



## Monday Morning Report

April 10, 2023

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### INTERNAL

The **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council Executive Committee will meet Wednesday, April 19 at 2 pm by Zoom. 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](mailto:council@thecorridor.org).

Join us *this* Friday, April 14, 1:30 pm for the Policy Work Group meeting of the Texas Electric Transportation Resources Alliance (TxETRA). The meeting is being conducted via **Zoom** (Meeting ID: 819 0407 5716  
Passcode: 404618).

If you're following TxDOT's Interstate-10 Corridor Study from **Houston** to **El Paso**, the next meeting of the Central Working Group will be held in person at the Alamo Area Council of Governments offices on Friday, May 5, 9:00 am-11:30 am in **San Antonio**. More details available [here](#).

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### INFRASTRUCTURE

The Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization could take action this week (4/10) on the possible development by TxDOT of a 28-mile 'Connected and Automated Vehicle' facility along the abandoned Missouri-Kansas (MoKan) Corridor from east **Austin** to **Georgetown** between IH-35 and SH 130. [Details](#). (Item 10)

Construction on the Capital Express North project on IH-35 between **Round Rock** and **Austin** is officially underway, even as the central portion of the Interstate-rebuild through downtown remains in the process of a contentious environmental clearance effort. TxDOT held a groundbreaking ceremony for the \$606 million expansion project from US 290 East to State Highway 45 North on March 29th. [Story](#). (includes video links.)

A new report suggests that one reason for a recent rash of train derailments is the relatively new industry practice of precision-scheduling, which can result in 'monster trains' that stretch for two or even three miles. The Federal Railroad Administration says it doesn't collect the data that would provide evidence longer trains pose a particular risk, according to [ProPublica](#). Scary details from a **Hyndman**, PA wreck included [here](#).

A Texas House bill (HB 3899) that both proponents and opponents say could kill **Austin's** Project Connect light rail effort got a committee hearing last week, and indications were strong that it might move forward to the full House. Rep. Ellen Troxclair (R-**Lakeway**) proposed the measure, which calls for new elections before the sponsoring agency can issue debt. Dirty Martin's hamburger joint catered (no kidding). [Story](#).

Disputes over design concerns that had halted some construction phases on that \$1 billion Harbor Bridge project in **Corpus Christi** since July have now been resolved between TxDOT and the developers, Flatiron/Dragados. The project is now five years past its expected delivery date, now scheduled for early 2025. [Story](#).

The Biden administration in **Washington** is expected to announce this coming week some new, higher standards for tailpipe emissions from traditional internal combustion engines - a move also expected to spur the transition towards electric vehicles. Less widely known is the secretive process by which an **Ann Arbor** laboratory is stacking the deck on behalf of the Environmental Protection Agency. [Story](#).

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## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

**Austin** and **San Antonio** ranked in the Top Ten of US metro areas in the growth of millennials' home ownership between 2017-2022, **Axios** reports. **San Antonio** ranked 6th (at 127.9%); **Austin** ranked 9th (at 112%). Millennial homeowners outpaced millennial renters for the first-time last year. [Story](#).

Expect a critical eye to be cast on **Austin** Central Health's \$35 million-a-year contribution to the Dell Medical School as part of a long-awaited performance audit of the agency by **Travis County** examiners, says the **Austin Monitor** newsletter. Critics say the tax-funded agency spends too little on promised local health care. [Story](#).

Some residents of **Garden Ridge** in **Comal County** are fighting back against a **San Antonio** company's plans for a new concrete plant too close, they say, to local farms and neighborhoods. The project has already received permit approvals from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. [Story](#).

Natural Bridge Caverns in **Comal County** will open a new tour on May 12, Hidden Wonders, allowing visitors to explore newly developed parts of the cave system - discovered in 1967 - beyond the current tour, called Hidden Passages. Summer is coming; it will be hot; give the kids something to do that doesn't require cellphones. [Story](#).

The **New York Times** last week highlighted the case of **San Antonio** resident Gustavo Angel Suarez Castillo, shot dead in **Nuevo Laredo** with four other men by uniformed soldiers, in a story about the growing domestic role of the Mexican military and how lack of oversight has led to corruption and violence. [Story](#).

## Thought of the Week

*"Don't sit down and wait for the opportunities to come. Get up and make them."*

– Madam C.J. Walker

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