



Monday Morning Report

June 27, 2022

INTERNAL

The next meeting of the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council Executive Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, July 20 at 2 PM by videoconference. To add an item to the agenda, contact council@thecorridor.org.

COVID-19 UPDATE: Global cases this morning are at 543.6 million with 6,329,069 million deaths. US cases are at nearly 87 million, with 1,015,938 deaths (6/27/22) ([Johns Hopkins](#)). Yesterday, Texas reported 5,780,431 confirmed cases with 87,054 deaths, including in **Bexar County**: 494,854 cases with 6,168 deaths; **Guadalupe County**: 27,260 cases, still with 399 deaths; **Comal County**: 23,115 cases, with 553 deaths; **Hays County**: 54,918 cases with 435 deaths; **Travis County**: 219,667 cases with 1,744 deaths; and **Williamson County**: 115,869 cases with 880 deaths (6/26/22). ([TDHHS](#)). *Current regional hospitalization-rate data is found [here](#).*

INFRASTRUCTURE

The Texas Supreme Court ruled on Friday (6/24) that Texas Central Railway IS a legitimate inter-urban railroad and thus entitled to use eminent domain authority to acquire right-of-way for its **Dallas-to-Houston** high speed bullet train project. After weeks of silence following the departure of its president, Carlos Aguilar, the company issued a statement thanking the court and saying they would continue developing the project. [Story. More.](#)

An environmentally questionable proposal by the Port of **Corpus Christi** to dredge about 14-miles of the ship channel near Harbor Island from the current 50-feet to 80-feet, removing 43-million cubic feet of subsurface seafloor (nearly 1800-acres), is drawing increased opposition over aquatic and avian life in the sensitive coastal ecosystem. Proponents say it's vital to global energy demand and support of Western allies in Ukraine. [Story.](#)

That logistical logjam that was expected following **Shanghai's** reopening after months of pandemic lock down, widely predicted to jam ports and hamstring shippers because of a lack of containers, has failed to materialize. The backlog is being systematically cleared and - wary of delays - some shippers canceled sailings, officials said. [Story.](#)

Nonetheless, Elon Musk told Tesla owners last week that battery-delivery delays from Chinese ports were causing production issues for his two plants in **Austin** and **Berlin**, saying the facilities were 'burning cash' but not producing many cars ([here](#)). What is it with Tesla's and fires, anyway? The **Washington Post** reports a wrecked Tesla sat in a junkyard for weeks before the battery suddenly burst into tough-to-extinguish flames. [Story.](#)

Amazon's Zoox robotaxi company announced last week in **Las Vegas** that it had successfully completed test runs on private roadways with no operator, no one inside, no chase cars or remote drivers, in a

landscape populated by cars, trucks, and pedestrians. Amazon's 2020 acquisition of Zoox for \$1 billion is part of a diversification program by the company into robotics, automation, and electric vehicles. [Story](#).

The **San Antonio Report** says Texas Transportation Commission Chairman J. Bruce Bugg is banking on business growth in the Interstate Highway 35 Corridor between Austin and San Antonio, 'the fastest-growing corridor in the United States,' through his Texas Partners Bank's network of three banks in **Austin, San Antonio**, and the **Hill Country**. Read more [here](#).

Three environmental advocacy groups filed a lawsuit this morning seeking to force TxDOT into a broader examination of the potential impacts of three expansion projects along Interstate 35 in central **Austin**. Texas Public Interest Research Group, Environment Texas, and Rethink35 argue the three projects should be considered as one for environmental study purposes. [Story](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

News sources including the **Austin Business Journal** are reporting that Elon Musk's SpaceX rocket company will be joining another Musk enterprise, The Boring Company, with new facilities in **Bastrop**. The reports are based upon job openings posted in nearby **Austin** and public filings, the sources said. [Details](#).

Mayor Ron Nirenberg is talking up **San Antonio** as the site for a new National Football League franchise team, an idea that has been around for a while but has yet to come to fruition, despite a lot of talk lately that the league is looking to expand. As the seventh largest US city and a gateway to Mexico's enthusiastic football fans, the mayor thinks the NFL and Alamo City are a perfect fit. [Story](#).

The Coleman company will be closing its manufacturing facility in **New Braunfels** by the end of this year after 40 years of operation there, laying off about 150 employees and consolidating existing work to other company owned facilities in **Wichita**, KS. The company said it will work with the local Chamber of Commerce to find 'new opportunities' for its former workers. [Story](#).

Thought of the Week

"Each moment is a place you've never been."

- Mark Strand

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