



Monday Morning Report

Veterans Day Edition

November 12, 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

More than 11,000 scientists from a broad range of disciplines in 153 countries issued a report last week warning that the planet 'clearly and unequivocally faces a climate emergency,' according to the **Washington Post**. The group proposed six broad policy responses that include a massive shift to renewable energy sources, eliminating fossil fuels from energy production, and a series of sustainability and resiliency measures. [Story](#).

Two economists in **Washington** say communities don't have to go broke paying for the impacts of climate change. More proactive and targeted infrastructure investment will mitigate risk, promote adaptation, and save money, they argue, citing multiple examples in **Houston, Miami**, and elsewhere. [Story](#).

Last week's debate over a proposed regional arterial roadway study by the **Austin**-area Capital Metropolitan Planning Organization highlighted a split between urban and suburban interests on the board, with some members questioning the methodology behind data used to formulate the document (which includes potential development scenarios ranging from 'no-build' to one costing \$60 billion with 6,000 new roadway lane-miles). They reduced the document from a 'study' to an 'inventory,' but stark planning strategy differences remain. [Details](#).

According to a nifty interactive graphic from the **New York Times**, auto and freight trucking emissions in the **Austin** area have increased 178% since 1990 (that's 12% per person); **San Antonio** metro-area emissions increased by 144% (or 39% per person) in the same period. (For comparison, **Portland, OR**, emissions went up only 22% since 1990 and their per person emissions went down by 22%.) [Graphic](#).

The challenge of aging dam infrastructure (such as the failed Lake Dunlop dam near **San Antonio** managed by the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority) is not unique to **South-Central Texas**: a new study finds that nearly 1,700 US high-hazard dams are at risk of failure and - over the last four decades - about 1,000 dams *have* failed, killing 34 people. One group estimates it will take \$70 billion to modernize the nation's 90,000 dams. [Story](#). For a legal update on the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority's dams, go [here](#).

Houston approved a \$3.5 billion spending package for transit, rail and bus rapid transit expansions last week. In all, Texas voters passed \$12.1 billion of a total \$13 billion in bond propositions, including a whopping \$447 million in **Williamson County** for roads, parks, and trails. [Details](#).

Your daily commute may be longer if you live in **Houston** or **Dallas**, but if you live in **Austin** your commute is more *stressful*. At least that's the conclusion of a study by private consulting firm Robert Half entitled '*How US Workers Feel About Commuting*,' released last week. [Details](#).

The **Austin** Transportation Department has launched the second and final phase of developing its **Austin** Core Transportation Plan, a document intended to guide future downtown right of way management. Expect a series of public engagement efforts later this year and next to refine the Plan. Officials said the plan would also contain regional strategies (park-and-rides and dedicated transit lanes) as the city works towards a 50-50 modal split between cars and other modes. [Story](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and 'Other' News)

Net migration added 239,501 residents to **San Antonio-New Braunfels** from 2010-2018, 11% of the metro-area's 2010 population of 2,142,508. In **Austin-Round Rock**, net migration added 310,931 new residents or 18% of the metro's 2010 population, 1,716,289. Net migration is the number of people who moved into an area, minus the number who moved out. For other Top Twelve Texas metro area data, go [here](#).

More than 50 speakers and 300 participants joined the Second Annual CityFest conference in **San Antonio** last week for panel discussions and speakers on topics ranging from early learning to legislative duplicity (the Bonner Affair) in **Austin**. For a wrap-up of another successful event for the **Rivard Report** crew, go [here](#).

Transportation Advocates of Texas (TAoT) meets this Thursday (11/14) in **Austin** to elect new officers and regional board members, 11:30-1:00 pm, at the Texas Strategy Group Basement Conference room, 1005 Congress Ave. For more info, email iharlan@samcoinc.org.

Tesla has introduced a 'Smart Summon' feature that allows users to call their car from a cell phone to drive itself to pick them up - within 200 feet. Handy feature for a weather day like today. The feature is described in a story datelined out of **Garfield Heights, Ohio**, [here](#). Also, later this month in **Los Angeles** (11/21), Tesla will unveil its electric pickup truck, dubbed a 'cyber-truck.' [Details](#).

Former private attorney Cameron Cox will take over as the executive director of **Bastrop's** Economic Development Corporation. He succeeds Mike Kamerlander, who's moved on to lead **Lockhart's** economic development program. [Details](#).

Bexar County commissioners have approved an unusual public art installation along the San Pedro Culture Creek Park that features a 250-foot wide, 15-foot tall 'water wall' that interacts with visitors using lights and sound. Pretty cool. [Details](#).

Thought of the Week

"As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words but to live by them."

- John F. Kennedy

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