NPR FOR OREGONIANS

KLCC STRATEGIC PLAN

2015 – 2018

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INTRODUCTION

Like all media organizations, KLCC finds itself operating in a rapidly changing, highly competitive environment. New platforms and distribution models threaten its long-standing primacy as the sole local outlet for public radio's most popular programs. Expenses rise while competition for funding grows increasingly fierce.

To help KLCC meet these emerging challenges, a group of community members, licensee representatives, KLCC staff and volunteers was convened in the fall of 2014. Meeting over a period of five months, the group crafted a four year plan for sustainable station growth and development that will expand and strengthen KLCC's role as a unique and indispensable community institution.

The group's review of KLCC current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats revealed an organization with three significant opportunities for growth:
- Increased <u>financial support</u>, from listeners, underwriting and grants
- Greater <u>community engagement</u> with both individuals and institutions
- <u>Strengthened local news service</u>, focusing initially on the content area most highly valued by KLCC listeners; news and cultural information

Making greater use of emerging digital platforms will be a vital component of the work to be done in all three areas.

The station's ability to realize growth opportunities will be further strengthened by an array of actions that will <u>enhance KLCC's organizational effectiveness</u> through improved station collaboration and operational efficiencies

Our profound thanks go to all who contributed their time and ideas to the development of this plan; the members of KLCC's Strategic Planning Group, KLCC staff and volunteers, and those individuals whose generous support made the planning process possible.

KLCC: WHY, HOW, WHAT

WHY: *Our purpose; the experience we aspire to provide*

To engage the mind, enrich the spirit, and deepen understanding of our community and our world.

HOW: *The principles that guide our work*

We are guided by the core values of public radio and Lane Community College:
- We foster a love of lifelong learning
- We respect the intelligence and inspire the curiosity of our listeners
- We maintain high standards of credibility, accuracy, integrity and civility
- We believe in public discourse and our power to find solutions
- We present diverse voices to reflect diverse experiences, ideas and cultures
- We are committed to partnerships that strengthen our service
- We focus on our distinct sense of place
- We pursue excellence and innovation in the craft of radio
- We make creative use of emerging digital and social media platforms
- We are dedicated to listener-focused public service

WHAT: *Our service; the results of our work*

We provide a unique, accessible and vital source of local, national and international news and culture.

SUSTAINABLE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

KLCC is a commercial free, listener supported universally available source of news and culture, offering a unique blend of local, regional, national and international content. Deeply rooted in community, KLCC is part of the largest locally owned and operated broadcast network in the world, both guided by a strong set of shared values.

KLCC STRATEGIC GOALS, KEY PRIORITIES AND ACTION ITEMS

GOALS advance KLCC purpose, reinforce station values and expand KLCC service.
KEY PRIORITIES identify primary KLCC opportunities.
ACTION ITEMS (listed beneath each Key Priority) outline tactical activities to achieve goals and priorities.

Goal I – STRENGTHEN KLCC LOCAL NEWS SERVICE
KLCC will invest in local news, including arts and cultural reporting, to increase in-depth coverage of our community and reflect its sense of place.

Key Priorities
- Strengthen KLCC's commitment to quality programming
    - Institute more effective program management
        - Conduct periodic program reviews
        - Provide frequent announcer feedback
        - Apply more disciplined execution of formatics
        - Evaluate and codify editorial process
    - Develop more ambitious programming
        - Produce NPR quality in-depth news
        - Contribute to NPR newsmagazines
- Build local news capacity
    - Grow staff
    - Obtain program grants
    - Collaborate with UO Journalism School
- Create innovative new programming
    - Develop special series, regularly scheduled modules, podcasts
    - Explore feasibility of local midday program
        - Analyze staffing, cost, funding, resources, focus
- Develop multiplatform strategy
    - Build user access and engagement
    - Move aggressively into mobile and digital

Goal II – ENHANCE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

KLCC will invest in people and systems to dramatically increase program and service effectiveness.

Key Priorities

- Explore optimal KLCC governance structures
    - Identify potential models including 501c3 and Local Management Agreement (LMA)
- Anticipate personnel and program succession and transition
    - Diversify station personnel including staff, volunteers, and interns
- Analyze and improve internal structures and procedures
    - Reorganize staff to maximize resources
    - Ensure performance appraisal process ties to clearly defined performance metrics and goals established in strategic plan
    - Schedule annual staff retreat to assess progress and opportunities
    - Improve volunteer oversight and accountability
    - Create opportunities for team building
- Maximize opportunities for professional development
    - Increase sharing of lessons learned via conferences and training
- Improve content and effectiveness of internal communications
    - Restructure meetings, listserv use and reports
- Invest in capital improvements
    - Develop annual plan for infrastructure improvements
    - Buy and install emergency backup generator for studio
- Implement efficiencies
    - Make greater use of automation, freeing staff resources to create content
    - Explore consolidation of backroom operations (underwriting, traffic, engineering)

Goal III – EXPAND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

KLCC will build and deepen partnerships with individuals and organizations to better connect with community, grow audience and revenues, and best serve the public interest.

Key Priorities

- Create community support group
    - To fundraise, advocate, mentor, advise and connect
- Expand and deepen collaborations
    - Match collaborative opportunities to strategic plan
    - Pursue opportunities with: Lane Community College; University of Oregon; Oregon State University; OPB; Jefferson Public Radio; Eugene Public Library; The Eugene Register-Guard; Eugene Weekly; arts, culture, civic, business and social service organizations.
- Increase and diversify audience
    - Increase listening occasions and TSL (time spent listening)
    - Engage younger, diverse audiences
    - Develop consistent, effective branding messages
- Gather, analyze and act on audience and market research
    - Identify critical community issues
    - Convene community conversations – on-air, online and in-studio
    - Stay current with public radio research findings

Goal IV – ASSURE FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

KLCC will increase financial support with fundraising to build programs and infrastructure, grow net revenue, generate surplus, and build reserves.

Key Priorities
- Set substantial new goals for major giving, underwriting and membership
  - Major Giving
    - Develop major giving cases for KLCC projects
    - Identify, cultivate, solicit and steward donor prospects
    - Expand Tower Society major giving club
    - Increase planned giving initiatives
  - Underwriting
    - Implement recommendations and achieve revenue goals set in Market Enginuity 2013 report prepared for KLCC
  - Membership
    - Implement public radio membership best practices
    - Increase attention to messaging, segmentation, sustaining members and retention
    - Produce more powerful and efficient on-air fundraising
    - Expand use of incentives such as matches and sweepstakes
    - Build greater volunteer and community engagement in drives
    - Establish a day sponsor program
  - Grant writing
    - Pursue funding from foundations, businesses, public agencies and other sources.
- Strengthen the relationship between donors and KLCC
  - Design and send regular eblast communications
  - Hold more frequent donor events
  - Publish and distribute annual report
- Build KLCC endowment to provide long term support
- Explore cost containment strategies that strengthen KLCC's ability to reach its goals.

IMPLEMENTATION

The next step is to create a written work plan for each action item which details tactical steps for KLCC to accomplish our goals and strategic priorities.

Each work plan identifies the people responsible for implementation and success, prioritizes activities, establishes timelines for completion, details necessary resources, and describes metrics for evaluation.

KLCC management will collaborate with staff, licensee officials, station volunteers and community members to write the work plans. The implementation process is designed to be inclusive and transparent, ambitious and forward thinking.   It will empower staff while holding them accountable.

The work plans groups will be written to align with the framework of KLCC's Strategic Plan and Lane Community College's Program Review Process.

This next phase will completed by June 2015 to allow initial implementation of KLCC's strategic plan in fiscal year 2016.

SWOTS AT-A-GLANCE: MAJOR THEMES

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STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
BROADCAST INFRASTRUCTURE			
BROADCAST PARTNERSHIPS			
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	COMMUNITY ENAGEMENT	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	
STATION PERSONNEL	STATION PERSONNEL		
		LOCAL PROGRAMMING	
	FINANCIAL		FINANCIAL
			DIGITAL

SWOT NARRATIVE: ANALYSIS OF MAJOR THEMES

This analysis is based on a review of the KLCC <u>strengths</u>, <u>weaknesses</u>, <u>opportunities</u> and <u>threats</u> identified by members of the KLCC Strategic Planning Group at its 9.23.14 meeting. As shown in the *SWOTS-AT-A-GLANCE* chart, the analysis is two dimensional, identifying major themes <u>within</u> each of the four categories, as well as those that <u>resonated across</u> categories.

<u>STRENGTHS</u>

Four dominant themes emerged in this category – two of which <u>only</u> appear in this category;
- **Broadcast Infrastructure**

KLCC's broadcast signal strength and reach, studio, equipment and facility all got uniformly high marks. This is not surprising given that some years ago, KLCC made improving its infrastructure a high priority, dedicating several years of station time and resources to this effort. Clearly this planning effort paid off.
- **Broadcast Partnerships**

The benefits of KLCC affiliation with NPR drew several mentions as well as the N3 regional news cooperative and collaboration with OPB. (We'll see much more about a variety of <u>potential</u> partnerships and collaborations in OPPORTUNITIES.)

The two other dominant themes in **STRENGTHS** found <u>mirror images</u> in **WEAKNESSES**
- **Station Personnel**

The STRENGTHS of KLCC staff and volunteers were described in glowing terms; beloved, solid, deeply rooted in community, dedicated, loyal. Their long-time tenure, knowledge, experience and commitment were seen as a source of station continuity. But an almost opposite image appears in the terms offered as WEAKNESSES; status quo, most have never worked at another station, an organization habit-bound from decades of program and staff consistency, stagnation and complacency, concern about KLCC's capacity to change.
- **Community Engagement**

This same dichotomy appeared in community engagement. KLCC is seen as a station with a deeply established place in the community and a long tradition of community service and involvement. But responses in the WEAKNESSES category indicate a perception that these qualities of community participation are in decline, perhaps due to a lack of definition of "community" itself. (We'll see much more on the potential for greater community engagement in OPPORTUNITIES).

A third theme that emerged in the **WEAKNESS** category was KLCC's financial status
- **Finances**

Concerns here included the station's deficit, relatively flat membership, underwriting and major donor decline, budget shortfalls, financial inefficiencies and rising personnel expenses over which the station has no control. (More on these same themes will appear in THREATS).

OPPORTUNITES

Community engagement was the sole topic that emerged front and center across three categories. It is also strongly inter-related with the one other theme to emerge in this category – local programming.

- **Community Engagement –** *"Own Eugene"*

Tremendous opportunity was seen for KLCC to deepen its community engagement via increased collaborations and partnerships. Institutions that share the public radio audience "love of lifelong learning" were seen as partners of particular promise and potential. The station was also encouraged to better leverage its downtown location and facility to take on a more central role in the community. Greater use of SELCO Performance Hall was suggested as a setting for community events, forums and concerts.

- **Local Programming**

Greater community engagement and collaboration were also encouraged as a pathway to meet aspirations for the expansion, support and reinvigoration of KLCC's local content. The University of Oregon and Lane Community College were suggested as sources for interns, volunteers and programmers – both on the air and via new media such as web-based, on-demand programming. This engagement of younger talent was seen as a way to both expand the resources KLCC needs and strengthen its ability to produce high quality local programming on a consistent basis. It would also continue a historic KLCC legacy – a tradition of comprehensive training that has placed former KLCC volunteers and staffers at other public radio stations around the country as well as national networks including NPR and PRI.   (NOTE: This strategy could also provide KLCC with a "talent bench" as part of a succession strategy to replace long-time staff upon retirement.)

THREATS

- **Financial**

Additional concerns about KLCC's financial future emerged here – some reiterated points made in WEAKNESSES including rising expenses and the station's budget shortfall. But several others referred to the larger context in which KLCC finds itself; a difficult financial climate – external as well as internal; an uncertain economy, lack of funding both locally and nationally, and competition for member donations with OPB.

- **Digital/Competition from Emerging Technologies and Platforms**

Several concerns were raised about the potential threat to radio's historic dominance from an emerging array of media choices such as direct listener access to NPR programming (effectively bypassing local stations like KLCC). Satellite radio and internet access in cars both challenge radio's historic dominance in this critical radio listening location. And finally, listening to radio is declining – especially among younger people as they enthusiastically embrace new options.

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