



Monday Morning Report

March 13, 2023

INTERNAL

Reminder: No Executive Committee meeting this week. The next meeting is on Wednesday, April 19th, when our guest speaker will be Greg Stunz, Ph.D. of the Harte Research Institute. To add an item to the agenda, contact council@thecorridor.org.

INFRASTRUCTURE

City-owned public utilities providing power, water, and revenue to **Austin** and **San Antonio** are under attack in the state legislature: **Georgetown** senator Charles Schwertner's Senate Bill 1110 prohibits cities from transferring municipal utility revenue to their general funds ('the biggest, potentially most damaging piece of legislation we've ever seen;') and **Lakeway** representative Ellen Troxclair proposes state control of Austin Energy. [Story. More.](#)

Austin's Project Connect transit effort is also drawing fire in the Texas Capital through a series of bills, from six lawmakers, which limit the venture's ability to issue debt without continuing voter approvals on funding stages as the project proceeds. [Story. More.](#)

The private toll road operator of the State Highway 130 concession would receive a 20-year extension of their existing contract in exchange for funding and building a new, non-tolled connector route from Interstate 35 to SH 130, if a Texas Senate bill filed by Senator Donna Campbell succeeds. [Story. SB 1071.](#)

After a two-year pause to resolve local political and environmental struggles, the Federal Highway Administration and TxDOT have struck a deal to resume work on the \$9 billion revamp of IH-45 and other inner-loop projects in **Houston**. The agreement calls for various mitigation measures, greenspace, and more public input. [Story.](#)

Austin signed a significant - first-of-its-kind - agreement with the US Department of Transportation's Emerging Projects program last week, opening the door potentially to billions in federal funding for transportation and related projects. Project Connect, the city's transit initiative, Corridor Construction efforts, **Austin** Bergstrom International Airport, and the IH-35 'Cap and Stitch' program could all eventually benefit, officials said. [Story.](#)

Texas State University in **San Marcos** has been named one of 34 University Transportation Centers by the US Department of Transportation. The designation comes with two significant research grants directed at "enabling the next generation of transportation professionals to make roads, bridges, rail, shipping, and airspace safer, more innovative, and more efficient." [Details.](#)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

With 16 Chambers of Commerce in **Bexar County**, Robert Rivard of the **San Antonio Report** is asking, Does **San Antonio** have too many? He says the multiple groups compete for market share, relevance, and political power, diluting the city's business voice in all kinds of ways. Food for thought. [Opinion](#).

Both **Austin** (#11) and **San Antonio** (#9) made **Travel & Leisure** magazine's list of *The 15 Best Cities in the United States*, and Hill Country favorite **Fredericksburg** was named as one of *The South's Best Cities* by **Southern Living** magazine (#4). [Story](#). [More](#).

Water Woes: A local landowner is seeking to dump 600,000 gallons of treated sewage water *a day* into a tributary of the Comal River near **New Braunfels** ([here](#)); Tesla magnate Elon Musk's The Boring Company is seeking permission to dump more than 100,000 gallons of treated wastewater into the Colorado River near **Bastrop** ([here](#)). Meanwhile, iconic Jacob's Well near **Wimberley** is bone dry, possibly forever. [Story](#).

The oldest still-working Spanish aqueduct in the US, **San Antonio's** 275-year-old Espada Aqueduct, which is a United Nation's World Heritage Site - is back in action after repairs by the National Park Service. [Story](#).

Texas Government Insider profiled **San Marcos** city manager Stephanie Reyes last week. A proud product of the city's local schools and Texas State University, Ms. Reyes is the first female San Marcos city manager. [Story](#).

Thought of the Week

"It's never too late to be what you might've been."

– George Eliot

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