



Monday Morning Report

November 12, 2018

INTERNAL

The next scheduled meeting for the **Austin-San Antonio Corridor** Council Executive Committee is Wednesday, December 19 at 2pm.

RSVP or submit agenda items to council@thecorridor.org.

INFRASTRUCTURE

The incoming chairman of the House Transportation Committee believes that a big infrastructure spending bill is possible - with support from the Trump administration - within the first six months of the new Congress taking control in January. In a **Washington** interview, ranking Democrat Rep. Peter DeFazio is proposing an initial \$500 billion program aimed at rebuilding the nation's crumbling highway and rail systems that he hopes to pass 'before the silliness of the presidential election year' begins. [Story](#).

Urban visionary Gil Penalosa, keynote speaker for the **Rivard Report's** first annual CityFest over the weekend in **San Antonio**, issued a call for city policies that emphasize people over cars: "The most important piece of infrastructure in any city is its network of sidewalks and parks, the places where people walk, recreate, stay healthy, and meet across the socio-economic spectrum as citizens, neighbors, and equals," writes Bob Rivard, summarizing remarks by Penalosa. [Story](#).

Comal and **Guadalupe Counties**, and the cities of **Seguin** and **New Braunfels**, have partnered to prioritize highway projects that impact their jurisdictions. Highway 46 from Interstate 35 to Interstate 10, and improvements around **New Braunfels** have emerged as consensus needs for better connectivity. By combining forces, the jurisdictions hope to improve their prospects for funding from the Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization. [Story](#). More details [here](#).

It sounds like a science fiction idea right out of *Bladerunner* but police in **Dubai** have indeed begun training on drone-like flying motorbikes that hover up to 16 feet in the air and travel at speeds up to 60 miles per hour. A California-based company, Hoversurf, is providing the vehicles and training, expecting the devices to be deployed in large numbers by 2020. [Details](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and 'Other' News)

The takeover in **Washington** by Democrats in the US Congress may unravel elements of the Trump administrations attempts to re-write the NAFTA agreement between the US, Mexico, and Canada. Media reports say House Democrats are considering withholding support for the new trade agreement until further protections are included for US workers. [Story](#).

A leading expert on federally-designated Opportunity Zones says there are three important components to making the successful: having a powerful institutional anchor as a partner; understanding the sometimes complicated issues of multi-jurisdictional governance; and understanding the power of transformative

investments. Bruce Katz on lessons learned from visits to six cities including **Albuquerque**, **Madison**, and **New Orleans**. Research posting [here](#).

In a story datelined out of **Toyota City**, Japan, the **Dallas Morning News** reports that Toyota Motor Company - which employs over 300,000 people worldwide and 70,000 in the US - is engaged in a 'life or death' battle among auto giants to adapt to new technologies and market-place realities. Key to their effort is 'future-proofing' the company amid the mobility revolution sparked by looming developments in ride-sharing and autonomous vehicles. [Story](#).

It was probably inevitable, but Amazon's apparent decision to split its 50,000-employee HQ2 'second headquarters' project between two different cities (currently reputed to be regions of **New York** and **Washington**) is sparking a hailstorm of questions about their methodology and the lengths to which economic development groups went to secure the facility. Our favorite comment on the process calls it '*The Hunger Games*' of economic development. [Opinion](#).

Tiny **Gruene**, best known for country music and a classic dance hall, kicks off an impressive array of Christmas season events tomorrow (11/13) that will run through New Year's Day. They've got a Western-style Santa Claus (Cowboy Kringle) taking photos with children, a Christmas Fair of local crafts, lighting displays and even a Pony Express re-enactment. If you don't know, it's between **New Braunfels** and **San Marcos** off IH-35 and you can see a list of the events [here](#).

Thought of the Week

"Duty, Honor, Country. Those three hallowed words reverently dictate what you ought to be, what you can be, what you will be."

- Douglas MacArthur

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