



Monday Morning Report

December 16, 2024

INTERNAL

Important Deadline: Local agencies and the public have until December 30 to propose potential rail-related projects for inclusion in TxDOT's 2024 update of the Texas Rail Plan. Instructions for proposing projects and consultant contacts - as well as freight and passenger projects currently included - can be found [here](#). An interactive map of currently listed potential projects in the Plan can be found [here](#).

Next week, the **Monday Morning Report** will begin our annual holiday publication hiatus until after the first of the New Year. Happy Holidays to all, and we'll see you again early next year. For holiday office information, email council@corridor.org.

The December meeting of the **Austin-San Antonio** Corridor Council Executive Committee has been postponed to Wednesday, January 15 at 2 PM by Zoom.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Despite growing statewide momentum for passenger rail efforts - including **Dallas-to-Houston** high speed rail - and despite a projected \$20-billion budget surplus, the **Texas Tribune** predicts tough headwinds for rail projects when the State Legislature convenes in **Austin** next month. Some rail advocates disagree: "This might be a turning point where the Legislature is starting to wake up and smell the vehicle fumes," said one. [Story](#).

State Highway 130 in **Williamson County** will be expanded from two to three lanes in each direction for about 15-miles between **Round Rock** and **Georgetown**, following a \$250-million commitment from the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization last week. Construction will begin in 2027. [Story](#).

And in other State Highway 130 news (above), a private group called the Autonomy Institute is proposing that autonomous drones will be used to provide around-the-clock security, monitor traffic, and aid emergency operations along the roadway from **Georgetown** to **Seguin**. TxDOT says it has no such plans, as of now. [Story](#).

More opposition has surfaced against the expansion of MoPac (Loop 1) for eight miles south of downtown **Austin**, at least as currently proposed by the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority. The Save Our Springs Alliance says more lanes equals more traffic and that there are less intrusive ways to improve traffic flow. [Story](#). And parents of Austin High School students have expressed concerns about increased traffic in the area. [More](#).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (and Other News)

San Antonio mayor Ron Nirenberg hit back hard at a *Texas Monthly* piece critical of the city's 'generational poverty.' Acknowledging that the article raised important issues, he lists successive mayors' and voter-approved initiatives on pre-K education, housing affordability, workforce development, and more. *Opinion. Original piece.*

The 'cap and stitch' effort for Interstate 35 in downtown **Austin** continues to move forward with both the city council and the University of Texas board of regents shifting more than \$100 million each toward the project last week. UT sees an opportunity to add badly needed land for medical school facilities near campus. *Story.*

Hays County approved a 305-acre master development plan for 800 new homes earlier this month. The Mason project, located off Centerpoint Road near **San Marcos**, will build out over the next ten years in phases. *Details.*

General Motors is getting out of the robotaxi business, the *New York Times* reports. After spending \$10 billion on its self-driving subsidiary Cruise, Mary T. Barra, chief executive for the company, suggested the potential payoff was too far in the future to justify the mounting expense of developing robotaxi technology. *Story.*

Segment One of the IH-10/Loop 1604 intersection opened December 3. A picture is worth 1.4 billion words (\$):



Thought of the Week

"It is Christmas in the heart that puts Christmas in the air."

– W.T. Ellis

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