



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Octagon Barn Center Challenges National Tear-Down Demand**

With help from local sponsor, Utility Telephone, The Land Conservancy unveiled its final vision of what the future San Luis Obispo Octagon Barn Center will be for the Central Coast. Despite a national demand for old barn wood from the building and design community, the historic Octagon Barn will remain a local icon thanks to a \$150,000 pledge from Utility Telephone.

*“The Octagon barn is an important part of the history of San Luis Obispo, and we at Utility Telephone feel strongly that support of such projects is vital to the community,”* said Mark Jordan, Utility Telephone Vice President of Sales. *“We hope our participation in this endeavor will encourage others to consider the importance of this soon-to-be hub of activity in San Luis Obispo.”*

San Luis Obispo’s Octagon Barn could easily have succumbed to a different future. A website, [oldbarnwoodsite.com](http://oldbarnwoodsite.com), that facilitates the sale and dismantling of old barns for reuse states that *“the demand for old barns for sale, barn boards and reclaimed barn beams for sale nationwide is strong.”* Just last week an octagon barn in Wisconsin was taken down and sold to a buyer in Texas who plans to attach it to their late-1700s home.

Removing old barns from their original locations erases a portion of local history and character. The Land Conservancy and its project contributors believe that the future of the San Luis Obispo Octagon Barn Center is just as important as its past.

A large sign on the Barn property facing Higuera Street was erected. It depicts the Octagon Barn Center as an imminent community hub that will serve as a gateway to the City of SLO. This significant phase has been made possible with a \$150,000 pledge from local business telephone & internet provider, Utility Telephone.

### **Site Plans**

- Octagon Barn - As the site’s iconic structure, the historic Octagon Barn has been left as a big open Barn which will accommodate events with up to 200 people. A new roof, structural enhancements and safety improvements have been added.
- Bob Jones Trailhead - A key feature of the multi-use facility is a new San Luis Obispo County trailhead to



Pete Jenny, Valerie Endres, BK Richard, Mark Jordan, Bob Hill and Ed Carson unveil the Octagon Barn Center vision sign sponsored by Utility Telephone.

the Bob Jones Trail with bicycle amenities to service the dozens of cyclists who currently ride by the site each day.

- Milking Parlor Meeting Room - The Milking Parlor is slated for major renovations to become a community meeting room featuring local historic displays depicting unique stories relevant to the Octagon Barn. A portion of renovation funding has been raised and construction plans are underway which will help secure the final funds needed to complete the project. The building is being renovated with conservation in mind.

Additional site components include:

- Authentic windmill to indicate the start of the bike path and generate energy.
- Interpretive walking path flanked with native plants and an Honor Grove of donor sponsored trees.
- Landscaping highlighting heirloom vegetables and educational plant displays specific to the Octagon Barn's history and character.
- Wetland restoration and interpretation via a viewing platform and sitting area to provide a quiet getaway within the larger Center.
- Permeable parking lot to accommodate event parking, school buses and large tour buses.

### **Milestones**

Major site improvements are scheduled to begin by Fall 2012. The Land Conservancy and project partners at SLO County Parks & Recreation plan to start by grading the site and installing restrooms. A fundraising campaign is also slated to kick off by the end of 2012.

### **Sponsors**

Utility Telephone is sponsoring the Octagon Barn Center with a combination of cash funds and in-kind services worth \$150,000. The donation subsidizes the various site amenities required to open the Center for community use. Additional Octagon Barn Center sponsors include Bert & Candace Forbes, Westland Engineering, Hind Foundation, Harold J. Miozzi Charitable Trust and dozens of private volunteers & donors.

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**The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County** is the preeminent nonprofit land trust working to protect and restore local lands with scenic, cultural and historic values. Their efforts help protect drinking water sources, prevent poorly planned development, restore wildlife habitat and promote family farmlands and ranches in this region. Since its formation in 1984, The Land Conservancy has worked with community partners to permanently protect nearly 14,000 acres of land in San Luis Obispo County. For more information visit [www.LCSLO.org](http://www.LCSLO.org) or call (805) 544-9096.

**San Luis Obispo's Octagon Barn** has been an important feature of the San Luis Obispo landscape for over 100 years. A true rarity, the Octagon Barn is a symbol of the quintessential landscape of San Luis Obispo County, paying homage to our agricultural and multicultural beginnings. The Land Conservancy has led community efforts to restore this county icon. Plans are underway to open the Barn and its surrounding area to be known as San Luis Obispo's *Octagon Barn Center*. For more information about the Barn visit [www.OctagonBarn.org](http://www.OctagonBarn.org).



**HISTORIC  
OCTAGON BARN  
CENTER**

The Land  
Conservancy  
of San Luis Obispo County

**Major Sponsors**

UtilityTelephone  
Business Telephone and Internet



Bert & Candace  
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**Project Partners**



**Coming Soon**

**Donate or Volunteer Today! 805-544-9096 / www.OctagonBarn.org**

