

2026 Census Collective Dwelling Overview

Presentation to CDP

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Census Subject Matter Secretariat

Secrétariat des domaines spécialisés du recensement



Outline

Where we were:

- Past collection methods
- 2021 Census enumeration

Where we are:

- Objectives and timelines for the 2026 Census
- Changes for 2026:
 - Demographic data from non-institutional collectives
 - New qualitative testing
 - Census field readiness test
 - Electronic questionnaire (EQ) improvements
 - Follow-up strategy and return to in-person visits
 - New pre-contact survey
 - Improved collection for private attached dwellings
- Administrative sources
- Frame maintenance



Definitions

Collective dwelling:

- Refers to a dwelling of a commercial, institutional, or communal nature in which a person or group of persons resides or could reside.
- The collective dwelling must provide care or services or have common facilities shared by the occupants, such as a kitchen, dining room or bathroom.
- Examples include long-term care homes, residences for older adults, lodging or rooming houses, correctional facilities, group homes, hotels, motels, tourist establishments, hospitals, staff residences, military bases, and work camps.

Usual residents:

- The census counts people in the dwelling in which they usually live to ensure that a person is enumerated once and only once. People are counted in their usual place of residence.



Collective dwelling types

Institutional:

- Hospital
- Long-term care home or residence for older adults
- Residential care facility such as a group home for persons with disabilities or addictions
- Shelter
- Correctional or custodial facility
- Religious establishment (e.g. convent, monastery or seminary)

Non-institutional:

- Lodging or rooming house
- Hutterite colony
- Establishment with temporary accommodation services (e.g. hotel, campground, or hostel)
- Other establishment (e.g. school residence, military base, work camp)



Past collective dwelling enumeration methods

Prior to 2021:

- Collective dwellings were traditionally identified, classified and enumerated by census employees in the field. Data from collective dwellings was collected by field enumerators.
- Dwelling administrators, working with field staff, answered on behalf of their residents.
- Until 2016, in the case of hotels and campgrounds and other establishments with temporary accommodation, enumerators would leave census questionnaires for usual residents and then return to collect the completed questionnaires.
 - In 2016 and 2021, only usual resident head counts were collected.



2021 Collective dwelling enumeration methods

- 2021 pandemic protocols resulted in the elimination of in-person visits for institutional collective dwellings, including seniors' residences, long-term care facilities, hospitals and religious establishments.
- As a result, substantial changes were made to collection methods:
 - Introduction of an electronic questionnaire (EQ) to be completed by collective dwelling administrators.
 - Field collection retained for rooming houses and Hutterite colonies only
 - Non-response follow-up by field enumerators suspended for institutional collectives
 - Implementation of Computer-Assisted-Telephone-Interview (CATI) follow-up for institutional and most non-institutional collectives.
 - Collaboration with Justice Statistics to get complete administrative data replacement for people in federal penitentiaries.



2021 Census: Enumeration challenges

- Determination of in-scope vs out-of-scope collective dwellings.
 - Because field staff were not permitted to enter establishments that housed the most vulnerable due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Statistics Canada relied on the administrators of these establishments to determine the status of their dwelling.
 - Facility administrators did not always understand the concepts or what was required for the census. This resulted in a large number of cancelled or out-of-scope dwellings.
- High non-response rates for basic demographic information for residents from facility administrators, such as living arrangements and language variables.
 - For some collective dwellings, critical information was missing from the data provided (e.g., date of birth, sex at birth or gender) or no data was provided (blank attachments).
- Large increase in the number of private dwellings attached to a collective.

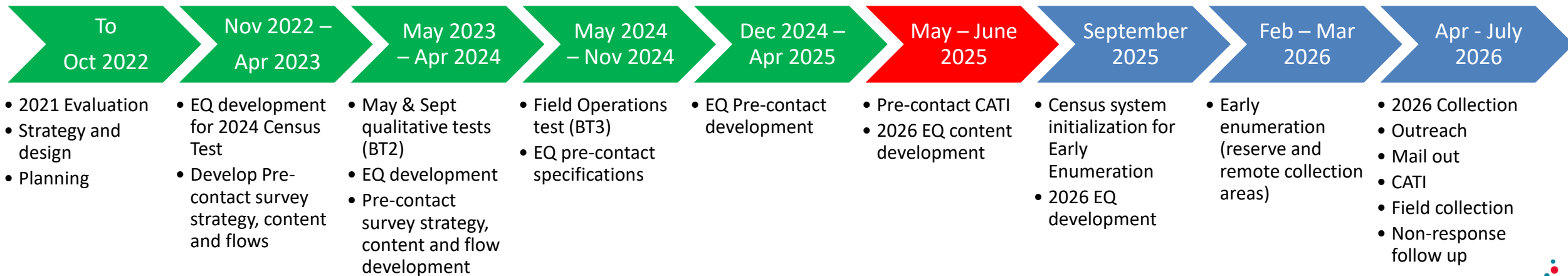


2026 Census: Objectives for collective dwelling enumeration

- Maximize data from persons residing within collective dwellings (usual residents)
 - Collect short form demographic data from usual residents of non-institutional collectives, rather than only a usual resident (UR) head count
 - Allow residents to self-respond online without requiring a Secure Access Code (SAC) (non-advertised method of self-enumeration).
- Improve data quality:
 - Include collective dwellings in pre-census qualitative and operational testing
 - Improve the collective dwelling electronic questionnaire (EQ) for administrators
 - Improve follow-up strategy and return to in-person visits
 - Conduct pre-contact survey (for selected collective dwellings) to improve census frame for collective dwellings and private dwellings attached to them.



Collective dwelling EQ and Field Operations development timelines



Demographic information from non-institutional collectives

- For 2026, Statistics Canada will collect basic short form demographic information for all usual residents in both institutional and non-institutional collective dwellings.
- No longer only a head count of usual residents as in 2016 and 2021.
- Information will be collected in the same manner as for institutional collectives, using an electronic questionnaire.



Allow self-enumeration for residents of collective dwellings

- The primary enumeration method for 2026 remains the collection of administrative data from facility administrators on behalf of residents.
- Feedback from previous census cycles indicated that some residents in collective dwellings, primarily those in long-term care homes or residents for older adults, expressed the desire to complete their own questionnaires.
- **NEW for 2026:** A no SAC portal will be available to residents of collective dwellings if they choose to self-enumerate
 - Respondents will be able to complete their own 2A census questionnaire online.
 - This will be a non-advertised method of self-enumeration in collective dwellings.



Pre-census qualitative testing

Qualitative EQ testing by Questionnaire Development & Research Division (QDRC)

- Collectives were included in qualitative testing by QDRC for the first time
- Interviewed 60 collectives in two rounds of qualitative testing
- Test included probing questions, alternate text for questions, scripts, etc.
- **What was tested?**
 - Collective type concepts, definitions and questions
 - EQ questionnaire flows, including the out-of-scope functionality
 - Pre-filled information and dynamic text with real life examples
 - Maximum occupancy question in relation to usual resident count
 - Roster functionality for collectives when UR < 100
 - Roster for private attached dwellings
 - Unique questions for use in planned pre-contact survey
 - Are there any other facilities that share the same address as this facility?
 - Are you the contact person for any other facilities that have not been mentioned?
- **Test Outcome**
 - Constructive feedback received and improvements were made to wording, definitions and EQ flows.



Pre-census operational testing

In May 2024, Statistics Canada conducted a quantitative test to evaluate new and modified questions, along with an operational test to evaluate collection procedures and tools, in preparation for the 2026 Census of Population.

- Sample included approximately 198,000 private households in 10 provinces.
- Collective dwellings were included in the test of online collection procedures for the first time.

Testing of EQ/CATI and field collection procedures for collective dwelling enumeration:

- Approximately 400 collective dwellings in 3 geographic areas selected for test
- Collection from early April to late May 2024.
 - Self-response EQ and CATI collection - April 8th to May 10th
 - Field collection and non-response follow-up – May 13th to 23rd
 - CATI follow-up on out-of-scope cases and blank/invalid attachments – until portal closes.
- Many teams involved: collection planning and research, census communication, field operations, census processing. Input from Subject Matter and Methodology throughout.

Electronic questionnaire (EQ) Improvements

- Collective definitions have been revised and simplified. Definitions will be added to EQ help text and documentation, such as interviewer training manuals and census user guides.
- Pre-filled responses to some questions (from previous census data) to allow for respondent confirmation and reduce burden (for both self-response and interviewer EQ).
- Addition of a roster manager and component list for the respondent EQ
 - Administrators have the option of providing data by entering responses into an EQ roster or attaching administrative records or data entered onto a standard excel template.
 - For both respondent and interviewer EQ, roster structure was changed: content will be organized by person rather than by question to reduce response burden and improve data quality.
- Improved instructions and EQ flow.
 - Changed flow of questions to confirm that collectives are in scope
- Addition of 'instruction blocks', on the EQ to provide a preview of the data being collected and explain complex concepts.
 - Addition of new edits and off-screen help text to reflect changes to the private dwelling questionnaire (for example, sex and gender confirmation edit)



Follow-up strategy and return to in-person visits

- **Follow-up by phone interview** (Computer Assisted Telephone Interview or CATI)
 - Out-of-scope collectives
 - Collectives that do not meet the collective dwelling definition will be defined as 'Out-of-scope' for the collective EQ
 - The new operational status question will determine if the follow-up needs to be completed
 - Blank/invalid attachment
 - Any administrative records that are blank or invalid will have follow-up
 - Total non-response
 - CATI will be the first attempt to collect data from non-response collectives
- **Field in-person visits:**
 - If CATI is unsuccessful, field follow-up will be completed
 - Reinstatement of field non-response follow-up within institutional collectives
 - Completion of questionnaires (self-response) for usual residents in non-institutional collectives



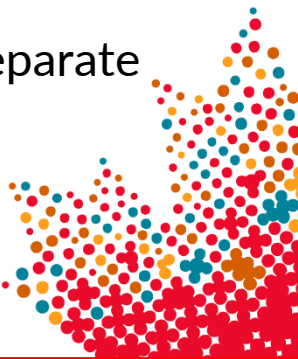
Collective Dwellings Status & Classification Survey

- **Pre-contact survey should improve data quality by providing as accurate a frame as possible**
Prior to collection, targeted dwelling validation to confirm:
 - address and contact information
 - private or collective dwelling, and status of the dwelling to ensure it is still in operation
 - type and number of collective dwellings at a given address
 - number & unit numbers of private dwellings attached to collectives in order to mail SACs for self-response in 2026.
- There are **approximately 13,500** collective dwellings targeted for pre-contact. This represents about one third of all collective dwellings in 2021.
 - Private dwellings that were converted to collective dwellings
 - Collective dwellings:
 - that changed collective type (2016 - 2021)
 - with one or more private attached dwellings
 - with 2021 Usual Residents count of > 50
 - with a non-response in 2021
 - added to the frame as new growth since 2021.
- Pre-contact was in collection from May-June 2025 by telephone interviews.



Improve collection of private attached dwellings

- A 'private attached' is a dwelling that shares the same address as a collective dwelling. These private dwellings are not affiliated with the collective and residents do not receive any services from the collective dwelling.
- Collectives in the pre-contact sample are asked if there are private dwellings at the same address, and if so, to provide unit numbers.
 - The identified private dwellings will be added to the frame and will be mailed an invitation letter with a Secure Access Code to complete their own census questionnaire in 2026.
 - Any facility that provides private attached dwelling information during the pre-contact survey will not be asked for that information during census collection in 2026.
- Updates to collection strategy for private attached dwellings in 2026:
 - Private attached dwellings definition will be added to on-screen help text to clarify and help separate the concept of private dwelling and usual resident.
 - Private attached dwelling information will be collected through a roster in the EQ, and invitation letters will then be mailed to the identified units.
 - Residents will receive a Secure Access Code to complete their own census questionnaire.



Use of administrative sources

- **Correctional facilities:**

- Collaborated in 2021 with the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics to use previously collected correctional data to complete census requirements for people in federal custody.
- This was to address a known undercoverage issue for this population.
- We also created a linkage project to ensure people included on private census questionnaires were not also counted as part of the collective dwelling.
- Project was very successful, and we are expecting the same level of reporting for the 2026 Census.

- **Other sources of administrative data will be examined for potential use in 2031:**

- Hutterite colonies and potential use of information from their own database of members.



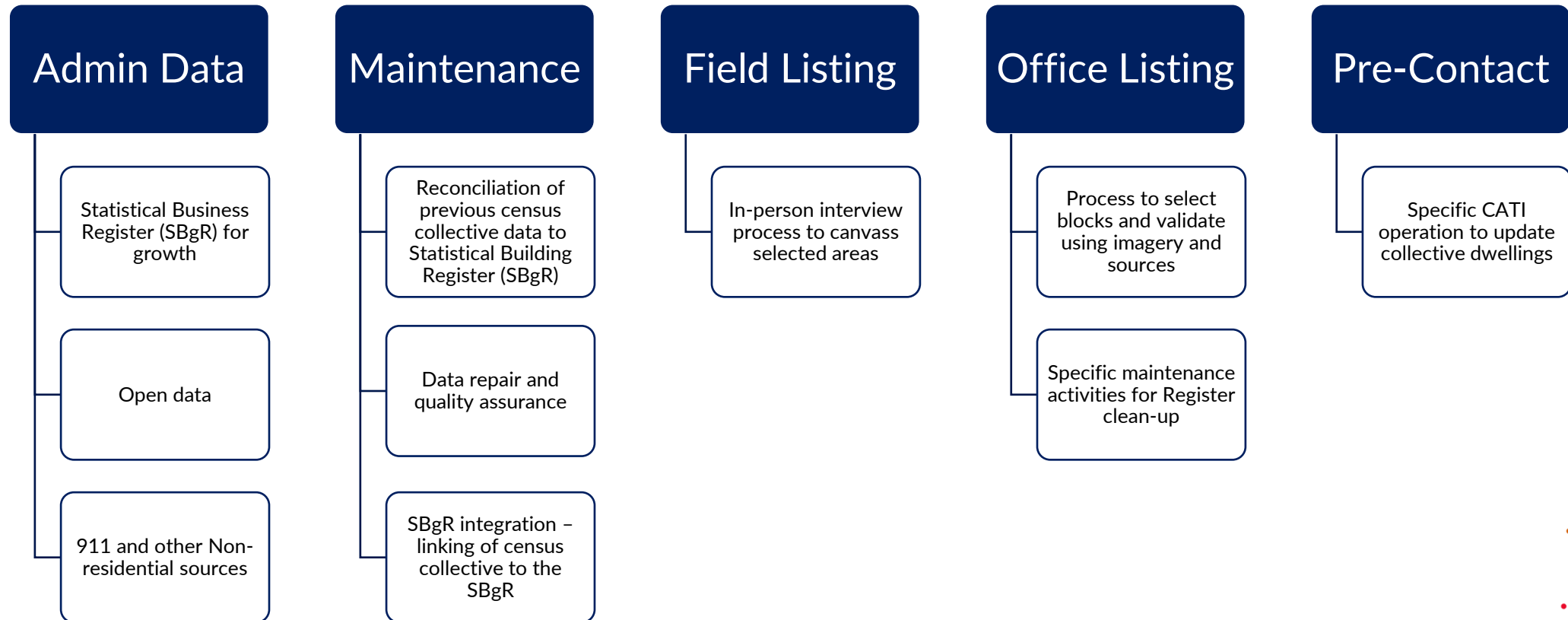
Frame general maintenance strategy

- No single comprehensive list of addresses available
- Statistical Building Register (SBgR) contains residential and non-residential buildings
 - Collective dwellings can be comprised of both
 - Statistical Business Register (SBgR) integration
- Administrative data as primary driver for updating SBgR
 - Integration and determination of business rules for more than 65 sources
 - Possible to create a quality frame with limited listing in civic-mailable areas
 - Challenges with Collective growth administrative sources:
 - Availability of data
 - Classification
 - Quality of data
- Office listing processes
 - Specific maintenance operations/updating areas where up-to-date imagery exists
- Field listing processes
 - Primarily for updating outside areas covered by authoritative sources and late-growth



SBgR collective maintenance strategy

As with the general maintenance, collective dwelling maintenance is multi-faceted.



Thank you

Questions or comments?

