



Monday Morning Report

June 1, 2020

INTERNAL

The next teleconference meeting of the Executive Committee of the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, June 17 at 2pm via Zoom.

COVID-19 UPDATE: Total confirmed global cases reached 6,112,902 with 370,416 deaths as of noon yesterday (5/31). US deaths have reached 104,051 with US confirmed cases topping 1,778,515. (**Johns Hopkins**) Texas confirmed cases stood at 62,333 as of (5/30, 5:00 pm), with 1,648 deaths. **Bexar County**: 2,636 cases with 72 deaths; **Comal County**: 94 cases, 7 dead; **Guadalupe County**: 132 cases, no deaths; **Travis County**: 3,186 cases, 93 deaths; **Williamson County**: 603 cases, with 24 deaths. (**TDHHS**)

INFRASTRUCTURE

National protests over the death of a black man being arrested by the police in **Minneapolis** sadly spread to the **Austin-San Antonio Corridor** over the weekend, with originally peaceful demonstrations gradually descending in some places into looting and arson. IH-35 in Austin was shut down twice by protesters. Even more violent protests in **Houston** and **Dallas** led Gov. Greg Abbott to issue a statewide disaster declaration. **Austin report. San Antonio report. Declaration.**

The national impacts of pandemic-inspired traffic reductions - and a slump in oil prices - on transportation funding appear even more serious than previously thought: "All of our models are broken," said a senior **Washington** think-tank official. Statewide traffic counts have declined in every urban center, motorists are buying less gasoline, and "traditional revenues are bleak." A respected **Dallas** leader says it's time to focus on needs, not wants. **Story. Opinion.**

Austin's Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) continues to struggle with which projects to cancel or defer following last month's decision to re-direct \$633 million in funding from an earlier spending plan to the IH-35 Capital Expressway project. CAMPO board members had asked for a new scoring system to evaluate projects, but not everyone is happy with the staff's methodology. A difficult vote is scheduled for June 8. **Story.**

When self-driving cars eventually largely replace existing fleets, whenever that happens, will people still want to own their own vehicles or rely on ride-hailing services such as Uber or Lyft? Fortunes - and the environment - may be won or lost with the answer to that question. New polling data from **Cargurus.com** indicate that post-pandemic consumers may be re-evaluating the benefits/dangers of both car ownership and ridesharing. **Story.**

Standard & Poor's chief economist expects the economic damage from the pandemic will be three times larger than the Great Recession, and in one-third the time. She's recommending a \$2.1 trillion federal infrastructure spending package from **Washington** that would generate \$5.7 trillion in returns - returning the national economy to full strength in four quarters rather than the projected seven quarters. **Opinion.**

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

Austin and **San Antonio**, perfect together? The business editor of the *Express-News* thinks so and argues in an op-ed piece that entrepreneur Elon Musk may be the matchmaker for a marriage combining the two cities' multiple assets to develop a new Tesla manufacturing facility in Central Texas. [Opinion](#).

The University of Texas at **San Antonio** has been selected by the US Department of Energy to create a \$110 million Cybersecurity Manufacturing Innovation Institute focused on cybersecurity issues, energy efficiency and creation of manufacturing jobs. \$70 million in financing will come from the federal government. [Story](#).

As questions continue to surround a \$39 million federal contract granted to a **San Antonio** event-planner charged with orchestrating large, food bank-style deliveries to a multi-state area, it now appears that alarms are sounding about another partner in the venture - local caterer Iverson Brownell - over resume-inflation. [Details](#).

With elected officials frequently scrambling over the last few months to respond to the multiple impacts and issues surrounding the coronavirus pandemic, **San Antonio** mayor Ron Nirenberg 'has emerged as a steady, cautious leader who relies on data,' according to the *Express-News* over the weekend. [Story](#).

Thought of the Week

"If it isn't a mess, it will do until a mess gets here."

— Brian Williams

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