



## Monday Morning Report

March 10, 2025

---

### INTERNAL

The next meeting of the Austin-San Antonio Corridor Council Executive Committee is Wednesday, March 19 at 2:00 PM by Zoom. For more information or to add an item to the agenda, contact [council@thecorridor.org](mailto:council@thecorridor.org).

Legislative Alert: Wednesday (3/12), Senate Bill 1555 (Nichols) is before the Senate Transportation Committee in Room E1.012, 8:00 AM at the State Capitol. The bill establishes a grant program for rail/roadway-pedestrian grade crossing separations. This is a potential funding source for **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor projects. [Details](#).

Question One: We asked Elon Musk's Grok AI - "truth-seeking" artificial intelligence-driven software - 'Given current population and trade trends, how do we insure transportation mobility in the **Austin-San Antonio Corridor** by 2050?' Planned IH-35 improvements, truck diversions to SH 130, interurban bus, and passenger rail were suggested solutions. Oddly, not Hyperloop. [AI Response Here](#). Question Two in next week's **MMR**.

---

### INFRASTRUCTURE

Liberal **New York Times** columnist Ezra Klein writes over the weekend that liberal policies raise the cost of living in blue (Democratic) states - causing their populations to flee to red (Republican) states - and create regulatory burdens that stifle many worthy highway, transit, and in particular, high-speed rail projects. [Opinion](#). [Video](#).

Billionaire, tech mogul, on-again-off-again government employee, and sometime **Austin** resident Elon Musk reportedly told a Morgan Stanley conference last week that Amtrak should be privatized, calling the national rail service "embarrassing" before adding: "It can leave you with a very bad impression of America." [Story](#).

Meanwhile, details emerged last week in **Texas Government Insider** about Amtrak's delivery partner search for the **Dallas-to-Houston** high-speed rail project via a Request for Qualifications notice, posted last month. The item mentions House Bill 483 (Bucy), calling for a **DFW-AUS-SAT** high-speed rail corridor along IH-35. [Story](#). [More](#).

---

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

**Smart Asset's** annual *'What It Takes to Bet Middle Class in America'* 2025 report says **Austin** residents should be making at least \$60,995 to be labeled 'middle class' - 18th highest in the US. In **San Antonio**, being middle class requires an annual income of at least \$41,544, roughly equivalent to **Houston**. For details, go [here](#).

The 'Giant White House' is a phenomenon popping in more and more neighborhoods in the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor. Outsized for the surrounding homes, taller and architecturally unrelated to their neighbors, white mammoths with black windows, **Slate** magazine says they're a product of sector wealth and sq. footage. [Story](#).

Drivers are increasingly frustrated by new high-tech features in automobiles (TV-sized touch screens, fancy pop-out door handles) that create distractions and frequently don't work, the **Wall Street Journal** reports. Complaints are prompting automakers to bring back physical buttons and knobs. Now, about that annoying GPS... [Story](#).

## Thought of the Week

"Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes, including you."

– Anne Lamott

---

This newsletter is available to our members. If you wish to unsubscribe, please send an email request to [council@thecorridor.org](mailto:council@thecorridor.org).

---

©2025 Austin-San Antonio Corridor Council