



Monday Morning Report

March 7, 2022

INTERNAL

Due to Spring Break travel schedules of various members, we're going to merge the March and April meetings of the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council Executive Committee into a single meeting on April 20 at 2 PM. Thus, *no meeting* next week. To add an item to the April 20 agenda, contact council@thecorridor.org.

COVID-19 UPDATE: As of this morning global fatalities have surpassed six million, to 6,001,094, with confirmed worldwide cases now at 46.5 million. US cases have reached 79.2 million with 958,621 deaths. (3/1/22) ([Johns Hopkins](#)). Yesterday, Texas reported 5,445,217 confirmed cases with 84,409 deaths, including in **Bexar County**: 463,868 cases with 5,956 deaths; **Guadalupe County**: 26,061 cases, with 389 deaths; **Comal County**: 21,746 cases, with 535 deaths; **Hays County**: 51,560 cases with 424 deaths; **Travis County**: 201,298 cases with 1,684 deaths; and **Williamson County**: 107,774 cases with 852 deaths (3/6/22). ([TDHHS](#)). *Current regional hospitalization-rate data is found [here](#).*

INFRASTRUCTURE

Nearly halfway through the current federal fiscal year, Congress has yet to pass an appropriations bill funding the \$1.2 trillion Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act passed last November, wrote Corridor Council-member Gary Raba in the **San Antonio Report** last week. Congressional delay is stalling new dollars for infrastructure projects, he notes, warning also of potential complications from Texas state-directed co-funding restrictions. [Opinion](#).

Construction began last week on the final segment of an eastern loop around **San Marcos** on Farm-to-Market Road 110 North that should be operable by 2024, creating an alternative route to Interstate-35 in **Hays County**. The \$36.5 million segment includes new roadway from State Highway 80 back to IH-35 with a bridge over State Highway 20, connecting south **San Marcos** to south **Kyle**. More details [here](#).

Anticipating big crowds for this year's Spring Break, **San Antonio** officials are developing a one-way traffic loop through Brackenridge Park to ease congestion and access challenges for nearby neighborhoods. The new pattern began this weekend and continues at least through March 20. [Details](#).

Urban bus systems and subways have received the most attention amid changing commuter habits, but the **Washington Post** reports that experts say longer-distance trains and buses, which took the biggest ridership hits during the pandemic, remain at an even higher risk of long-term ridership woes. The reason: low-income riders who can't work from home rely on city transit lines; affluent, more flexible workers telework or drive. [Story](#).

American roads are getting more deadly, with motorists and pedestrian fatalities rising at a record pace, **Axios** reports. 31,720 people died in crashes during the first nine months of 2021 - despite lower traffic volumes during the pandemic - up 12% over the same period in 2020, which itself was up 7.2% over the

previous year. Data indicates that younger, male motorists are driving *more* - with riskier behaviors. [Story](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

Texas topped all other US states for business investment projects in 2021 for the 10th year in a row, according to **Site Selection** magazine, and the **Austin** area topped other cities in the state for overall new facilities investments with the addition of the Tesla and Samsung manufacturing mega-projects. [Story](#).

The University of Texas at **Austin** has pledged to raise \$6 billion in the largest private philanthropic effort ever undertaken by a Texas university, with \$1 billion dedicated to assisting students directly - thought to be the largest fundraising goal for such purposes in the history of public education. Officials aim to become the 'highest-impact public research university in the world.' [Story](#).

Fast-growing **Buda** is moving forward on some \$89 million in ambitious projects approved last year, including \$73.6 million for 13 local transportation efforts and \$16.1 million for six park projects. **Texas Government Insider** says the city is beginning the process to select consulting, management, and design teams. [Details](#) (left hand column).

Thought of the Week

"To be prepared for war is one of the most effective means of preserving peace."

- George Washington

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