ACT for ALEXANDRIA
A COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

POLICY AGENDA



Advancing Economic Well-Being

ACT for Alexandria advances policies and investments that strengthen economic well-being and help Alexandrians build secure, fulfilling futures in the community they call home.

How We Understand Economic Well-Being

200+

Alexandria residents shared what economic well-being means to them

Alexandria residents define economic well-being as having enough to feel secure, make choices, and live with a sense of freedom.

It is about more than income. It is about having the security and agency to shape your future and the sense of belonging that comes from being able to stay and thrive in your community.

WHY IT MATTERS

1 in 4

Alexandria children live in food-insecure households

Source: Capital Area Food Bank, 2026

2x

Black households are twice as likely to lack the money to meet basic essentials

44% of Black households vs. 21% of White households

Source: ALICE

28.4%

Increase in personal bankruptcy filings over the past year

Source: DMV Monitor

WE BELIEVE ECONOMIC WELL-BEING RESTS ON THREE CONNECTED CONDITIONS

Stability

Being able to meet basic needs and build a secure foundation, with housing, food, healthcare, and utilities within reach.

+

Opportunity

Having pathways to build skills, pursue education, obtain sustaining careers, and create a more secure future.

+

Community Infrastructure

Having strong connected community systems, organizations, and partnerships.

OUR APPROACH

How We Approach Our Work

As a community foundation, ACT connects community priorities with the partners, resources, and policy opportunities needed to advance change. Our approach is grounded in community voice, belonging, and racial equity. We recognize that not all Alexandrians have had the same opportunities to achieve economic well-being. Historical and ongoing discrimination, structural racism, and inequitable policies and practices have created persistent racial disparities in access to resources, economic stability, and opportunity.

We seek to **center the people most affected by policy decisions**, examine who benefits and who may be left out, and advance solutions that address the systemic and institutional racism and structural barriers that contribute to unequal economic opportunities and outcomes in Alexandria.

GROUNDED IN

- **Community voice**
- **Belonging**
- **Racial equity**

ACT does not advocate alone.

We bring together **residents, nonprofits, businesses, and government** to elevate community priorities, connect Alexandria's experience to regional and state conversations, and mobilize people and resources for change.

How ACT Will Use This Agenda

This agenda sets out the values and direction that guide our work.

Invest

Mobilize philanthropic resources and align grantmaking and capacity building efforts with the priorities in the agenda and the outcomes residents say matter most.

Convene

Bring residents, nonprofits, and public and private partners together around shared goals and opportunities for collective action.

Advocate

Elevate community priorities with local, regional, and state decision-makers.

Learn and report

Track progress, examine disparities in outcomes, gather community input, and share what we learn.

Each year, ACT will share a legislative agenda that applies these priorities to specific city and state policies and budget recommendations.

ACT'S PRIORITIES

Five Priorities for Economic Well-Being

The first four priorities focus on the conditions that enable residents to achieve economic **stability** and **opportunity**. The fifth focuses on the **community infrastructure** and partnerships needed to support these outcomes.

STABILITY

01 Advance Housing Stability

Every Alexandrian should have a safe, affordable place to call home. We support policies and investments that:

- Expand and preserve affordable housing across the city
- Prevent eviction and displacement, particularly among renters, older adults, and communities of color who face disproportionate housing instability
- Support pathways to stable housing and homeownership, including opportunities to build long-term housing security and wealth
- Protect renters from excessive, hidden, and unfair rental fees, and ensure rental homes are safe, healthy, and well maintained

02 Strengthen the Safety Net

Everyone should have the resources to meet their basic needs, navigate unexpected challenges, and maintain a stable foundation. We support policies and investments that:

- Protect and improve access to food assistance, healthcare coverage, and public benefits
- Reduce administrative barriers and inequities in how public benefits are accessed and delivered so eligible residents can enroll and maintain their benefits
- Expand access to emergency financial assistance for residents facing a sudden financial crisis or unexpected expense
- Keep basic utilities affordable and reliable, recognizing access to essential services is fundamental to economic stability
- Support refundable tax credits and policies that increase household incomes, particularly for residents with low and moderate incomes

OPPORTUNITY

03 Expand Education, Career, and Entrepreneurship Pathways

Every Alexandrian, at every stage of life, should have the opportunity to build skills, obtain meaningful work, and develop pathways to economic security. We support policies and investments that:

- Advance equitable, well-resourced education from early learning through high school, with supports for students who face the greatest barriers
- Strengthen connections between learning and work, including internships, apprenticeships, career and technical education, and credentials that lead to in-demand careers with sustaining wages
- Expand upskilling and reskilling so residents can adapt to changing industries and technologies
- Expand access to entrepreneurship resources, including technical assistance, networks, and capital, for entrepreneurs who have historically faced barriers
- Address discrimination in education, hiring, compensation, and career advancement, particularly for people of color

04 Remove Barriers to Economic Participation

Affordable childcare and reliable transportation are essential infrastructure for work, education, and economic opportunity. We support policies and investments that:

- Expand access to affordable, high-quality childcare and early childhood education, including subsidies, while supporting a stable early childhood workforce
- Improve access to affordable, reliable public transit and other mobility options
- Prioritize equitable investments in childcare, transportation, and other infrastructure that connect residents in every neighborhood to jobs, schools, and services

CROSS-CUTTING

05 Build the Community Infrastructure for Economic Well-Being

Economic well-being depends on individual resources and opportunities and the strength of the systems that help people access them. We support policies and investments that:

- Sustain and strengthen the nonprofits that help residents meet basic needs and build economic security, particularly those serving communities most affected by economic inequities
- Support coordination, partnerships, and shared tools that connect residents to resources and help government, nonprofits, businesses, and philanthropy respond more effectively
- Create meaningful ways for residents, especially those most affected by economic inequities, to shape public policy and community investment decisions
- Ensure accurate, inclusive data collection, including the census, so all Alexandrians are counted
- Guide local economic policies that expand access to opportunity, address disparities, and ensure economic growth benefits residents across Alexandria

Join us

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Together, we can advance policies and investments that strengthen economic well-being and create opportunities for all Alexandrians to thrive.

To learn more or to join us in this work, contact **Brandi Yee**
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ABOUT ACT FOR ALEXANDRIA

ACT for Alexandria is Alexandria's community foundation. Our mission is to amplify the work of our community by bringing people and resources together. We envision an Alexandria that is just, vibrant, and equitable, where all who live and work here thrive and feel like they belong.