



Monday Morning Report

October 28, 2019

INTERNAL

The next meeting of the Executive Committee of the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council is scheduled for Wednesday, December 18, 2:00 pm at the Council offices in **San Marcos** (304 North C.M. Allen Parkway). For questions or to add items to the agenda, email council@thecorridor.org.

INFRASTRUCTURE

With the increased demand for products from online companies such as Amazon - and the explosion of food-on-demand services - there is a corollary increase in delivery vehicles that clog streets and highways, adding to congestion. In **New York** city, where 1.5 million packages a day are delivered by trucks that frequently double-park, blocking traffic, this push for convenience has enormous impacts on gridlock, road safety, and pollution. UPS and FedEx alone received nearly 471,000 parking citations last year. Here's how officials are responding. [Story](#).

San Antonio is at an inflection point on transportation, opined the **Rivard Report** over the weekend, stalled out at a crossroads over future policy and funding options to address the city's 'unacceptable' transportation profile. 'San Antonio is now at a point where rhetorical commitment to change either translates into actual change, or a loss in momentum,' says editor Bob Rivard. He lauds **Bexar County** judge Nelson Wolff's call for a 2020 referendum potentially shifting tax revenue from greenspace to transit. [Opinion](#).

It's somewhat policy-wonkish, but the National Transportation Research Board in **Washington** has published a manual with guidelines to help agencies update regional transportation modeling and forecasting tools to incorporate the expected impacts of Connected and Automated Vehicles. The report comes in two volumes: one dealing with CAV modeling tools and the second examining planning and modeling processes. If interested, start [here](#).

NOVA, the Public Broadcasting Service's science program, has posted an episode considering Connected and Autonomous Vehicles, "*Look Who's Driving*," and particularly the challenges of using artificial intelligence to make better decisions than human beings in life-and-death situations. The program is available online via **Austin's** PBS affiliate KLRU website. [Details](#).

What may be one of the world's largest conferences on '*The Future of Transportation*' takes place December 10-11 in **Vienna**, Austria, with nine separate programming streams including airborne mobility, connectivity and cyber-security, tons of Connected and Automated Vehicles content, freight movement technologies, and a section devoted to exploring alternative ideas across mobility disciplines. More information, [here](#).

According to **Texas Government Insider** and despite a legislative prohibition on toll lanes, TxDOT planners are now considering adding two managed or High Occupancy Vehicle lanes in each direction on IH-35 in Austin as part of the Capital Expressway projects north and south of downtown. [Details](#) (left

column, halfway down). TxDOT has set up a virtual public comments site for comments on the project [here](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and 'Other' News)

Re-writing **Austin's** land development code has been a struggle from the start, and some neighborhood activists have forced significant changes on city planners via court action, but one respected longtime conservationist, George Cofer - head of the Hill Country Conservancy - surprised some last week by telling a Real Estate Council of Austin luncheon crowd that a new development code provided an opportunity for both developers and neighborhood advocates to get what they want from city government. [Story](#).

One of the recent Democratic presidential primary debates featured a scary portrait of the threats automation represents to US workers, with the assertion made that a quarter of all American jobs are at risk. The question was framed based on a **Washington** think tank report, and the group involved has responded with clarifications that paint a far less worrisome scenario. Federal education and re-training funds have historically dealt with this issue quite well. [Details](#).

Cities are constantly trying to upgrade their emergency dispatch systems and a recent commercial service reports that there are three main factors that impact the speed and efficiency of emergency response: the source of the road data, the level of agency situational awareness, and the capacity for real-time routing. The service offers an e-book citing data from cities such as **Boston, San Francisco, London** and others. Download [here](#).

Amazon today controls nearly 40% of all e-commerce in the US; Amazon's advertising business alone is worth more than IBM; 42% of all book sales and one-third of the video streaming market are controlled by the company, according to a fascinating story in **The Atlantic** about Jeff Bezos and his ultimate vision for his company and global online commerce, 'What Jeff Bezos Wants.' [Story](#).

The Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority appears to be making progress on developing a response plan along its Guadalupe River Valley system's failing dams northeast of **San Antonio**. A potential pact approved last week between the agency and the Preserve Lake Dunlap Association (following a public presentation in **New Braunfels**) seems to be outlining a methodology that would enlist state help in finding long term funding to replace the dams. [Details](#).

If you thought student debt was just a millennial issue, think again. In a story datelined from **Amarillo**, the **Texas Tribune** reports that over 220,000 Texans aged 60-plus had student loan debts - some decades old - in 2017, with a median balance of \$15,754. Older Americans were the fastest-growing demographic of student loan holders in 2016, and the most likely to be in default. A time bomb ticks a little louder, [here](#).

Thought of the Week

"I am afraid we must make the world honest before we can honestly say to our children that honesty is the best policy."

- Sir Walter Besant

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