



Monday Morning Report

January 22, 2024

INTERNAL

The Executive Committee of the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council met last Wednesday (1/17) to discuss regional water resource planning efforts, including developments from the Lower Colorado River Authority, **San Antonio** Water System, a 20-point plan from former LCRA director Joe Beal, and an introduction to the Texas Water Trade. Also on the agenda, the **Austin** IH-35 'Cap and Stitch' effort, **San Antonio-to-DFW** rail and the Federal Railroad Administration's Corridor Identification Program, Transit Forward, and more. **Final Agenda**. For more information, contact council@thecorridor.org.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Global supply chains already in disarray due to Red Sea Houthi rebel attacks, a container shortage in China, and US port congestion is now taking an additional hit from a Central American drought that has cut Panama Canal shipping traffic by 36% and is expected to reduce Panama's 2024 ship-transit fee revenues by 700%. **Story**.

SmartCities identified six trends they say that will shape urban policy in 2024: a shifting transportation picture, decarbonization and climate change resiliency, housing affordability, momentum for US high speed rail and flying taxis, and struggling public transit as post-pandemic patterns change commuting. Strap in. **Story**.

After decades of complaints about outdated methodologies and confronting a new weather reality due to climate change, the Federal Emergency Management Agency is overhauling its disaster response programs, the **New York Times** reports. The changes include faster direct payments to victims and more housing assistance. **Story**.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

Austin has been named one of the *Top 50 Cities in the World* for 2024 by a consulting firm which **Bloomberg News** says has one of the globe's most comprehensive ranking systems. 270 metropolitan areas with populations above one million were analyzed for 24 metrics as to Liveability, Loveability, and Prosperity. **Story**.

According to announcements made last week, **New Braunfels** may soon be known as a national hub for autonomous trucking. Continental and Aurora Innovation say that by 2027 they will be producing thousands of commercialized self-driving trucks that are "reliable, serviceable, and cost-efficient." **Story**.

Some companies and trucking associations say the transition from diesel- or gasoline-trucks is happening too fast, the **Washington Post** reports, but drivers who have gone electric tell the paper they will never go back. While trucks make up only 4% of vehicles on the road, they represent 25% of US emissions, they report. [Story](#).

Projected costs for a water desalinization plant and related infrastructure in **Corpus Christi** have soared to \$654 million for 30-million-gallons per day, which is primarily earmarked for industrial users. Council members are questioning 30-million-gallon a day deals for plants in nearby **Gregory** and **Sinton**, cut earlier. [Story](#).

Thought of the Week

"Over every mountain there is a path, although it may not be seen from the valley."

- Theodore Roethke

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