



Monday Morning Report

May 9, 2022

INTERNAL

The Executive Committee of the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council is scheduled to meet Wednesday, May 18 at 2 PM by videoconference. At least one presentation will deliver an electric vehicles and fleet sales update from a General Motors spokesman. For details, email council@thecorridor.org.

COVID-19 UPDATE: Global confirmed cases have reached 517.4 million, with 6,251,531 deaths. US cases reached 81,863,771 this morning, with 997,528 deaths. (5/9/22) ([Johns Hopkins](#)). As of yesterday, Texas reported 5,561,552 confirmed cases with 86,635 deaths, including in **Bexar County**: 474,571 cases with 6,127 deaths; **Guadalupe County**: 26,402 cases, still with 398 deaths; **Comal County**: 22,195 cases, with 550 deaths; **Hays County**: 52,521 cases with 432 deaths; **Travis County**: 206,533 cases with 1,733 deaths; and **Williamson County**: 110,308 cases with 878 deaths (5/8/22). ([TDHHS](#)). *Current regional hospitalization-rate data is found [here](#).*

INFRASTRUCTURE

Last month's meeting of the Texas Transportation Commission in **Austin**, marked by delegations from the state's five largest cities complaining about big highway expansion projects slicing through local neighborhoods, has now reached an international audience via **London**-based *The Guardian* newspaper [here](#). Similar protests in California have drawn organized labor into the disputes, [here](#).

In order to meet the Biden administration's goal to make half of US vehicles sold by 2030 electric cars, the nation will have to invest \$120 billion to strengthen the electric grid, according to the **Washington Post**; but thus far, the administration has only raised \$5 billion toward grid upgrades and transmission lines thru 2027. Uh-oh. [Story](#).

Elon Musk's The Boring Company, in the midst of developing a base campus in **Bastrop**, will build a \$3 million railroad pedestrian underpass in **Kyle**, according to a contract approved by the local city council last week. Part of **Kyle**'s trail system, the tunnel requires an agreement up for city approval next week with Union Pacific. [Story](#).

Leander voters approved continuing their transit partnership with **Austin**'s Capital Metro over the weekend ([here](#)). At least one analysis attributed the nearly 60% approval margin to a deal the transit agency cut last year proposing to funnel millions of new infrastructure investment into the city. [Story](#).

Local transportation and civic leaders (including regional city managers) will gather in **Austin** for a *Mobility Summit* on May 25 - hosted by the Movability ATX group - to discuss 'how Central Texas can embrace growth in a way that leads to better outcomes for the entire community.' [Details](#). More on Movability [here](#).

Mexico will re-route a proposed \$3 billion freight railroad line to New Mexico from Texas in response to Gov. Greg Abbott's recent on-again, off-again border crackdown on trade, officials announced in **Mexico City** last month. The freight project, originally transited Texas on the way to **Winnipeg**, Canada from the

Mexican port of **Mazatlán**, Mexico frequently announces infrastructure projects that don't materialize, **Bloomberg** says. [Story](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

Austin has had more success getting workers back into the office than any other major US city, according to Kastle Systems, a real estate security company, in a study reported by **Fortune Magazine**. Office buildings in the Texas capital are occupied up to 60% of the time, recent data says, compared to occupancy rates of 31-33% in cities like **New York** and **San Jose**. The data does not even include **Austin's** many government buildings. [Story](#).

A **Dallas**-based real estate venture is taking over a 3000-plus acre, 11,500-resident mixed-use development along State Highway 130 east of **San Marcos** and south of **Lockhart** in an area formerly known as 'Cherryville.' The new owners plan to begin site development - about 60 miles from downtown **San Antonio** and 50 miles from downtown **Austin** - in early 2023. [Story](#).

Even as Western states gird themselves for unusually heightened fire danger from drought and increasing heat spikes ([here](#)) - and historic wildfires in New Mexico rage ([here](#)) - officials say that 75-miles of the Rio Grande River has gone dry through the Big Bend National Park, threatening crops, wildlife, and tourism. [Story](#).

Registration is open until tomorrow afternoon for this Thursday's (5/12) 'State of Logistics' luncheon hosted by the **San Antonio** Mobility Coalition, featuring TxDOT's Caroline Mays, Director of Planning and Modal Programs, and other trade-related panelists. [Details](#).

Thought of the Week

"Time stays long enough for anyone who will use it."

- Leonardo de Vinci

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