



Monday Morning Report

October 17, 2022

INTERNAL

The **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council Executive Committee is scheduled to meet November 16 at 2 PM by videoconference. For more information, contact council@thecorridor.org.

COVID-19 UPDATE: Global cases yesterday reached 624,598,169 with 6,567,340 deaths. US cases were at 96,952,033 with 96,952,033 deaths (10/16/22) ([Johns Hopkins](#)). On Friday, Texas reported 6,369,430 cases, with 89,409 deaths, including in **Bexar County:** 546,784 cases with 6,342 deaths; **Guadalupe County:** 29,468 cases, still with 414 deaths; **Comal County:** 25,503 cases, still with 566 deaths; **Hays County:** 62,329 cases, with 456 deaths; **Travis County:** 246,088 cases, with 1,799 deaths; and **Williamson County:** 128,898 cases, with 913 deaths (10/14/22). ([TDHHS](#)). *Regional hospitalization-rate data found [here](#).*

INFRASTRUCTURE

Confronted by multiple technical, legal, environmental, and regulatory challenges - not to mention physics - worldwide interest in much-touted hyperloop transportation systems is waning. Investors are bailing, start-ups are downsizing, and expectations everywhere are fading. "There will not be a hyperloop system constructed that will transport either goods or passengers - or I'll eat a tractor," the **New York Times** was told. [Story](#).

Interviewed about potential Texas rail corridors at a **Dallas YTexas Summit** conference sponsored by **Community Impact** newspapers, Roy Spence - founder of the GSD&M advertising agency - said: "Out of all the corridors, **Austin-San Antonio** is born for rail. If we have visionary leaders who understand that in the end game, all we want is less people on the highway and more people on trains. This is...a perfect corridor." [Story](#).

More details emerged last week about TxDOT's filings of Expressions of Interest in participating with the Federal Railroad Administration's Amtrak Corridor Identification and Development program. **Texas Government Insider** describes the state agency's submission and the corridors involved, including **Austin-San Antonio** and **San Antonio-Houston**. The Lone Star Rail District's filing is also referenced, (second item down) [here](#).

California's effort to build a high speed rail service from **Los Angeles** to **San Francisco** has become a 'nightmare,' moreover, "a case study in how ambitious public works projects can become perilously encumbered by political compromise, unrealistic cost estimates, flawed engineering, and a determination to persist on projects...too big to fail." One of the nation's top transportation reports surveys the project [here](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

The **Financial Times** and the Brookings Institution have collaborated to create *Tracking Indexes for the Global Economic Recovery* (TIGER), a useful tool in a world economy battered by COVID-19, high inflation, and stalling worldwide financial growth. Get a description of the program and their latest report [here](#).

The shift toward renewable energy is not without critics and political complexity, particularly in rural communities, as **Austin's** Robert Bryce highlighted in **Real Clear Energy** last week: at least 67 US political jurisdictions have rejected wind and solar projects within the last 11 months, including 40 townships in Ohio alone. Since 2015, 370 communities from Maine to Hawaii have rejected or restricted wind projects, he writes. **Story**.

San Antonio's Office of Innovation is soliciting feedback from residents about their priorities for creating a smart city through the **Smart Cities Priority Development Survey** and three public meetings on October 12, 13, and 19. Details (right hand column [here](#)).

Elon Musk Watch: **Austin's** boyish billionaire was all over the news last week proposing a peace plan for the Russia-Ukraine war (non-starter) [here](#), then threatening to take his Starlink internet-satellite toys away from Ukraine ([here](#)), then offering to leave them in place - IF the Defense Department would pay him ([here](#)), and finally, victim of a **New York Times** piece on his social life ([here](#)) at Burning Man. *We're beat*, just keeping up

Thought of the Week

"No pressure, no diamonds."

- Thomas Carlyle

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