Guide to Comparing Address Counts by Block

Reviewing census address counts in advance of Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) can be helpful to anticipate the desired level of participation and potential focus areas. While both housing unit and group quarter counts are provided in census reference files, instructions and examples are given using housing units.
Step 1: Identify census blocks in your government.
Step 2: Review census housing unit counts by census block.
Step 3: Identify government sources and tally housing unit counts per census block.
Step 4: Compare government block counts to census housing unit counts.

Step 1: Identify census blocks in your government
When LUCA starts, governments will have access to address counts specific to their jurisdiction. In the meantime, here are two approaches.

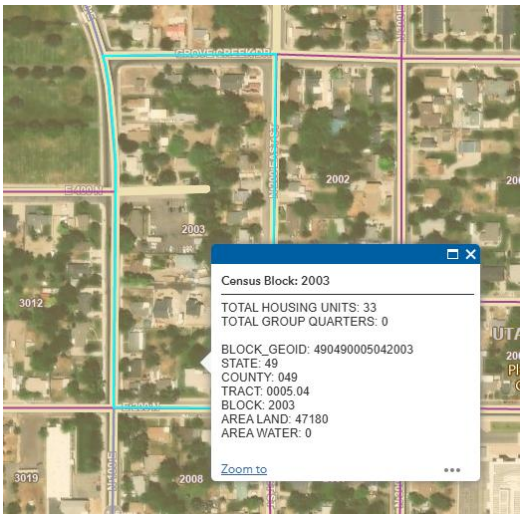
- Download a table of blocks from https://data.census.gov/advanced.
    - For Geographies, select Block and desired area. Look for "Within other geographies" as needed within the nation, state, or county.
    - Select a Table and download.
- Use the partnership shapefiles to determine blocks.

Step 2: Review census housing unit counts by census block

- Identify the number of housing units in each census block.
- This can be done by Data Table or Map Viewer. For a review of larger areas, extraction from the data table may be more efficient. Using the map viewer may be valuable for research or review of just a few census blocks.
- Data Table: https://www.census.gov/geographies/reference-files/2025/geo/addcountlisting.html
    - Select State to view.
    - Use BLOCK_GEOID or combination of state, count, and tract data to identify desired census blocks.

Data Table Example:
STATE|COUNTY|TRACT|BLOCK|BLOCK_GEOID|TOTAL HOUSING UNITS|TOTAL GROUP QUARTERS
49|049|0005.04|2001|490490005042001|35|0
49|049|0005.04|2002|490490005042002|23|0
49|049|0005.04|2003|490490005042003|33|0

- Map Viewer: Current Census Address Count Listing Files Viewer
  Navigate in the map to the desired location.
    - Select census block.
    - Make note of total housing units.
    - Repeat for each census block.
- Sum for the desired areas. Make note of your initial impressions. Does it seem high, low, or reasonable?



Step 3: Identify government sources and tally housing unit counts per census block

- Only residential living quarters will be included in 2030 Census operations, so care should be taken to exclude other addressed structures, such as libraries, fire hydrants, or businesses. Each unit in a multi-unit structure is a separate housing unit.

- The Address Geocoder can be used to identify census blocks for addresses with standard postal addresses.
- The Current Census Address Count Listing Files Viewer can be used to identify census blocks for housing units based on imagery, streets, or similar landmarks.
- Sum the number of government housing units for each block.

Step 4: Compare government housing counts to current census housing counts

- Calculate the difference between government housing units and current census housing units.
- Results can be used to consider desired level of participation in LUCA and potential focus areas.
- Governments that find the housing unit counts meet expectations may not need to devote as many resources for the LUCA review. This may be the case when census block counts match, or are very similar.
- Where housing unit counts do not match, consider reasons there may be differences.
- Governments that find the housing unit counts do not meet expectations across the government, or in specific areas may want to consider resources they can devote to participate in LUCA. See the section "Governments can explore resources that may be available to support them" on the LUCA website.
- For suggestions on how to develop an address list, including a focus on housing units that may be missing from traditional sources, see the section "Governments can update their address list or create one" in the "How to Start Preparing" section on the LUCA website.
- Governments are encouraged to continue to update address and parcel data and make it publicly available.

Count Comparison Example:

Census Block	Current Census Housing Units	Government Expected Housing Units	Difference
2001	34	35	1
2002	23	23	0
2003	26	33	7
Total	**83**	**91**	**8**

- Census block 2003 has the biggest difference in the number of housing units.
- Other census blocks have the same or a similar number of housing units.
- Overall, housing unit counts may be similar to expected, or additional review of census block 2003 may be considered.