

# Casino Road Inclusive Economic Development



# Our Model

---

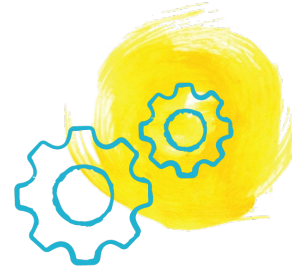
**Together with residents and partners, LISC helps forge resilient and inclusive communities of opportunity across America—great places to live, work, visit, do business and raise families.**



## Pool Public and Private Dollars

We raise funds from philanthropies, corporations and financial firms, federal, state and local governments and through the capital markets.

We also generate income from consulting, and lending services.



## Work With Local Partners

Through a network of local offices and community-based partners across the country, we provide grants, loans, equity and technical assistance.

We also lead advocacy efforts on local, regional and national policy.



## Support People and Places

By investing in housing, businesses, jobs, schools, public spaces, safety, youth, health centers, grocery stores and more, we catalyze opportunities in communities nationwide.



# Casino Road Neighborhood

Casino Road is largely a LatinX community, with a high concentration of Everett's newcomers, communities of color, and low-income households. The district includes retail, commercial, industrial, and residential along its corridors. There are two planned light rail stations on each end of Casino Road, but little permanently affordable housing. Already experiencing some of the region's highest eviction rates, the risk of displacement from change is high.



**Inclusive economic development initiatives to create equitable opportunities for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) to participate in and benefit from the economic growth of their neighborhoods.**

---

### **Project Objectives:**

**Provide an actionable economic development agenda in Casino Road that uplifts existing residents and businesses.**

**Support organizational capacity of local non-profits to implement and sustain this work**

### **Project's Guiding Principles:**

**Move at the speed of trust and operate in relationship**

**Respect community expertise and honor previous planning and organizing efforts**

**Be responsive to community needs and feedback**

**Recognize and build on community strengths and assets**

# Inclusive Economic Development Planning

## Goal

Gather feedback from community in an engaging way that doesn't duplicate previous surveys, meetings, or engagement efforts

Community feedback is essential to the development of the Inclusive Economic Development landscape analysis and agenda/implementation plan

## Challenge

Previous engagement efforts have bred distrust of institutional planning processes

The community has a history of low civic engagement

# Inclusive Economic Development Planning

## Approach

1. Review previous plans and surveys, summarize together key themes and findings
1. Conduct 1:1 interviews with diverse set of community, elected and organization leaders
2. Use themes from previous planning and interviews to determine key topics for community feedback
3. Contract with trusted community partner to co-design community outreach



# Connect Casino Road Summer Carnival

Community Partner: Connect  
Casino Road

Event cost: \$5,000

## Outcomes:

Over 300 people attended  
100+ people contributed ideas  
Much joy!

- Community leaders were asked the best way to build relationships and engage the community in a way that felt additive rather than extractive. They requested an opportunity to come together in joy and celebration.
- LISC provided funding to Connect Casino Road for a community carnival, with community resources, kid's games, giveaways and a food truck.
- For a meal ticket or to be entered into a raffle for giveaways, attendees provided feedback and ideas about affordable housing, transportation, job training, parks and open space and healthy food access.
- LISC booth staffed with Spanish speakers so feedback could be shared their native language rather than translated.





**We envision a future for the Casino Road community with accelerated access to opportunity, pathways for wealth creation, and community connection and belonging.**

---



- All residents are prepared with the right skills and have connections with key industries to access economic opportunities.
- Affordable housing in the Casino Road neighborhood enables current residents to maintain stability and existing connections to the community.
- A vibrant business district meets the needs of the community.
- Small businesses can access capital, training and technical assistance to thrive and grow.
- Existing residents benefit from and live close to light rail, transit and other transportation amenities.
- Residents feel safe, have access to parks and open space that are family-friendly and culturally relevant.
- Public art and placemaking create connection and celebrate the culture of the community.

# Future of Casino Road



### **Grow Organizational Capacity**

Casino Road has strong community-based organizations with sustainable staff capacity that can actively engage in economic development opportunities and expand partnerships.

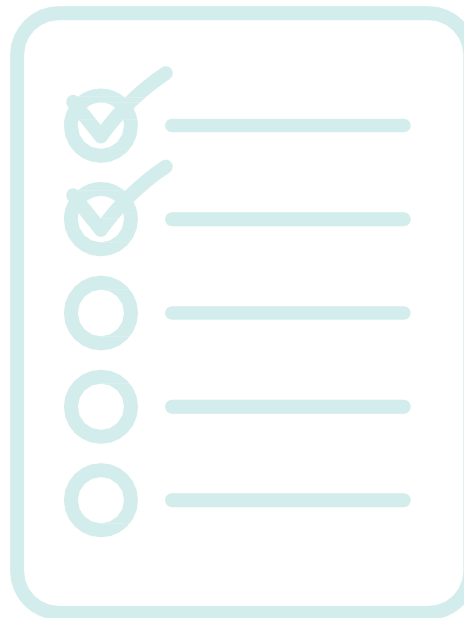
## **STRATEGY AREAS: Community vision**

### **Advocate for Affordable Housing Around Transit**

Casino Road residents benefit from and live close to light rail, transit, and other transportation amenities and fully participate in housing programs.

### **Expand Economic Opportunities**

Casino Road enjoys strong relationships with its key industries and small business districts, connecting residents to job opportunities and training and supporting a thriving neighborhood business district.



### **Invest in Parks, Recreation and Open Space**

The Casino Road community enjoys ample and easily accessible parks, open space and recreational areas which are safe, family-friendly and culturally relevant.

## Priority: Grow Organizational Capacity

Casino Road has strong community-based organizations with sustainable staff capacity that can actively engage in economic development opportunities and expand partnerships.

## Activities

- Economic Agenda has been shared widely and received positive reception
- New and renewed partnerships engaged in new programming
- Video production to inspire the inclusive vision of Casino Road's future
- LISC staff regularly provided connections and technical assistance
- Capacity building grant to support workforce development

## Outcomes

- Casino Road Economic Agenda has become a key reference document
- Connect Casino Road is now becoming an independent 501c3

## Next

- Form/partner with organization to lead community advocacy around built environment, small business organizing and serve as a champion for affordable housing development.
- Secure funding commitments from aligned funders from corporate, philanthropic and government sectors to sustain work.



## Priority: Expand Economic Opportunities

Casino Road enjoys strong relationships with its key industries and small business districts, connecting residents to job opportunities and training and supporting a thriving neighborhood business district.



### Activities

- Entrepreneurial training, English language acquisition, and child care training
- Community-driven programs have been launched to empower residents and foster economic resilience
- Delegation attended 2023 Small Business Anti-Displacement Network Conference attendance

### Outcomes

- 15 participants enrolled in financial literacy initiatives
- 26 graduates from Madres de Casino Road ESL classes
- 15 graduates from Imagine Institute to strengthen childcare support and create career opportunities in Early Childhood Education for Casino Road residents
- 21 graduates from Ventures Basic Business Course

### Next

- Conduct business outreach and connect small businesses with resources to support their stability and resilience.
- Create a Financial Opportunity Center to boost incomes in Casino Road by integrating training, employment services, and financial coaching.



## Priority: Invest in Parks, Recreation and Open Space

The Casino Road community enjoys ample and easily accessible parks, open space and recreational areas which are safe, family-friendly and culturally relevant.



### Activities

- Catalyzed traffic signal box art policy for City of Everett; Funded and supported traffic signal box art project, including new approach to community-led decision making
- Created connection with City of Everett Parks Department to share community priorities
- Funded creation of picnic area at Walter Hall Park

### Outcomes

- New picnic area will be operational by spring
- Installation of 5-8 signal box art boxes to celebrate community culture and reduce graffiti
- City of Everett Arts Commission now structures decision making with majority of decision makers from community

### Next

- Latin Music Festival at Walter Hall Park, to be held in July celebrating Hispanic culture, is the first of its kind of cultural programming at the park.
- City of Everett Parks Department will create better access to park amenities, with new trails and access points.



## Priority: Advocate for Affordable Housing Around Transit

Casino Road residents benefit from and live close to light rail, transit, and other transportation amenities and fully participate in housing programs.



## Activities

- The Affordable Housing Workplan has been a cornerstone initiative, uniting stakeholders in crafting a collaborative roadmap for retaining and expanding affordable housing.
- LISC Puget Sound facilitated a visit for stakeholders from the Casino Road community to [Together Center](#). Formerly a strip mall, Together Center has been transformed into affordable housing with integrated services.

## Outcomes

- Casino Road Affordable Housing Workplan was completed in partnership with stakeholders, through a four-month engagement process.

## Next

LISC and Housing Consortium will collaborate on implementation of the Casino Road Affordable Housing Workplan. Activities include, foundational policy work for City of Everett housing levy, outreach and engagement of property owners, identification of 2 – 3 affordable housing projects in the community.

# Lessons Learned

**1** Sustained, long-term relationships, rather than transactional outreach

**2** Engagement that provides value to the community based on its own priorities and needs

**3** Asset based mindset and recognition of community expertise and knowledge

**4** Funding to implement near term projects and create small wins

**5** Compensation for key partner community-based organizations

# THANK YOU!

