

A Declaration of Interdependence for San Diego Tijuana

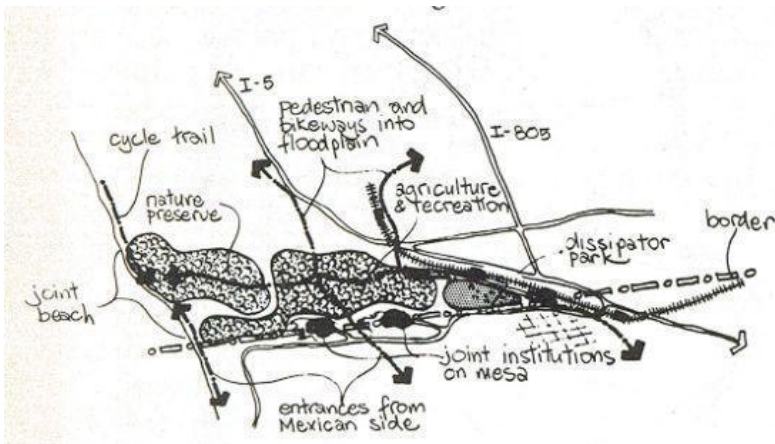
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Interdependence (n.): the state of being dependent upon one another

Cross-cultural exchanges have occurred for generations across the San Diego Tijuana region. In many ways it is this constant exchange between people from diverse backgrounds that forms our greatest strengths—driving our innovation, enriching our identity and creating an exceptional sense of place for all.



Inspired by the seminal vision of *Temporary Paradise? A Look at the Special Landscape of the San Diego/Tijuana Region*, by Donald Appleyard and Kevin Lynch in 1974, we join together for this celebration of our region as the first multi-national World Design Capital. This work continues as a timeless inspiration through its images,

imagination and poetic narrative, and we endeavor to reflect upon their voice and dreams with a broad multinational balance.

While *Temporary Paradise?* provides a rich account of the natural and man-made advantages of our region, we are keenly focused on its multinational dream to transform the San Diego/Tijuana border into a true “zone of confluence,” a “vital meeting point of two living cultures” (p. 41) that shares its water, energy, landscape, and economy—a vision whose voice seems to have left us long ago, but whose deeply seated truth never has—and is characterized in this passage from “*Temporary Paradise?*” that can serve as a preamble toward the reconstitution of our identity as one people, one San Diego/Tijuana:

“Dreams have some use.

They give us hope, but they also move us to act.

Can one dream about a region as large as San Diego/ Tijuana?

We think so.”

As our region has the busiest border crossing in the world with over 100 million individual crossings a year, an underlying truth is that, from both sides of the border, we see opportunities and possibilities on each other's side.

As one looks north, one can see opportunities for advancement, prosperity, and hope. But they might also see misunderstanding, hostility, and discrimination. We are committed to creating a region where our people can realize their greatest dreams, with dignity, fulfillment, and peace.

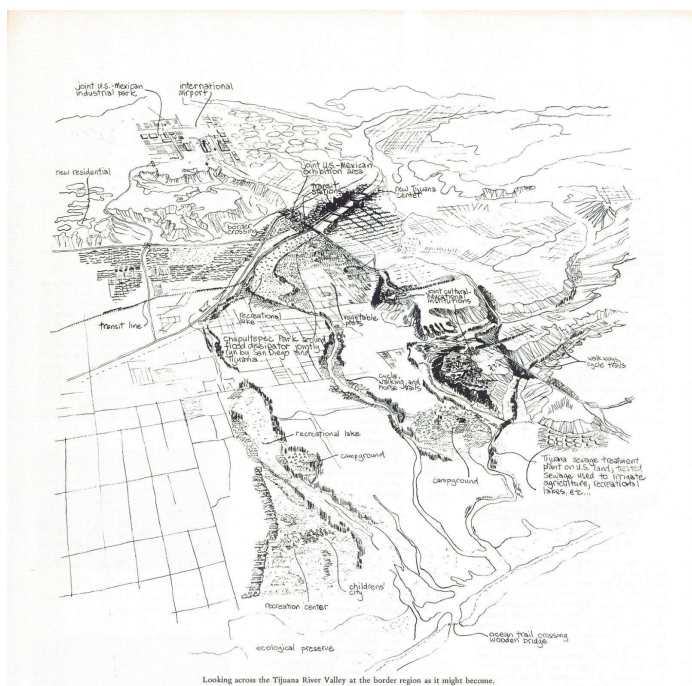
As one looks south across the border, they may see opportunities for new experiences, enrichment, and relaxation. But they may also see competition, air & water pollution, and fear of the "other". We are committed to removing the veil of insecurity and impacts by shining a light on our common goals for our region for shared safety, vitality, and prosperity.

In sum, we believe we should think about unmasking the hidden, underlying truths of our borderlife that are often closeted, unacknowledged and undervalued.

And while recently inflamed nationalist discourses try to pry us from our shared regional identity, we become acutely aware of how the vision of our cross-cultural community provides a beam of light to illuminate and eliminate the dark shadows of fear cast over our regional partners, our neighbors—our friends. Hence we re-embrace "Temporary Paradise?" and its shining beacon toward the true manifestation of our cross-border collaboration and binational synergy.

Mark Twain once said:

"Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness, and many of our people need it sorely on these accounts. Broad, wholesome, charitable views of men and things cannot be acquired by vegetating in one little corner of the earth all one's lifetime."



Fortunately, our little corners of the US and Mexico afford us opportunities for ready exchanges that promise to broaden our horizons and community conversations both resilient and fearless in the face of politicians' attempts to prey upon people's fear of the unknown—the other. In San Diego/Tijuana, we can remain un-swayed by these fears as our cross-cultural collaborations open our hearts and minds to the possibilities of all our people, arming us with a steady resolve toward hope founded in fairness, compassion, and understanding. The

promise of our San Diego/Tijuana confluence—a vision empowering our people—should not be denied by the outside influence of fear-mongers.

Some may say that the border is deeply part of our regional identity and some say that building an expensive wall will make us more secure. But what about the true force of San Diego/Tijuana embedded in cross-border friendships that shine a beam of peace and partnership to illuminate and repel threats that may come our way? Moreover, building bigger walls, both real and imagined, will only serve to corrupt the underlying truths of our natural region—threatening our shared environment and our chance to resiliently respond and adapt in the face of a changing climate now upon us.

In short, our ability to share ideas across a diverse spectrum of backgrounds and opinions give us the capacity to appropriately and resiliently respond to any threats that come our way—from climate change to terrorism. In other words, respectful and inclusive discourses arc towards the truth, illuminating facts and knowledge that outshine the murky darkness of political agendas, thereby empowering us to discover and choose the most effective and just policy pathways forward—these are the foundations of healthy democracies—these are the true powers of one San Diego/Tijuana.

It is now time for us to raise up our voices in unison to rearticulate the visions and dreams of “Temporary Paradise?”. In this chorus we shall overcome the attempts from afar to suppress the natural forces of collaboration between our neighbors and partners — our friends. Together we can free ourselves from the chains of fear trying to shackle us into separate corners and a dark future of oppressive isolation that will only serve to harm our economy, our security, our environment, and most importantly, our people. We therefore say together that we are a region of outsiders, that we are one community, and to realize the dream of a single transnational San Diego/Tijuana region along the US-Mexico border, in unison we can declare:

"We, the people of San Diego and Tijuana, declare our interdependence as neighbors, partners, and friends. Inspired by the 1974 transnational vision, by the visionary work of Appleyard and Lynch, and by our collaborative designation as the 2024 San Diego/Tijuana World Design Capital, we recognize our border as a 'zone of confluence' where we share our economy, culture, and environment. We can dream about a region as large as San Diego and Tijuana because it 'gives us hope and moves us to act' together for a sustainable, livable, and equitable future for our community.

In unison, we acknowledge that this confluence brings both challenges and opportunities, and our success depends on the well-being of our people on both sides of the border. From finding innovative solutions for migration, transportation, infrastructure, and coastal & climate resiliency, we pledge to collaborate to promote education, economic growth, environmental protection, and the rights and well-being of our citizens, fostering mutual understanding and cultural exchanges.

We accept our shared responsibility to support our most vulnerable and strive for a more just and equitable society. We will build trust and cooperation between our agencies, businesses, and people to create a brighter future for all.

We commit to this Declaration of Interdependence as a symbol of our shared vision to work together towards a better future for all the people of San Diego and Tijuana.

And together we ask:

Do dreams have use?

Can one dream of a united San Diego/Tijuana?

Without a doubt, we say yes!

*The time has come for us to build on this hope, to take action,
and to act now!"*

Bruce Appleyard
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