



Monday Morning Report

January 7, 2019

INTERNAL

In the last meeting of 2018, the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council's Executive Committee met December 19 in **San Marcos** to discuss the 2019 legislative agenda, a 2019 work plan, website development, events schedule, and a strategic planning workshop for members and regional elected officials for 2019. Our next regularly scheduled meeting is set for March 20, 2019, 2:00 pm, in **San Marcos**. For details, contact council@thecorridor.org.

INFRASTRUCTURE

The 'dark store' theory of property taxation, which maintains that big box retail stores are virtually worthless without their inventory of products, is stripping hundreds of millions of dollars from local governments and school districts across the US. As we've been reporting for months, the state comptroller in **Austin** estimates the state could face a \$2.6 billion loss of revenue if 'dark store' theory is upheld by the courts. The *New York Times* weighed in yesterday with a nationwide analysis [here](#).

The western United States are racing to add rail and transit to their transportation options while the eastern states are struggling to upgrade and replace aging infrastructure, according to a recent analysis. "There's a political will to invest in expansion on the West Coast," said a **New York** transportation leader, but not so much in the East. Example cited: a recent \$120 billion dollar rail and bus plan announced for car-centric **Los Angeles**. Details [here](#).

Passenger rail service from **Ft. Worth** to **Dallas-Ft. Worth** Airport - known as the TexRail Project - scheduled to begin this week, fell victim to the US government shut down and was unable to get Federal Railroad Administration clearances in time to meet the projected launch date. [Details](#).

One of the country's largest pipeline companies, Kinder Morgan, is trying to build the \$2 billion, 430-mile long 'Permian Highway' pipeline project from **Katy**, just outside of **Houston**, to the Permian Basin oilfields in West Texas. But the route through the Central Texas Hill Country and **Hays County** near **San Marcos** faces growing controversy from landowners and aquifer protection interests. [Story](#).

Strange: Armed with rocks, knives, and PVC pipe, angry locals in **Chandler**, AZ, near **Phoenix**, have been attacking self-driving vehicles being tested by Google spin-off Waymo. Two dozen attacks, apparently a reaction to safety concerns, have been reported within the last two years. "There's a growing sense that the giant corporations honing self-driving technologies do not have our best interests at heart," said one expert. [Story](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and 'Other' News)

The world's largest Consumer Electronics Show kicks off tomorrow in **Las Vegas** with dazzling new technologies announcements expected by all the usual suspects. *Business Insider* just posted a

summary of the major tech advancements anticipated, including in 5G network developments, artificial intelligence, and more [here](#).

Alaska Airlines is expanding its nonstop service between **San Antonio** International Airport and **Seattle**. Beginning July 16, the airline will add an additional two nonstop flights - one in each direction - to its existing round-trip daily nonstop service between the two cities. [Details](#).

Struggling **San Antonio**-based digital marketing company Harte Hanks Inc. named new leadership last week as it tries to deal with declining revenues in an increasingly crowded marketplace. Marketing executive Bant Breen was named chief executive officer and Andrew Harrison was promoted to president and chief executive officer of the firm, which has 5,000 employees worldwide. [Details](#).

Longtime **San Antonio** VIA Metro Transit executive Brian Buchanan has left the agency to join HDR, Inc., an engineering firm. He will remain in Alamo City to concentrate on a multi-discipline transit practice, including emerging technologies and their associated infrastructure. [Details](#).

San Antonio state representative Justin Rodriguez is leaving the Texas House of Representatives to take an appointment by Judge Nelson Wolff to the **Bexar County** commissioners' court, replacing longtime commissioner Paul Elizondo, who died last week. [Details](#).

Thought of the Week

"There is only one boss: the customer. And he can fire everybody in the company, from the chairman on down, simply by spending his money somewhere else."
- Sam Walton

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