



Monday Morning Report

August 13, 2018

INTERNAL

The next meeting of the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council's Executive Committee will be on September 19 at 2:00 pm, in the Council offices at 304 C.M. Allen Parkway in **San Marcos**. RSVP to council@thecorridor.org.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Influential free-market writer Robert Poole, a fellow at the conservative Reason Foundation, is proposing a new approach to Interstate financing he calls '*Value-Added Tolling*' to rebuild the nation's highway system. The policy would guarantee that new tolls could only be used for capital and operating/maintenance costs of the replacement interstates, that tolling would begin only after the reconstruction is completed (value for money), and that toll customers receive rebates on state fuel taxes for miles driven on toll-financed replacement corridors. Expect to hear more about this as state leaders in **Austin** struggle to reverse their 'no new tolling' policies. [Opinion](#).

Local jurisdictions frequently offer incentives and subsidies to lure new firms and jobs, but **Washington** economist Joseph Kane - a former US Labor Department official - argues that investing in local infrastructure creates a better platform to support industries and broader regional growth. He writes that such growth is more sustainable and equitable. [Story](#).

The University of Texas at **Austin** will work with the US Army and Uber to develop flying taxis for personal use by 2020. Specifically, the parties will attempt to develop quieter rotor blades than those currently available for the devices. Earlier this year, Uber created a \$21 million think tank in **Paris** to speed flying taxi and drone development. [Story](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and 'Other' News)

New climate research shows that the arid Western region is shifting into the humid Eastern region, with profound implications for US agriculture. Reflecting a 30-year trend, this shift from grains to cattle and turning cropland into range land, appears to be speeding up and could impact much more than just food prices. The **Austin-San Antonio Corridor** appears to be on the front line of this change - so expect hotter and drier weather. [Story](#).

[Bad Week For Weather News](#): In another new weather research report based upon multiple independent studies, **Oxford** University scientists say this summer's heat wave across Europe is definitely linked to global warming and that the chances for extreme summer heat waves have doubled for the entire Northern Hemisphere. [Report](#).

San Antonio city staff has proposed a \$2.8 billion budget for fiscal year 2019, about 6% larger than last year's budget but containing no property tax increases. The proposal contains just less than \$100 million for streets and sidewalks. A vote on the budget is slated for Sept. 13. See it [here](#).

Distressed and developing areas in **San Antonio** and across the Corridor could see a surge of new investment due to a change in Federal tax law that creates state-designated Opportunity Zones, according to today's **Rivard Report**. The item details 24 Opportunity Zone tracts in **San Antonio** and **Bexar County** and describes the program. [Story](#).

In the realm of urban design ugly gas stations ordinarily seem as certain as death and taxes. But a new book suggests that maybe it doesn't have to be that way. The book, sub-titled '*The Allure of Gas Stations*,' examines design qualities of stations across the world and suggests retrofits suitable in a world where electric cars may rule. [Story](#).

Thought of the Week

"The best way to make your dreams come true is to wake up."

- Paul Valery

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