



**NEWS - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Hind Foundation Contributes \$389,000 grant to the Octagon Barn Center's Milking Parlor Building**

The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County was recently awarded a \$389,000 grant from the Hind Foundation in support of the Octagon Barn Center effort. The funds are specified for the completion of the Center's Milking Parlor building renovation, which is now underway and will be complete by September of this year.

The Hind Foundation is committed to funding community-based projects and programs that encourage people to work together to build an enduring legacy for future generations, and has been a long-time supporter of The Land Conservancy's work. The Octagon Barn Center, and the Milking Parlor structure in particular, fit well within the Hind Foundation's focus on historical landmark restoration and land conservation. The completed Milking Parlor will honor our county's rich agricultural legacy while bringing the community together in a restored and functional educational event space.

With the Hind Foundation grant and other recent community donations, The Land Conservancy is now seeking \$350,000 by the end of Summer 2017 to complete its \$5.5 million Octagon Barn Center funding goal. Project leaders say that this gap must be filled by local community funding sources including contributions from individuals, businesses and family foundations.

"I am incredibly grateful to the Hind Foundation for helping us bring the vision for the Octagon Barn Center this much closer to reality," says Kaila Dettman, Executive Director of The Land Conservancy. It's amazing to see everyone come together around this project. The Barn, the Bob Jones trail, and the community spaces they will create are going to provide so much for families, outdoor enthusiasts, history buffs, and our local economy. We are now in the final stretch, where donations of any amount are going to make it possible. Imagine what it's going to be like next year, with this as a new community center on the southern edge of our beautiful city."

**The Octagon Barn Center**

As a treasured cultural icon and direct link to local agricultural history, the Octagon Barn it is a symbol of our county's commitment to productive and natural lands. The completion of the Octagon Barn Center will enhance this cherished local structure to become a functioning gathering place for locals and visitors. As the future trailhead for the Bob Jones City-to-Sea Trail, the Center will be critical to facilitating bike-friendly transportation and recreational trails.

When open to the public, the Octagon Barn Center will serve as a community gathering place to host various events; from barn dances, weddings and farmer's markets, to films and music. It will be a tourist destination that reaches thousands of visitors each year and will be ADA-designed to accommodate people with physical limitations.

Just 40 feet away from the iconic Barn sits the Milking Parlor building. Built in 1938 to accommodate the modern milking machines of the dairy industry, the Parlor was critical to running a working dairy farm during that time. The goal of the project is a complete renovation on the Milking Parlor, preserving the historic character of the external building while updating and retrofitting the interior with sustainable designs and materials.

In its new role, the Parlor will serve as a weatherproof multi-purpose community room, education center, and museum. Members of the public and school groups will be able to visit and learn about the County's rich agrarian heritage and the land on which agriculture and tourism currently depend. Capable of hosting up to 100 people, the Parlor will be suitable for non-profit meetings, educational field trips, workshops, and other small private events. The successful renovation of the Milking Parlor is critical to supporting the Octagon Barn Center, but on its own will be an important and cherished amenity for our community.

Targeted for completion in early 2018, the Octagon Barn Center will be a unique place for people to learn about and celebrate San Luis Obispo County landscapes and local agriculture. Because of its central location in the County and its proximity to the City of San Luis Obispo, the Octagon Barn Center will serve a diverse constituency including San Luis Obispo County residents, businesses, and families of varying socio-economic backgrounds.

“So many people, organizations, businesses and non profits have supported this project,” said BK Richard, chief volunteer and project supervisor. “It is so close. The last \$350,000 is going to be something that brings the project to life, and that’s going to be great fun to see. It’s a barn, and a project, that in one way is priceless—you can’t buy history like this. It’s once in a lifetime.”

More information and photos are available at The Land Conservancy’s website at [www.lcslo.org](http://www.lcslo.org).

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**The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County** is a local nonprofit land trust working to protect and restore local landscapes for the benefit of people and wildlife. The land trust’s efforts help protect drinking water sources, prevent poorly planned development, restore wildlife habitat and promote family farmlands and ranches in our region. The Land Conservancy has led collaborative efforts to permanently protect over 18,400 acres of land in San Luis Obispo County. Details at [www.LCSLO.org](http://www.LCSLO.org) or call (805) 544-9096.