



Monday Morning Report

June 6, 2022

INTERNAL

The next meeting of the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council Executive Committee is tentatively set for Wednesday, June 15 at 2 PM by videoconference. To add an item to the agenda, contact council@thecorridor.org.

COVID-19 UPDATE: Worldwide confirmed cases are now over 532.02 million and will reach 6.3 million deaths later today. US cases are at 84,770,252 this morning, with 1,008,590 reported deaths (6/6/22). ([Johns Hopkins](#)). Yesterday, Texas was reporting 5,6157,875 confirmed cases with 86,849 deaths, including in **Bexar County**: 483,295 cases with 6,147 deaths; **Guadalupe County**: 26,702 cases, with 399 deaths; **Comal County**: 22,589 cases, with 551 deaths; **Hays County**: 53,651 cases still with 433 deaths; **Travis County**: 213,264 cases with 1,738 deaths; and **Williamson County**: 112,910 cases still with 879 deaths (6/5/22). ([TDHHS](#)). *Current regional hospitalization-rate data is found [here](#).*

INFRASTRUCTURE

Approximately 550,000 truck drivers in the US have proven a vital link in supply chains during the pandemic-era, but theirs is an industry on the cusp of major disruption from worker shortages, self-driving vehicles, and health problems associated with a sedentary lifestyle. As the industry changes, the familiar supportive hub for much of their lives - the lowly truck stop - is also threatened, the **New York Times** reports. [Story](#).

Fans of the Texas Eagle passenger rail service from **Chicago** to **San Antonio** are complaining that budget cutbacks at Amtrak - even amidst the biggest funding boost in agency history - are failing to take advantage of growing interest in long distance rail travel. Lack of amenities and limited frequencies are cited. [Opinion](#).

Bloomberg news service has obtained copies of eight proposals submitted by Elon Musk's The Boring Company to state and local officials that outline a series of prospective underground tunnel projects eventually connecting **Austin** to **San Antonio**, but with initial intermediate connections among **New Braunfels**, **San Marcos**, and **Kyle**. Details remain sketchy though the proposals reference working with TxDOT on IH-35 right of way. [Story](#).

Officials have approved the first design contract for a third terminal (C) at **San Antonio** International Airport, thus launching a 20-year, \$2.5 billion strategic development & improvement plan adopted by the city council in 2021. The new terminal is expected to go operational by 2028. [Details](#).

The Texas Electric Transportation Resources Alliance (TxETRA) May 2022 newsletter is out with the latest data on state developments for the national electric vehicle charging-station network, and with it TxDOT's draft map of proposed station locations. There's also news about **Bexar County**'s auto electric transportation transition, [here](#).

The Brightline passenger rail service in Florida has received a \$15-million-plus grant from the US Department of Transportation for environmental approvals and preliminary engineering design work on a **Tampa-to-Orlando** high speed rail line, the company - which now operates from **Miami-to-West Palm Beach** - says. [Release](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

Another foundational brick for the **Austin-San Antonio Corridor** becoming an innovation hub for autonomous vehicles got laid last week in **New Braunfels** with construction underway for **Hanover**, Germany-based Continental Automotive's \$110-million, 215,000-square-foot manufacturing facility on IH-35. The company makes components for advanced driver assistance systems, eventually employing about 500 people. [Story](#).

After a rapid rise in value over the last year in international markets the US dollar stumbled last week on its race to parity with the European euro currency, possibly signaling trouble for American manufacturers reliant on foreign sales. Investors usually buy currencies in countries with rising interest rates and the downward move suggests big bets on the Federal Reserve Bank not following through with expected rate increases. [Story](#).

Internet retail sales continue to soar despite the pandemic, supply chain issues, and a slowing economy, reports the **Loadstar** newsletter. The Big Four shippers (UPS, Fed Ex, USPS, and Amazon) are now making nearly 700 deliveries *per second* and the industry's rapid growth pace is expected to rise through 2028. [Story](#).

Austin-based Tesla has implemented a hiring freeze and intends to shrink its white-collar administrative staff by 10%, according to internal company executive messaging from CEO Elon Musk, who said in an email that he has a "super bad feeling about the economy" ([here](#)). Meanwhile, a Twitter poll Musk launched suggests respondents have a super bad feeling about Elon Musk - and other billionaires, **Newsweek** reports. [Story](#).

Thought of the Week

"Perfection is not attainable, but if we chase perfection, we can catch excellence."

- Vince Lombardi

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