



## Monday Morning Report

April 16, 2024 (Tuesday)

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### INTERNAL

The **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council Executive Committee meets *tomorrow*, April 17 at 2pm by Zoom. **Draft Agenda**. If you would like more information, contact [council@thecorridor.org](mailto:council@thecorridor.org).

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### INFRASTRUCTURE

Texas had more accidents at highway-railroad crossings than any other state in the US last year, 246 crashes with 16 deaths and 75 injuries, according to preliminary data from the Federal Railroad Administration. The accident rate has been trending downwards, the report says. Most incidents were due to human error. **Story**.

Norfolk Southern railroad will pay a whopping \$600 million to settle over 30 lawsuits that resulted from their derailment and chemical spill accident last year in **East Palestine**, OH. The settlement still requires approval from a federal judge, but the railroad said compensatory payments could begin later this year. **Story**.

**Reuters** reported that an outcome of last week's meeting between President Biden and Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida was a 'political understanding' that both countries would pursue joint development of the Amtrak/Texas Central Railway's **Dallas-to-Houston** high speed rail project. **Story. More**.

Amid conservative complaints in Congress about federal funds going to rebuild the Francis Scott Key bridge after that shipping accident in **Baltimore**, it now appears that the shipowner involved has declared 'General Average' - a maritime principle wherein all parties, including cargo owners, must share the costs of any accident. **Story**.

There's a Groundbreaking Ceremony today to launch the construction of Segment 4 of the Loop 1604 North Expansion project in **San Antonio**. TxDOT chairman J. Bruce Bugg will host local dignitaries at 10 am. **Details**.

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### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

**Bexar County** commissioner Tommy Calvert - a Corridor Council Executive Committee member - is pushing for a new \$120 million park project in **San Antonio** known as '*The Link*,' which will feature a waterfall and plantscapes rivaling those of the local Botanical Gardens. **Story**. And **Austin** opened the new one-acre Taniguchi Park last week at Mueller, raising to 122-acres total parkland in the neighborhood. **Story**.

Speaking of parks, the **Washington Post** has published a 'NatureScore' interactive web project allowing users to see neighborhood-by-neighborhood just how much access a given area has to

greenspace [here](#). The **Austin** NatureScore is 62.2 with a pop./sq.mile ratio of 2,424; **San Antonio** is at 47.8 with a pop./sq.mile ratio of 2,536.

**Austin** approved a new city manager earlier this month, T.C. Broadnax, formerly city manager in **Dallas**. Broadnax will take over beginning May 6th, replacing interim city manager Jesus Garza, whose been filling in admirably at that position since February of 2023. [Story](#).

*Another brutal summer?* Apparently so: the **San Antonio Report** answers the question in a survey of climate experts that also references a 2036 Committee **climate report** indicating that average temperatures will be 3 degrees warmer in coming years than the average temperatures over the past 50 years. [Story](#). [Report](#).

Home and auto insurance rates in Texas are among the highest in the nation and headed higher, **Axios** reports, due to both the increasing occurrence and severity of climate events and other factors (catalytic converter thefts, up over 1250%). Weather related events have cost Texans \$402 billion since 1980 - the highest in the US. [Story](#).

An interesting new solid-state battery technology developed in **Osaka**, Japan could double the driving range of electric vehicles and, moreover, relies on materials that are less-scarce and less-China-controlled than the current standard lithium-ion batteries powering US electric-powered vehicles. [Story](#).

**New Braunfels** has a new addition to its undersung series of murals throughout downtown depicting significant historical figures or events, this time the 10th mural, celebrating the relationship between the city and its railroads dating back to the 1870's: '*Connecting New Braunfels to The World.*' Very cool project you should see. [Story](#).

## Thought of the Week

*"Never put off till tomorrow what you can do the day after tomorrow."*

- Mark Twain

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