



## Monday Morning Report

August 12, 2019

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### INTERNAL

The **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council Executive Committee is scheduled to meet on Wednesday, September 18, 2:00 pm at the Council offices in **San Marcos**, 304 N CM Allen Parkway. Please RSVP to [council@thecorridor.org](mailto:council@thecorridor.org).

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### INFRASTRUCTURE

In a new report that will have a familiar ring to policy-makers in **Austin** and **San Antonio**, *'The Growing Shadow of State Interference'* by two policy think tanks argue that across the country state governments are usurping local control on a whole range of issues including gun controls, taxation, zoning, local land use, business practices, climate change adaptation, and even the display of monuments. They cite trends starting in 2011 and peaking in 2019 that are eroding traditional realms of local political power. [Story](#).

Driverless vehicles have arrived in **New York**, although for now they will be limited to a geographically confined, restricted loop around the Brooklyn Navy yard, a 300-acre privately-operated manufacturing and technology hub. Six autonomous shuttles will offer free rides to and from a ferry docking point along a route with limited other traffic. [Details](#).

And closer to home, the **Austin** Bergstrom International Airport has also begun testing an autonomous six-passenger shuttle bus, the Easy Mile EZ10, between parking lots and rental car facilities to and from the main terminal. It's an electric vehicle operating (with a safety attendant on board for now) on the upper level of Garage One. [Story](#).

Bond packages totaling \$447 million will appear on the Nov. 5 ballot in **Williamson County**, \$412 million for roads and \$35 million for parks and recreation projects. The figure is substantially lower than amounts recommended by a Citizens Bond Committee but is not expected to impact the county's debt service tax rate. [Details](#).

After the fourth death involving e-scooters, **Atlanta** is imposing a nighttime (9 pm to 4 am) ban on the vehicles; **Nashville** has banned them entirely, and **Washington DC** is considering a broad range of regulations, including a nighttime ban. [Story](#). Even **Lockhart** is climbing on the regulatory bandwagon, with new regulations for their five scooters downtown. [Details](#).

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### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and 'Other' News)

Uber, the **San Francisco**-based ride share giant, posted its largest-ever quarterly loss (about \$5 billion) and its slowest-ever revenue growth in their latest quarterly financial reports, raising questions about the long-term viability of the company's business model. The majority of the quarterly loss, however, was about \$4 billion related to one-time costs for employee stock compensation related to Uber's initial public offering. [Story](#).

**San Antonio** mayor Ron Nirenberg has called for putting an end to merit-based bonuses for executives at CPS Energy and the San Antonio Water System. He has no complaints about their performance but thinks the bonus process and surrounding media coverage amounts to 'political theater.' The head of CPS energy has a base salary of about \$485,000 and also earned a bonus of \$444,000; the SAWS CEO got a \$100,000 bonus last year. [Details](#).

The mayor of **Buda**, George Haehn, was profiled in last week's *Texas Government Insider*, and speaks about his 21 years in the US military and, surprisingly, reveals a desire to polish his horsemanship. Who knew? [Details](#).

Well-known social economist Richard Florida reports on a new study from England that provides clear evidence that low-skilled workers fail to benefit from high-tech growth and development. 'It is increasingly evident that major tech hubs (**San Francisco, Boston, Seattle...**) have become more and more unequal, especially with their high housing costs eating away at the incomes of blue-collar and service workers,' he writes. [Story](#).

## Thought of the Week

*"All good things which exist are the fruits of originality."*  
- John Stuart Mill

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