



Monday Morning Report

January 15, 2024

INTERNAL

The **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council Executive Committee meets *this* Wednesday, January 17, at 2:00 pm via Zoom. Agenda items include federal **SAT-DFW** rail funding from the Corridor Identification Program and a 20-Point Water Plan for **Austin-San Antonio**. Also: other rail issues, water resource agencies, highway funding, transit advocacy, and more. **Draft Agenda**. If you did not receive the Zoom meeting link, RSVP at council@thecorridor.org.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Interstate 35 is about to get a whole new look in **San Antonio** from the Fort Sam Houston area north to **Schertz**, with elevated lanes. Other projects already scheduled will add further capacity both north and south, and add flyovers that, taken together, will total about \$2.4 billion in construction. **Story**. Also, TxDOT is warning drivers to avoid the area around the Loop 1604/I-10 interchange, also undergoing a major revamp and construction. **More**.

Central Texas toll road rates went up 3.7% January 1 on US 183 and 183A, Highway 290, State Highway 71, and State Highway 45. They rose a bit more for folks without a TxTag. **Details**.

The governmental partners in **Austin's** ambitious Project Connect transit and light rail effort are being sued by a group of local activists - including a sitting **Travis County** commissioner - who claim the current project, revamped to a smaller scope in 2023, no longer fits what voters approved in a 2020 election. **Story**.

New 160-mile per hour Amtrak trains replacing the aging Acela fleet are coming to the Northeast Corridor **Washington-New York-Boston** route after (finally) passing safety tests. **Story**. And the Gateway project, adding new tunnels under the Hudson River into **Manhattan**, is underway but already years behind schedule. **Story**.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

The Greater **San Antonio** Chamber of Commerce and the North Chamber of Commerce have new presidents, and both say their focus will be business advocacy. Britt Finlay comes to the 50-year-old North Chamber from the real estate world. Former city council member Jeff Webster leads the larger, Greater Chamber group and posited this value proposition for members: 'You can't do what we're going to do for you.' **Story**.

New subdivisions are springing up all over **Comal County**, straining resources, but county and **New Braunfels** officials have only limited legal ability to control growth, reports the **Herald-**

Zeitung. The newspaper says new tools must be found to address essential issues and most roads lead to the Legislature. **Story. Opinion.**

Unlike Texas state water agencies, which have been instructed to ignore global climate change in their forecasts, **San Antonio** Water Systems' five-year draft 2024 Water Management Plan - released last week - *will* incorporate expected more intense droughts and higher temperatures in addressing future water needs. **Story.**

KUT News reported last week that the water supply utility Aqua Texas filed a federal lawsuit to protest \$450,000 in fines imposed by the Hays-Trinity Groundwater Conservation District after the utility *pumped twice as much as its permits allowed* in 2022. **Details.**

The **New York Times Magazine** headline asks the question: '*Why Are American Drivers So Deadly?*' and the article answers: lethally high speeds, distracted drivers, poor pedestrian infrastructure, and bigger cars. **Story.**

Thought of the Week

"Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that."

- Martin Luther King, Jr.

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