

Executive Summary: Todos Santos Community Assessment June-July 2015

Dr. Kathleen Pickering, McKenzie Campbell, Kim Kita, Dr. Danielle Straatmann, Dr. Aines Castro, Fabiola Rodriguez, Dr. Andrea Purdy, Cole Purdy, Joanie Ellis, Drew Wilson, Amy Rex, David Bartecchi

In opening an education and research center in Todos Santos, Baja California Sur, Mexico, Colorado State University (CSU) is making a long-term commitment to the community and the region. Central to CSU's longevity and success in Todos Santos is developing partnerships with community members and regional institutions that are built on mutual respect, trust and accountability.

This ongoing process of relationship building, in which we seek to understand each other's cultures, priorities, hopes and challenges will set the stage for CSU faculty to collaboratively design and implement educational programs and research projects, for both the community and CSU students, that are based on shared goals and mutual commitment. This collaboration will not only help provide long-term holistic solutions to community priorities, but will also enrich student and faculty experiences.

To this end, the CSU Todos Santos Center, with the help of CSU faculty and students has been developing a participatory community approach to help guide program development in the Todos Santos region, which initiated with a Community Assessment this June.

METHODOLOGY. Through this process our team talked to more than 150 individuals from Todos Santos, El Pescadero, Elias Calles and surrounding areas. Concurrently, the team has been collaborating with regional academic, non-profit and governmental agencies to learn what research and educational programs are currently available, as well as gathering baseline data around socio-economic, demographic, geographic, environmental, health and agricultural factors. This information can be matched with the areas identified by the communities as priorities to better understand the current situation and help guide further collaborative research and educational programming. For additional information, please read the full, "Todos Santos Community Assessment 2015," and the "Todos Santos and El Pescadero Socio-Demographic and Environmental Overview."

Stakeholder groups addressed	
Youth	Ejidatarios
Women's groups	Expatriates
Farmers	Elected officials
Ranchers	Service providers
Fishermen	School Directors
Individuals interested in environment	

MISCONCEPTIONS OF THE CSU TODOS SANTOS CENTER. Through conversations, the team encountered several misconceptions about the CSU Center held by the Todos Santos community. There was, and continues to be, among those who aren't as familiar with the project, the hope that the CSU Center will offer university degrees to local residents. Conversely, there is a widely-held belief that the CSU Center will exclusively serve CSU students. In response to these beliefs, the team has consistently communicated that the CSU Center is not a "university," but an educational and research center, open to both CSU students and faculty as well as the regional community for opportunities to learn, teach and exchange ideas.

Some community members express concern about development in the area and are skeptical of a "commercial relationship" between CSU and MIRA. Some question whether CSU is being used to sell real-estate and if CSU will be free to act independently or objectively in-terms of programming and research. CSU is appreciative of the generous land donation by MIRA. CSU upholds research and academic freedom across all of our work and campuses, including the CSU Todos Santos Center, and fully supports our faculty and staff in all academic and research endeavors as they pertain to the Baja California Sur region. Tres Santos and its parent company, MIRA, have also committed to the university that it fully supports research and academic freedom at the center.

SIGNIFICANT LEARNINGS

Our conversations unveiled the important themes to incorporate into program development as CSU continues its presence in the community.

There is strong community desire to participate with the CSU Center. Upon hearing that the CSU Center is offering opportunities like workshops, courses, lectures and cultural exchange for the local community there was significant interest by individuals and groups to both learn and teach at the CSU Center.

Community perception of CSU's role in Todos Santos. CSU's name holds substantial clout in the region. It has great ability to open doors with institutions and individuals. There is hope that the university will use this to facilitate collaborations and provide data-driven research which will help the community better understand and address regional concerns.

Creating expectations. As soon as ideas are mentioned to the community and potential program partners, a sense of hope and expectation is generated. If a concrete direction or outcome is yet to be formed, framing conversations to let people know that you are in an information gathering/brain-storming phase is quite important to maintaining trust.

PRIMARY COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

While there is a wide range of hopes and visions for the future by community members, several re-occurring themes appeared through our conversations with residents, as captured below, in no specific order of priority.

Youth Engagement	Desire to create options for youth to help them succeed in the future and to keep them engaged now. Opportunities: Youth Leadership and Empowerment Club, Extracurricular sports, arts and language, UABCS partnership
Language Classes (Especially English)	English language has become an increasing need for young people entering the work force. There is opportunity for advanced/profession oriented English courses.
Education System	The education system in Todos Santos could benefit from support; as schools face high teacher turn-over and there are few continuing education opportunities for teachers.
<i>Valuing the Environment</i>	Importance of a clean and healthy place to live and kindling environmental values.
Water	Concern over the quantity and quality of the water supply, infrastructural challenges, conservation and future growth.
Waste Management	Solid Waste - No sanitary landfill, open burning practices, poor waste collection system, lack of treatment for hazardous residues and accumulation of agro-plastics Human Waste – Limited infrastructural capacity
Mines	Proposed open pit gold mine, “Los Cardones,” threatens the watershed and agricultural and tourism industries
Public Health	Primary Health Concerns - Acute respiratory infections, intestinal infections, diabetes and obesity, Dengue, Rickettsia, cancer, kidney issues, STDs and teen pregnancy
Sustainable/Responsible Development	Growth is happening quickly and often without following a development plan. Todos Santos grew 25% to 5,148 residents and Pescadero, 43% to 2,338 from 2005-2010 ¹ . Current and future development has social, cultural, environmental, economic and infrastructural impacts
Business Training and Alternative Models	Concern over lack of preparation within the native resident workforce to meet the needs of tourism industry. Desire for increased training in trades, small business management and entrepreneurship. Intermediaries were identified as a challenge for Agricultural and Fishing industries.

¹ Cuento de Población y Vivienda, 2005, Resultados Definitivos; XIII Censo de Población y Vivienda 2010, Resultados definitivos. Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI) <http://www.inegi.org.mx>