



Monday Morning Report

June 10, 2024

INTERNAL

The **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council Executive Committee will meet on Wednesday, June 19, at 2:00 pm via Zoom. To add an agenda item to the agenda, contact council@thecorridor.org.

INFRASTRUCTURE

The boldest plan yet to introduce congestion pricing in the US, set to begin this month in **New York**, was put on an indefinite hold at the last minute by the state's governor. Although **London**, **Singapore**, and **Stockholm** have all successfully launched tolling programs for entering cities ([here](#)), the governor said the time was not right for **Manhattan**, citing 'economic uncertainty.' Regional transit officials are upset at the loss of revenue. [Story](#). [More](#). [Opinion](#).

US home-to-office commute times are growing longer as high urban housing prices are causing more workers to travel further distances to their jobs, the **Wall Street Journal** reports. 'Super-commuting,' traveling up to 75 miles or more on a regular basis for employment, is also growing more common, up 35% from 2019-2023. [Story](#).

Amazon robotaxi subsidiary Zoox announced last week that it would launch operations in **Austin** and **Miami**, although safety drivers will initially be aboard their autonomous vehicles. And Cruise - the General Motors offshoot - has restarted operations in **Dallas** after pausing all US autonomous testing last year. [Story](#). [More](#).

New mileage standards announced last week by the Biden administration will require US automakers to achieve an average of 65 miles-per-gallon of gasoline for all the car models they sell by 2031 - part of an overall push by the government to shift the industry away from gas-powered vehicles into electric cars, the **Times** reports. [Story](#).

Meanwhile, the **New York Times** also reports that electric vehicles are becoming more affordable due to more efficient manufacturing, falling battery prices, and more intense industry competition. Used Tesla's sell for as low as \$20,000, including a \$4000 federal tax incentive. And brand new \$25,000 EVs are on the way. [Story](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

After a bankruptcy filing last month by parts of **San Antonio's** Zachry Group construction company, one of the subsidiaries, Zachry Industrial, notified state officials that they will be laying off more than 4,400 workers. [Story](#).

Travis County is working on its first Master Flood Plan in cooperation with the Texas Water Development Board, part of an effort to develop a statewide flood plan to be considered by the

Legislature in 2025. The project includes surveys, database development, updated floodplain maps, and lots of public involvement. [Story](#).

The **World Resources Institute** reports that 25 countries - including Mexico - are in danger of running out of water. It's not just that global warming-induced droughts are spreading in length and intensity, but that available supplies are often mismanaged. And there are techniques to solve the problem, researchers say. [Story](#).

The overwhelming election wins of former **Mexico City** mayor Claudia Sheinbaum and her Morena party last week have hit the national economy hard - the peso had its biggest drop against the dollar (now 17.67-to-\$1) since November and their stock markets have lost 6-10%. Investors fear leftist-led financial reforms. [Story](#).

The US Department of the Interior has named Comal Springs in **New Braunfels** a National Water Trail, adding it the National Trails System, a network of more than 1,300 recreation trails in every part of the US. [Details](#).

Booming **Lockhart** is having a moment, according to the **Express-News**, which has run three stories this year on the burg known for barbecue. This latest piece has some new niche bar lists and a raft of B&B's added recently, and it's always a good time for Smitty's, where the cue is cooked into the walls. [Feature](#).

Thought of the Week

"It's easy to make a buck. It's a lot tougher to make a difference."

– Tom Brokaw

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