



Monday Morning Report

December 5, 2022

INTERNAL

The next meeting of the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council Executive Committee is tentatively scheduled for December 21 at 2 PM by videoconference.

COVID-19 UPDATE: Global cases reached 645,235,755 yesterday, with 6,640,886 deaths. US cases were at 98,972,375 with 1,081,431 deaths (12/4/22) ([Johns Hopkins](#)). Friday, Texas reported 6,424,693 cases with 89,834 deaths, including in **Bexar County**: 551,774 cases with 6,374 deaths; **Guadalupe County**: 29,706 cases, still with 415 deaths; **Comal County**: 25,744 cases, with 573 deaths; **Hays County**: 63,493 cases, with 459 deaths; **Travis County**: 249,114 cases, still with 1,808 deaths; and **Williamson County**: 130,667 cases, still with 918 deaths (11/30/22). ([TDHHS](#)). *Regional hospitalization-rate data found [here](#).*

INFRASTRUCTURE

Traffic fatalities worldwide fell during the pandemic: fewer people drove fewer miles in most countries and lower traffic deaths resulted. But in the US, the opposite happened: travel declined, but traffic deaths still went up. The **New York Times** says one reason may be that as other countries moved to smaller, lighter cars over the last two decades, the US average automobile grew larger and more dangerous. [Story](#).

Another 'IH-35 Is Horrible' Story: The road everyone loves to hate is even worse for truckers than cars, the Texas A&M Transportation Institute finds, with downtown **Austin** being the most expensive, most time-consuming, and most congested segment of highway for 18-wheelers anywhere in Texas. Nearly 178,000 trucks daily suffered 621,000 hours of delay in 2021, making IH-35 the worst for truckers for the third consecutive year. [Story](#).

It's not just **Austin**: According to the **Express-News**, traffic in **San Antonio** is a "hellscape," with 10 of the top 100 most-congested roads in the state - also based upon the same annual Texas A&M Transportation Institute study quoted above - with Culebra Road, Loop 1604, IH-35, and Loop 410 all coming up for special recognition. [Story](#).

We're not vouching for the methodology but Twitter-based research by an outfit called **GetCircuit** found that the most road rage incidents per 1000 drivers were in **Eugene**, Oregon followed by **Atlanta**. The study also noted a dangerous connection between states with lenient gun laws and angry drivers, so watch out in **Dallas** - which ranked in the top 20 of road-rage incident prone cities. [Report](#).

Hydrogen-powered trains, which debuted earlier this year in **Hamburg**, Germany, are set to revolutionize train travel in carbon-conscious Europe by 2035, reports **Conde-Nast**. An Alstom model in current use with fuel-cell technology, emitting only steam and water, can run for an entire day on a single tank of hydrogen saves 422,000 gallons of diesel fuel annually and prevents over 4000 tons of CO2 carbon emissions each year. [Link](#).

Officials fear a 'doomsday scenario' for the drought-stricken nearly 1500-mile long western Colorado River, which serves roughly 1 in 10 Americans, as water levels drop to the lowest levels on record, according to the **Washington Post**. As soon as this July levels could be so low the many lakes along the river may not be able to drain to the next reservoir - 'minimum power pool' - enroute to a catastrophic 'dead pool' event. **Story**.

Meanwhile, in the category of good climate news, the **Washington Post** also examined 1200 possible scenarios for the planet's future and determined 16 paths that have the potential to avoid disastrous global warming and keep the world's temperature increases below 1.5 degrees by 2050. (*Whew!*) **Story**.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

Icon, an **Austin**-based company that uses giant 3-D printers to build houses and other projects, has been awarded a \$57.2 million contract by NASA to develop construction systems to build structures on the moon (landing pads, housing, etc.) using compressed moon dust. It's being called 'the hardest construction project in the history of humanity.' **Story**.

Former mayor (and **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council founder) Henry Cisneros and the Brooks Development Authority could be bringing one of the largest arboretums in Texas to **San Antonio's** south side, using about 170-acres of what was once a golf course for the enterprise. **Story**.

Austin-based Tesla produced its first shipment of all-electric semi-trucks last week from a Nevada plant, delivered to a PepsiCo factory in **Modesto**, CA - just days after a similar announcement from Renault about their electric semi-truck deliveries for Coca Cola. Same great taste, just three years late. **Story**.
More. Still More.

Thought of the Week

"A problem is a chance for you to do your best."

- Duke Ellington

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