



## Monday Morning Report

March 31, 2025

---

### INTERNAL

The next meeting of the Austin-San Antonio Corridor Council Executive Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, April 16 at 2:00 PM by Zoom. For more information or to add an item to the agenda, contact [council@thecorridor.org](mailto:council@thecorridor.org).

---

### INFRASTRUCTURE

Aurora Innovation, a leader in developing autonomous trucking, has published a 75-page '*Driverless Safety Report*' just ahead of the company's planned commercial launch of self-driving trucks on Texas highways. Their earlier '*Safety Case Framework*,' drawing on protocols from the nuclear and aviation industries, is applicable to both driverless cars and trucks, they say. First up for service: the **Dallas-to-Houston** corridor. [Story. Report.](#)

Another autonomous technology venture, Waymo, meanwhile caused a brief traffic flap in **Austin** last week as two of their robotaxis got confused by severe weather, started a horn-honking contest with each other, and came to a stop at an onramp to West 15th St - causing the company to pause operations over the weekend. [Details.](#)

After several multi-vehicle and multi-death accidents on IH-35 in the past two weeks, TxDOT's regional safety protocols for the highway are coming under more scrutiny, **CBS Austin** reports. Safety advocates say more should be done to ameliorate the effects of ongoing **Austin-San Antonio** IH-35 construction projects. [Story.](#)

House Bill 2876, by Gerdes, relating to modification of a comprehensive development agreement to facilitate a non-tolled project providing greater connectivity between IH-35 and State Highway 130, will be heard *today* (10:00 am) by the Subcommittee on Transportation Funding, at the Capitol in E2.014. [Details.](#)

House Bill 1564 by Hernandez, which would limit the length of trains operated in Texas to less than 8,500-feet, will be heard by the House Transportation Committee in **Austin** Thursday, April 3. [Details. Bill Text.](#)

Last week it was France's TGV high-speed rail service deploying new trainsets, and this week it's Amtrak announcing a 2026 launch date for their 'next generation' Airo trainsets: roomier,

sleeker, with panoramic windows and lots of modern upgrades. The **Washington-New York-Boston** routes will see them first. [Story](#).

**Paris** voters overwhelmingly approved (66%) a climate- and lifestyle-driven plan last week to close 500 local streets, replacing them with small parks and trees, the **Washington Post** reports. Critics say the changes will make the city more difficult to navigate, exacerbating conflicts between suburbanites and city-dwellers. [Story](#).

Mark Your Calendars: Next Tuesday, April 8, the **Austin** chamber of commerce hosts its 2025 Infrastructure Conference, with an all-afternoon lineup of speakers on transportation, water, transit, energy, and more. [Details](#).

---

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

Politico reports that budget writers in **Washington** are considering an unusual split-process between the House and Senate to develop a US spending bill that might result ultimately in each chamber adopting a different budget number, "something that has never been done before." It's complicated, but if interested read [this](#).

The US Trade Representative has proposed a \$1.5 million fee per port call for Chinese-made or -operated ships entering American ports - 'sowing panic in the country's agricultural industry' - with farmer saying the added costs will upend exports of wheat, corn, and soybeans. the **Financial Times** and **John Ellis** report. [Story](#).

After national reporting uncovered issues with 'forever chemicals' due to fertilizers found by farmers and ranchers in livestock and crops in **Johnson County**, lawsuits ensued. Now, the city of **Fort Worth** has canceled a sewage contract with Wall Street-backed Synagro, the manufacturer of the contaminated products. [Story](#).

The **Wall Street Journal** took note of the new privately funded University of **Austin** last week, taking a deep video dive into the supposed 'anti-woke' education offered at the school's downtown campus. Various academic supporters and critics are featured, with much being made of controversies surrounding the school. [Video](#).

## Thought of the Week

"Success isn't always about greatness. It's about consistency. With consistent hard work greatness will come." – Dwayne Johnson

---

This newsletter is available to our members. If you wish to unsubscribe, please send an email request to [council@thecorridor.org](mailto:council@thecorridor.org).

---

