



Monday Morning Report

August 19, 2019

INTERNAL

The next meeting of the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council Executive Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, September 18, 2:00 pm at the Council offices in **San Marcos**, 304 N CM Allen Parkway. Please RSVP to council@thecorridor.org.

INFRASTRUCTURE

All six lakes in the Guadalupe River valley network overseen by the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority will be drained, beginning in September, as the agency struggles to respond to the failure of two dams (Lake Wood and Lake Dunlap) over the last three years. Property values for homes and businesses fronting the lakes east of **San Antonio** may be drained away as well, with some estimating losses of 50%. Aging dam infrastructure is the culprit and it may take up to \$180 million - and many years - to fix. [Details. More.](#)

Several recent reports have highlighted the threats posed by wildfires and floods to the **Austin-San Antonio Corridor**, and now some **Austin** city council members on the Audit and Finance Committee want a more thorough look at just how prepared the city is to tackle the threat. Fire-resistant building codes and clearing fire-prone brush are topping the list of considerations, particularly in areas adjacent to the urban core. [Story.](#)

Business Insider has compiled a list of the 50 Worst Commutes in the US - those that range from 25-to-37 minutes each way - and, when **San Antonio** ranked 40th out of 50, the **Express-News** went further and added time-and-cost estimates for the most common commutes in the Alamo City [here](#). The **Austin** commute ranked 33rd but **Houston** led Texas cities at 16th worst in the US. Original list [here](#).

TxDOT's plans for Interstate 35 in Northeast **San Antonio** were previewed for local residents earlier this month and they include double-decking the highway through **Selma** and **Schertz**. "There's nowhere to go but up," said one official. "There's no more available right of way." Without the improvements, officials said, drive time from AT&T Center Parkway to **Schertz** would reach 50 minutes by 2044. [Details.](#)

In the course of an analysis of how Tesla's self-driving technology differs from those of other autonomous-vehicle aspirants (Elon Musk has abandoned Lidar technology, a mainstay of other potential manufacturers), the website **CleanTechnica** has provided a graphics-heavy update on where the self-driving vehicle industry is at the moment, and when exactly we can expect to be dodging driver-less cars. It includes a useful primer on sensing technologies currently in play. [Story.](#)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and 'Other' News)

US railroads are trying to fight off attempts in **Washington** that would have Congress mandate a 'two-person' crew rule for freight trains, something the industry says would not necessarily improve safety. Bob Mitchell, of the Bay Area **Houston** Economic Partnership, argues in an op-ed that oil producing states like

Texas would be especially hard hit by the proposed rule, which he terms 'government over-reach.'

Opinion.

The Texas Supreme Court has rejected a lawsuit seeking intervention by the courts into a ballot language dispute involving **Austin's** proposed \$1.4 billion convention center expansion. Backers of the lawsuit want Proposition B, a petition-driven ordinance, to call for voter approval of convention-center expansions and a redistribution of millions in hotel tax revenues. An appeal has already been filed and the clock is ticking away with a Sept. 5 deadline looming to print ballots for the November election. **Story.**

San Antonio's master plan to combat climate change will go before the city council for approval on October 17, according to mayor Ron Nirenberg. The latest draft still projects the city achieving carbon neutrality by 2050, but it has been stripped of many of its most controversial specific targeted emissions-reduction goals. **Details.**

Thought of the Week

"If you don't like something change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude. Don't complain."

- Maya Angelou

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