



Monday Morning Report

August 29, 2022

INTERNAL

The next meeting of the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council Executive Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, September 21 at 2 PM by videoconference. The meeting will include a presentation by Will Smithson of HNTB on 'Future Traffic Trends on Interstate Highway-10 and Interstate Highway-35.' To add an item to the agenda, contact council@thecorridor.org.

COVID-19 UPDATE: Global cases reached 601,054,129 this morning, with 6,486,857 deaths. US cases are at 94,197,327 with 1,043,858 deaths (8/29/22) ([Johns Hopkins](#)). Texas was reporting 6,233,971 cases as of Friday, with 88,502 deaths, including in **Bexar County**: 534,163 cases with 6,285 deaths; **Guadalupe County**: 28,930 cases, with 408 deaths; **Comal County**: 24,926 cases, also still with 563 deaths; **Hays County**: 60,359 cases, still with 449 deaths; **Travis County**: 240,341 cases, with 1,776 deaths; and **Williamson County**: 125,762 cases with 900 deaths (8/26/22). ([TDHHS](#)). *Regional hospitalization-rate data found [here](#).*

INFRASTRUCTURE

Eight hundred miles from **Los Angeles**, two billionaires are racing to develop wind-powered energy networks that could re-shape the landscape and future of cities in the American West, but not without costs to wildlife and a rural way of life. In the transition from fossil fuels to clean energy, time is short, and the stakes are high. "We want more renewable energy, and we want more conservation. And those two things are going to collide." [Story](#).

From the High Plains near **Lubbock**, wind could provide power for up to nine million homes, but investment is needed to move that power to other areas of the state. [Story](#). In **Central Texas**, wind-driven electricity production is providing a welcome revenue stream to drought-stricken farmers - part of the largest wind network in the US - but national party politics and state grid regulations are threatening the industry's growth. [More](#).

TxDOT is once again thwarting local roadway planning in **San Antonio**, this time along the important tourist corridor in the Mission District on Roosevelt Avenue. City officials and neighborhood interests want to reduce four lanes to two, adding bike lanes and wider sidewalks, but the state transportation agency - as with the Broadway corridor and the Lamar Street project in **Austin** - has nixed local funding and development plans. [Story](#).

Elon Musk continued to tout (or tweet) a hyperloop tunnel between **Austin** and **San Antonio** last week, claiming it is "the fastest way to get between one downtown and the other with known physics" ([here](#)). The **San Antonio Express-News** light-heartedly took the bait ([here](#)), but **New York** magazine has the best take ([here](#)).

A major consumer objection to electric vehicles - down time during charging - may be resolved by new technology that reduces charge-time restoring 90% of battery capacity to about as long as it takes to

charge a cell phone, just 10 minutes. Full deployment of the technology may take five years, the **Washington Post** reports [here](#).

TxDOT wants your help with a public survey being conducted as part of a study of I-10 from **Houston** to **El Paso**, through **San Antonio**, of course. The survey just takes a few minutes and is open until Sept. 7. [Study. Survey.](#)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

Weston Urban is betting big on downtown **San Antonio** residential development, with more than 600 units scheduled to come online within the next two years from three different project. The company, also involved in the new downtown Frost Bank office building, is the real estate arm of Rackspace founder Graham Weston. [Story.](#)

Idaho-based semiconductor giant Micron is considering an up to \$80 billion investment for a new manufacturing facility near **Lockhart** in **Caldwell County**, according to state filings. An ultimate decision could hinge on tax incentives that would total about \$565 million over 10 years. [Story. More.](#)

You've probably read a lot of stories about how Californians are fleeing to Texas because of high taxes among other things (regulations, traffic, fires, earthquakes, landslides, and Vegans) but the truth is, as revealed by the **Houston Chronicle**, that Texans pay *higher* taxes than residents of the Golden State. [Story.](#)

As ever-hotter summers turn cities like **Austin** and **San Antonio** into urban blast furnaces due to heat island effect (concrete & rooftops absorbing rather than reflecting heat), some cities resort to 'heat officers' and re-imagined cooling centers to relieve their populations. "We didn't build for these temperatures," says one. [Story.](#)

Whether droughts or floods, water is central to regional public policy-planner concerns, and when KXAN television news reported that a new golf course in **Driftwood** used **Dripping Springs** drinking water to keep its fairways green -190 million gallons in the last two years - neighbors called 'foul' and local officials admitted the situation was below par (sorry), but pledged to fix it. [Story.](#)

Texas State University in **San Marcos** has set a record for freshman enrollment this year, with 7,590 registering for the fall semester, up 14% from the previous year. The class was selected from more than 34,000 first-year freshmen applications, also a record. [Story.](#)

Thought of the Week

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

- Margaret Mead

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