



Monday Morning Report

July 3, 2023

INTERNAL

The next meeting of the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council Executive Committee is scheduled for July 19 at 2 pm by Zoom. For information or to add an item to the agenda, email council@thecorridor.org.

The Texas Electric Transportation Resources Alliance (TxETRA) Policy Working Group meets *this* Friday, July 7, 1:30-4 pm via Zoom. Council staff serves on the Advisory Board for this effort to guide policy on the transition from traditional gasoline-powered cars to electric vehicles. To participate via Zoom, email amandaalandzes.txetra@gmail.com.

Upcoming *next* week is the final meeting of the Steering Committee for TxDOT's I-10 Texas Corridor Study (Corridor Council staff serves on the oversight committee). The meeting is Thursday, July 13, 9-11:00 am. The Committee will review the I-10 Texas Corridor Study Implementation Plan. [Details](#).

INFRASTRUCTURE

The **Austin-San Antonio Corridor** is designated as a priority area for \$87 million in grants available from the Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Program. Cities and counties can qualify for 100% reimbursement for re-powering or replacing eligible vehicles (gas engines) with all-electric models (and supporting infrastructure). Non-government entities can receive 75% reimbursement. First come, first served, so hurry. [Details](#).

A former governor of Virginia's op-ed in the **Washington Post** weighs in on the 'perimeter rule' limiting access between **San Antonio** International Airport and Ronald Reagan National Airport (DCA) in **Washington DC**, concluding the antiquated mid-century regulation hampers his local airport. 'It's time to dispense with it.' [Opinion](#).

San Antonio Express-News columnist confuses news with opinion again in writing about revived local talk about **Austin-San Antonio** rail, complains about money Lone Star spent on studies (federally required) with consultants (to save tax dollars, just as TxDOT, VIA, Capital Metro do) and time wasted on environmental clearances (he doesn't know 15 years is now standard). Lone Star didn't 'fail miserably,' partisan local politicians did. [Opinion](#).

California regulators are contemplating granting Cruise and Waymo permission to deploy 24/7 driverless taxis in **San Francisco**, a city that has emerged as a leading testing center for autonomous technologies - and local city officials are fuming about it, due to a rash of accidents and traffic snarls linked to the vehicles. [Story](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

Governor Greg Abbott is calling on the Texas Transportation Commission and TxDOT to allocate \$150 million to help fund the International Bridge Trade Corridor stretching from **Pharr to Donna** in deep South Texas. Local and state officials believe the move will grow trade opportunities with Mexico, speeding freight deliveries. [Story](#).

A study from the University of **Reading** says air turbulence over the North Atlantic has increased 55% in the last four decades, disrupting one of the busiest air cargo routes in the world, **Loadstar** reports. Airlines now have to consider increased damage cargo and planes, already costing \$100-150 million per year in the US alone. [Story](#).

About 90 percent of the world's trade travels by ship — a ceaseless movement of 60,000 vessels plying their routes, moving 11 billion tons of goods each year, the **Washington Post** reports. This week, in **London**, the International Maritime Organization (a United Nations agency) meets for a sharp debate about regulating emissions from the industry. [Story](#).

It has been predicted for years, but now it is happening: climate change, particularly floods, is pushing an increasing number of people from their homes. Curiously, however, they aren't moving far. A new study from **Houston's** Rice University found that most weather-displaced US migrants only moved about 20 miles. [Study](#).

Also as predicted (here in the MMR), cities and counties are preparing court fights over the legislature's recently passed 'Death Star' bill that limits local governments' ability to regulate everything from the environment to water breaks for workers. **San Antonio** city council members discussed a lawsuit last week. [Story](#). [More](#).

Congratulations to one Larry Hildebrand, retiring last week after 46 years with the **New Braunfels** Police Department, where he started as a reserve officer back in 1976. A local judge said Hildebrand 'was good at de-escalating tense situations.' Send him to the Legislature, still locked in a fruitless Special Session. [Story](#).

Thought of the Week

"Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom, must, like me, undergo the fatigue of supporting it."

- Thomas Paine

This newsletter is available to our members. If you wish to unsubscribe, please send an email request to council@thecorridor.org.