



Monday Morning Report

May 30, 2022

Memorial Day Edition

INTERNAL

The Executive Committee of the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council met earlier this month (5/18) for a presentation from national General Motors electric and fleet officials on the current 'state of play' in developing EV's for government use, the various models available, and comparable life-cycle costs vs. traditional gas-powered vehicles. In addition to various project updates, the Committee also discussed and approved a proposed plan ([here](#)) for seeking enhanced Amtrak passenger rail service in the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor. For questions or concerns, email council@thecorridor.org.

COVID-19 UPDATE: It's not over until it's over. Due to more transmissible though less lethal variants, new US infections are five times higher this Memorial Day than last year ([here](#)). Worldwide confirmed cases are now at 528.8 million, with 6,287,421 deaths. US cases reached 83,984,472 yesterday, with 1,004,730 reported deaths (5/29/22). ([Johns Hopkins](#)). On Friday, Texas was reporting 5,617,405 confirmed cases with 86,804 deaths, including in **Bexar County**: 479,649 cases with 6,143 deaths; **Guadalupe County**: 26,570 cases, still with 398 deaths; **Comal County**: 22,428 cases, still with 550 deaths; **Hays County**: 53,237 cases with 433 deaths; **Travis County**: 210,761 cases with 1,736 deaths; and **Williamson County**: 111,916 cases still with 879 deaths (5/27/22). ([TDHHS](#)). *Current regional hospitalization-rate data is found [here](#).*

INFRASTRUCTURE

'Sun Belt' communities are booming as major cities bleed population to suburbs and exurbs in a signal that pandemic-era attitudes have shifted for good, reports [The Hill](#). More than half of major US cities registered a loss of population over the last year, sparking big gains for Texas cities, in particular: **Georgetown**, **Leander**, and **New Braunfels** are cited. [Story. More](#) (third item, left-hand column).

Austin-based Tesla joined other electric vehicle companies in an asking the federal government last week to add medium and heavy-duty truck equipment to their plans for a nationwide electric vehicle charging network. Though only 10% of the US fleet, heavy-duty trucks contribute 45% of mobile nitrogen oxide pollution, 57% of particulates, and 28% of global warming emissions, says the Union of Concerned Scientists. [Story. Report.](#)

Ford Motor Company and the German city of **Cologne** are testing technology that could offer new protections for pedestrian and school safety zones, geofencing systems that automatically alert drivers and enforce a slowdown by connected vehicles passing through the protected area. [Details.](#)

The Alamo Regional Mobility Authority (ARMA) and the public got a first detailed look at **Bastrop**-based The Boring Company's proposal for a tunnel project connecting **San Antonio** International Airport to downtown and the Pearl development earlier this month (5/19). Environmentalists and skeptics have a lot

of questions already, but the ARMA's chairman nonetheless envisions possibly expanding the system to **Austin** eventually. [Story](#).

Capital Metro in **Austin** has appointed an interim president and CEO, Dottie Watkins - the agency's current deputy CEO - to serve temporarily while the board conducts a nationwide search for a replacement for former CEO Randy Clarke, who departed for **Washington DC** earlier this month. [Story](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

Prominent venture capital firms are sending warning signals about future funding flows to start-up enterprises, the life's blood for many **Austin** and **San Antonio** technology companies, advising existing firms to cut costs and conserve cash, according to **CNBC**. Sequoia Capital, one of the largest, is circulating a slide deck entitled 'Adapting to Endure.' [Story](#). [More](#).

An **Atlanta**-based research firm has developed a six-point, five-year strategy document to guide the Greater **New Braunfels** Economic Development Foundation - a public-private partnership of **Comal County, New Braunfels**, the local Chamber of Commerce, and New Braunfels Utilities. Transportation and mobility improvements are highlighted, among other suggestions. [Details](#).

Another day, another **Austin** growth-pains story? Not this time: the **American Statesman** has instead collected *all* their recent growth-pain stories under one headline into a population-surge impacts survey that includes housing, homelessness, gentrification, the student population, and more. Take a look, [here](#).

Austin Bergstrom International Airport is now suggesting passengers arrive three-hours before their flights due to a triple-whammy of revived travel demand, ticket-counter & concessions employee shortages, and persistently long Transportation Security Administration lines. [Story](#).

Thought of the Week

"As we set today aside to honor and thank our veterans, let us be mindful that we should do this every day of the year and not just one."

- Beth Pennington

This newsletter is available to our members. If you wish to unsubscribe, please send an email request to council@thecorridor.org.

©2022 Austin-San Antonio Corridor Council