



## Monday Morning Report

August 31, 2026

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### INTERNAL

Next Monday, Labor Day, there will be no **Monday Morning Report** due to the holiday. See you on the far side. We'll be back September 14, 2026. Have a great holiday!

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### INFRASTRUCTURE

Recent Rail News Wrap-Up: Texas Senate Transportation Committee chairman Tan Parker, discussing continued state funding for Amtrak's Heartland Flyer between **Ft. Worth** - **Oklahoma City**, says Texas needs long-haul rail to address congestion and mobility ([here](#)). Mexico announced that new passenger line phases will eventually connect **Mexico City** to **Laredo** at 200-kph ([here](#)). And California high speed rail stalls out. [Story](#).

Attempts to replace Michael Morris at the **North Texas** Council of Governments - possibly the state's most experienced and knowledgeable local transportation executive - have backfired against the person who fired him. Former **Ellis County** judge Todd Little will instead be leaving, following board action last week. [Story](#).

Mounting opposition led state regulators last week to delay a decision on that proposed 370-mile 765-kilovolt transmission line from **San Antonio** through the Hill Country to **Fort Stockton**; they approved a similar transmission line from **North Texas** to the Permian Basin, with much criticism of the regulatory timeline. [Details](#).

Be aware that TxDOT has a raft of closures coming on IH-35 in **Austin** as part of the Capital Express Program that may affect travel times; particularly worth noting are changes to the SH 71 (Ben White intersection), northbound between Rundberg Lane and Braker Lane, and the rebuilding of the Stassney Lane bridge. For a full list, go [here](#).

And don't forget the **San Antonio** Mobility Coalition's annual 'State of the District' luncheon on September 18 featuring TxDOT commissioner Alex Meade and local District Engineer Charles Benavidez. [Details](#).

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### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

**Axios** says that new forces are pushing up grocery prices beyond just beef, coffee, and chocolate: more expensive grains, soaring fertilizer and fuel prices, unpredictable weather and

raging wars are coalescing to form what they call a 'grocery apocalypse.' Stores are supplied by global supply chains threatened at every stage. [Story](#).

The US Treasury's attempts to buy back debt to calm the bond markets drew a lot of attention earlier this month, but if you thought this country's \$40-trillion national debt was bad, consider what's happening abroad: France, Italy, the United Kingdom, and Japan are facing ten-year-high costs for raising money. [Story](#).

Much of Europe this summer has also been hammered by ultra-high temperatures, which damaged crops, destroyed forests, stranded river cargo, and created havoc in local economies, the **Wall Street Journal** reports. "The pace of change has caught many European governments off guard, despite years of warnings." [Story](#).

In what may be the worst idea since Jonathan Swift suggested eating orphaned Irish babies, **New Scientist** magazine says that millions of tons of discarded plastic bottles could be converted into vanilla-flavored cookies using genetically engineered yeast. Stick with Oreos or be afraid, very afraid. [Story](#).

## Thought of the Week

"Only two things are infinite, the universe and human stupidity... and I'm not sure about the former." – Albert Einstein

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