Proudly Serving Columbia Pike since 1986

Columbia Pike Revitalization Organization

CELEBRATING 35 YEARS

Proudly Serving Columbia Pike since 1986
It has been my greatest honor to serve as the Executive Director of the Columbia Pike Revitalization Organization (CPRO) for the past two years. As an Arlington resident for 20 years, I am truly grateful for the opportunity to combine my professional knowledge with my passion for this community.

I want to thank the Columbia Pike community for embracing me and supporting this amazing organization that was built by the many wonderful leaders that came before me. Over the past 35 years, CPRO and its leadership have accomplished a great deal, building lasting partnerships and fostering decades of economic growth.

In my time as Executive Director I have come to know so many smart, passionate people that have dedicated themselves to supporting this diverse community. I am hopeful that the new partnerships we have made these past few years will also stand the test of time and continue to support Columbia Pike for another 35 years.

Kim Klingler
Executive Director

2020/21 STAFF

Amy McWilliams
Deputy Director

Stephen Gregory Smith
Program Director

Amanda Lovins
Communications and Fundraising Coordinator

Lucero Alvarez
Business Engagement Specialist
In March of 2021, CPRO announced the formation of its new Community Advisory Council (CAC).

“We have an amazing Board of Directors that thought it was important to form a broader group of advisors to ensure everything we do is informed by the perspectives of our wonderfully diverse community,” said Executive Director Kim Klingler.

The Council’s 30+ members assist CPRO with their mission to foster a vibrant, safe, connected, and diverse Columbia Pike community by providing CPRO with their time, unique expertise, connections, and perspectives on how the organization's programs and initiatives can better serve those within the community.
Our Mission
To foster a vibrant, safe, connected, and diverse Columbia Pike community. CPRO exists to be the convening body representing the interests of all those who live, work and visit Columbia Pike.

Our Vision
An authentic, exciting, and accessible Columbia Pike community where social, ethnic, and economic diversity is celebrated.
Our Values

At its core, CPRO values inclusiveness, connectivity, heritage, and prosperity.

Inclusiveness.
We strive to make Columbia Pike a place for all people – one that people of all walks of life can enjoy and/or call home.

Connectivity.
We work to convene and connect residents, visitors, businesses, and property owners with each other and with Arlington County to create a sense of community, provide a collective voice, and ensure we are all working together to achieve our goals.

Heritage.
We celebrate and work to preserve Columbia Pike’s rich history and diversity.

Prosperity.
Everything we do is to create equity and increase the quality of life of our community and build a better future for all.

The Columbia Pike Revitalization Organization (CPRO) is a coalition of businesses, residents, property owners, and the Arlington County Government dedicated to serving the 3.5-mile-long stretch of Columbia Pike from Arlington’s border with Fairfax County in the west to Arlington National Cemetery and the Pentagon in the east.

CPRO was established as a public/private partnership in 1986 to assist Arlington County with the development of the Columbia Pike Initiative: A Revitalization Plan.
35 Years of Creating Community Through PLACEMAKING

Columbia Pike Blues Festival

The festival was founded in 1995 under CPRO Executive Director Conchita Mitchell. It was originally a small event held at Patrick Henry Elementary School where families would gather with their picnics and blankets to listen to local blues bands.

Now the Columbia Pike Blues Festival is hailed as “Arlington’s best block party” (Arlington Magazine) drawing in thousands of visitors each year to S. Walter Reed Dr. The most recent Blues Festivals also featured national names such as Sugaray Rayford, Thornetta Davis, and Don Bryant.

Columbia Pike Movie Nights

In 2011, Executive Director Takis Karantonis launched the very first outdoor movie night on Columbia Pike. One Saturday night that August, residents and visitors gathered at Penrose Square to watch The Blind Side. It was so popular that CPRO hosted more outdoor movies the next year and the Columbia Pike Movie Nights became an annual event.

The movie nights gradually expanded, adding more movies and a second location. For several years, Columbia Pike residents enjoyed over 20 movies each summer at Arlington Mill Community Center and Penrose Square.
Columbia Pike Farmers Market

The Columbia Pike Farmers Market is one of the oldest in Arlington County. Founded by CPRO Executive Director Conchita Mitchell, it began as a “Growers Market.” All of its vendors were local farmers who grew their own food and the farmers themselves ran the market, setting their own rules and regulations.

Originally located in a small gravel lot behind the pharmacy at Columbia Pike and S. Walter Reed Dr., CPRO Executive Director Jim Whittaker moved the market to Pike Park, the small park in front of the pharmacy for greater visibility and helped grow the market to what it is today. Now residents and visitors can find a variety of homemade products in addition to the fresh produce vendors they know and love.

Other Events & Initiatives

Our newest annual event is Paws on the Pike. Launched in 2018, the event is a large pet fair designed to support our local businesses and help resident pet-owners connect to local veterinarians, groomers, shelters, and more.

CPRO has also partnered with various organizations to support their local events, including Groovin’ on the Pike with the Arlington Public Library, Celebrate Local Heroes Day with Arlington County Police, Fire, Sheriff, and Animal Control, Penrose Square’s Winter Wonderland and others.

In 2018, under the direction of Executive Director Cecilia Cassidy, CPRO completed the installation of 70 placemaking banners on Columbia Pike. The project is intended to visually unify the four-mile stretch of Columbia Pike from the Sheraton Pentagon City on the east end to the Western Boundary Marker at Jefferson Street. Designed by our partners, Winking Fish, and funded by grants from Arlington County, The Washington Forrest Foundation, and the Virginia Main Street Affiliate Program, the banner project was a year in the making, created at the directive of the Arlington County Board in April 2017.
The Columbia Pike Initiative

In 1998, Arlington County and the Columbia Pike Revitalization Organization (CPRO) embarked on a planning process called the Columbia Pike Initiative to encourage revitalization and build a safer, cleaner, more competitive, and vibrant Columbia Pike.

During an extensive public charrette process led by Dover, Kohl & Partners in 2002, over 700 citizens, along with local stakeholders and the design team, studied four specific areas along the corridor. The result was a new vision that includes a vibrant main street with affordable housing, improved transit, more urban parks and a safe environment to bike and walk and a revitalization plan that will guide sustainable development and housing for all.

CPRO and its Executive Director Tim Lynch were instrumental to this process, hosting over 300 public meetings with local residents, civic associations, the Arlington Chamber of Commerce, property owners, and more to ensure the community’s voice was heard. After the intense public charrette process, CPRO turned its offices into a design studio where the Dover, Kohl & Partners team could work while allowing the public the visit and stay involved as they developed the final plan for publication.
Form Based Code

With the community’s vision documented in the Columbia Pike Initiative, the next step was to create a mechanism for encouraging the type of development and growth that would make that vision a reality. That mechanism was the Form Based Code (FBC). The FBC provided a blueprint for developers looking to build along the Columbia Pike corridor, allowing for new development to happen quickly. It outlined the general design, requirements for outdoor space, and streetscape improvements.

Since adoption of the FBC, 13 projects have been approved along the Pike with another four under review. More than 1,900 residential units, more than 210,000 square feet of commercial space, the 52,300 square-foot Arlington Mill Community Center, public plazas and supermarkets have been added to Columbia Pike.

CPRO was heavily involved in the development of the FBC and outreach to developers who were interested in investing in the area. CPRO Executive Director Jim Whittaker was a major advocate for the building of the Arlington Mill Community Center and saw the first three FBC developments break ground during his tenure. In recent years, Executive Director Kim Klingler has worked with local stakeholders to outline suggested amendments to the FBC to stay current with market trends and better serve the community’s needs.

Transportation

Access to public transportation has always been vital to the Columbia Pike community. Over the years, CPRO has taken a leading role in advocating for rapid, reliable transportation, meeting regularly with Arlington County officials and hosting public forums to ensure our rapidly growing community has the access it deserved.

Now the Columbia Pike Premium Transit Network is in development. Utilities have been undergrounded, streetscape improvements have been made, and the foundations have been laid for the first eight (of twenty-three total) new transit stations.

Early next year these stations will be completed and Columbia Pike will have increased local connector service as well as direct limited-stop service to the Pentagon and points in DC. Amenities will also be enhanced with off-vehicle fare collections, near-level boarding, real-time bus arrival information and more.
Staying Informed

Columbia Pike Revitalization Organization (CPR) staff are constantly meeting with community activists, County staff and board members, leaders of local organizations, and more to ensure we are as up-to-date as possible on what is happening in our community and are able to lend a helping hand wherever needed. Our staff and board members also sit on various commissions, committees, and working groups to stay informed and advocate for community needs.

We work diligently to share important information with both residents and businesses along the Columbia Pike corridor through our weekly newsletter, blog, social media pages, and other online platforms. We also host public forums for local business owners or other stakeholder meetings to discuss important topics or visit local businesses to guarantee the community is kept apprised of upcoming projects.

Columbia Pike Progress Luncheon

Each year, the Columbia Pike Revitalization Organization (CPR) brings together area residents, businesses, developers, and other stakeholders to stay informed and engaged on the growth and development of the Columbia Pike corridor. Panels of speakers are gathered to report on recent Arlington County projects, new buildings under construction, how challenges are being addressed, and what progress lies ahead.
35 Years of Partnerships

2300 9th St
Acme Pie Company
AHC, Inc.
Alpha Graphics
Amazon
Animal Welfare League of Arlington
Arlington Animal Hospital
Arlington Branch NAACP
Arlington Chamber of Commerce
Arlington Cinema & Draft House
Arlington Community Federal
Credit Union
Arlington Community Foundation
Arlington Convention and Visitors Service (StayArlington)
Arlington County Board
Arlington County Community Planning, Housing and Development (CPHD)
Arlington County Commuter Services
Arlington County Department of Environmental Services
Arlington County Department of Human Services
Arlington County Manager
Arlington County Police Department
Arlington Economic Development
Arlington Food Assistance Center
Arlington Free Clinic
Arlington Independent Media
Arlington Magazine
Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing
Arlington Presbyterian Church
Arlington Public School
Arlington South Lions Club
Arlington Strategy
Arlington Thrive
ARLnow
Aspire! Afterschool
Attila's Restaurant
Atacat Restaurant
Bailey's Crossroads/ Seven Corners Revitalization Corporation
Ballston BID
Bangkok 54
BBQ Grill Masters
Bean Kinney & Korman P.C.
BLM Arlington
Blue Land Media
BM Smith & Associates
Bound Train
Bridges to Independence
Burgers of Columbia Pike, Inc.
Café Sazón
Caspi Restaurant and Lounge
Cassiel's Hair Salon
Celtic House Irish Pub & Restaurant
Clarendon Alliance
Clarendon Animal Care
Columbia Pike Artist Studios
Columbia Pike Documentary Project
Columbia Pike Laundry
Columbia Pike Thrift Shop, Trinity Episcopal Church
Connect
Dalton Digital
Dama Ethiopian Restaurant
DeLashmutt Associates, Ltd.
Donohoe
Doorways
Douglas J Woods
Dover, Kohl, & Partners
E.G. Reinsch
Eska Restaurant & Hookah
Ethiopian Community Development Council
Eye Smile Optometry and Dental Care
F4S Training
Falls Church News-Press
Flare
Fresh Fit
FreshFarm
Giant
Green Valley Civic Association
Greens N Teff
Harris Teeter
High Sierra Pools
Insight Property Group
Jaime Barron, P.C., Immigration Law Group
Jim Talbert Residential
JM International
Kabobistan
KCM Construction Management
KGD Architecture
La Cocina VA
Langston Boulevard Alliance
Latino Economic Development Center
Le Touche Beauty Salon
Leaders in Energy
Legend Kicks & Apparel
Lisa Cherkasky
Los Chamacos
Lost Dog Café South Arlington
Mancini de Paris
Manoukian Brothers Oriental Rugs
Mary Arshall Assisted Living
Mega M Art Express
Mellowood
Meron Companies
Michael Garcia, State Farm Insurance
M S R M A & Sports Rehab
More Vang
National Landing BID
N Street Market
Nino’s Taqueria
Offender Aid and Restoration
Our Lady Queen of Peace
Pan American Bakery
Path Forward (formerly A-SPAN)
Pentagon Mixed Media
Peruvian Brothers
Phoenix Bikes
Pike Presidents Group
Pino Bangla
Pupatella
Rakusin & Becker Management
Randolph Elementary School PTA
Real Food for Kids
Rebellion on The Pike
Reinsch Pierce Family Foundation
Republic Family of Companies
Rinconde Thai Cuisine
Rosslyn BID
Ruthie’s All-Day
S.L. Nusbaum Realty Co.
Shirlington Civic Association
Sofia’s Pupuseria
Sonina Properties
SYNERGY Homecare
Takahachi
The Black Heritage Museum of Arlington
The Broiler
The Burka Family
The Caruthers Companies
The Elliott at Fillmore Center
The Leadership Center for Excellence
The Woman’s Club of Arlington
Tortas Y Tacos La Chiquita
Trafalgar Flats
Trip Advisor
Trove
U.S. Air Force Memorial
United Bank, South Arlington Branch
Virginia Housing Development Authority
Virginia Hospital Center
Virginia M ain Street
Volunteer Arlington
Walsh Colucci Lubeley & Walsh PC
Walter L. Phillips, Inc.
Washington Forrest Foundation
Washington WorkPlace
Wendroff & Associates, CPA
West End Columbia Pike Coalition
Will Reintzell Photography
Willi am Jeffrey’s Tavern
Winter Fish
YW Capital Investment

35 Years of Leadership

1989 Lauren Adkins
1991 Darlene Mickey
1995 Conchita Mitchell
2000 Tim Lynch
2006 Jim W hittaker
2010 Takis Karantonis
2016 Cecilia Cassidy
2019 Karen Vasquez, Interim
2019 Kim Klingler
Adapting to the “New Normal” in Our 35th Year, 2020-2021

In 2020, the world changed and we had to change with it. As the COVID-19 pandemic plunged our businesses into shutdowns and families into uncertainty, The Columbia Pike Revitalization Organization (CPRO) worked quickly to adapt to Columbia Pike’s changing needs.

Buy a Nurse Lunch

As restaurants were struggling with capacity restrictions or shutdowns and our local hospital was becoming overwhelmed with patients, a local resident reached out to CPRO with an idea: raise funds to purchase meals from Columbia Pike restaurants and deliver them to the staff at Virginia Hospital Center (VHC).

This idea evolved into our Buy a Nurse Lunch program. Thanks to the generosity of our community we were able to deliver weekly meals to the nurses and staff at VHC, Arlington Free Clinic, Arlington Pediatric Center, and Mary Marshall Assisted Living for over a year.

- **$60,000 + raised**
- **4,300 meals delivered**
- **15 restaurants supported**

Restaurant Partners: BBQ At It’s Best, Café Sazón, Celtic House Irish Pub & Restaurant, Cinthia’s Bakery II, Dama Restaurant & Pastry, La Cocina VA, Los Chamacos Mexican Restaurant, Lost Dog Cafe, South Arlington, Peruvian Brothers, Pupatella, Rebellion on the Pike, Rincome Thai, Ruthie’s All-Day, Tortas Y Tacos La Chiquita, William Jeffrey’s Tavern

Delivery Partners: Flare Rides, Connect

New Signage & Programs

With businesses needing to change their hours or services offered, we worked to help them spread the word. We advocated for loosened signage restrictions and provided over 50 Columbia Pike businesses with free, large vinyl banners to better communicate with their customers. We also hung a large street banner advertising that Columbia Pike was still here and open for business.
Meals for A-SPAN

As hypothermia season hit with the COVID-19 pandemic still underway, our friends at Pathforward (formerly A-SPAN) found themselves in need of assistance feeding the additional guests in their shelter. So CPRO formed a partnership with La Cocina VA to provide 1,300 meals to A-SPAN for the winter of 2021 (January – March). The program was funded by Arlington Presbyterian Church, E.G. Reinsch, an anonymous donor, and several local contributors.

Feed Our Families

In May 2020, food insecurity became a clear threat to our community. At the same time, our farmers market vendors were seeing a steep decline in customers, leaving them with a surplus of crops. We reached out to our partners and worked diligently to find a way to bring that surplus of fresh food to the Columbia Pike families most in need.

Thanks to the astonishing generosity of the Arlington Presbyterian Church, Darla C. Ellis Memorial Fund, and local residents, we were able to purchase and deliver weekly boxes of fresh produce from our Columbia Pike Farmer Market vendors to residents at Harvey Hall and Gilliam Place as well as to Our Lady Queen of Peace’s food pantry.

Program partners: AHC, Inc. (Harvey Hall), Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing (Gilliam Place), Arlington Presbyterian Church, Darla C. Ellis Memorial Fund, Our Lady Queen of Peace, Penn Farm, Twin Springs Fruit Farm, Westmoreland Produce

$100,000+ raised

4,800+ produce boxes delivered

Supporting Columbia Pike Residents

M e a l s f o r A - S P A N
Keeping the Community Connected in Our 35th Year, 2020-2021

The COVID-19 pandemic forced the cancellation of large events and community gatherings forcing us all to find new ways to connect and communicate. CPRO was no exception and spreading timely, accurate information to our businesses and residents was more important than ever. We developed new virtual forums to keep the community informed and adapted our annual events to continue to bring joy and human connection whenever we could.

Virtual Roundtables and Forums

CPRO hosted numerous virtual roundtables and forums for businesses and residents alike. Public forums included discussions with Arlington County Police on safety concerns, the unique challenges faced by our diverse communities during the pandemic, and ways that partnerships could be created to address the growing needs of our community. We also hosted several “Listening Sessions” to provide a safe online space for businesses and residents to share with each other the challenges they were facing and the solutions they found. From these listening sessions came several new partnerships and the development of our monthly “Columbia Pike Business Roundtables.”

We took the challenges our businesses shared with us and turned them into topics for open dialogue and sought to provide more personal connections by featuring a local business as the primary speakers for each of the roundtables. Discussions included managing social media with the Animal Welfare League of Arlington, setting up a Google business account with Arlington Strategy, and improving food and product photography with professional food stylist for the Washington Post, Lisa Cherkasky.

Boletín de Columbia Pike

With limited online access and so much information being released solely in English, we felt it was vital to provide a printed publication to ensure access to the resources our Spanish-speaking small business owners needed. Our new Business & Engagement Specialist, Lucero Alvarez, worked with our Communications and Fundraising Coordinator, Amanda Lovins, and the CPRO team to produce Boletín.
Adapting Our Annual Events

Columbia Pike Movie Nights
In partnership with Arlington Public Schools and the Arlington Career Center, CPRO adapted its 2020 and 2021 summer movie nights into Drive-In Movie Nights, continuing to provide quality entertainment and community connection safely.

Columbia Pike Blues Festival
While the COVID-19 pandemic prevented CPRO from hosting a large street festival, we worked tirelessly with our partners to ensure the blues still rang out on the Pike. In 2020, we hosted a blues radio broadcast under the name “Backyard Blues Fest” with the help of our partners Arlington Arts and WERA 96.7 FM. In 2021, we hosted a “Blues Weekend” with both in-person and live-streamed performances with our partners at Arlington Arts, Manoukian Brothers Oriental Rugs, and Blue Land Media.

Columbia Pike Farmers Market
When the COVID-19 pandemic began to shut down markets across the nation, CPRO took the necessary steps to ensure our community continued to have access to fresh food. We built a unique online platform that allowed customers to pre-order their items and pick them up quickly and safely. We also temporarily relocated the market across the street to the Fillmore Gardens Shopping Center to allow adequate social distancing of both vendors and customers. In the summer of 2021, we were thrilled to reopen the market in Pike Park.