



Monday Morning Report

August 19, 2024

INTERNAL

A memorial and celebration of life service for former **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council chairman Pete Winstead will be held later *today*, Monday August 19, 4-6:00 pm, at the **Austin** Four Seasons Hotel. [Details](#).

The **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council's Executive Committee meets *this* Wednesday, August 21 at 2 pm by Zoom. The meeting includes a presentation on the Austin Housing Conservancy. [Draft Agenda](#). For more information, contact council@thecorridor.org.

INFRASTRUCTURE

[Dodging Big-rigs](#): In an effort to cram more traffic through downtown **Austin** on IH-35, TxDOT is planning to shrink the width of lanes as part of the Capital Expressway project, **KUT News** reports. The new 11-foot-wide lanes may prove problematic for the typical eight-and-a-half-foot wide freight truck, quoted drivers said. [Story](#).

City Journal compares the relative advantages and disadvantages of public sector vs. private sector development of high-speed rail projects, pitting private company Brightline's efforts in Florida with the now \$128 billion California **Central Valley** project. Bottom line: Brightline is less subject to local politics. [Story](#).

Community Impact provides a sobering look at **Austin's** Project Connect light rail effort entitled "*Are Austin-area residents any closer to having a light rail system?*" The piece examines next year's \$116 million budget for the \$7.4 billion undertaking, now scheduled to begin service in 2033, highlighting financial hurdles ahead. [Story](#).

Bexar County manager David Smith recommends against issuing any new debt until 2028, possibly delaying planned construction projects, the **Express-News** reports, noting that while the county has the highest level of debt per capita - at \$2.5 billion - of any county in Texas, it also has the highest possible credit rating. [Story](#).

Los Angeles is planning to launch a network of electric flying taxis by 2026, according to **Smart Cities**, just in time for the Super Bowl in 2027 and the 2028 Summer Olympics. The city's air mobility partner, Archer Aviation, says it's ramping up to manufacture 650 electric vertical takeoff and landing aircraft annually for the effort. [Story](#).

[Reminder](#): TxDOT is hosting a virtual public meeting today, Aug. 19, at 4:30 pm, for the Texas Rail Plan. [Details](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

Although Mexico is benefiting from recent near-shoring trends - manufacturers moving Asian production centers closer to US markets - lack of government investment and strategic planning is hobbling expansion, **Loadstar** writes, logistical and transportation deficiencies cost Mexico nearly \$9 billion in 2023, officials said. [Story](#).

A 2024 **World Atlas** report says **Wimberley, Castroville, and Fredericksburg** are three of the Top Ten best small towns in Texas to visit. Others on the list included **Pleasanton, Yorktown, and... Mineral Wells (?)**. [List](#).

Watch a Cinderella story developing around the **Boerne** little league team, playing at 6:00 pm *tonight* in the Little League World Series in **Williamsport, PA**. And, if you need more 'boys of summer,' the **New York Times** ran a fascinating profile this weekend of 'Pinky' Deras, the greatest US little league player of all time. [Details](#). [More](#).

Thought of the Week

"Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does."

- William James

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