



Monday Morning Report

May 20, 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. To add an agenda item to the agenda, contact council@thecorridor.org.

INFRASTRUCTURE

San Antonio International Airport is just one presidential signature away from launching nonstop service to **Washington DC**, and already American Airlines is preparing to fill at least one of the available slots opened by the pending re-authorization of the Federal Aviation Administration.

Story. It was Texas vs. Virginia in securing nonstop access to Reagan National (DCA). **More.**

With South Texas lakes at historically low levels and the Rio Grande drying up south and east of **El Paso**, the US and Mexico are headed toward a water war, the **Washington Post** reports. Already, the town of **Mission** is considering a total halt to future development until water supplies can be guaranteed. The US says Mexico is hoarding water to support their own agricultural exports at the expense of South Texas farmers. **Story.**

Although tying a specific weather event to climate change is difficult, the **New York Times** reports that last week's powerful thunder and windstorm that hit **Houston** is part of a pattern of destruction that will only become more widespread and intensify in coming decades. Expect more highway flooding along the Texas coast. **Story.**

A wave of optimism washed over the US High Speed Rail conference in **Washington** last week, with participants almost giddy about recent advances of the California-to-**Las Vegas** and **Dallas-to-Houston** bullet train projects (**here**). But, as *Newsweek* points out, there are still substantial obstacles to wider deployment. **Story. More.**

In **Austin**, an attempt to quickly issue bonds for the Project Connect light rail effort hit a series of snags thrown up by a local lawsuit and intervention from Texas attorney general Ken Paxton. A trial regarding the validity of the bonds was set for May 28, but a continuance hearing tomorrow may spur delays. **Story.**

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

The **Express-News** reports that **San Antonio** topped **Austin** in the latest US Census Bureau rankings of the fastest-growing American metro areas. Slower **Austin** growth is attributed to less in-migration. **Kyle** and **Georgetown's** rapid growth pace also slowed slightly, according to the paper's analysis. **Story.**

Something strange is happening in major US cities: despite talk of 'urban doom loops' following the pandemic (office-space gluts and declining retail sales due to remote work), many downtown areas are booming after-hours and on weekends. Cellphone data analyzed by a university in **Toronto** shows many cities' population activity *increasing*. **San Antonio** ranks 25th, **Austin** ranked 31st among US metros in the analysis. [Story. Report.](#)

Want to know what's happening to housing prices near you? The **Washington Post** developed an interactive tool that allows you to check home prices and trends by zip code. Of interest: four of the ten counties with the biggest price drops were in the **Austin** area. [Story & Tool.](#)

It took a while, but the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration is finally investigating the robotaxi units of Alphabet and Amazon after multiple reports of crashes or potential traffic violations. The agency is already investigating and evaluating Ford and **Austin**-based Tesla's self-driving systems. [Story.](#)

If you've got time for one non-work-related reading item this week, take a look at this fascinating exploration of a century-old gunfight battle south of **San Antonio** involving the Texas Rangers and three members of a Tejano wedding party or (maybe?) tequila smugglers. An investigation kept alive by surviving descendants. [Story.](#)

Thought of the Week

"It is amazing what you can accomplish if you do not care who gets the credit."

– Harry Truman

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