS/emergency responder developments, US 281 updates, a 'global funding outlook at TxDOT, commuter rail news, I 35 funding plans, and more left over tricks and treats than you can shake a (used) Halloween mask at...Please *RSVP* or call 512-558-7360 if you have questions.

The Corridor Council's Brown Bag Luncheon will be held at our offices in **San Marcos** on Wednesday, November 4 at 11:30 am, with Director of Economic Development, T.J. Costello offering a session on "*Knowing Your Market – Basic Market Research.*" Please *RSVP* or call 512-558-7360 if you haven't done so. *Details.*

Infrastructure

The **Austin-San Antonio** Inter-municipal Rail District will launch their new name, "Lone Star Rail District" in public forums on Monday, November 9 at 10:00 am in **Austin** at the intersection of Third and Bowie streets downtown and again at 2:00 pm in **San Antonio** at the University of Texas, Downtown Campus located at 501 W. Durango Blvd., Frio Street Building, 3rd floor balcony. Key speakers include Mayors Lee Leffingwell and Julian Castro, Senators Kirk Watson and Jeff Wentworth, Hays County Commissioner Jeff Barton, State Representative Ruth Jones McClendon and Dr. Denise Trauth of Texas State University. For more information contact us at council@thecorridor.org.

We won't know for sure until the TxDOT Commission votes on Nov. 19, but it looks like about \$1 billion in Prop 12 bond money will be going to widen IH-35 in **McClennon, Bell, and Hill Counties**. TxDOT staff recommended these projects at the Commission meeting last week: 13 miles between North Loop 340 and **West** (\$212 million); nine miles between Farm-to-Market Road 2063 in **Hewitt** and Woodlawn Road near **Bruceville-Eddy** (\$192 million); \$679 million for four projects from **West** to **Abbott**; from **Bruceville-Eddy** to **Troy**; from **Troy** to north **Temple**; and through much of **Salado**.

The Sixth Annual Southwestern Rail Conference is scheduled for January 28-29, 2010. There is a lot of rail activity happening including reports on stimulus spending and the new TxDOT Rail Division. *Details.*

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) along with the Associated General Contractors of Texas, the Good Roads Transportation Association and the Texas Transportation Institute will hold it's Fifth Annual Texas Transportation Forum in Austin, January 6 -8. Local leaders, state officials, industry professionals and national experts will discuss the future of Texas transportation from both the public and private sectors. *Details.*

A new US Court House is finally being constructed in downtown **Austin** on the old “Intel site.” While this project was in the planning for years, it took stimulus monies to finally get it started. The Federal government awarded a \$102 million construction contract and construction was ground was broken in September. *Details.*

Economic Development (and ‘Other News’)

Nationwide Insurance announced it will expand its operations in **San Antonio** creating upwards of 750 new high-paying jobs in the region. Governor Perry approved an investment of \$2.5 million from the Texas Enterprise Fund to assist with this expansion. *Details.*

The Barton Springs Edwards Aquifer Conservation District (service area includes southern **Travis**, northern **Hays** and western **Caldwell** and **Bastrop** counties) has seen enough relief to downgrade its drought classification. After 10 months in a Critical Stage drought, it has declared its area as Under Alarm Stage — the next less restrictive stage. *Website.*

Forbes Magazine has rated **Austin** and **San Antonio** the 15th and 22nd safest cities in America respectively. Both cities scored reasonably well in all categories except traffic deaths, thus accounting for lower ratings than would have been expected. *Details.*

According to the *San Antonio Business Journal*, VIA Metro Transit is setting aside one of its buses as part of a pilot project to test the practicality of offering Wi-Fi for riders from Nov 2 through Dec 4. The connection will be free of charge and up to five people will be able to log into the internet at one time for the pilot program. *Details.*

Indicating the relative strength of the **Austin** market as well as the viability of **Austin** Community College, Standard and Poor’s raised the bond rating for ACC from A to AA-. This makes ACC eligible for lower interest rates on its next bond issuance. *Details.*

Thought for the week:

“Your attitude, not your aptitude, will determine your altitude.”

“I’m against every law up to and including the law of gravity: what goes up doesn’t necessarily have to come down.”

*~ Zig Ziglar
- Abbie Hoffman*