



Monday Morning Report

March 16, 2020

INTERNAL

This Wednesday's March 18 meeting of the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council's Executive Committee will begin at 2:00 pm BY TELECONFERENCE ONLY.

Members of the Executive Committee may participate by dialing **1-866-546-3377** (**Access code: 197070**).

Click [here](#) for the DRAFT agenda, the final is forthcoming. For more information, email council@thecorridor.org.

INFRASTRUCTURE

'It has taken this pandemic to redefine Nirenberg as mayor of **San Antonio**, but he has risen to the occasion, firm in his resolve, calm in his demeanor. It's exactly what **San Antonio** needs as we work to return the city and economy to good health.' That's former *Express-News* editor Bob Rivard's assessment, and in the *Rivard Report* he also applauds new city manager Eric Walsh and his team's handling of the coronavirus [here](#).

The Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority has rolled out nearly a billion dollars worth of upcoming new projects, including improvements to US 183 (\$580 million), 183 A (\$260 million), and MoPAC (at least \$15 million) in south **Austin**. Most of the work begins this year and continues through 2025. [Details](#) (second item).

Texas Central Railway's proposed high-speed passenger rail service between **Dallas-Houston** was the subject of a proposed safety standards ruling last week by the Federal Railroad Administration (summary item [here](#)). The agency will hold three public hearing prior to publishing final safety rules May 11. A complete package of related federal documents can be found [here](#).

Capital Metro's proposed light rail plan for **Austin** would boost the average homeowner's annual local tax bill by about \$300, according to an *American-Statesman* story last week, a 21-22.5% tax rate increase that could trigger a tax-rollback election under state law. Nothing is yet set in stone, officials said, but the financing plans have an added element of complexity because state law prohibits bond proceeds being used to finance maintenance costs - a key factor in securing federal funds to help pay for the project(s). [Story](#). A series of related documents from city/Cap Metro presentations can be found [here](#).

Details about **Austin** Bergstrom International Airport's future plans emerged during a zoning case postponed by the city council last week. The case involved housing and sound abatement issues related to a third tier of development around the airport, but what caught our eye was projected growth by 2037 that includes 812 flights per day and as many as 30 million passengers a year. [Story](#).

The **San Antonio** Mobility Coalition Leadership Series Event, *State of Transit*, originally scheduled for March 27, is postponed.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

Ride-hailing application Uber is reportedly studying a new service that would focus on children under the age of 18, according to **Fox Business News**. Similar services, some dubbed 'nannies on the go,' already operate in some Texas and California cities, and in **Washington DC**. For more, [details](#).

And another ride-hailing application, Go360, is offering a subscription electric car service in **Sacramento** that provides four rides a day, seven days a week, for \$250 per month. A spokesperson says the goal is reducing congestion, cutting carbon emissions, and spurring local employment. [Story](#).

Two new studies, focused on projects in **New York City** and the **San Francisco** area, continue to make the case for value capture or tax-increment financing, as a viable method for funding public transportation projects - even in markets that are already heavily developed. Together, the two projects represent almost \$10 billion in recaptured value. [Story](#).

Assuming that current international travel disruptions are behind us by then, the **Austin-Angers** Sister Cities committee is organizing a trip to the Loire Valley in northwestern France and the country's fourth-largest industrial producer from June 1-7, 2020. [Details](#). Register [here](#).

A **Business Insider** writer reminds the world that all is not doom and gloom in **Austin** following the cancellation of South By Southwest. She came to town anyway and - from the sound of it - had a pretty good time: less traffic, crowds like 'a *slow* Monday,' plenty of cocktails and lots of music still available. [Story](#).

Longtime former judge Sam Biscoe has been appointed by **Travis County** commissioners to replace sitting county judge Sarah Eckhardt, who resigned last week to run for the soon-to-be-vacant seat of resigning state senator Kirk Watson. Biscoe had previously served 15 years as the county judge, retiring in 2015. [Story](#).

Thought of the Week

"Lead, follow, or get out of the way."

- Thomas Paine

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