



## Monday Morning Report

October 9, 2023

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### INTERNAL

There being no pressing issues to discuss or act upon at this time, the next meeting of the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council Executive Committee will be held on Wednesday, November 15, at 2:00 pm by Zoom. To add an item to the agenda or to raise any issues, email [council@thecorridor.org](mailto:council@thecorridor.org).

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### INFRASTRUCTURE

It won't come online until 2027, but the heavily used intersection of Interstate 10 and Loop 1604 in **San Antonio** is getting a major upgrade. Part of a TxDOT project to widen Loop 1604, the intersection - currently used by about 250,000 motorists per day - will be converted from four to ten lanes, adding high occupancy vehicle lanes and a five-level interchange taller than a ten-story office building. [Details](#).

**Austin** approved a five-year, \$3.2 million contract last week for an artificial intelligence-driven tool to assist Austin Energy crews and emergency first-responders with real-time information in detecting and reacting to local wildfire threats. The city has been named as the 5th most at-risk municipality in the US for wildfire dangers and the move is just one part of a larger effort to deal with heightened, drought-related wildfire risks. [Story](#). [More](#).

The **Texas Tribune** looks at the fleet of 125 Cruise autonomous vehicles (AVs) operating in **Austin** to discuss statewide safety regulation of AVs (or lack thereof) and examines 33 AV-related complaints the city's Transportation and Public Works Department has received this year between September and July. [Story](#).

Opponents of improvements to Interstate 45 North in **Houston** take their battle to the ballot box next month with Proposition B - a measure requiring that city and county governments withdraw from the regional council of governments and the metropolitan planning organization unless their representational voting procedures are reformed. The **Houston Chronicle** is in favor, [here](#); a former **Harris County** judge opposes, [here](#).

The Texas Transportation Commission has approved \$241 million for 31 projects at ports in **Galveston, Victoria, and Harlingen**, with an eye toward improving the safety and reliability of the state's supply chains. In **Victoria**, \$20.3 million will go toward building 42,000 feet of railroad tracks supporting the Texas Logistics Center. [Story](#).

**YouTube** has posted a 20-minute video of the *Top 12 Personal Vertical Takeoff and Landing Vehicles*, featuring everything from multi-copters to hover-bikes - all single-seater aircraft divided into four categories - including a few that can take off and land on water. See them [here](#).

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## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

**San Marcos** will receive \$300,000 and **Pflugerville** \$175,000 from a \$1 billion federal program aimed at increasing urban tree canopies to fight climate change. **Pflugerville** will replace trees lost to weather events and diminish the local 'heat island effect;' **San Marcos** will develop a Forestry Strategic Management Plan. [Story](#).

**San Antonio** International Airport will begin new non-stop flights to **Queretaro**, Mexico starting December 1, offered by low-cost carrier Viva Aerobus - bringing to 43 the number of local direct flights offered, including one to **Frankfurt**, Germany that starts next year. [Details](#).

The Texas Economic Development Corporation has a new president and CEO beginning next month, **Texas Government Insider** reports: Aaron Demerson, formerly a commissioner on the Texas Workforce Commission, brings almost 25 years of experience in public sector economic development efforts. [Details](#). (right hand column)

US Treasury securities have now hit a 16-year high, up 50 basis points on ten-year notes to 4.8% in the last month, according to a release from the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget ([here](#)). Meanwhile, the **Wall Street Journal** reports that traders are growing uncertain about the appetite for more US federal bonds. [Story](#).

## Thought of the Week

"The willingness to change one's mind in light of new evidence is a sign of rationality, not weakness."

- Stuart Sutherland

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