



Monday Morning Report

November 1, 2021

INTERNAL

The **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council Executive Committee will meet Wednesday, November 17, at 2:00 pm by Zoom videoconference. There will be a presentation by Jason Giulietti, president of the Greater San Marcos Partnership. To add an item to the agenda or for any questions, email council@thecorridor.org.

COVID-19 UPDATE: The global death count topped 5 million for the first time this morning, with 5,001,932 fatalities and 246,819,825 cases. US cases are at 45,971,267, with 745,837 deaths (11/01/21) (**Johns Hopkins**). The Texas death count yesterday stood at just under 70,000, with 3,511,739 cases including in **Bexar County:** 264,377 cases with 5,131 deaths; **Guadalupe County:** 17,654 cases, with 336 deaths; **Comal County:** 11,256 cases with 455 deaths; **Hays County:** 29,660 cases with 348 deaths; **Travis County:** 119,762 cases with 1,433 deaths; and **Williamson County:** 65,257 cases with 694 deaths (10/31/21). (**TDHHS**).

INFRASTRUCTURE

Politico says watch for a vote this Wednesday (11/3) by Democrats in **Washington** on a scaled-down \$1.8 trillion Biden administration infrastructure package. President Biden, who is in **Glasgow** today for a climate summit, leaned heavily on West Virginia senator Joe Manchin last week to get on board with the package. **Story**.

Efforts to add main lanes and more frontage roads to IH-35 through **New Braunfels** and **Hays County** continue apace toward a scheduled March 2023 completion date - just in time for big new projects to get underway north and south of there in **Austin** and **San Antonio**. For a local construction progress report, go **here**.

A key vote on how to spend up to \$7.1 billion on **Austin** transit projects has been delayed because discussions among the partners (the city, Capital Metro, and the new Austin Transit Partnership) dragged on too long and left the participants with a lot of questions yet to be answered. It now looks as if each entity will approve a plan after more staff work. **Details**.

TxDOT and the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority have re-opened a potentially controversial study of that MoPac Expressway South project, adding express lanes south of Caesar Chavez Street in **Austin**. For details on the project from TxDOT, start **here**.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

More than 80% of Texas population growth since 1960 has been in Texas Triangle cities (**Dallas-Ft. Worth, Houston, Austin-San Antonio**) and 60% of the state's population currently live there. The Triangle's economic activity in 2018 totaled more than \$1.3 trillion, producing more than Mexico, Indonesia, or Saudi Arabia and accounting for 6.9% of US gross domestic product. Learn more from a

review of former **San Antonio** mayor Henry Cisneros et al's new book on the Triangle from the **Express-News**. Opinion piece [here](#).

One of **Austin**'s biggest technology employers, National Instruments (which recently re-branded itself NI), is betting big on the growth of the market for electric vehicles (EV) by acquiring two California and German companies involved in EV testing and battery technologies. [Story](#).

Two **San Antonio** companies are playing a significant, little-noticed role in the national move towards the commercialization of outer space: Astrosport Space Technologies, which can turn moondust into bricks; and Knight Aerospace, designers of specialized containers for rockets that can deliver medical supplies anywhere in the world. Both companies have been named finalists in the federally backed '*Hyperspace Challenge*.' [Details](#).

An **Austin** investor better known for his technology interests has acquired a substantial piece of land in **San Antonio** from one of that city's most famous families, Bill Miller of regional Bar-B-Que fame. J.R. Carter reportedly wants the 600-acre Southside property near the Toyota manufacturing plant for a solar panel farm. [Details](#).

Tune in to NBC News tonight at 5:30 pm on KXAN if you want to hear veteran anchor Lester Holt's broadcast from **Austin** on how the city is recovering from the pandemic, part of an '*Across America*' series of reports that will reportedly touch on real estate prices, high tech, and tacos. Yes, you read that right. [Details](#).

Thought of the Week

"It takes considerable knowledge just to realize the extent of your own ignorance."

- Thomas Sowell

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