



Monday Morning Report

July 13, 2026

INTERNAL

There will be no July meeting for the Executive Committee of the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council, thus we will NOT be meeting *this* Wednesday, July 15. Enjoy the summer break, if you can avoid the heat.

For more information or to add an item to the agenda, contact council@thecorridor.org.

INFRASTRUCTURE

The **Houston Chronicle** reported last week on a new TxDOT study of improved Amtrak service between **Austin-San Antonio**, offering these details: up to eight passenger trains per day could operate along the route without disrupting Union Pacific's freight service if sufficient improvements (\$810 million to \$1.9 million) were implemented; trip travel times could be about two hours; 499,000 commuter trips occur per day on IH-35 on the route. [Story](#).

SmartCitiesDive says that, despite robust ridership, Brightline Florida's **Orlando-Miami** passenger route is facing bankruptcy due to the entity's high debt burden. Brightline faces a deadline this week (7/15) to make payment on \$985 million in bonds after already receiving two deferments. Their overall debt stands at \$5.5 billion. [Details](#).

The Federation of American Scientists released its '*State and Local Heat Policy Agenda*' last week, outlining concepts endorsed by nearly 150 organizations and 40 states to protect communities from extreme heat, which also includes a searchable database of more than 400 evidence-based policy solutions. [Story](#). [Report](#).

Houston contains 39 of the 100 most congested roadways in Texas, more than any other metro area. Use the **Chronicle's** interactive maps to see where the states and cities' worst gridlocked highways are [here](#).

TxDOT is warning motorists of some upcoming re-routing projects this week (7/13-15 forward) along IH-35 in **Austin** - part of the Capital Express Central effort through downtown - that could significantly affect traffic near Riverside Drive and also between Oltorf St. and Woodward St. [Details](#).

And **San Antonio** will see traffic disruptions along miles of San Pedro Avenue from Basse to Breeden as VIA Metropolitan Transit works to implement the city's first rapid transit bus route, the \$500 million Green Line. [Story](#).

Brownsville, Laredo, and McAllen were ranked among the Top 10 safest cities for US drivers in Allstate insurance company's annual traffic accident/safety report, based upon claims data and the lowest number of years between collisions. **San Antonio** and **Austin** ranked 134th and 135th out of 200 for accident risk. [Study](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

The **San Antonio Current** reports on experts warning that Gov. Greg Abbott's new property tax plan could bankrupt Texas, defund already-struggling school districts, and hobble cities facing population surges - such as most of those in the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor. "Purely ideological and wishful thinking," says one academic. [Story](#).

Municipal groups warn that a new proposal by the US Office of Management and Budget in **Washington** would change federal grants to cities, counties, and states by giving agencies more authority to terminate grants for reasons including political and agency priority misalignment. More than \$1 trillion is at risk. [Story](#). [Rule](#).

The Federal Communication Commission in **Washington** last week approved permitting for a **Hawthorne**, CA-based company to launch a 60-ft satellite mirror to bounce solar rays back onto the dark side of Earth, lighting up a three-mile-wide patch for solar farms, illuminate city streets, and provide light for rescue work. The company eventually wants to send 50,000 big mirrors into space. *What Could Possibly Go Wrong?* [Story](#).

Thought of the Week

"It is difficult to free fools from the chains they revere." – Voltaire

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