

# Stories of a Resilient SLO

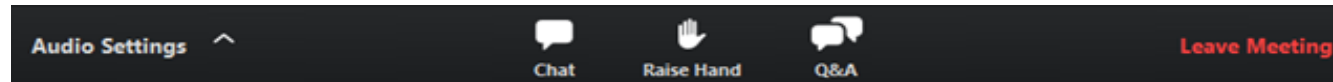
January 28, 2020



# Webinar Logistics

## Q&A

- Submit questions for panelists through the Q&A module at any point during the webinar.
- Upvote questions that you are interested in hearing responses to.



## Chat

- Engage in a dialogue with your peers – share resources, case studies, and thoughts.
- Reach out to LGC staff if you encounter technical issues or have questions.



# Welcome



**Chris Read**

Sustainability Manager

*City of San Luis Obispo*



# Thank you to our Partners!



# Welcoming Remarks



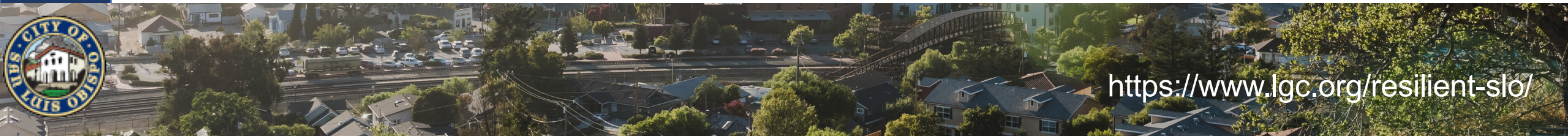
**Mayor Harmon**

*City of San Luis Obispo*



# Welcome to Resilient SLO

Thank you for engaging  
in an important  
planning initiative in  
our community.



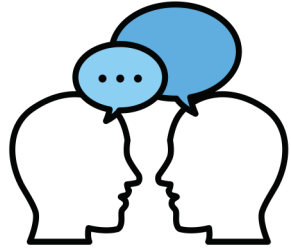
<https://www.lgc.org/resilient-slo/>

# What is Resilient SLO?

A planning initiative to help our community prepare for the impacts of climate change, which will result in an update to the City General Plan-Safety Element.



# What Does the Project Include?



Community  
Input

ON NEEDS AND PRIORITIES

Vulnerability  
Assessment

OF CLIMATE RELATED RISKS TO THE CITY



Education

FOR RESIDENTS, BUSINESSES AND City staff

Adaptation Strategies

TO HELP THE CITY ADAPT TO EXECTED  
CHANGES



General Plan- Safety Element

UPDATE TO A KEY DOCUMENT THAT GUIDES THE FUTURE  
OF THE CITY

Implementation Guide

TO BRING STRATEGIES TO ACTION





# Resilience- What does that mean?



**Adrienne Greve**

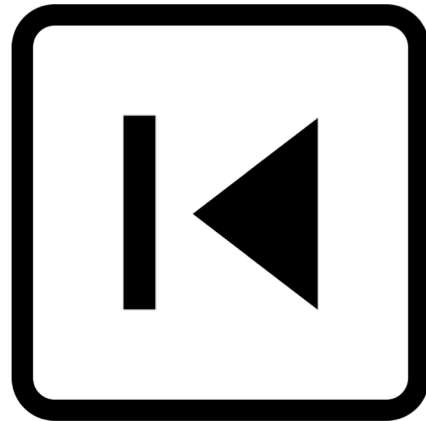
Professor, City & Regional  
Planning

*California Polytechnic State  
University*



# Resilience – What does that mean?

Easy to think of it as:



# Resilience – What does that mean?

But, what if things are changing



and you cannot go back?



# Resilience – What does that mean?

“We understand resilience as the ability to self-organize, learn, and adapt.” (Djalante et al. 2011, p. 3)



We can go back, just with a different route & a different means of travel to an even better state than the one you began with.



# Resilience – What does that mean?

- Identify the detours
  - *What will the projected climate impacts mean for SLO on the ground with the community?*
- Where do we go?
  - *What actions are needed to assure that SLO is both ready & able to adjust to the changes that are coming?*



# Stories of a Resilient SLO

Community stories help us understand how we have overcome past challenges and what makes SLO resilient.

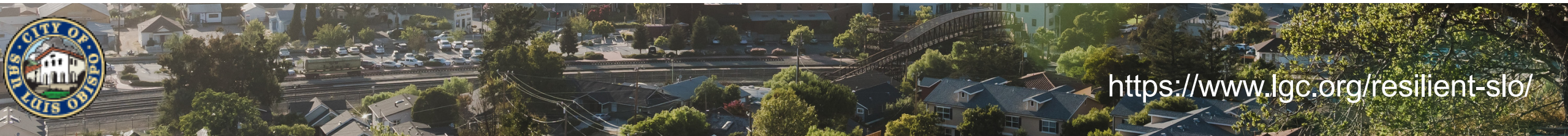
“ In 1995 San Luis Obispo County experienced one of the largest storms and flood events in its history....Nature is the ultimate teacher. Some lessons are harsher than others, but we learn to pick-up the pieces and put them back together again. ”

~ Jessica, SLO Non-profit Advisor

What does *community resilience* mean to you?

“ The ability for community and families to bounce back stronger after a setback like a natural disaster ”

~ Kelly Fisher



# Stories of a Resilient SLO

Read Stories of Resilience from Community Members!

View submitted stories  
and submit your own at:  
[www.lgc.org/resilient-slo](http://www.lgc.org/resilient-slo)

**Story of Resilience**

What disaster did you experience?  
*Recent wildfires around central coast of California.*

How did the disaster impact your community?  
*Several neighbors in Baywood/Los Osos expressed concern about defensible space around their homes*


How did you respond to the impact?  
*My husband a retired wild land fire chief offered his assistance to go to their homes and teach, advise and assist with how to make their property more defensible in case of wildfire. Additionally, a local landscape business coordinated volunteers go to a senior citizens (cancer patient) home to clear brush from around her home to reduce fire hazard. 12 volunteers participated and brought tools and equipment and cleared brush.*

What was your experience recovering from the impact?  
*This was a tremendous relief to local residents to know they had ability with a little bit of encouragement, knowledge and effort that they could protect their home from a potential disaster.*

What does community resilience mean to you?  
*The ability for community and families to bounce back stronger after a setback like a natural disaster.*

What did you learn?  
*I learned that with a vision, goal and a little coordination, collectively our community has interest, skills and potential to find innovative, efficient, effective solutions to build resilience.*

Submitted by: Kelly Fisher



<https://www.lgc.org/stories>

**Story of Resilience**

What disaster did you experience?  
*Extreme Heat and wildfire smoke during the pandemic*

How did the disaster impact your community?  
*Working from home in a house with no A/C during a heat wave and time of poor air quality was tough on me, and my house's kitten.*

How did you respond to the impact?  
*While we normally would be in an air conditioned office, we weren't this year. And normally we would open up all our windows and doors to let a breeze through during heat waves, but it wasn't safe this year due to the wildfire smoke rolling through. So we kept windows closed and all fans on and directly pointed at us during work and at night when sleeping. We laid ice packs around the house for our kitten to lay on, and put ice cubes in his water bowl.*

What was your experience recovering from the impact?  
*We luckily had no long-term side effects from this.*

What did you learn?  
*Air conditioning will be near the top of my priority list when finding my next place of residence.*

-Anonymous Submission



<https://www.lgc.org/stories>

**Story of Resilience**

“Some lessons are harsher than others, but we learn to pick-up the pieces and put them back together again.”

In 1995 San Luis Obispo County experienced one of the largest storms and flood events in its history. At the time, my mom and dad owned the concessions (store and boat rentals) at the Santa Margarita Lake Marina. The flood waters rose so high the entire building was under water. The cables that held the dock with all of the boats snapped. As the boats drifted and disappeared from view, I watched my dad in the pouring rain - with no help and just his two hands - hold on to the cables and try to secure them so the dock wouldn't float away. After the flooding, we assessed the damage and everything in the store was destroyed.

All of the food, equipment, and hundreds of polaroids that my dad displayed of people with their prize catches over the years swirled around the store like a tsunami in a fish bowl. Everything was soaked and littered on the floor. When it was safe to go back out on the water he went fishing for his boats (20 aluminum boats and one pontoon boat) and was able to bring them all back in after a very long and arduous day.

Nature is the ultimate teacher. Some lessons are harsher than others, but we learn to pick-up the pieces and put them back together again. After we opened for business again, I remember helping my dad pin up new polaroids of people grinning from ear to ear with their catches of the day - huge catfish, bass, trout and occasionally the elusive striped bass. My dad would always say work smarter not harder. This philosophy served him well and his story is one of many that demonstrates the power of resiliency.”

Submitted by: Jessica, SLO Non-profit Advisor



<https://www.lgc.org/stories>

Watch community members share their stories!



# Climate Resilience from an Equity Perspective



**Beya Makekau**

Director: Student Diversity and  
Belonging, Student Affairs

*California Polytechnic State  
University*





# What is Going on With Our Climate?



**John Lindsey**

Marine Meteorologist

*PG&E*



# Baseline Conditions Report



**Kai Lord-Farmer**

Air Quality and Climate Change  
Analyst

*Ascent*



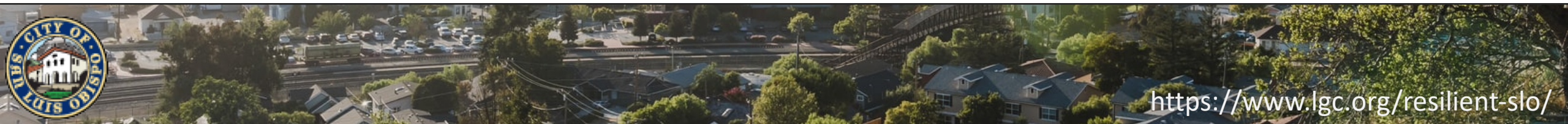
# Baseline Conditions Report

## Purpose

- First step in the Vulnerability Assessment process
- Provides a baseline of current climate-related hazards
- Identifies community sensitivities likely to be affected by climate change
- Context to inform development of climate resilience strategies and the Safety Element update



# Baseline Conditions Report



# Baseline Conditions Report

## Report Overview

### Existing Hazards Assessment

- Flood
- Wildfire
- Extreme Heat
- Drought
- Urban Heat Island

### Sensitive Infrastructure, Populations, and Functions

- Transportation System and Built Environment
- Socioeconomic Trends and Vulnerable Populations
- Community and Economic Functions

January 2021

ASCENT



*Resilient SLO:*  
Baseline Conditions Report



City of San Luis Obispo  
990 Palm Street  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401



<https://www.lgc.org/resilient-slo/>

# Baseline Conditions Report

## Key Findings

### Existing Plans and Resources

- General Plan Safety Element (Existing)
- Local Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Community Wildfire Protection Plan
- Urban Water Management Plan
- Waterway Management Plan

January 2021

ASCENT



*Resilient SLO:*  
Baseline Conditions Report



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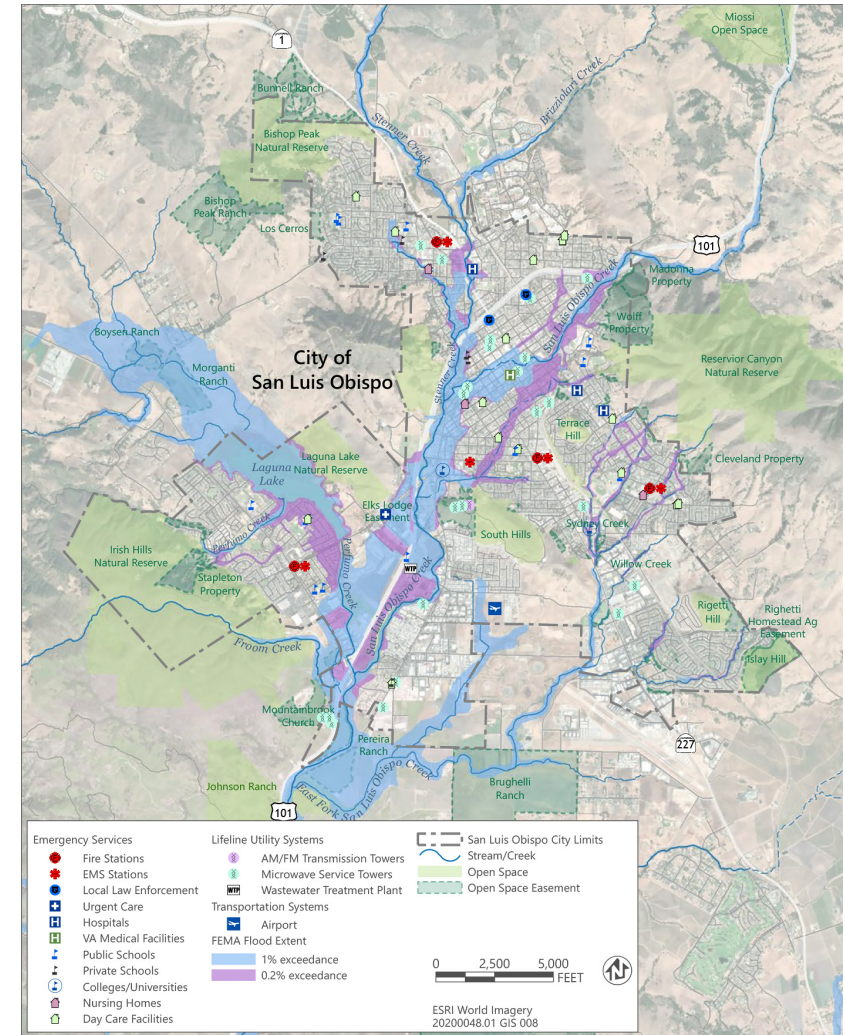
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# Baseline Conditions Report

## Key Findings

### Flooding

- 100-Year Floodplain
  - Downtown SLO surrounding San Luis Obispo Creek – Higuera Street
  - Los Osos Valley Road near Prefumo Creek
- 500-Year Floodplain
  - Laguna Lake neighborhood
  - Near Sinsheimer Park
  - East of downtown SLO



# Baseline Conditions Report

## Key Findings

### Historic Large Flooding Events

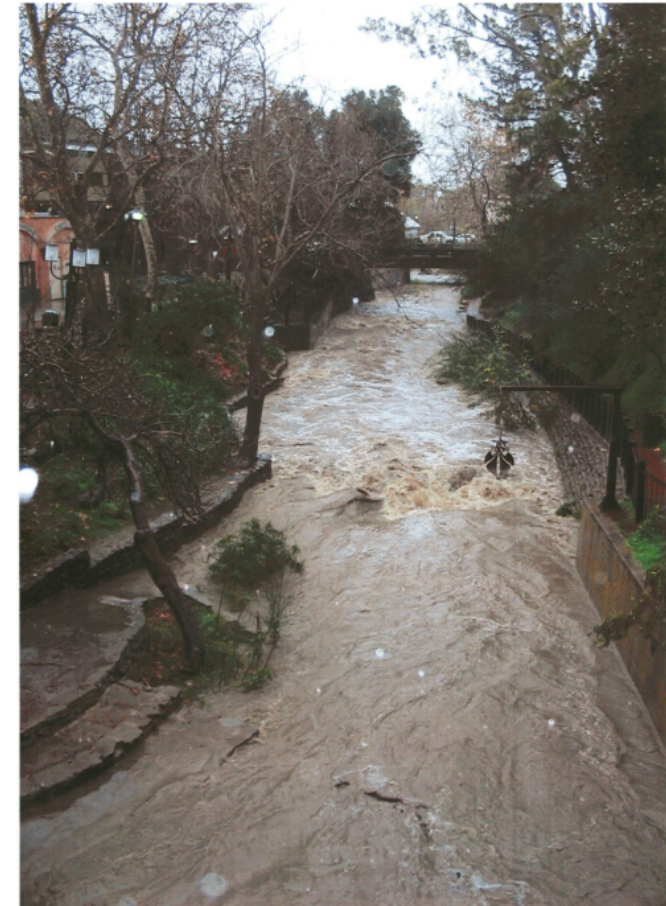
- 1868–1872
- 1969
- 1973
- 1982
- 1995
- 1998
- 2001
- 2004



U.S. 101 near  
Prefumo Creek  
1973



Los Osos  
Valley Road  
1982



Downtown SLO 2004





# Baseline Conditions Report

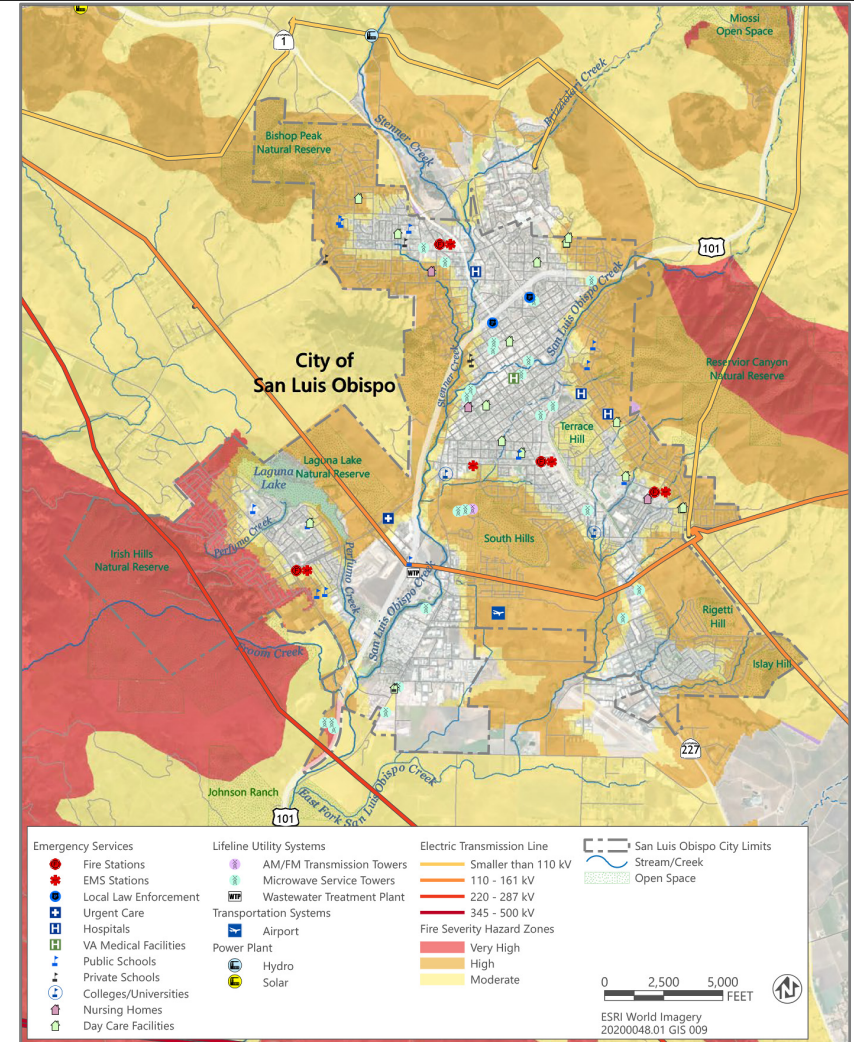
## Key Findings

### Wildfire and Grassland Fire

- Irish Hills Natural Reserve
- Reservoir Canyon Natural Reserve
- South Hills
- Bishops Peak

### Wildland Urban Interface

- Areas of human development in or near areas prone to wildfire



# Baseline Conditions Report

## Key Findings Historic and Recent Wildfires



South Hills  
near Bridge  
Street  
2020



Cuesta  
Grade Fire  
2015



Wildfire Smoke in Paso Robles



# Baseline Conditions Report

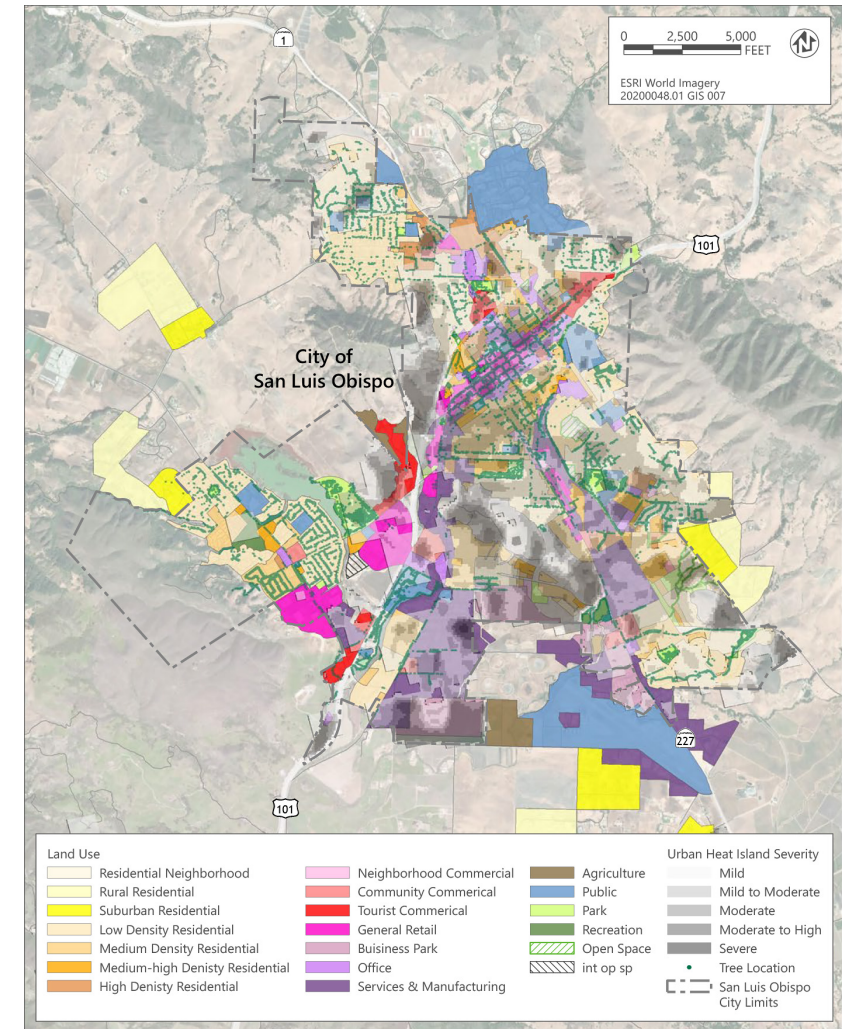
## Key Findings

### Extreme Heat and Heat Waves

- Historic – 4 days above 90°F per year
- Above 90°F for seven consecutive days in August 2020
- Warm nights during heat waves

### Urban Heat Island Effect

- Urban areas being warmer than surrounding rural areas because of human activity and land use patterns



# Baseline Conditions Report

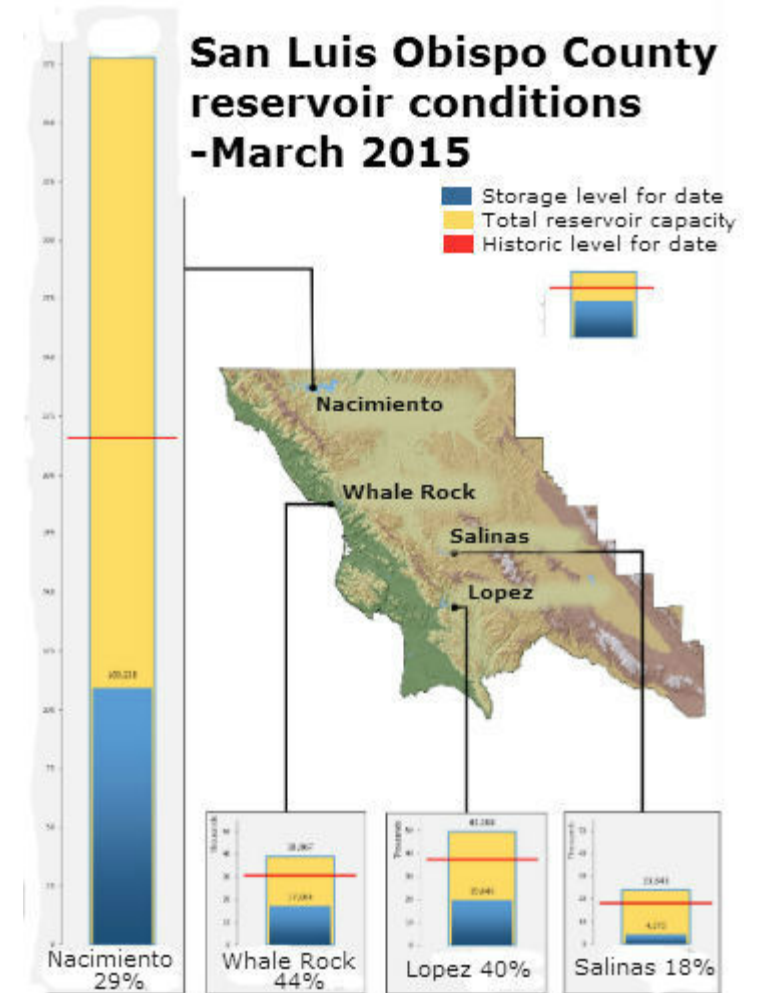
## Key Findings

### Historic Droughts Affecting SLO

- 1929 – 1934
- 1975 – 1977
- 1987 – 1992
- 2007 – 2009
- 2012 – 2017

### Four primary sources for SLO water supply:

- Whale Rock Reservoir
- Salinas Reservoir
- Nacimiento Reservoir
- Recycled water



# Baseline Conditions Report

## Key Findings

### Vulnerable Populations

- 13 percent of City population over the age of 65
- 3 percent of the population under the age of 5
- 13 percent of the population under the age of 18
- 6 percent of population speaks language other than English at home
- 57 percent of residents paying 35 percent or more for housing



# Baseline Conditions Report

## Key Findings

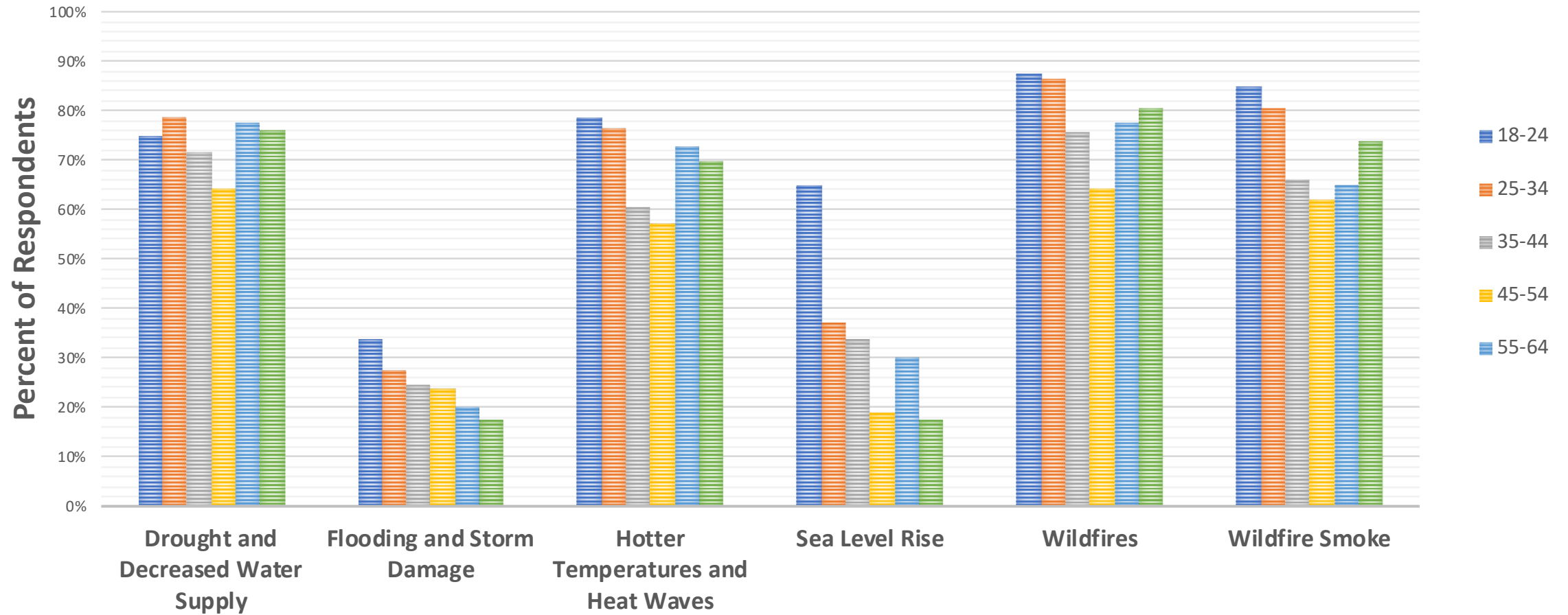
### Economic Vulnerabilities

- City has jobs-to-housing ratio of 2.7 (jobs per housing unit)
- Reliance on retail and tourism
  - 25 percent of the City's revenue came from sale tax
  - 10 percent of revenue came from the transient occupancy tax, generated from hotels in the City
  - 15 percent of employees in accommodation and services
  - 12 percent of employees in retail trade



# Baseline Conditions Report

## CLIMATE CONCERN BY AGE



# Community Engagement Opportunities

Stay tuned  
for future  
events!

We will be asking for your input on the right adaptation strategies for our community.

Keep up to date on the project website:  
<https://www.lgc.org/resilient-slo/>

Email Teresa McClish:  
tmcclish@slocity.org



<https://www.lgc.org/resilient-slo/>



# Questions?

Please submit questions through the Q&A module

## Q&A

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Audio Settings ^



Chat



Raise Hand



Q&A

Leave Meeting

## Chat

- Engage in a dialogue with your peers – share resources, case studies, and thoughts.
- Reach out to LGC staff if you encounter technical issues or have questions.



Thank you for attending today's presentation!

**Stay Involved:**

<https://www.lgc.org/resilient-slo/>

Email Teresa McClish: [tmcclish@slocity.org](mailto:tmcclish@slocity.org)

