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Notes from editor (not for publication):

HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

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SEVCA survey: Rising costs straining local residents

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TEXT BODY:

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Housing affordability, food insecurity, and rising energy costs continue to place significant strain on individuals and families across southeastern Vermont, according to Southeastern Vermont Community Action's (SEVCA) 2025 Community Needs Assessment.

Over the past year, SEVCA engaged 630 residents, community partners, and local leaders across Windham and Windsor counties through surveys, interviews, and community

12 meetings to better understand emerging needs and barriers to
13 well-being.

14 The assessment found that while needs remain high,
15 community members also identified opportunities to strengthen
16 services, improve coordination, and make support systems easier
17 to access.

18 Key findings include:

19 • Housing, energy assistance, and food security remain
20 among the region's most pressing needs.

21 • Transportation barriers, geographic isolation, limited
22 digital access, and complex systems continue to make it difficult
23 for individuals and families to connect with services.

24 • Residents expressed a need for increased outreach and
25 clearer communication about available resources.

26 • Opportunities exist to strengthen partnerships and
27 improve coordination across programs and organizations.

28 "Community Action begins with listening," SEVCA
29 Executive Director Joshua Davis said in a news release. "This
30 assessment reinforces what many in our communities experience
31 every day: challenges are interconnected, and solutions must be
32 as well. The findings will help guide our efforts to strengthen
33 services, partnerships, and systems so that individuals and
34 families have the support they need to thrive."

35 The Community Needs Assessment will directly inform
36 SEVCA's three-year strategic plan, which is currently being
37 developed by staff and the Board of Directors. The plan will help
38 shape how SEVCA responds to evolving community needs and
39 will advance its mission of partnering with individuals and
40 communities to alleviate hardships, create opportunities, and
41 address the root causes of poverty.

42 In the coming months, SEVCA will release additional
43 information about its updated mission and vision statements and
44 the strategic priorities that will guide the organization into the
45 future. For the full recap on the community needs assessment,
46 visit sevca.org/community-needs-survey.

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LAST ISSUE IN WHICH THIS FILE CAN BE RUN:

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LINKS:

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VIDEO:

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LOGLINE (SOCIAL MEDIA):

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