



Monday Morning Report

November 4, 2019

INTERNAL

The next meeting of the Executive Committee of the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council is scheduled for Wednesday, December 18, 2:00 pm at the Council offices in **San Marcos** (304 North C.M. Allen Parkway). For questions or to add items to the agenda, email council@thecorridor.org.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Fallout continues over a secretly-recorded comment by Texas House Speaker Dennis Bonnen that he wanted "the worst session in the history of the Legislature for cities and counties," namely an opinion piece in the **Houston Chronicle** yesterday by a former Republican arguing that state leaders want to vilify local government jurisdictions in order to disguise their own failures on property taxes, public education, and infrastructure funding. Michael Collier, who ran against Lt. Governor Dan Patrick last cycle, says there's no better example of this than Proposition 4, which is on statewide ballots tomorrow.

[Opinion. More.](#)

Our friends at the **San Antonio** Mobility Coalition (SAMCO) have put together a helpful package of notes and slides from last week's TxDOT Commission presentations on 2050 Texas population projections for the state's top metro areas AND some slides detailing completed and proposed improvements to Interstate 35 from the Red River to the Rio Grande. Included are details for IH-35 projects (both funded and unfunded) in **Austin** and **San Antonio**. The SAMCO notes are [here](#). Slide presentations are [here](#) and [here](#).

A commuter rail connection between **Austin** and **San Antonio** continues to be discussed in both cities, most recently at a **San Antonio** Chamber of Commerce Transportation Committee panel discussion with Union Pacific representatives and a spokeswoman for the **Dallas-Houston** high speed rail effort proposed by the Texas Central Railway (TCR), which still insists that it will use no public money for its \$14 billion project. (That \$14 billion does NOT include the cost of right of way or the costs of the actual trains, according to TCR's spokeswoman.) [Story.](#)

The Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization meets tonight in **Austin** with two potentially controversial items on the agenda: adopting a regional arterial study that has been heavily debated on technical levels and consideration of a plan to remove the turn lane on Bee Cave Road and replacing it with a reversible lane. [Agenda.](#)

A joint meeting last week between Capital Metro and the **Austin** city council about Project Connect transit plans produced one observation worth bearing in mind: staffers said that current Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) plans - cheaper than light rail but with less capacity - would probably achieve maximum capacity by 2040. That stirred some officials to question whether BRT would end up being penny-wise but pound-foolish in the long term. [Story.](#)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and 'Other' News)

San Antonio's Second Annual *CityFest* begins this week (Nov. 6-8), 'Showcasing ideas and issues that are integral to progressive change' in the Alamo City. The annual urban ideas festival features two days of thought leaders, elected officials, and community members sharing the stage, according to the official website. For more information, go [here](#).

It's been nearly ten years since then-mayor Julian Castro declared the 'Decade of Downtown' in **San Antonio**, and **Rivard Report** founder Bob Rivard has some thoughts on what the city should accomplish over the *next* decade, including better education outcomes, better transit and connectivity options, and better planning. [Opinion](#).

The Chinese company Ehang, which builds drones that can transport people via a 2-person, 16-rotor electric vehicle, has filed with NASDAQ for a \$100 billion public offering to become the world's first autonomous flying drone taxi company. Their air mobility service has already received operational approvals from **Guangzhou**, China. [Details](#).

In a strong signal out of the combustion automotive manufacturing center of Europe, German chancellor Angela Merkel announced in **Berlin** last week that she wants to dramatically increase the number of charging stations for electric cars to combat 'range anxiety' among motorists. She wants Germany to have one million charging stations by 2030, a reflection of continued European Community concerns about global climate change. [Story](#).

Some bicycle activists in **Durham**, NC came up with a novel idea to chide city officials for not building bike lanes when they refurbished a busy local street: they used carved Halloween pumpkins to form a protective barrier along an existing bike lane. Pretty clever. And colorful. [Story](#).

Thought of the Week

*"The most pathetic person in the world is someone who has sight
but has no vision."*

- Helen Keller

This newsletter was sent to you on behalf of council@thecorridor.org. It is available to our members. If you wish to unsubscribe from this newsletter, please [click here](#) to send an email request to council@thecorridor.org, or send your request to: Optout Request, Monday Morning Report, PO Box 1618, San Marcos, TX. 78667.

©2019 Austin-San Antonio Corridor Council
