



## Monday Morning Report

October 26, 2020

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### INTERNAL

Last Wednesday (10/21) the Executive Committee of the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council met by video conference to consider a presentation from TEXCETRA, a statewide coalition of energy and transportation interests dedicated to carbon reduction and vehicle electrification efforts; also on the agenda were Census population updates, 2020 Legislative agendas, COVID-19 economic recovery status, and an upcoming IH-35 study in **Bexar, Guadalupe, and Comal Counties**. For a copy of the presentation, go [here](#). For further details, contact [council@thecorridor.org](mailto:council@thecorridor.org).

**COVID-19 UPDATE:** Worldwide infections reached close to 43 million with 1,152,314 deaths as of 2:30 pm yesterday (10/25), and the United States had 8,619,314 confirmed cases with just over 225,000 fatalities. ([Johns Hopkins](#)) Also as of Sunday (10/25), Texas reported 862,375 total confirmed cases with 17,504 deaths, including **Bexar County:** 52,485 cases with 1,394 deaths; **Guadalupe County:** 3,885 cases with 79 deaths; **Comal County:** 2,848 cases with 106 deaths; **Hays County:** 6,287 cases with 74 deaths; **Travis County:** 31,493 cases with 442 deaths; and **Williamson County:** 9,335 cases with 152 deaths. ([TDHHS](#))

**COVID-19 US Hospitalizations Update:** Two federal disaster teams are enroute to **El Paso** to counter a surge in COVID-19 cases that have taxed local resources there, leading city officials to convert the civic center into an emergency hospital. As of Saturday (10/24), the region had just 12 remaining ICU beds available. [Story](#).

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### INFRASTRUCTURE

Just weeks before the national passenger rail service, AMTRAK, announced that it was cutting daily service from **San Antonio to Chicago** to three-times-a-week service, an official for the agency told a rail passengers association that AMTRAK was contemplating boosting service throughout the Texas Triangle (**Dallas-Houston-Austin-San Antonio**) as one part of a \$25 billion expansion plan. According to the official, the plan goes before Congress next year. [Story](#).

With fewer seats filled due to pandemic fears, US airlines are creating 'air deserts' by cutting service to smaller, less profitable cities. Some cities such as **Dubuque, Del Rio, New Haven, Greenville,** and **Williamsport** now have municipal airports but no commercial air service. [Story](#).

The Texas Transportation Commission meets this Thursday (10/29) at 9:00 am in **Austin** to consider potential additions to the 2021 Texas Unified Transportation Program. [Live Stream](#).

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### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

**New Braunfels** city manager Robert Camareno, in an annual State of the City event last week, said he expects the city to surpass the 100,000-population mark by 2022. Camareno also gave updates on local bond projects and reported that more than 11,000 residential, commercial, and other construction permits have been processed since 2010, including nearly 1400 so far this year. [Details](#).

Leaders from **San Antonio** are continuing their campaign to snare the operations headquarters for the US Space Command, which is supposed to announce the results of its site selection process in January 2021. Alamo City remains in play after the Air Force narrowed their search down to 26 potential locations, including **Fort Worth** and **Houston**. Details can be found [here](#).

While presidential candidate Joe Biden's comments about scaling down the US oil industry may have produced a flap in petroleum-centric cities like **Houston**, the globe's third largest economy and fifth-largest emitter of carbon dioxide, Japan, has vowed to become carbon neutral by 2050 with a 'fundamental shift' to its economy. [Story](#).

Grim Forecast: A co-director of the Global Health Justice Partnership and epidemiologist at Yale University surveys governmental responses to the COVID-19 pandemic in **The Nation** within the larger contest of other historic challenges to US society and concludes that we are systemically unprepared. Without new thinking, things will never get better, he says. [Opinion](#).

There's a new sheriff in town in **San Marcos** (well, police chief actually) after the former chief of the **Abilene** Police Department, 25-year veteran Stan Standridge, was selected as the lone finalist to replace interim chief Bob Klett there. The city council still has to approve the hire on Nov. 4. [Details](#).

Re-drawing Texas legislative districts was the focus of a lengthy **New York Times** study of races in **Bedford** and **Houston** yesterday, but the paper missed a key point: the Legislature indeed draws 2021 districts, but Gov. Abbott won't sign a plan unfavorable to Republicans. If the Legislature doesn't approve a passable plan, the Legislative Redistricting Committee draws the new districts. Even IF Democrats re-take the House, *that* Committee has a Republican majority. [Story](#).

## Thought of the Week

*"A work is perfectly finished only when nothing can be added to it and nothing taken away."*

— Joseph Joubert

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