



Monday Morning Report

June 14, 2021

INTERNAL

This Wednesday, the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council Executive Committee will meet by Zoom video conference (June 16) at 2:00 pm. Expect presentations from VIA on their upcoming development plans in **San Antonio** and from the Great Springs Project, designed to interconnect natural springs in **San Antonio-New Braunfels-San Marcos- Austin**. We will also discuss an effort to attract new Amtrak services to the Corridor. **Draft Agenda**. Details available from council@thecorridor.org.

COVID-19 UPDATE: Global cases are at 176,029,125 today, with 3,805,518 total deaths. US cases reached 33,462,314, with 599,769 deaths (6/14). (**Johns Hopkins**) Yesterday, Texas was reporting 2,530,910 confirmed cases with 50,857 fatalities as of yesterday, including in **Bexar County**: 184,916 cases with 3,596 deaths; **Guadalupe County**: 11,642 cases with 222 deaths; **Comal County**: 5,921 cases with 303 deaths; **Hays County**: 18,952 cases with 219 deaths; **Travis County**: 84,104 cases with 1,033 deaths; and **Williamson County**: 40,110 cases with 482 deaths (6/13/21). (**TDHHS**).

INFRASTRUCTURE

Something surprising is happening to traffic, according to the **New York Times**: the gross numbers of cars and transit commuters is returning to pre-pandemic levels, but traffic is being spread out more evenly throughout the day. A survey of cars and transit users reveals that 'work-from-home' may be changing travel patterns permanently. **Story**.

TxDOT says work should begin later this year on that \$1.9 billion, three-phase expansion of IH-35 near the **Bexar-Guadalupe** County line in **San Antonio, Cibolo, and Schertz**. Six elevated lanes will be added - two general purpose and one HOV lane - beginning with a center section from Windcrest to Cibolo Creek. **Story**.

Officials in **Sacramento** last week said that the US Department of Transportation had agreed to restore nearly \$1 billion in funding - revoked by the Trump administration in 2019 - to the state's high-speed rail project that will eventually, emphasize *eventually*, connect **Los Angeles to San Francisco**. Originally scheduled for completion by 2020, the small first segment is now expected to come online in 2029, billions over-budget. **Story**.

Amtrak's proposed expansions - if funded - will restore passenger rail service to a big swath of the Midwest, with 39 new routes including connections across the Texas Triangle including **Austin-San Antonio, Dallas, and Houston**. Officials detail their plans if the Biden infrastructure plan goes through, [here](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

American Airlines is adding 10 domestic and four new international flights to **Austin** Bergstrom Airport, including nonstop service to **Cancun** and **Puerto Vallarta** in Mexico, **Liberia** in Costa Rica, and **Punta Cana** in the Dominican Republic. Alaska Airlines is adding new flights as well. **Details**.

Fiesta is *back*. The ten-day one-of-a-kind celebration of **San Antonio** starts later this week (6/17) with about 40 scheduled events, slimmed down from the usual 115 events due to the pandemic, but some old favorites like A Night in Old San Antonio remain. [Story](#).

On the surface, acquisition of at least three **San Antonio** cyber security firms in the last year by out-of-state buyers would seem to be good news for the Alamo City's booming tech community. But some are referring to the purchases as 'liquidations' or 'fire sales,' and calling related jobs-cuts as a 'bloodletting.' [Story](#).

Today in **New Braunfels**, city council members will hear more details about that big, 1900-acre Mayfair development proposing to add thousands of new homes and commercial developments over the next 15-20 years along IH-35 within the city's extra-territorial jurisdiction. [Details](#).

The explosive growth of private cryptocurrencies has sparked the Federal Reserve to consider launching a digital currency of its own, **Politico** reports. Biggest reason: providing access to banking services for low-income groups. Biggest loser: banks. [Details](#).

After spending ten years and billions of dollars, **Silicon Valley** technologists and entrepreneurs are getting close to a durable, commercially viable model of an electric air-taxi vehicle capable of vertical lift-offs and landings, otherwise known as 'flying cars.' But technological and regulatory hurdles remain, even as some cities rush to plan for the autonomous or robo-taxis of the future, which remain years-away from deployment. [Story](#).

More Elon Musk Watch: The *wunderkind* took to a stage in **San Francisco** last week to introduce what he said would be the world's 'safest and quickest' automobile, the Plaid, which can go zero-to-60-mph in less than two seconds with a 390-mile range - available for purchase within weeks, he said, for about \$130,000. Some industry analysts had their doubts. [Story](#).

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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