



# MRV entities depend on the 2020 Census data

The Mad River Valley Planning District (MRVPD) is urging everyone to take the time to complete the 2020 U.S. Census because of how significantly it impacts The Valley and Vermont.

The Mad River Valley Planning District is one of many entities in the Mad River Valley that depends on census-collected data to fulfill its mission, according to MRVPD community planner Kati Gallagher.

As a regional planning body for Warren, Waitsfield and Fayston, the role of the MRVPD is to “carry out a program of planning for the future of the Mad River Valley ... directed toward the physical, social, economic, fiscal, environmental, cultural and aesthetic well-being of the member towns and its inhabitants.”

“The census provides an understanding about where we’ve been and who we are – key ingredients to plan for the

future,” she said.

Here are two specific ways that accurate completion of the census supports planning efforts in the Mad River Valley.

The first is the usefulness of the data collected by the census, including information about income and employment, housing costs, transportation options and more. The MRVPD incorporates this data in its annual Mad River Valley Data Report, providing a wide range of information used to paint a picture of community life, challenges and opportunities. Identifying changing trends over time helps inform municipal policies, business strategies and nonprofit programming.

Second, an accurate census count means that residents of the Mad River Valley retain access to federal and state funds. There are over 55 federal government programs operating in Vermont that

depend on the census to determine where and how their funds are spent. Programs use population, demographic, economic and housing characteristics in formulas to calculate allocations and determine program eligibility. Recent investments in the MRV have been made possible due to these programs, such as the Warren Main Street Improvement Project, Mad River Taste video series, multiple business loan guarantees, solar energy investments and more.

At the time of this writing, the Mad River Valley towns of Warren, Waitsfield and Fayston had an average response rate of 28 percent, compared with 43 percent for the state. One reason local numbers may be low is because census reminders are not mailed to post office boxes. People can fill out the census at any time online at [2020census.gov](https://2020census.gov).

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