

# LARISA ORTIZ ASSOCIATES

Advisors in Commercial District Revitalization

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## QUALIFICATIONS STATEMENT

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**Larisa Ortiz Associates** is a consulting firm specializing in market analysis, strategic positioning, and retail and development strategies for downtown and neighborhood commercial districts. We help our clients devise a customized, market-based strategic vision for their district, turn this vision into an actionable plan, and support implementation of those plans over time.

### **Who is Larisa Ortiz Associates?**

**Larisa Ortiz** is an urban planner with over 15 years of national and international experience in the field of commercial revitalization and real estate development. In addition to consulting work, she is co-author of "Real Estate, Redevelopment & Reuse", a training manual published by the International Economic Development Council (IEDC). She is also editor of the *Commercial District Advisor*, a quarterly newsletter distributed to over 2,500 economic development practitioners that highlights best practices in commercial district revitalization from around the nation.

Larisa is former Director of both the Commercial Markets Advisory Service and MetroEdge, in-house technical assistance and market analysis units for the nation's largest community development intermediary, the Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC). In that capacity, Larisa traveled the nation in service of LISC's 30 regional offices. Her work involved advising communities on their commercial district planning and implementation activities.

A Watson Fellow and Fulbright Scholar, Larisa received a bachelor's degree with honors from Wesleyan University, and a master's degree in City Planning with a concentration in real estate development from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

### **What can we do for you?**

- **Commercial District Assessments**
- **Niche/Destination Retail Analysis**
- **Consumer Research**
  - Consumer Intercept Surveys
  - Resident Intercept Surveys
- **Market Analysis and Sales Leakage Analysis**
- **Branding and merchandise/leasing plans**
- **Retail Retention and Merchant Support Activities**
  - Retail Environment Audits
  - Individual Business Audits
- **Real Estate Feasibility Studies**
- **Trainings**
  - Introduction to Commercial District Management
  - Introduction to Market Analysis and Strategic Positioning
  - Basics of Retail Attraction
  - Basics of Retail Retention and Merchant Support
  - Strategies for Driving Retail Sales
- **Customized Solutions For Your District**

### **Past project experience includes:**

- Niche retail analysis - New Rochelle Business Improvement District, New Rochelle, NY
- Market analysis and training in retail prospecting and retail attraction - Jacksonville LISC/Springfield Preservation and Restoration Council, Jacksonville, Florida
- "Next Stop NYC" – an award winning New York City-wide marketing campaign promoting commercial districts along the F train line.
- 125<sup>th</sup> Street Rezoning/Arts, Culture and Entertainment Strategy – New York City Economic Development Corporation
- "Introduction to Commercial Corridor Management", one-day training - LISC Kansas City, Kansas City, MO
- "Preserving a Pueblo" – a plan for the revitalization of downtown Guayama, PR
- Jackson Heights Film and Food Festival, event founder and on-going program management – Jackson Heights, NY

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## FIRM PROFILE

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*The staff at **Larisa Ortiz Associates** bring a unique depth and breadth of expertise to all aspects and stages of successful commercial district revitalization, from strategic planning to financial feasibility to successful on-the-ground implementation.*

### **New Rochelle Business Improvement District (2008)**

Completed market analysis and a niche retail attraction/retention strategy with a strategic focus on two significant blocks along New Rochelle's Main Street. The project included trade area analysis for destination retail, a building inventory and business mix analysis, and focus group/individual interviews.

### **Jacksonville LISC/ Springfield Preservation and Revitalization Council (SPAR) (2007-2008)**

Provided training in retail attraction and leasing strategies, as well as on-going advisory services as SPAR initiated the City of Jacksonville, FL's first formal commercial corridor revitalization program.

### **LISC/International Council of Shopping Centers Applied Retail Attraction Training Program (2007-08)**

In partnership with the International Council of Shopping Centers, developed a seven-month capacity building program in retail attraction for non-profit organizations in five cities (Detroit, MI; Philadelphia, PA; Minneapolis, MI; Brooklyn, NY; Jacksonville, FL). Participating organizations were guided through a process that included the collection and interpretation of market data, the identification of retail categories for prospecting, and the preparation of marketing material and development sell-sheets, in preparation for participation in an ICSC trade-show.

### **LISC Urban Forum, Indianapolis, IN (2007-2008)**

Managed all aspects of planning and implementation for a 500+ person conference dedicated to exploring advanced concepts in comprehensive commercial corridor revitalization, with a focus on urban neighborhood commercial corridors.

### **Jackson Heights Film and Food Festival (2005-2008)**

Jackson Heights, Queens is among New York's most diverse neighborhoods known regionally for its authentic ethnic restaurants. However the community did not have an event to harness it's potential for destination retail and tourism. Ms. Ortiz is co-founder of the festival and serves as advisor and executive committee member involved in all festival planning and management. The festival now draws thousands of visitors to Jackson Heights annually and has been covered by Time Out New York and the New York Times.

### **Next Stop NYC City-Wide Marketing Campaign (2005-2006)**

Managed all aspects of the award-winning Next Stop NYC city-wide marketing campaign. The promotional campaign generated regional tourism for neighborhoods and commercial districts and was marketed extensively along select subway lines.

### **125<sup>th</sup> Street Arts, Cultural and Entertainment Strategy (2004-2006)**

Managed an inter-agency municipal team charged with high-profile planning, policy decision making, and implementation of innovative regulatory policies aimed at ensuring the continued preeminence of 125<sup>th</sup> Street in Harlem as an international destination for arts, culture and entertainment activities.

### **Mixed-Use Development Feasibility Study, Wallingford, CT (2003)**

In collaboration with the Yale Urban Design Workshop, performed an in-depth planning and development study for a 3-acre mid-block site in downtown Wallingford, CT. The concept plan, site analysis and financial feasibility study resulted in a proposal for twenty town homes, approximately 10,000 sf of new retail space, and a village center style "market square."

### **Middletown, CT, Main Street Program (1997-1998)**

Coordinated Middletown's successful grant application to the Connecticut Main Street Program, which resulted in \$70,000 worth of free consulting services from the National Main Street Program. Supported board development, public outreach, and authored a weekly ghost column in a local paper highlighting the benefits of Main Street revitalization.