



Monday Morning Report

September 5, 2023

Labor Day Edition

INTERNAL

The Executive Committee of the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council will meet Wednesday, September 20 at 2:00 pm by Zoom. If you would like to add an item to the agenda, email council@thecorridor.org.

INFRASTRUCTURE

The US is using up its groundwater supply like there's no tomorrow, the **New York Times** reports, with little hope of timely replenishment due to climate change and drought. In **Central Texas**, the largest springs are going dry as heat, drought, and population growth stress aquifers supplying drinking water to millions of people. Locally, an inefficient regulatory system lets users pump twice their legal allotments with no penalties. [Story](#). [Local](#).

In a survey piece about future prospects for high- and higher-speed passenger train projects in the US, the **Washington Post** provides details on five efforts underway including Amtrak in the Northeast Corridor, Brightline West in California-Nevada, California's potential **San Francisco-to-Los Angeles** route, Cascadia - connecting **Vancouver, Seattle, and Portland** - and the risen-from-the-dead Texas **Houston-Dallas** route. [Story](#). [More](#).

In a striking move forced on the Biden administration by a Supreme Court decision restricting use of the Clean Water Act of 1972, **NPR** reports that the Environmental Protection Agency has removed most federal protections for the country's wetlands, key to marine wildlife and already endangered by over-development. Context [here](#).

'90% Of Everything:' Shipping is the physical equivalent of the internet, abolishing national boundaries for goods by being efficient and cheap through containerization. According to Bridgewater Associates experts interviewed about supply chains, it is 100 times cheaper to transport a product by ship than by truck ([here](#)). So, what does a complete collapse of the container shipping market tell us about the future of the global economy? [Story](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

This week's installment of the **Express News** series on the mega-region formed by **Austin** and **San Antonio** focuses on business growth over the last two years in the area, particularly in the smaller interior communities of **New Braunfels, San Marcos, and Kyle**. Billion-dollar investments from Tesla, Samsung, Toyota, and others have created economic hotspots reaching far beyond their own local facilities, the paper says. [Story](#).

A **Travis County** state district judge last week ruled the so-called 'Death Star' bill unconstitutional. Scheduled to go into effect this month, the measure would have severely restricted the ability of Texas cities to self-govern on a range of issues from labor to environmental law. "There is nothing in American jurisprudence like this," argued an attorney for **Houston, San Antonio, and El Paso**. Next stop: Court of Appeals or Supreme Court. [Story](#).

San Antonio public television station KLRN hosts an event next Thursday, (9/14), at the Briscoe Museum, highlighting a national PBS series called '*Iconic America*' with a local segment, '*Iconic San Antonio*.' [Details](#).

Four years after the collapse of a 90-year-old dam emptied it overnight, Lake Dunlap near **New Braunfels** is on the way back to full again - a really encouraging story of how local residents and public authorities came together cooperatively to restore a regional recreational asset. [Story](#).

Write Your Own Headline: Federal authorities in **Manhattan** are investigating the potential misuse of Tesla corporate funds to build the super-secret 'Project 42,' supposedly a large glass house in **Austin** designed as a future home for Elon Musk, the world's richest, and most famous, couch-surfer. [Story](#). [More](#).

Thought of the Week

"Enjoy the little things, for one day you may look back and realize they were the big things."

- Robert Brault

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