



Monday Morning Report

May 13, 2024

INTERNAL

The next meeting of the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council Executive Committee will be on Wednesday, June 19, at 2:00 pm via Zoom. As discussed at last month's meeting, we are combining the May and June meetings into a single meeting next month, thus there will be no Executive Committee meeting this week. For any issues or concerns, or to add an agenda item for next month, contact council@thecorridor.org.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Texas has the deadliest highways in the US, according to a recently resurfaced study by **Consumer Affairs** that analyzed data from National Highway Transportation Safety data. The state's 79,000-miles of highways saw 4,068 crashes with 4,498 deaths in 2021 - and nearly a third of fatalities were alcohol-related. [Story. Report.](#)

San Antonio is one step closer to getting nonstop flights to **Washington DC** following passage by the US Senate last week of the Federal Aviation Administration's reauthorization measure, which opened five new landing slots at Reagan National (DCA). The bill is expected to pass the House shortly. [Story.](#) US Senator Ted Cruz emerged as an unlikely craftsman for the bipartisan effort, the **Washington Post** reported. [Analysis.](#)

Travis County judge Andy Brown and **Bexar County** judge Peter Sakai announced formation last week of a Texas Passenger Rail Advisory Committee to explore passenger rail service in the **Austin-San Antonio Corridor** and beyond. **San Antonio** city council member and Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization chairwoman, Melissa Cabello Havrda, as well as former mayor Henry Cisneros, will also serve on the panel. [Details.](#)

Formation of the Texas Passenger Rail Advisory Panel (*above*) comes amid a resurgence across the US of passenger rail services, **Axios** reports, spurred in part by increased federal funding, advances in train technologies, environmental concerns, and private sector-driven rail projects in Florida and California. [Story.](#)

The **Dallas Morning News** is out this morning with a package of stories detailing how explosive population growth in Texas led to what the paper calls the highway 'Toll Trap,' showing a timeline for how toll roads spread across the state and the financial burden the trend has foisted upon motorists. [Story.](#)

University of Texas regents pledged \$13.5 million last week as a down payment for design work on a 17-acre 'cap' over Interstate 35 from Dean Keeton to 15th street, part of a TxDOT project to widen and lower the highway through downtown **Austin**. For more details, go [here](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

The **Express-News** reported on a survey of housing valuations across **Central Texas** last week and found median home prices dropping across the region, with **Fredericksburg** suffering a year-over-year drop of nearly \$85,000, **Austin** down \$37,694, and **San Antonio** down \$11,127. [Story Report.](#)

Water Wins And Woes: As drought continues across Texas, fast-growing cities are scrambling for more access to water. On a positive note, **San Marcos** agreed last week to share water with booming **Kyle** until 2027. [Details.](#) Further south, **San Antonio's** Medina Lake hit a record low of just 2.7% full. Other area lake levels cited [here.](#)

Planet-warming carbon dioxide is accumulating in the atmosphere at a record pace, and the rate of increase is faster than scientists' grimmest predictions, the **Washington Post** reports, based upon data at Hawaii's **Mauna Loa** Observatory. But there may be good news: the world's largest carbon-capturing plant, designed to remove 36,000 metric tons of carbon from the air each year, just became operational in Iceland. [Story. More.](#)

Tech giant Google will host an online event *tomorrow* showcasing their latest artificial intelligence-based tricks and unveiling new developer tools, **Axios** reports. Presentations begin at 8:00 am CT. You can register [here.](#)

Congratulations to Texas State University in **San Marcos**, which has been awarded \$10 million in federal funding to support the University Transportation Center to 'advance transportation research, technology, and workforce.' Among the projects first up: a study of sediments undermining bridge foundations. [Story.](#)

Thought of the Week

"Change your life today. Don't gamble on the future, act now, without delay."

– Simone de Beauvoir

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