



Monday Morning Report

June 24, 2019

INTERNAL

The recent Five-Year Strategy Planning Session for the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council generated new vision and mission statements approved by the Executive Committee. Our new Vision Statement reads:

"We are an economically and politically united collaboration between public and private sector leaders to fulfill and sustain the combined strength of the Austin-San Antonio Corridor."

And our Mission Statement:

"We are the unique entity that convenes, collaborates, and advocates for the Austin-San Antonio Corridor."

You are welcome to submit any comments or suggestions to council@thecorridor.org.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Can Big Data Fight Wildfires? At least one thing shared by California and residents of the **Austin-San Antonio Corridor** is the threat of wildfires, which seem to be more frequent and intensifying as temperatures rise. In **Los Angeles**, firefighters have joined with university supercomputer researchers to create a program that combines real-time weather conditions, topography, available flammable materials and other data to predict how far and how fast fires will spread. [Story](#).

Experts from all over the globe will gather in **Vienna**, Austria, on Dec. 10-11 this year for 'The Future of Transportation World Conference,' which will explore the mass deployment of self-driving vehicles, autonomous and connected vehicles' impacts on privacy, safety, insurance, mobility as a service, and other changes emerging technologies will have on the auto industry. [Details](#).

If a trip to **Vienna** isn't likely (above), you might consider a July 25th event with experts from **Washington's** Brookings Institution, Texas A&M, and others that will discuss autonomous vehicles engineering, smart infrastructure, public-private collaboration, and other public policy issues surrounding self-driving vehicles. [Details](#).

Gov. Gregg Abbott has signed a bill requiring TxDOT to study the feasibility of a new Interstate 27 Corridor that would link **Laredo** to **Lubbock**, then travel onward to **Denver**. Backers imagine a new 'Ports-to-Plains' trade route connecting Mexico to Canada. The study should be completed by 2021. [Details](#).

A debate over transportation funding priorities in **Atlanta** might offer some insights into similar ongoing discussions over transit in **Austin** and **San Antonio**. At issue is whether bus-rapid-transit (BRT) corridors are as effective as light rail in building tax bases and moving people. At least one advocate argues that doing transit services 'on the cheap' is actually shortsighted and 'penny-wise, pound foolish.' [Opinion](#).

Airbus-owned Voom - currently operating in Latin America - will challenge Uber in the US for on-demand air helicopter shuttle services. Uber had earlier announced an air shuttle between **Manhattan** and **JFK**

Airport, set to begin next month. Voom plans to be in 25 cities by 2025, flying two million passengers annually. [Story](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and 'Other' News)

A thoughtful piece published yesterday in the *Rivard Report* explores public reaction to the salary and bonuses of two **San Antonio** figures, former city manager Sheryl Sculley and CPS Energy executive Paula Gold-Williams. One received nearly \$1 million with little public comment; the other was forced from office over a salary half as high. Why? [Opinion](#).

New **Dallas** mayor Eric Johnson has set five basic goals: eliminate corruption; promote civility; use 'big data' to drive innovation; create a more skilled workforce; and improve public safety. For commentary on his likelihood of success, go [here](#).

San Antonio's unemployment rate for May set an all-time record low of 2.8%, according to the Federal Reserve Bank of **Dallas**, undercutting a twice-achieved previous low of 2.9%. [Details](#). In **Austin**, May unemployment numbers also reached a 20-year low, at 2.2%. [Details](#).

Climate Central, a non-profit group, has created an app enabling users to visualize the impacts of rising sea levels by year 2100, and the results are troubling for **New York, Miami, and Boston**. But also troubling for Texas coastal cities including **Galveston, Port Aransas, and Brownsville**. Scientists say it's a 'worst-case scenario' and 'unlikely to occur.' [Details](#).

A panel discussion in **San Antonio** last week provided insight into how **Bexar County** infrastructure development might make cities more livable for all residents, from the youngest to the oldest. A **Toronto** planner laid out his urban vision and **Bexar County** judge Nelson Wolff discussed progress toward that vision. **San Antonio** Mobility Coalition president Vic Boyer observed, regarding transportation and the last legislative session: "If you're into highways it was a pretty good session. If you're into mass transit, we've got a lot of work to do." [Story](#).

Thought of the Week

"The right to be heard does not automatically include the right to be taken seriously."

- Hubert H. Humphrey

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