



**★ NORTHERN
CALIFORNIA**
PUBLIC MEDIA

STRATEGIC PLAN
2023-2027

*Honoring the Past.
Building for the Future.*



104.9 krcb
npr

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KPJK 

MISSION

NorCal Public Media's mission is to be a trusted, independent, and essential voice that heightens awareness of the diversity of the human experience, reports on issues of importance, and convenes public discussion to strengthen our community.







VISION

NorCal Public Media's vision is to inspire audiences to learn from one another, examine the world around them, and make their own decisions as informed citizens on a lifelong journey of educational discovery.



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

DARREN LASHELLE



Dear Friends and Supporters,

I am thrilled to share some exciting news with you about NorCal Public Media's future direction. After a year-long series of retreats, discussions, careful planning, and community collaboration, we are proud to present this five-year strategic plan (2023-2028) that will guide us towards a future of even greater impact and service to our community.

This strategic plan represents a significant milestone in our organization's history, reflecting our commitment to innovation, community engagement, and the continued delivery of high-quality educational media that informs, inspires, and connects us all. In a rapidly evolving media landscape, the need for adaptability and sustainability has never been more crucial. NorCal Public Media's new strategic plan is designed to address the challenges of today while positioning us as a leader in the media landscape of tomorrow.

Our commitment to **Audience & Community** is at the forefront of this plan. NorCal Public Media pledges to not only understand but actively engage with the unique voices that make up the rich tapestry of our region. We aim to represent and include those who have been underrepresented in media, bringing new perspectives, sources, and conversations to the airwaves. By doing so, we hope to foster a greater sense of unity, understanding, and community throughout the Bay Area.

Organizational Excellence is a core pillar of our strategic plan. We recognize the responsibility that comes with stewarding the resources entrusted to us. Through careful management and forward-thinking practices, we aim to build a resilient organization that can withstand changes in public service, audience dynamics, technology, and economic fluctuations. This commitment ensures that we remain a steadfast source of information and entertainment for years to come.



Digital Transformation is another key element of our plan. In a rapidly evolving media landscape, NorCal Public Media is dedicated to advancing our digital tools, technology, and systems. This is not just about embracing the latest trends but ensuring that we can reach, engage, and serve our audiences equitably across a variety of platforms. By creating digital content that reflects and resonates with diverse audiences, we hope to foster a sense of inclusivity and accessibility.

*At the heart of our mission is the creation of **Trusted Content**. We understand the importance of producing content that speaks to the concerns and aspirations of our communities. To achieve this, we commit to engaging in media projects that celebrate our differences while working to bridge divides. By doing so, we seek to build trust and understanding, fostering a sense of connection.*

Aligned Facilities are a crucial component of our plan. We envision designing and building adaptable facilities that not only meet our current needs but also anticipate the future requirements of our ever-evolving role in the community. These spaces will serve as common ground for public media content, fostering engagement, and community collaboration.

Community Representation is a value that underpins everything we do. NorCal Public Media is steadfast in our commitment to creating an open and safe space where everyone from our community feels respected and valued. The celebration of representation is not just a point of pride but a source of strength that enriches and unites us. By fostering authentic connections, we believe we can create a greater sense of empathy and belonging for all.

This strategic plan represents a roadmap for NorCal Public Media to evolve and thrive. We invite you to join us on this exciting journey as we work together to create a media organization that truly reflects and serves the needs of the Bay Area today and tomorrow.

Your support has been instrumental in our success, and we look forward to continuing to serve you with the highest standards of journalistic excellence and community engagement.

Sincerely,

DARREN LASHELLE
PRESIDENT & CEO





AUDIENCE & COMMUNITY

STRATEGIC PRIORITY STATEMENT

NorCal Public Media pledges to deepen our connection to the diverse communities of our region, including those underrepresented in our audience by sharing new voices, developing new sources and inspiring new conversations.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- 1 **Know** our audiences to better serve them
- 2 **Understand** the changing needs of our communities
- 3 **Increase** engagement and dialogue with underrepresented voices
- 4 **Increase** our presence as an essential and trusted resource
- 5 **Grow** our membership across all platforms and partnerships by 20,000 donors over five years

STRATEGIES

1. Know our audiences to better serve them

- Discover as much as we can about our potential audience from existing information, including census data for all nine counties
- Understand the age, gender, ethnicity, and economic demographics for the nine counties and municipalities
- Aggregate all the data we have about our listeners/viewers and digital media users thru Trac media, Eastlan, Comscore, our membership, website, social media platforms, YouTube, and other means
- Connect with and survey community non-profits and service organizations to gather more information about existing and potential audiences
- Document the audiences we are not currently serving and develop strategies to engage with them through programming and events

2. Understand the changing needs of our communities

- Develop a plan to meet and consult with community leaders, organizations, service groups, including youth, the elderly and the underrepresented.
- Foster continuing relationships that build trust and consistency
- Create a dedicated community engagement coordinator on staff, supported by an advisory group of staff, board of directors, and community advisory committee members
- Develop a volunteer corps of community members to help with community engagement efforts (for example: staffing event tables, appearing on NorCal's behalf at events, handing out informational material, etc.)
- Participate regularly in community events, tabling and partnering at outdoor events with staff and volunteers to interact with people at festivals, cultural celebrations, educational events, environmental conferences, emergency planning events
- Explore how we brand ourselves. Geographically (Sonoma vs Bay Area), services (emergency information, educational media), and mission (independent, free media for all), and more



3. Increase engagement and dialogue with underrepresented voices

- Prioritize community engagement by developing relationships with youth, social justice, and interfaith groups, where we can have an ongoing conversation about their concerns and needs
- Recognize important holidays and celebrations for all communities with the community calendar and PSAs presented by community members
- Target growth among 18–35-year-olds, children and young parents, underrepresented communities, including immigrants and other people of color
- Conduct live town meetings to serve all nine counties, organized around issues, including but not limited to housing, health care, environmental concerns, and social justice
- Develop targeted YouTube Channel programming

4. Become an essential and trusted resource

- Build on the trust developed by NPR and PBS as news leaders to further develop our brand awareness
- Partner with diverse community co-hosts to add needed diversity to on-air faces/voices and news story topics, as well as building music programs that are representative of all our communities. Representation matters!
- Promote existing PBS and other children's programs to reach diverse young parents
- Develop more resources around natural disaster and emergency information, taking advantage of our good and award-winning work



5. Grow our membership across all platforms and partnerships by 20,000 over 5 years

- Establish strategic partnerships, both geographically and demographically, in all the communities we serve
- Hold membership drives specific to the South Bay and East Bay
- Promote children's programming to reach young parents
- Offer affordable entry level membership for lower income and student listeners/viewers
- Strengthen our value proposition for the community we serve
- Think outside the box, take calculated risks, set the trends and become the leader not the follower





ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE & SUSTAINABILITY



STRATEGIC PRIORITY STATEMENT

NorCal Public Media will steward our resources responsibly. Creating a strong, resilient organization and service that endures through changes in public service, audience, staffing, technology, demographics, the industry, and the economy.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- 1 Implement** ongoing needs assessment including operational and asset management
- 2 Diversify** and **strengthen** revenue streams through dynamic development strategies
- 3 Assess** and **increase** operational efficiencies and innovation to optimize functionality within and across all departments
- 4 Cultivate** and **demonstrate** strategic leadership and administration
- 5 Be agile** and **responsive** in allocation of investment in emerging growth areas

- Emphasize grant seeking and grant writing as an integrated organizational strategy
- Institute a fundraising culture of informed experimentation
- Explore expanded digital fundraising through Day of Giving, Crowdfunding, Passport, NPR's upcoming podcast package and other new and emerging technologies

2. Implement ongoing needs assessment including operational and asset management

- Schedule an organizational needs assessment with full department meetings with senior management on a quarterly basis
- Assign responsibility for the needs assessment
- Ask staff and management to review current organizational structure
- Research best practices within and outside the industry
- Assess priorities for current and future implementation

STRATEGIES

1. Diversify and strengthen revenue streams through dynamic development strategies

- Identify new revenue streams by utilizing digital platforms for fundraising opportunities
- Grow membership within traditional donor structures while developing new membership strategies beyond the pledge drives and mailing cycles to solidify a sustainable future
- Focus on major donor relationship building
- Strengthen planned-giving and bequests through increased marketing and outreach to targeted demographics





3. Assess and increase operational efficiencies and innovation to optimize functionality within and across all departments

- Review organization chart
- Develop workflows and archive systems for more efficient asset management
- Create/update operation manuals
- Inventory, evaluate and audit organizational assets
- Assign single points of accountability
- Establish an organizational staff advisory group to meet semi-annually to determine trends, where we're going and where we need to be and to decide the conferences we need to attend
- Use Trello dashboard across all areas of the organization to ensure coordination and communication

4. Cultivate and demonstrate strategic leadership and administration

- Establish a clear vision and common set of values and purposes
- Measure performance against goals for excellence
- Create and support highly productive teams
- Plan and execute improved collaborations and communications across TV, radio, and digital sectors on a quarterly basis
- Develop a conflict resolution process
- Encourage and enact staff professional development within and outside of the organization through the online Public Media Learns platform, increasing travel budgets for staff and transforming internal meetings from "report out" sessions to opportunities to mentor, share, and develop skills and abilities



5. Be agile and responsive in allocation of investment in emerging growth areas

- Identify, through team structures, areas of potential growth
- Strategize support mechanisms such as resources, staff, and finances to explore new concepts in programming, management, and fundraising
- Monetize community enthusiasm and interest in new technologies and practices to entertain and educate
- Act swiftly to take advantage of emerging opportunities





DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION



STRATEGIC PRIORITY STATEMENT

NorCal Public Media will advance our digital tools, technology and systems to reach, engage, and serve audiences equitably across platforms, including digital content created with and for diverse audiences.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- 1 **Create** a Digital Content Manager position
- 2 **Explore** regional partnerships and platforms for content creation and sharing
- 3 **Communicate** in a regular, structured process
- 4 **Evaluate** activity and deliverables through an ongoing assessment of cost-benefit, impact, growth opportunities, and best practices
- 5 **Invest** in tools, technology, and systems to improve flexibility and efficiency of distribution and operations

2. Explore regional partnerships and platforms for content creation and sharing

- Try new strategies by taking calculated risks, in partnership with community organizations, that represent diverse audiences and communities
- Look for what partnerships are possible, and how to develop strategies to engage with partners in an authentic and transparent manner
- Share partner content from existing creators, allow partners to share NorCal Public Media content, and co-brand content elements with our partners

3. Communicate in a regular, structured process

- Support the Digital Content Manager in guiding an organizational shift to a culture of digital communication
- Create a standard of communication for digital content creation across departments e.g., Teams, Trello
- Hold regularly scheduled briefings and strategy sessions to coordinate content production and promotion, and develop the tools to support those efforts

STRATEGIES

1. Create a Digital Content Manager position

- Hire a Digital Content Manager (new position) with a depth of experience in digital platforms, social media communication methods, and experience-based knowledge of diverse audiences and their needs
- Work across video and audio platforms, as well as events and community outreach, to create exceptional digital content and set priorities
- Develop overall digital distribution plan matching content, message, and intended outcomes to platforms more effectively



4. Evaluate activity and deliverables through an ongoing assessment of cost-benefit, impact, growth opportunities, and best practices

- Determine which platforms and social networks are used by regional youth-driven organizations, and engage/promote/market via those channels
- Innovate and evaluate by reviewing the successes and failures of early adopters through our own research and existing research
- Explore how our capacity as a mid-sized, locally owned, nonprofit public media organization can be a strength in a crowded marketplace of large national, and international outlets
- Analyze current social media practices across the organization to assess time spent vs value of return in awareness and engagement

5. Invest in tools, technology, and systems to improve flexibility and efficiency of distribution and operations

- Pursue more effective search engine optimization through professional development and outsourced solutions
- Implement automation solutions for posting content across digital platforms
- Explore new intranet opportunities: streamlining information flows, media assets, document management
- Research and invest in tools to obtain and extract value from data in order to make informed decisions



TRUSTED CONTENT

STRATEGIC PRIORITY STATEMENT

NorCal Public Media will create trusted content responsive to the concerns and aspirations of our communities by engaging in conversations that celebrate and bridge our differences.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- 1 **Conduct** ongoing assessment of all content across all platforms
- 2 **Focus** and **grow** local and regional news coverage, environmental, cultural, and civics programming
- 3 **Develop** more immediate and interactive programming around issues of importance to our communities
- 4 **Plan** and **market** multi-generational and multi-cultural programming across all platforms
- 5 **Promote** our programs and services more effectively as content creators

STRATEGIES

1. Conduct ongoing assessment of all content across all platforms

- Create content surveys for our many audiences
- Use Google AdWords and search engine optimization to test engagement of areas of content
- Research which communities in our service area are underrepresented, and set content creation and partnership goals to better serve diverse audiences/geographic audiences
- Assess the metrics we use to evaluate demographics and success, including research and ratings information and public feedback

2. Focus and grow local and regional news coverage, environmental, cultural, and civics programming

- Explore the idea of creating an All-Local Content Channel on broadcast and/or digital FAST channel around content we excel in creating and presenting
- Recognize the changing identity of the station and grow our presence effectively and strategically in these content areas
- Grow news and local programming through effective partnerships that celebrate and present diversity

3. Develop more immediate and interactive programming around issues of importance to our communities

- Produce more regularly scheduled call-in shows on community topics
- Conduct Social media livestream efforts on important topics
- Livestream radio shows with camera installed in radio studios
- Create more focused short form content for digital first audiences within initiatives that also air on broadcast for cohesion and branding
- Explore text communication and e-newsletters to distribute NorCal News Stories

- Create content around shared experiences in the community where NorCal acts as a content aggregator, not solely as a content producer, like picture posting, question answering
- Build music audiences with video content of musicians in the radio studio performing and record the session to create pledge premium music albums and shows
- Produce live TV and radio presentations around NorCal's core programmatic themes (news coverage, environmental, cultural, and civics programming)



4. Plan and market multi-generational and multi-cultural programming across all platforms

- Define what *responsive* means to content creation and provide guidelines for measuring program development and scheduling
- Create a cohesive marketing plan that ensures a unified message across all platforms
- Create new content-based fundraising concepts like wine clubs, family and child membership opportunities, travel experiences, and a NorCal discount card
- Provide and expand content in alternative languages



5. Promote our programs and services more effectively as content creators

- Develop effective cross-promotional practices between video creators, audio creators, social media creators, and management
- Assess the effectiveness of our promotional activity on the air and online with research and supporting data
- Collaborate on developing meeting schedules and digital communication platforms to share concepts, assets, and editorial calendars to keep promotional work on track and on schedule
- Utilize NPR and PBS assets to enhance our local message with national resources
- Support fundraising and institutional messaging with exceptional creative promotional elements and campaigns to raise awareness and facilitate donations





ALIGNED FACILITIES



STRATEGIC PRIORITY STATEMENT

NorCal Public Media will design and build adaptable facilities for future needs that create common ground for public media content that engages the community..

KEY OBJECTIVES

1. **Assess** the organizational, financial, and community landscape for project viability
2. **Ensure** that facility plans are aligned with all strategic plan pillars
3. **Involve** all stakeholders in a charrette process
4. **Create** a master plan
5. **Produce** a capital campaign case and feasibility study

STRATEGIES

1. Assess the organizational, financial, and community landscape for project

- Complete a staff-led study of the current facility including square footage, space usage analysis, specific individual and departmental needs, and future needs
- Survey available commercial properties and real estate opportunities for suitability including cost, location, readiness, public access, scalability, parking, visibility, and other relevant factors
- Explore potential community partnerships

2. Ensure that facility plans are aligned with all strategic plan pillars

- Assemble a Facilities Planning Team with responsibility for compiling staff and Board input, and providing guidance and updates throughout the design and building process
- Identify and prioritize goals from the strategic plan that should be incorporated into the design process and reflected in the outcome
- Communicate and collaborate regularly with the Strategic Planning Committee throughout the planning and design process

3. Involve all stakeholders in a charrette

- Hire an architect(s) for conceptual design consultation and charrette activities
- Develop initial concepts for a new/remodeled/expanded facility using the facility study and Strategic Plan as a starting point
- Involve staff, Board, Community Advisory Council, volunteers, supporters and community partners in a series of charrettes to encourage co-design opportunities

4. Create a master plan

- Make a final selection of the architect(s) and consultants
- Ensure the master plan aligns with the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan, incorporates all critical facility needs established under Strategies 1-3, and reflects the values of the organization
- Staff and Board will continue to inform and shape design decisions and overall direction as needed throughout the entire process

5. Produce a capital campaign case and feasibility study

- Conduct a feasibility study to support a capital campaign
- Incorporate beneficial outcomes from the design process into the capital campaign promotion



COMMUNITY REPRESENTATION

STRATEGIC PRIORITY STATEMENT

NorCal Public Media is committed to creating an open and safe space where everyone feels respected and valued. Our diversity connects us, enriches us and unites us. Authentic connection leads to a greater sense of empathy and belonging. We all belong.

KEY OBJECTIVES

1. **Represent** the Bay Area community among our Staff, Board, Radio Volunteer Guild, and the Community Advisory Council
2. **Develop** a Community Representation Roadmap
3. **Commit** to ongoing internal education, communication, and participation
4. **Increase** our visibility and engagement with representative community groups
5. **Reflect** full representation of communities in our programs

STRATEGIES

1. **Represent the Bay Area community among our Staff, Board, Radio Volunteer Guild, and the Community Advisory Council**
 - Recruit representative job candidates by advertising in college and community newspapers/ websites that may reach communities we're not currently reaching
 - Find a means to attract, recruit, and retain workers that represent our region
 - Rethink and rewrite job requirements that will bring in representative applicants
 - Reach out to all communities in equitable measure

2. **Develop a Community Representation Roadmap**

- Identify demographics including Census data, Membership data, and Ratings information
- Include within the roadmap full representation of the communities we serve
- Develop a Board of Directors/Community Advisory Council team to work with NorCal management and staff on roadmap
- Convene a group of community leaders and voices to gather and communicate their perspectives on our services on our services





3. Commit to ongoing internal education, communication, and participation

- Add a practical/tangible aspect to staff education, including site visits, video presentations, hold staff brown-bag lunches with representation topics discussed
- Create committees on particular topics that will be informed by the roadmap
- Education should be ongoing instead of annually or biannually
- Create a culture of understanding and adoption of representation, including internal code of ethics



4. Increase our visibility and engagement with representative community groups

- Hire a dedicated NorCal community engagement representative to establish relationships with local organizations that serve the community
- Highlight local organizations through the stories of their clients through series/interstitials/news reporting
- Hold listening sessions and/or one-on-ones among representative groups to build bridges, educate, cultivate understanding, empathy, and relationships
- Reboot the existing Connect the Bay program series with a focus on representative communities throughout the Bay Area

5. Reflect full representation of communities in our programs

- Make sure news and podcasts can be enjoyed by all in our community
- Ensure content is available on our website that can be read by all in our community
- Offer documentaries online and on the air that represent our community
- Maintain robust community events calendar so we can celebrate everyone in the region by covering film festivals, festivals, special events, holidays, etc.
- Cultivate on camera faces and on microphone voices that represent the Bay Area community



MISSION

NorCal Public Media's mission is to be a trusted, independent, and essential voice that heightens awareness of the diversity of the human experience, reports on issues of importance, and convenes public discussion to strengthen our community.

VISION

NorCal Public Media's vision is to inspire audiences to learn from one another, examine the world around them, and make their own decisions as informed citizens on a lifelong journey of educational discovery.

VALUES

Our work is defined by values that shape our content and guide our organizational decisions. We are:

*Trustworthy and Honest
Welcoming and Inclusive
Transparent and Accountable
Empowering and Inspiring
Collaborative and Curious
Creative and Innovative*

