



## Monday Morning Report

November 27, 2023

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### INTERNAL

The next meeting of the Corridor Council Executive Committee is scheduled for December 20 at 2:00 pm, via Zoom. To add an item to the agenda, contact [council@thecorridor.org](mailto:council@thecorridor.org).

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### INFRASTRUCTURE

The **Dallas**-based Texas Rail Advocates (TRA) newsletter published a blistering commentary last week on the failure of Texas Transportation Commissioners to include rail and mass transit in TxDOT's long term planning. Based upon [Streetsblog.org](https://streetsblog.org) reporting, TRA questions Commissioners' financial ties to the energy & auto industries and their biases toward highways, formally asking for answers to seven key questions. [Opinion](#).

[More Than Just A Bus Line: San Antonio Report](#) examines to potential economic development prospects of VIA Metropolitan Transit's proposed Advanced Rapid Transit lines and other transit-oriented projects planned by the agency. VIA's 12-mile north/south route will connect the airport to the Spanish Missions, opening in 2027. [Story](#).

TxDOT has announced that it will be creating a pilot 'smart freight' corridor for autonomous and other advanced-technology trucking along a 21-mile segment of State Highway 130 between Texas 71 and Texas 45 North, including areas between **Georgetown** and **Del Valle**. Initially, the project will involve a mix of hardware and software to share incident-management data with the agency and vehicles in real time. [Details](#).

The **Express-News** says **Austin** has begun tracking traffic incidents involving self-driving vehicles, although the biggest offender - Cruise autonomous cars - has been temporarily off the roads for now. Incidents thus far (more than 40) are reported to the city's 3-1-1 telephone network by motorists, firefighters, and police. [Story](#).

A new federal rule issued last week in **Washington** requires states to set goals for reducing carbon emissions from cars and trucks on their roads, an effort to link infrastructure spending to environmental goals. [Story](#). TxDOT plans to use \$641 million in carbon emissions reduction funding to add highway lanes, arguing that reduced congestion equals reduced emissions - though some science suggests otherwise. [Story](#). [Study](#). [Study #2](#).

As groundwater supplies dwindle across the West, Mid-West, and Southwest, the **New York Times** reports that even conservative farmers and ranchers in states like Kansas, Montana, and Nevada are beginning to wonder if it's time for the federal government - with a longstanding aversion to intervening in state water disputes - should step in to regulate groundwater resources across the United States. [Story](#). [More](#).

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## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

This week marks the start of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 28) in **Dubai** and, in the run-up to the global gathering, a raft of new reports are being issued with hopes of influencing the debate over climate reparations to affected countries. [Story](#). Meanwhile, Nobel prize-winning scientist John Clauser joined a press conference in **Washington** to declare 'there is no crisis.' [Details](#).

The **Austin** Area Research Organization (AARO) is hosting a one-day summit, December 4<sup>th</sup>, to discuss 'regional challenges and trends at the cross-section of multiple, inter-related policy issues.' Civic leaders, elected officials, and business representatives from a six-county Central Texas region (**Travis, Williamson, Hays, Bastrop, Caldwell and Burnet Counties**) are expected. [Details](#).

After at least a decade of stories about Californians fleeing to Texas because of taxes, extreme weather, housing affordability and partisan politics, **Business Insider** now says people are fleeing from Texas over the same concerns. [Story](#). The **San Antonio Express-News** has a locally-slanted re-write of the piece [here](#).

A University of Texas at **Austin** professor, expert in satellite communications, has been called in to solve 'unthinkable' GPS spoofing attacks on commercial airplanes in the Middle East that started in late September. The attacks can cause navigational systems to fail, potentially with disastrous consequences. Read more [here](#).

## Thought of the Week

"It is better to entertain an idea than to take it home to live with you for the rest of your life."

- Randall Jarrell

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