



Monday Morning Report

September 21, 2026

INTERNAL

About 250 regional civic leaders and elected officials gathered in **San Marcos** last Friday (9/18) at Texas State University for the formal launch of the **Central Texas Alliance**, a successor organization to the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council. Congratulations to CEO A.J. Rodriguez, co-founder Henry Cisneros, and founding chairs Gary Farmer (**Austin**) and Jenna Saucedo-Herrera (**San Antonio**) on an extremely well-organized and information-packed event. [Steering Committee](#). [13-County Briefing Document](#). [Agenda](#).

INFRASTRUCTURE

Waymo's signature white robotaxis returned to **San Antonio** streets last week following a five-month absence while the company retooled controls, operations, software and safety features for their vehicles. Waymo services had been suspended after some of their cars drove into flooded roadways last April, prompting concerns. [Story](#). [More](#).

Brightline's passenger rail projects in Florida (**Orlando-Miami**) and California/Nevada (**Las Vegas**) have missed making required equity and bond payments, **The Bond Trader** reports, raising the prospect of bankruptcy for the company's high speed rail efforts. Best hope for the company now appears to be a \$6 billion federal loan. [Story](#).

New York City's first light rail line between Brooklyn and Queens is expected to take five years and \$5.5 billion to build, officials said last week and will interconnect with 17 subway lines and Long Island Rail. The project is still in the design and engineering phase but should be ready for construction by 2027. [Details](#).

The **Wall Street Journal** reports that petroleum refinery capacity is now the major chokepoint for world energy supplies, and that wars in Iran and Russia create fuel shortages that may lead to US legislation banning the export of petroleum products. That could cause issues for **Houston, Corpus Christi** and other Texas ports. [Story](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

Realtor.com rated the top 100 US metro areas based on whether homes are affordable for locals and whether there is enough new construction scheduled to meet future demand. In

what may come as a surprise to some, **Austin** ranked 6th and **Houston** 4th, **Fast Company** reports. **San Antonio** ranked 34th. [Story. Report.](#)

Short-term rental company Airbnb - trying to deflect growing local ordinances limiting their business - has created a multi-million investment fund for multifamily housing developments and to support local pro-housing policies. The company's first \$250 million housing accelerator program will start in **Austin**, **SmartCities** says. [Story.](#)

San Antonio's city council approved (7-4 vote) a 3.9% property tax increase last week, the first such increase in 30 years, and without the support of mayor Gina Ortiz Jones, according to the **San Antonio Report**. The action marks the end of a long, fractious process to face down a \$150 million, 2026-7 budget shortfall. [Story.](#)

US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth visited **Austin** last week as part of his 'Arsenal of America' to highlight the military's defense industrial base and domestic manufacturing programs. In particular, he stopped by an event at Saronic Technologies, a start-up venture building autonomous vessels for military and industrial use. [Story.](#)

It didn't appear to get a lot of US media coverage, but **El Pais** reports that Mexico authorized the entry of 139 US military troops last week to assist in training operations related to curbing drug cartel activities. The troops will be stationed in **Chihuahua**, just months after controversy erupted over CIA agents acting in the area. [Story.](#)

In the worst news for local diners since President Obama cut the line at Franklin's Barbecue, the **New York Times** has named **Austin** taqueria Paprika as one of its Top 50 restaurants in the US. The wait time for your order just increased and the lines got longer. (*Thanks, Obama!*). [Story.](#)

Thought of the Week

“When we seek to discover the best in others, we somehow bring out the best in ourselves.” – William Arthur Ward

This newsletter is available to our members. If you wish to unsubscribe, please send an email request with subject UNSUBSCRIBE to council@thecorridor.org.