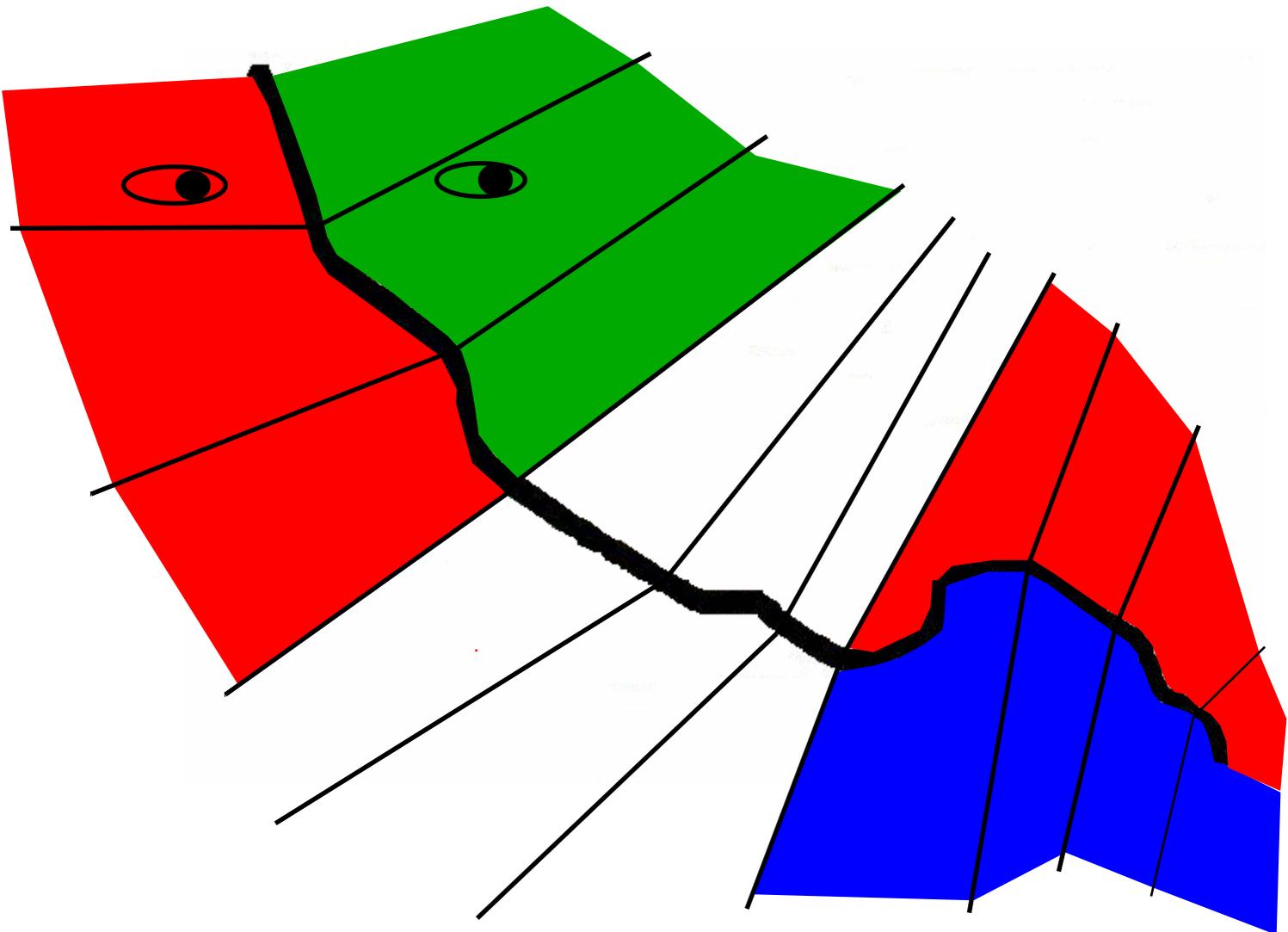


Agula Concretus



One reason why the border fence is being built along the US border urban areas is that those cities along the border did not recognize the borderline as a potential economic destination. This area is like the Eastern or Western coastline, or at least those on the border could have considered this notion. Moreover, what do people along the coastline so routinely do? Well think of the water and the land where these two meet.

One of the pedestrian / auto bridges between El Paso and Juarez specifically located in central downtown El Paso and Juarez clearly demonstrates the point where the borderline is not a destination. No one ever crosses those bridges to use or enjoy commercial or recreational activities along the borderline or along side the river. Instead, one uses those pedestrian bridges on their way to some location deeper into the cities.

Thus, the opportunity to cross the bridge and use some function directly on the borderline itself has been completely missed. The El Paso / Juarez border could have offered lateral as well as crossover tourism and commerce. The lateral tourism and commerce would have been confined to a small band of land less than ½ mile from the borderline but along at least 20 miles of share borderline between El Paso and Juarez. From either side of the borderline, either walking or public transportation would be the preferred choice of mobility versus the personal automobile that is typical of crossover traffic, thus reducing automobile traffic, pollution, and noise.

Having more contact points or points of entry between both sides of the border would create more access to the other side for tourist or commercial availability. If five commercial nodes were built on the El Paso side and 5 on the Juarez side, there would be ten potential sites for tourism and commercial activity to be explored right on the borderline itself.

Las Vegas and San Antonio provide each an example of an economic corridor that the border can learn from; when there is a corridor of activity, more economic activity will develop along it, hence the Las Vegas Strip and San Antonio River Walk.

The borderline could have been more than just two sides of a river in which one side was structured to prevent movement of people across it. That could have been accomplished in various ways and none of which exist today that creates an economic benefit, unless you consider the injection of income from the presence of the Border Patrol as the economic benefit.

To view the economic possibilities requires looking at the borderline in a way not viewed before. It is necessary to view it differently because most people may not visualize the friendly giant that has lain among all these independent components viewed separately. However, view as one, you will see that nature has provide to the El Paso and Juarez area a perfectly normal system of what the future infrastructure of this largest twin border city will look like and for the twin cities that follow in the footsteps of that community.



Nature has given an organizational map, a system everyone has themselves and can relate to, a main conduit with multi-portal entry and exit points, and an efficient model in information delivery and response. What nature has given humans is a spine and in the same way that you will find that, El Paso and Juarez have grown a spine naturally but it is not complete. What God has given us as humans; human nature had started creating naturally in the last 100 years along the El Paso and Juarez border.

A healthy spine for a human body is very important. The spine is curvy and helps us stand up straight. It has a skeleton bone structure that protects the spinal cord. The spine has branches of nerves coming out of the spinal cord between the vertebrae that makes up the spine and go into the left or right side of the body. As you will see, El Paso and Juarez have a similarly constructed spine.

Most cities do not sit across a twin city like El Paso and Juarez. Most, like Dallas, are a web of freeways whose center would be their downtown central business district and their high occupancy freeways go in all directions from this central core. But since El Paso and Juarez are twin cities, something different has happened that is significantly beneficial. As a city, El Paso and Juarez are two bodies joined by a river or better, they together are a body in which they represent two sides.

Like the spine of a human body, the El Paso / Juarez spine has a left side and a right side or an El Paso side and a Juarez side. In addition, this spine curves along the border.

Like a skeleton structure of a spine, from the air you can see both city's freeways and the river they share. Mass earth and concrete built this city skeleton spine. Moreover, like vertebrates that make up the skeleton spine, the El Paso / Juarez spine has sections as well.

We might make parallels of the human spinal cord, which is like a frenzy of electrical activity about the body, to the El Paso / Juarez spinal cord, which would be a frenzy of the human activity that moves along the freeways on both sides of the border. And just like the human spinal cord with its many branching lateral connections, the El Paso / Juarez spinal cord also would have branching lateral connection streaming on either side of the entry / exit points along the El Paso / Juarez borderline.

Ultimately, these branching connections in the El Paso / Juarez spine terminate at one of the social, civil, sport, entertainment, central business districts, medical facilities, high-density commercial locations, airports, universities, and other important assets of either city.

Open a map and literally strike a perpendicular line from these city assets to the border that lie between Asarco in the North West and Ysleta to the South East. Attempt to do this for both cities and what emerges is a spine with important branching locations that should be accessible from both sides.

A human spine has small but numerous sections and in between each section are the paths of many nerves on their way to other parts of the body. We may be able to learn from this and find that the El Paso / Juarez spine is in need of smaller but more numerous entry / exit points.



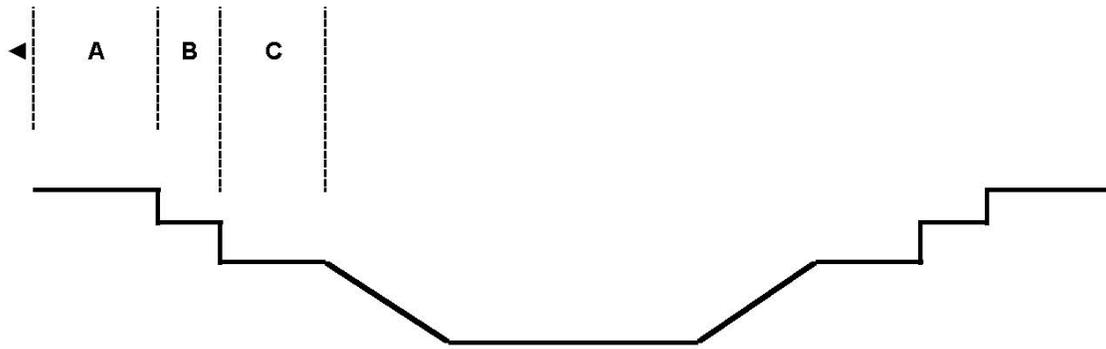
To increase economic activity, more access points along these sections on the border are required where one can cross from one side to the other side using either the existing crossings or new pedestrian-only crossings. This process would have been made a lot easier if there were already economic nodes along the borderline itself. Where there would be economic nodes, this would bring people permanently to the border. Where there is a permanent presence on the borderline, security could be achieved and thus eliminating the need for a border fence, entirely.

The International Border and Security Infrastructure Code Book does include a concept of a River Uplift that provides two basic functions. Flood control as a levee and an upper deck to traverse from one economic node to the next node. In its simplistic form, the current concrete lined river model looks like the picture below; a base with slanting slopes and an earthen levee. When there is no rain, it has no other function. Not even a strategic national security function.



An option would be to build a levee that has both a strategic national security function and a flood control function.

During flooding, the primary use of the structure would be to contain floodwaters. During those long periods through out the year when there are no floodwaters, auxiliary parts of the structure would be used commercially-publicly and designed in a way that serves the interest of national security.



A modified concrete lined riverbed and levee can have two steps and a variable deck. The left arrow represents the deck area (A) being variable and the first step area is identified by (B) and second step area by (C). The two steps can be used for low powered, light, small, personal transportation vehicles and be marketed as a transportation system for high tech very lightweight vehicles where the maximum weight would be 300 lbs or less. It may even be a toll road for these vehicles to increase funding for this type of transportation alternative vehicle option.

The deck can vary from 10 feet to 50 feet, and at some locations, the deck will join with spans of 2500 feet that will cross the area over existing freeways to connect to economic nodes established along the border. All nodes, where a freeway exist today, will be within existing neighborhoods and future nodes where no freeway exist will have the option of being on the borderline itself requiring roads to be below. There are many civil engineering options and left to them for actual designing so it is merely a strategic suggestion to putting an economic node right on the borderline itself.

Economic nodes will be high-density population and commercial centers and people will connect, through the use of spans, to the deck. There will be El Paso economic nodes, spans, and decks as well as Juarez economic nodes, spans, and decks. People will then enter the auxiliary step structures as an alternative transportation system and connect to the next node along the spine of the El Paso / Juarez borderline. Or they can enter the deck to cross over to the other side of the border through existing ports of entry or new pedestrian only ports of entry. Alternatively, people can walk or ride bicycles slowly along the deck as if it were an endless shoreline, which people are already familiar with along the coastal areas.

Also available will be high-speed public transportation that will use the existing freeways on both sides of the border, accessed from the deck or the commercial nodes.



Why would El Paso or Juarez want this?

Well first, take a tour of the dead zone and begin your education of what the border really looks like. It was helpful to use the markers provided so if you ever travel down there, you can use them too.

As you sit there and admire, ask any of the following questions.

Has the best public policy regarding the borderline been explored?

Why is there no economic activity along this area?

Does the rest of the country really understand what is happening here?

Does this protection or current policy cost more money than its alternative?

These may be a few of the questions asked while standing there. What is notable is that most people along the border do not want a border fence. Why do most people along the border not want a border fence? That is an answer still vaguely understood. People on the border know something inherently is wrong with the idea but some have not connected it to the notion that commercial death will be created along the borderline communities and subdivisions that are nearby the borderline. Or the social tension it creates from having a fortress wall and their policing agents nearby.

Both sides of the border need to adopt a comprehensive plan to rebuild this area. The city of Juarez should be encouraged to pursue the same goal of redevelopment along the borderline proximity as well. Both cities should realize as twin cities that it is in their interest that both have a joint commitment and joint success in such a project to redevelop the borderline area.

The twin plants through NAFTA bring to El Paso and Juarez trade, manufacturing jobs, and professional managers who work in Juarez and live in El Paso. What the El Paso / Juarez spine would offer are the new commercial and residential structures, retail, and the simpler access to either side. These two cities can display on the deck and economic nodes, the history, culture, food, people, art, friendship, memorials, and any other human existence that the two countries have to offer.

That is something that NAFTA has not brought to either El Paso or Juarez. Yet the spine can bring to both that immediate connection not found now and the intimate connection that two sides along a river should have that is lacking between both cities. Moreover, it brings a new landscape of commercial and retail opportunities unknown to both

countries, as this has never been seen before. Where El Paso and Juarez have seen pedestrian traffic concentrated in their downtown proximity, the spine can offer this new “strip” along side the river; for twenty miles and always within 5-10 minutes from the deck and country across to the other side.

Also, new to marketers, will be the minute shoppers where marketing campaigns through TV, radio, or newsprint will drive hordes of people to cross the bridge and make special purchase that take less than 1 hour to go to and from their destination along the El Paso / Juarez spine. Minute shopping and traveling! The ability to tour the El Paso / Juarez Spine as a destination and pop in and out of either country and get back to the other-side in minutes. For the more determined and well traveled, they connect to what will be another destination within the city using the El Paso / Juarez Spine regardless of how far up or down the spine they begin this journey.

What other option are there for the utilization of the borderline, the area between absolute zero on the US border and up to 100-2500 feet into the city? So far, a border fence and the exiting levee protection. Since the fence has been the option taken now, it will become an economic dark spot. Over the years, when the rest of the nation has forgotten about the construction of the fence, longer shadows will be cast down into neighboring subdivisions that have become unstable. This will be due to the lack of economic opportunity and fear from new elements that are attracted to the darkness along the borderline and create fear for families that live nearby these elements.

Even if it will take 25 years or 50 years, do elected officials in El Paso and Juarez want to constantly inject development band aide programs to communities along the borderline or create a self-sustaining vibrant commercial strip that brings in 5 million tourists a year?

There is this question, was the border fence the best public policy sought for these cities along the border or did federal, state, and city officials lack the vision to bring something greater to the border. And to make a claim that El Paso / Juarez is the largest twin cities in the world but have no vision for others to follow is like saying that El Paso / Juarez is the largest twin cities in the world that no other twin cities should ever use as an example. When they have the spine that nature gave them, did they use what God gave them?