

Monday Morning Report

November 16, 2026

INTERNAL

Let Us Know: The Central Texas Alliance is not quite ready to begin their own member communications program yet, but the **Monday Morning Report** will be discontinuing publication or shifting to Substack by the end of this year. If you wish to continue receiving a weekly update on regional issues or national matters with repercussions for the **Austin-San Antonio Corridor**, please hit REPLY and let us know. Thanks!

INFRASTRUCTURE

Video from a **Houston** conference showing Union Pacific Railroad president Jim Vena threatening to raise prices on shipping customers who publicly oppose UP's $71.5 billion merger with Norfolk Southern - a proposal still seeking federal Surface Transportation Board approvals - may kill the deal, the **Wall Street *Journal*** reports. ***Story***.

The **North Texas** Council of Governments, 12 counties around **Dallas-Ft. Worth**, is planning to spend $217.3 billion on transportation projects by 2050, the ***Morning-News*** reports, despite regional studies showing that congestion costs will still double from $17.3 billion today to at least $36.4 billion in next 25 years. ***Story***.

Austin mayor Kirk Watson, citing a local airport development program called "Journey With AUS," says it's time for the Austin Transportation Partnership to begin planning for a light rail line to Bergstrom International Airport, but challenges the group to do so within their existing budget - 'no new tax dollars,' he says. ***Opinion***.

Speaking of airports, the ***Express-News*** ran an 'explainer' last week that compared pricing for various flights departing from the **Austin** and **San Antonio** airports, concluding that AUS tends to be cheaper - with more flight options and increased marketplace competition - but SAT has its fans due to convenience, smaller size. ***Story***.

State Rep. John Bucy (D-**Austin**) has pre-filed a bill similar to his earlier legislation that would direct TxDOT to pursue a comprehensive development agreement to connect Texas Triangle cities with high-speed rail. ***Details***.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

The Registry, a **San Francisco** Bay-area real estate newsletter, says the sun is shining in Texas compared to California for developers - with 'an approval process that, so far at least, is shockingly reasonable and swift compared to blue states' - and hints at Choosin' Texas '"because that's where the money is." ***Opinion***.

A $67 million industrial development project tied to **New York**-based real estate firm Link Logistics (founded by the investment giant Blackstone, Inc) is set to break ground this month about three miles from Elon Musk's Tesla factory in **Austin**, although the project apparently has no Tesla connections, the ***Express-News*** reports. ***Details***.

The border city of **Brownsville** is booming, with over $110 billion in industrial investments already booked and most under construction. The major projects include a $3.5 billion ship-building facility, a $41 billion liquefied natural gas export terminal, a $3 billion refinery, and $3 billion in floating data centers called 'data-ships.' ***Story***.

There are a lot of qualifiers involved but the ***Financial Times*** is reporting that stocks linked to data center construction have lost $4.2 trillion in value since June as the boom in artificial intelligence trades unravel. ***Story***.

Maybe Privatizing Everything Isn't Always Best: Despite the outrage over last week's nationwide grounding of all US air flights, US Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy says he can't fire the contractor at fault because, 'decades ago' the government allowed L3Harris to build and own, at federal expense, the national Federal Aviation Administration's flight control communications network, ***The Hill*** reports. Now THAT's 'the art of the deal'. ***Details***.

Thought of the Week

> “Optimism is essential to achievement, and it is also the foundation of courage and true progress.” – Nicholas Murray Butler

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