



Monday Morning Report

June 19, 2023

INTERNAL

Join us *this* Wednesday, June 21, at 2:00 pm via Zoom for the next meeting of the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council Executive Committee. US Representative Joaquin Castro is tentatively scheduled to dial in for a brief discussion and updates on various federal issues (if available). Click [here](#) to request a Zoom invitation. Draft [Agenda](#).

Corridor Council staff meets this Thursday, June 22, in **Austin** with **Travis County** judge Andy Brown to discuss potential regional high-capacity transit options for **Austin-San Antonio**. And please join us *next* Friday in **San Antonio** (6/30) at 10:00 am at the ribbon-cutting, opening for Phase II of the US 281 North Expansion. RSVP to jennifer.serold@txdot.gov.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Responding to increased wildfires resulting from climate change, the nonprofit First Street Foundation - previously known for mapping flood risks - has a new report out (*'Fueling the Flames'*) with state-by-state fire risk assessments over the next 30 years and a related interactive tool allowing individual homeowners to gauge their fire, flood, and other risks. [Story](#). Users can plug in their property address [here](#) for assessment. [Report](#).

Wildfires are no longer a problem just for people who live in fire-prone forested areas, and a recent study found that the number of people in the US exposed to toxic air pollution from fires for at least one day a year increased 27-fold from 2006 to 2020, the **New York Times** reports. Ocean temperatures are also at their highest levels in 40 years. [Story](#).

The **San Antonio** and **Austin** Metropolitan Planning Organizations held a joint meeting in **San Marcos** last week (6/16) for reports on recent demographic studies from the Texas Demographic Center, TxDOT district updates on highway projects connecting the two cities, and upcoming freight studies. [Agenda](#). [Presentations](#). [Video](#).

Toyota - long skeptical about a transition to electric vehicles - made two 'stunning' announcements last week: first, the company is accelerating to 2026 its proposed pace of manufacturing and selling EVs; and it will double the standard range for their electric vehicle batteries to 1000-kilometers (620-miles). [Story](#).

United Airlines and partner Eve Air Mobility have announced plans to launch an electric vertical-takeoff-and-landing vehicle (eVTOL) ready for service from **San Francisco** to surrounding areas by 2026. At launch, their vehicle will have a range of about 60 miles. [Details](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

San Antonio Report founder Robert Rivard writes that the pandemic and other factors have slowed, even endangered economic growth and vitality in downtown **San Antonio** and that a major new

investment of time, money, and talent is essential to restore the city and secure its future. He suggests office-building conversions to housing - or the wrecking ball. [Opinion](#).

The **Austin** Chamber of Commerce and Opportunity **Austin**, two big players in local economic development, announced that they were separating into separate operating units and named new leaders last week. Jeremy Martin will head up the **Austin** Chamber; Gary Farmer will be Opportunity **Austin's** CEO. [Details](#).

The **New Braunfels Herald-Zeitung** reports that legislation passed during the recent legislative session opens the door for Texas State Technical College to expand in **Comal** and **Guadalupe Counties**. Training programs that could be made available include degrees or certifications in more than 40 fields, including aviation maintenance, welding, nursing, and biomedical tech. [Details](#).

A deadline is looming for moving all air cargo out of Benito Juarez International Airport, **Mexico City's** main congested gateway, Lodestar reports. The federal government set a July 7 deadline - despite warnings from airport and freight officials that the alternative, Felipe Angeles airport, was not yet ready. [Details](#).

Thought of the Week

"Strive not to be a success, but rather to be of value."

- Albert Einstein

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