



Monday Morning Report

November 8, 2021

INTERNAL

The **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council Executive Committee is scheduled to meet Wednesday, November 17, at 2:00 pm by Zoom videoconference. There will be a presentation by Jason Giulietti, president of the Greater San Marcos Partnership. To add an item to the agenda or for any questions, email council@thecorridor.org.

COVID-19 UPDATE: Global cases reached 250 million as of this morning, at 250,015,789 cases, with 5,052,148 fatalities. US cases stand at 46,488,417, with 754,431 deaths (11/08/21) (**Johns Hopkins**). Yesterday, Texas reported 3,528,564 confirmed cases with 70,758 deaths (about 10% of total US fatalities) including in **Bexar County**: 265,225 cases with 5,164 deaths; **Guadalupe County**: 17,660 cases, with 340 deaths; **Comal County**: 11,256 cases (no change) with 456 deaths; **Hays County**: 29,796 cases with 350 deaths; **Travis County**: 120,366 cases with 1,445 deaths; and **Williamson County**: 65,700 cases with 698 deaths (11/7/21). (**TDHHS**).

INFRASTRUCTURE

Now comes the hard part. With the \$1.2 trillion infrastructure bill passed and awaiting President Biden's signature, the **Washington Post** warns that the administration - like the Obama administration - may be tempted to spread that funding across multiple projects to derive the most political benefit but be unwilling to complete a smaller number of expensive, yet important, large projects. **Story**. What various states are seeking from the bill, [here](#); how did local representatives vote? [Here](#).

A state comptroller's report last week pegged the final statewide costs of February's winter storm Uri at a whopping \$80-130 billion, citing Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas data. The **Express-News** coverage of the report draws on additional studies from Austin and Houston universities, [here](#). Meanwhile, **Austin-Travis County** released an after-action study of the event, with over 100 suggestions for how to avoid future blackouts. **Story**.

The **Texas Observer** says Texas is using federal dollars intended for roadway and water infrastructure to instead fund police, prisons, and statewide cybersecurity efforts; and the magazine says to expect more-of-same if the Biden administration's '*Build Back Better*' infrastructure program is approved. Article references threats to Llano River water in **Junction, TX**. **Story**.

A new book argues that whiz-bang automobile technologies have been promised by car manufacturers for the past 80 years without coming to fruition and that the allure of autonomous, crash-free autos distract the public from the larger need to move away from single-occupant driving. The conclusions of *Autonorama: The Illusory Promise of High-Tech Driving*, by University of Virginia researcher Peter Norton are discussed [here](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

Irony Really Is Dead: **Houston**-based Exxon, the largest US energy company - with massive positions in oil and natural gas - warned investors in a head-spinning securities filing last week that some of its assets may suffer 'impairment' due to global climate change. Directors will study potential impacts of regulation, government policies and greenhouse gas restrictions, the company said. [Story](#).

Already suspect over methodology and political intervention, the 2020 Census Bureau population report appears to have under-counted Texans by at least 377,000 people - more than the entire city of **Corpus Christi**, for example - potentially costing the state \$13.6 billion in federal revenue over the next decade and one seat in the US House, according to a **Washington**-based research group. [Story](#). [Opinion & Analysis](#).

In yet another analysis of metro-to-metro population migration from Census Bureau data, the **New York Times** finds that people are pouring out of **Los Angeles** into **Phoenix**, **Las Vegas**, and **Dallas**. Of the top ten cities gaining from metro-to-metro moves, **Austin** ranked 4th, with **Houston** its largest source of new-comers. [Story](#).

Wurstfest is back! After a devastating fire and a two-year pause due to Covid-19, the quintessential annual celebration of sausage, beer, and all things German in **New Braunfels** kicked off over the weekend, re-igniting a 60-year-old tradition. The party continues thru Nov. 14. For some heartening local color, go [here](#).

Thought of the Week

"Today or any day that phone may ring and bring good news."

- Ethel Waters

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