



Monday Morning Report

March 30, 2020

INTERNAL

COVID-19 Update:

As of 12:00 noon Sunday (3/29), Johns Hopkins reports *worldwide* confirmed cases at 691,867, total deaths at 32,988, and total recovered cases at 146,613. *US cases* numbered 125,433, with 2,197 deaths. ([here](#))

The Texas State Department of Health and Human Services (TSDH) reports 2,552 active cases and 34 deaths. ([here](#))

By county, TSDH reports **Bexar County** (140 cases), **Comal County** (9), **Hays County** (13), **Travis County** (179), **Williamson County** (37), **Guadalupe County** (10), **Bastrop County** (5) and **Caldwell County** (1). ([here](#))

Local media reports continue to demonstrate higher case-counts than those reported by the TSDH, possibly related to reporting delays: **Bexar County** is now showing 170 active cases ([here](#)) and **Travis County** has just passed the 200-case mark ([here](#)).

COVID-19 Emergency Loan Funding: **Business Insider** posted links to emergency loan and funding programs from multiple sources, including US Small Business Administration financing approved last week ([here](#)). And **Bexar County** has developed a comprehensive listing of local financial resources for small businesses ([here](#)).

Links to US emergency loan assistance are posted ([here](#)) by **Travis County**. Information on **Comal County**'s emergency relief fund can be found [here](#). The Greater-San Marcos Partnership has **Hays County** COVID-19 financial resources links [here](#).

Important: The **Austin** chamber of commerce has organized a conference call regarding the CARE ACT (Stimulus Package Three) with US Rep. Michael McCaul for *this* morning at 11:00 am to discuss 'What Small Business Needs to Know' about the legislation. Details and register [here](#).

INFRASTRUCTURE

The timetable for that proposed **Dallas-Houston** high speed train project just grew a bit more uncertain. First, Federal Railroad Administration officials postponed proposed public hearings on environmental reviews for the project due to COVID-19 concerns earlier this month. Then, Texas Central Railroad announced last week that they are laying off 28 of their employees due to coronavirus-related problems their partners are having in Japan, Spain, and Italy. **Story**.

Capital Metro in **Austin** has announced that it will eliminate fare collections for the duration of the *Stay Home, Work Safe* city initiative prompted by the coronavirus. The agency stressed that the effort was not related to increasing ridership, but to promote public health. They've also increased cleaning procedures and implemented other changes to encourage social distancing. **Story**.

The double-whammy of slumping oil prices and the coronavirus have already turned eyes to the next Legislative Session in **Austin**. State comptroller figures on prospective revenues are being revised downwards and expenditures are trending up. Some transportation spending could be at risk (Prop 1 and Prop 7 dollars), particularly if legislators turn to the Economic Stabilization Fund (Rainy Day) to balance the budget. [Story](#).

A study by the University of Texas suggests that if residents of the five-county region surrounding **Austin** can reduce human contacts by 90%, the surge of patients seeking coronavirus care will not overwhelm local hospitals. Officials believe city and county actions may have reduced social contacts by 50% thus far. [Details](#). [Video](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

You don't often see "*Gobsmackingly Awful Decision*" in a newspaper headline, but here it was last week (3/27) in a **Community Impact** story about the **Hutto** city government's decision to lay off 48 workers, and local residents' reactions to the move. The city attributed the layoffs to the COVID-19 virus, but some locals want the workers reinstated. [Story](#).

The **Express-News** in **San Antonio** published additional information (to above links) this morning about accessing local *and* federal emergency grants and loan programs related to the coronavirus, and supplemental details about assistance from the **San Antonio** chamber of commerce and local private relief funds. [Story](#).

Three Mexican states are asking the Mexican president, Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador (AMLO), to close their northern borders with the US. A report out of **Ciudad Juarez** says Tamaulipas, Coahuila, and Nuevo Leon - reacting to over 2600 confirmed coronavirus cases as of yesterday - want to shut off the border during the traditionally busy Easter season. [Story](#).

And here's one we didn't see coming: A University of **Chicago** study has concluded that there are economic benefits related to nationwide social distancing that equate to \$8 trillion. The report says saving lives and saving the economy are complimentary goals - and that those saved lives equate to an \$8 trillion economic boost. [Story](#).

Thought of the Week

"There are some things you learn best in calm, and some in storm."

- Willa Cather

This newsletter was sent to you on behalf of council@thecorridor.org. It is available to our members. If you wish to unsubscribe from this newsletter, please [click here](#) to send an email request to council@thecorridor.org.

©2020 Austin-San Antonio Corridor Council