



## Monday Morning Report

June 29, 2020

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### INTERNAL

**COVID-19 UPDATE:** As of 8:30 am this morning (6/29) global confirmed cases were at 10,180,816 with just over 500,000 deaths worldwide. US confirmed cases stood at 2,550,848 with 125,808 fatalities ([Johns Hopkins](#)). Texas had 148,723 cases statewide with 2,393 deaths. **Bexar County:** 9,652 reported cases, with 107 fatalities; **Comal County:** 470 cases, and 7 deaths; **Guadalupe County:** 638 cases, with one death; **Hays County:** 2,469 with 6 deaths; **Travis County:** 7,825 cases, with 117 deaths; **Williamson County:** 1,850 cases, with 35 deaths. ([TDHHS](#))

**COVID-19 National Picture:** [The Atlantic](#) magazine has created one of the best data sets for tracking US infections and the picture they painted over the weekend was that of a new and brutal stage of the pandemic surging out of control across the South and West, including Texas. In their words: "cases are soaring, hospitalizations are spiking, and a greater portion of tests is coming back positive." Grim reading [here](#). [More](#) on Texas state government response.

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### INFRASTRUCTURE

CPS Energy and the city of **San Antonio** will build a 20,000 sq. ft. Alamo Regional Security Operations Center at the Port of San Antonio later this year to monitor and defend against cyber-security threats. The center will be located near major private-sector and Department of Defense cyber-security operations and the Texas Air National Guard's 273rd Cyberspace Operations Squadron, which supports state agencies responding to attacks against local governments. [Details](#).

**Austonia** newsletter published new details about the prospects of a \$1.1 billion Tesla 'gigafactory' landing in **Austin** - or more precisely, **Travis County** - revealing a proposed 2100-acre site near the Bergstrom International Airport along State Highway 130. Their report says no freight rail connection to the plant has been discussed yet, but Tesla's **Fremont**, Calif. factory uses a Union Pacific line for assembly parts and finished cars. Tesla set a July 31 deadline for approvals on tax incentives/environmental clearances for their 5000-employee plant. [Story](#). [More](#).

Amazon, the e-commerce and computing services giant, has acquired the California-based startup Zoox, a company focused on the development of purpose-built, autonomous ride-hailing systems. Industry insiders think the move is more related to delivery options than ride-sharing applications. [Details](#).

In other connected/autonomous vehicle news, Ford announced the launch of a new driver system that will compete with Tesla's Autopilot and General Motors' Active Drive Assist. The new technology will deploy in third-quarter 2021 models of the all-electric Mustang Mach-E. [Story](#).

**Comal County** commissioners have revealed a 'time capsule' letter sent to them in 1970 by their predecessors in county government as part of **New Braunfels'** 125th anniversary celebration, and it proves 'the more things change, the more they stay the same.' Concerns of the court 50 years ago included population growth (the city is now the second-fastest growing in the nation) and pollution of local rivers. [Story](#).

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## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

The coronavirus pandemic continues to ravage communities and economies across the US, but particularly those that have evolved around colleges and universities, creating potentially existential losses in population, jobs, and revenues. With 23 institutions of higher learning and a student-staff base of over 300,000, **Austin-San Antonio Corridor** communities could face another unseen risk: under-counts in the 2020 Census. [Story](#).

**Austin** billionaire businessman Robert F. Smith was profiled in the **Washington Post** yesterday, which highlighted his efforts to help small and minority-owned businesses struck hard by the economic impacts of the coronavirus pandemic. Smith made headlines earlier in 2019 when he announced plans to pay off the student debts of 800 graduates of Morehouse College, but his current rapid-relief efforts are the focus [here](#).

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic many people thought the slogans for most airlines should be "We're Not Happy Until You're Not Happy," but consumer complaints about air service have skyrocketed since January - up over 1500%, with 20,000 complaints in April alone, 90% of which concerned refund problems. [Story](#).

Europeans' view of both the US and the European Union have suffered during the pandemic, according to a survey by the European Council on Foreign Relations. 60% of Central Europeans said they had lost trust in the US as a global leader. Most felt the EU had abandoned their own native countries, leaving them feeling 'alone and vulnerable.' [Story](#).

As a response to the coronavirus pandemic, **San Antonio**'s city council has established a \$27 million small business grant fund for companies with 20 or fewer employees. About 1000 grants are to be made, some of up to \$75,000, with an application kickoff date of July 13 through July 24. [Details](#).

## Thought of the Week

*"They say a person needs just three things to be truly happy in this world: Someone to love, something to do, and something to hope for."*

— Tom Bodett

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