



Monday Morning Report

September 11, 2023

INTERNAL

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

INFRASTRUCTURE

A group called Rethink35 has sued TxDOT to stop the \$4.5 billion centerpiece of the Capital Expressway Project, which would rebuild Interstate 35 through downtown **Austin**, and they've lined up an impressive list of local officials and community groups to join the effort. Less-noticed last week was news that the University of Texas pledged \$400 million for a 'cap' on the project, potentially adding 17 acres to their campus. [Story](#).

In **Houston**, a mayoral race-oriented survey conducted by Rice University found that nearly three-quarters of local residents want the next mayor to focus on infrastructure, improving roads and drainage. Interestingly, 80% of residents most concerned about climate change also supported improved infrastructure. [Story](#).

Revived interest in a high-speed rail project from **Los Angeles-to-Las Vegas** has led to a high-stakes lobbying fight in **Washington** between French-owned Alstom and the German giant Siemens, both manufacturers of equipment capable of moving passenger trains in excess of 186 miles-per-hour. The Dallas-to-Houston Japanese high-speed project is cited as significantly 'behind other projects in the development process.' [Story](#).

In the midst of a multi-state barnstorming caravan to highlight the promise of electric vehicles, even the US Secretary of Energy - Jennifer Granholm - learned that finding a place to charge your car in **Grovetown**, GA can be a problem. Staffers tried to reserve her a spot; angry locals called the police. Point made. [Story](#).

"There is a rapidly narrowing window" for the world to avoid an ever-worsening set of climate disasters that are likely as the atmosphere gets hotter, the United Nations warned last week in its grimmest assessment yet of the world's governments race to slow the burning of fossil fuels to limit climate change. [Story](#). [The Report](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

Amidst an ongoing drought, **Central Texas** water resources are running low and leaving local officials scrambling. In the latest twist, **Kyle**, which by the end of August had used up 89% of its

yearly water allocation from one source (the Edwards Aquifer Authority), has appealed to **San Marcos** for additional supplies. [Story](#).

The latest version Opportunity Austin's five-year strategy plan for Austin adds a new focus on the life sciences business sector to other anticipated growth in the semiconductor, automotive manufacturing, financial services, and national defense industries, the **Austin Monitor** reports. Opportunity Austin has helped to roughly double the number of jobs in the city since 2004, the **Monitor** notes. [Story](#).

San Antonio has scored a huge distribution center project as part of a growing industrial hub near the Toyota manufacturing facility on the city's South Side. The 188-acre Frontera Logistics Supersite will feature, among other things, parking for over 3,300 cars. **Express-News** details can be found [here](#).

That \$267 million film and television studio project set to break ground in **San Marcos** later this year will focus on virtual production, an emerging technology that allows films to be made in a digital environment using computer-generated imagery and augmented reality, the developers say. [Story](#).

Researchers have suggested converting about 50 office buildings in **Dallas-Fort Worth** to residential properties to combat the twin challenges of housing affordability and continuing office-space vacancies. The recommendation came from the university-backed National Bureau of Economic Research. [Story](#).

Chemistry World reports that a recent discovery along the Oregon-Nevada border of massive deposits of lithium, which is vital to the batteries powering electric vehicles, may change the global dynamics of lithium in terms of price, security of supply, and geopolitics. A US company could begin mining operations by 2026. [Story](#).

Thought of the Week

"The best way out is always through."

- Robert Frost

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