



Monday Morning Report

August 26, 2019

INTERNAL

The next meeting of the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council Executive Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, September 18, 2:00 pm at the Council offices in **San Marcos**, 304 N CM Allen Parkway. Please RSVP to council@thecorridor.org.

INFRASTRUCTURE

A bi-partisan group of 20 Texas state representatives have petitioned the chairman of the House Transportation Committee for an interim charge that would 'consider and study the potential for intercity passenger rail, with initial focus on the **Austin-San Antonio** corridor.' [Letter](#).

The **Austin** Chamber of Commerce and the Real Estate Council of **Austin** have issued a joint resolution of support for the Project Connect high-capacity transit vision, although their support was conditioned upon some further refinements of the eventual plan. [Details](#).

Expect a big crowd at this Thursday's August 29 meeting of the Texas Transportation Commission in **Austin**, as the group considers the agency's 2020 Unified Transportation Plan. There should be testimony in support of the IH-35 Capital Expressway project in addition to other important highway developments in the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor. [Details](#).

Following the failure of two aged dams at Lake Wood and Lake Dunlap along Guadalupe River lakes controlled by the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority, the agency is moving ahead with plans to drain Lake McQueeney, Lake Gonzales, Meadow Lake, and Lake Placid - all east of **San Antonio** - despite pleas from property owners who fear devastating losses on property values. Local governments and school districts also may suffer from eroded tax basis. [Coverage](#). [Reaction](#).

Officials with the Pew Charitable Trust are lauding a statewide flood and mitigation planning effort and suggesting that the Texas Rainy Day Fund - currently about \$12.5 billion - play a major role in funding Hurricane Harvey relief efforts, particularly near **Houston**, and more ongoing flood prevention efforts using regional watershed data. [Opinion](#).

The US Department of Transportation in **Washington** is proposing two new interim policies for projects: one would limit the number of pages in environmental impact statements and the other would coordinate federal reviews for infrastructure projects under a 'One Federal Decision' executive order with the goal of completing environmental reviews within two years. [Details](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and 'Other' News)

A Texas state appeals court has ordered the city of **Austin** to revise the upcoming ballot language for that election involving a billion dollar-plus expansion of the **Austin** Convention Center. Petitioners had sought wording that detailed goals of the ordinance, including a diversion of hotel tax revenues from the convention center expansion to the arts and historic preservation. [Details](#).

After serving three terms as a **Bexar County** commissioner, Republican Kevin Wolff has announced that he will not seek re-election. Locals expect a crowded field to replace him. [Story](#).

Good To Know: Texas A&M's Forest Service has reopened the **Austin** Airtanker Base at Bergstrom International Airport and staged three large aircraft capable of assisting local firefighters in battling wildfires statewide. The planes are faster than helicopters or single-engine planes and can respond to fires anywhere in Texas in less than an hour, officials said. [Details](#).

A philanthropic arm of the Union Pacific Railroad gave a \$500,000 grant last week to Yanaguana Garden at Hemisfair Park in **San Antonio**. The Yanaguana Garden is 4.1 acres and hosts 600,000 visitors a year. [Details](#).

Thought of the Week

*"I have had dreams and I have had nightmares, but I have
conquered my nightmares because of my dreams."*

- Jonas Salk

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