



Monday Morning Report

October 26, 2026

INTERNAL

On November 16, our friends at the **Austin** Area Research Organization will be hosting their annual invitation-only '*Catalyst Summit on Connection*' in **San Marcos** with about 200 regional leaders for conversations about housing, transportation, water, healthcare, aviation, and economic development. To learn more, visit [AARO](#).

INFRASTRUCTURE

The **Wall Street Journal** produced a fascinating multi-media piece over the weekend about the highly controversial \$126 billion California high speed rail project between **Las Angeles** and **San Francisco**, outlining the enormous challenges facing the effort. In essence, the state and federal government provided funding to the agency charged with building the rail line but granted none of the legal authorities necessary to complete it. [Story](#).

Increasing transportation costs account for more than 35% of inflation in the US as of last month, according to the Bureau of Transportation Statistics in **Washington**. Annual year-over-year average transportation costs in US cities were up nearly 8%, the point at which consumers begin to make lifestyle changes, **SmartCities** reports. [Story](#).

This month marks two years since TxDOT began their major renovation of Interstate 35 via the \$4.5 billion, eight-mile Capital Express Central Project in **Austin**, and the **San Antonio Express-News** surveys what's been done so far and what drivers can expect as construction continues to completion (expected in 2033). [Story](#). [Update](#).

The **Express-News** is also reminding motorists traveling IH-35 from **Georgetown** to **San Antonio** of what to do if you experience a breakdown. There are a lot of options including the TxDOT-managed HERO roadside assistance program (Highway Emergency Response Operator), which you can reach at (512) 974-4376. [Details](#).

A new [report](#) shows that **Austin** efforts to reduce traffic speeds, crashes, and fatalities is working: fatal accidents are down from 79 to 60 year-over-year, crashes are down from 9,123 to 8,085, and vehicles traveling at least 10-mph over the speed limit fell 78% at locations with added traffic calming features. [Story](#). [Report](#).

State legislators want an investigation into Aqua Texas, which provides water directly or through related entities to multiple cities and counties in the **Austin-San Antonio Corridor**, after complaints to the Public Utilities Commission of price increases of up to a reported 400% in sometimes monopolistic water supply contracts. [Story](#). [Details](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

Chinese auto manufacturer BYD (Build Your Dreams) is suing **Austin**-based truck-maker Einride for unpaid invoices of about \$61.7 million, the **American-Statesman** reports, calling into question the company's future. [Story](#). [More](#).

A reader sent the **Monday Morning Report** this item from the **Visual Capitalist**, which indicates that just three countries account for over half of all greenhouse gas emissions (with China responsible for nearly a third of the global total), but asked '*Wouldn't it be more useful to display these numbers with an indication of what each country involved contributed to the worldwide gross product?*' Good idea, let us know if you've seen that. [Story](#).

The Hackening: Increasingly capable artificial intelligence systems are making it possible to discover and exploit software vulnerabilities at speeds and scales that were previously unimaginable, including the PHP programming language used in 70% of all websites globally, [paulkedrosky.com](#) reports. Read about how serious this is [here](#).

If you've got the time for it, the **Texas Observer** is out with a resurrected art photography/oral history project on **Caldwell County** by photographer Dee Azadian from fifty years ago; it's an elegiac portrait of a rural farm community long before the population growth that transformed Central Texas into a global tech center. [Story](#).

Thought of the Week

"Weather is a great metaphor for life—sometimes it's good, sometimes it's bad, and there's not much you can do but carry an umbrella or choose to dance in the rain!" – Terri Guillemets

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