



Monday Morning Report

May 10, 2021

INTERNAL

The Executive Committee of the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council will meet by video conference May 19th at 2pm. For details, email council@thecorridor.org.

COVID-19 UPDATE: 158,407,543 worldwide cases were confirmed as of this morning, with 3,294,694 total global deaths. US deaths are nearing the levels of the 1918 flu pandemic, now at 581,756 deaths with over 32 million confirmed cases (5/10/21). ([Johns Hopkins](#)). Texas was reporting 2,486,826 confirmed cases yesterday, with 49,591 deaths, including in **Bexar County:** 181,325 cases with 3,508 deaths; **Guadalupe County:** 10,958 cases with 211 deaths; **Comal County:** 5,585 cases with 296 deaths; **Hays County:** 18,561 cases with 207 deaths; **Travis County:** 82,882 cases with 1,006 deaths; and **Williamson County:** 39,120 cases with 467 deaths (5/9/21). ([TDHHS](#)).

INFRASTRUCTURE

Hotpocalypse? Power failures in the US have increased 60% since 2015 and new research published in the *Environmental Science & Technology* journal says rising temperatures due to climate change are increasingly putting urban populations at risk of heat exhaustion or stroke. The study focused on **Atlanta**, **Detroit**, and **Phoenix** but **Austin** and **Dallas** are referenced in research indicating that less than 2% of residents can be accommodated by city-run cooling centers. [Story](#). [Report](#).

That Texas Central Railroad project to develop high speed rail between **Houston** and **Dallas** says that it has entered a \$1.6 billion contract with Kiewit Infrastructure to develop core electrical systems, signaling, and communications equipment for their proposed deployment of Japanese-designed technology. 'Believe it when I see it,' wrote one observer. [Story](#).

Meanwhile, in **Washington**, the US House Transportation & Infrastructure committee held a hearing last week on the Biden administration's rail plans entitled '*When Unlimited Potential Meets Limited Resources: The Benefits and Challenges of High Speed Rail*,' ([here](#)) including testimony from Amtrak on a proposed \$80 billion expansion effort that could include **Austin** and **San Antonio** service. [Testimony](#).

The public involvement process has begun for the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization to consider a multi-billion-dollar investment in the **Austin** Project Connect Rail & Bus Rapid Transit systems at their June 14 meeting. Formal action is required on amendments to the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program that will begin funding preliminary engineering and environmental work. [Announcement](#).

Fleet trucking company Teletrac Navman, working off data from the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, has declared Interstate 45 between **Dallas** and **Galveston** the 2nd most deadly drive in the US with .913 deaths per mile. Only I-4 in Florida is more lethal, according to their study. [Story](#).

It was inevitable, probably, but someone has finally come up with a **Dallas-San Antonio** Interstate 35 'bingo card' that features items such as 'mattress in middle of the road' and '93-year-old Dolores going 40 in an '03 Impala.' Add your own favorites [here](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

A former US ambassador to Mexico says that merging American and Mexican supply chains could spur post-pandemic economic recovery and curtail what he says is an over-reliance on China. Antonio Garza proposes a four-point plan for 'ally shoring' in the **Dallas Morning News** that includes COVID-relief efforts and infrastructure investments. [Opinion](#).

A nearly 2000-acre project is being proposed near **New Braunfels** that will include up to 6000 new residential homes, plus businesses, industrial sites, and schools. Mayfair Development is seeking approvals for a water district and other permits, city officials said last week. [Story](#).

San Antonio-based Frost Bank, having completed its expansion into **Houston**, is now planning to enter the **Dallas** market early next year. [Details](#).

In what may be the largest outdoor gathering since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, **San Antonio** will host more than a thousand 'techies' and urban professionals in Legacy Park later this month (5/20). Tech Block, a tech sector advocacy program, is hosting the event - called a Reboot Rally - to signal 'to ourselves and the world' that the tech community is open for business. [Story](#).

Major cryptocurrency player Blockcap is moving its headquarters from **Las Vegas** to **Austin**. A spokesman for the company said their blockchain-based bitcoin technology is geared toward serving the 1.7 billion people worldwide who have no access to traditional banking. [Story](#).

Thought of the Week

"If you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change."

- Wayne Dyer

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