



## Monday Morning Report

November 19, 2018

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### INTERNAL

The next scheduled meeting for the **Austin-San Antonio Corridor** Council Executive Committee is Wednesday, December 19 at 2pm. RSVP or submit agenda items to [council@thecorridor.org](mailto:council@thecorridor.org).

Corrections: Last week's *Monday Morning Report* described **Gruene**, Texas as a 'town;' it is actually part of the Historic District of **New Braunfels**. The issue also referred imprecisely to the new role Democrats will have in **Washington** in 2019: they will control the House; the Senate and White House remain in Republican hands. Thanks to the readers who corrected us.

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### INFRASTRUCTURE

Two Brookings Institution economists in **Washington** have developed a profile of the workforce changes that will result from the new 'digital mobility' world of autonomous vehicles and suggests that training plans and programs should be developed now. The report concludes that more workers will be required for designing and maintaining connected transportation networks than are currently employed as drivers (trucks, school buses, taxis, etc). [Report](#).

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality has released their plan for distributing funds made available by the Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Trust settlement. The final version increases the percentage of costs covered for government-owned vehicles from 60% to 80%, making a transition to electric buses easier for metro transit agencies. Funding shares for **Dallas** and **Austin** increased from earlier proposals, while funding to **El Paso** and **San Antonio** was reduced. [Report](#).

Ford Motor Company, while building toward 'an autonomous vehicle mobility service,' is now testing self-driving vehicles in **Detroit**, **Miami**, **Washington DC**, and **Pittsburgh**. The company plans to invest \$4 billion in new autonomous technologies by 2023. [Story](#). Volkswagen, meanwhile, plans to invest \$50 billion over the same time period in autonomous and electric vehicles and will convert four of its automobile manufacturing plants to produce all electric vehicles. [Story](#).

*Apolitical*, a **London**-based website focused on governance issues, suggests that the 'hype' over driverless automobiles is threatening the future of public transportation. In an analysis of transportation issues in five of the world's most-congested cities, the site argues that a fixation on new technologies detracts attention from public transit and limits badly-needed expansions while agencies postpone decision-making based upon unproven visions for future mobility systems. [Opinion](#).

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### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and 'Other' News)

Discount carrier Sprint Airlines will begin operating daily flights next year from **Austin** Bergstrom International Airport to nine US cities: **Baltimore-Washington DC**; **Chicago**; **Denver**; **Detroit**; **Fort Lauderdale**; **Las Vegas**; **New Orleans**; and **Orlando**. More details [here](#).

This weekend's **Rivard Report** profiled legendary **San Antonio** businessman B.J. 'Red' McCombs and traces his history of involvement with HemisFair '68, the Spurs basketball team, and his thoughts on the future development of the city. Incidentally, Red - a longtime Corridor Council member - just turned 91 in October. [Story](#).

One casualty of two city charter amendments that passed in **San Antonio** last Election Day may be the city's gold-star bond rating. A spokesman for the Fitch ratings service says that Proposition C, which gives the firefighters union the ability to force binding arbitration on the city, may 'reduce the city's ability to control its expenditures.' [Story](#).

The **Austin**-area Capital Metropolitan Planning Organization is seeking comment on amendments to its Regional Transportation and Improvements Spending Plans, as well as their Public Participation Plan, in a series of outreach events over the next month. Go [here](#) for a calendar, or [comment online](#).

Shoppers hoping to take advantage of Black Friday in **San Marcos** should consider getting there early as some exits off IH-35 will be closed beginning Thanksgiving Day in order to avoid traffic jams. Check [details](#).

The **Seguin** chief of police, Kevin Kelso, resigned last week after citing lack of confidence in the city's management as the reason. [Story](#).

Amazon's selection of two sites near **New York** and **Washington DC** for its new headquarters facilities points out the growing disparity between rich and poor, urban and rural cities. Now the **New York Times** is asking if we're living in a world where a small number of superstar companies will choose to locate in a handful of superstar cities where they have the best chance of recruiting superstar employees? [Story](#).

## Thought of the Week

"We must find time to stop and thank the people who make a difference in our lives."

- John F. Kennedy

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