



Monday Morning Report

August 5, 2024

INTERNAL

The next meeting of the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council's Executive Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, August 21 at 2 pm by Zoom. For more information, contact council@thecorridor.org.

INFRASTRUCTURE

A US Senator has opened an inquiry into serious allegations that Union Pacific Railroad – the largest carrier in the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor - coordinated 'company-wide' interference with Federal Railroad Administration safety assessments, *Transportation Today* reports. Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-Washington) says Union Pacific's derailment rate is 30% higher than the next worst Class 1 railroad, 43% higher than the US average. [Story](#).

The US Department of Justice sued Norfolk Southern railroad last week for causing frequent delays of Amtrak trains on the Crescent route between **New York** and **New Orleans**, the first time since 1979 the government has taken a railroad to court for violating the federal law giving Amtrak trains priority over freight trains. [Story](#).

It's Happening: Driverless semi-trucks are now delivering fracking sand to well-head sites in the **Permian Basin**, according to *Axios San Antonio*. Kodiak Robotics is supplying autonomous vehicles to Atlas Energy Solutions. **New Braunfels**-based Aurora Innovation is also already testing driverless big rigs in the I-45 corridor. [Story](#).

People who oppose congestion pricing often end up supporting it once they've seen the traffic and air quality benefits, reports *Grist*. Surveys in **London** and **Stockholm** show up to six-in-ten people supported the measures within a year of implementation. An official says, 'No one is going to say I want to pay more.' [Story](#).

What can **Austin** learn from **Dallas** about covering a highway with a park? *KUT* examines the history and development strategy for the 5.4-acre Klyde Warren Park built over the Woodall Rodgers Freeway. [Story](#).

Sign up today for the **San Antonio** Mobility Coalition's 'State of Transit' leadership luncheon, featuring VIA Metropolitan Transit CEO Jeff Arndt, on Friday, August 16, 12: noon, at the Grand Hyatt Texas Ballroom. [Details](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

Viva Aerobus is adding nonstop flights to **Guadalajara** four times a week from **San Antonio** International Airport ([here](#)); meanwhile, JetBlue Airways will end flights from Alamo City to

Boston and **New York**, possibly related to negotiations over service to **Washington** (DCA) ([details](#)); and American Airlines will cut five flights from **Austin** Bergstrom to **Las Vegas, New Orleans, Orlando, Palm Springs** and **Reno** beginning in October. [Story](#).

According to the *Express-News*, two new, separate film-and-television studio projects are still on track to begin construction this year in **San Marcos** and **Bastrop**, with one of the ventures already working with Texas State University's theatre and drama departments. **Bastrop** details [here](#). Details for **San Marcos** are [here](#). And, also getting in on the act, **San Antonio** has reinstated its 7.5% incentives for TV & film productions. [Story](#).

Ford Motor Company lost \$47,585 for each electric vehicle it sold in the second quarter of this year, reports **Austin** energy writer Robert Bryce [here](#). And, although the US and the European Union have imposed hefty tariffs on them, cheap Chinese electric vehicles are disrupting auto markets elsewhere. [More](#).

South Korean powertrain and transmission manufacturer Futronic, a supplier to **Austin**-based Tesla Inc, is planning to build a \$17 million facility in **Buda** that may eventually employ 350 workers, officials said. [Story](#).

Thought of the Week

"We first make our habits, and then our habits make us."

– John Dryden

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