

**APPENDIX. REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE METROPOLITAN AND MICROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREA STANDARDS REVIEW COMMITTEE TO THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET CONCERNING CHANGES TO THE 2010 STANDARDS FOR DELINEATING METROPOLITAN AND MICROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREAS**

[Transmittal Memorandum]

August 1, 2019

Memorandum for Nancy Potok, Chief Statistician, Office of Management and Budget

From: Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Area Standards Review Committee

Subject: Transmittal of Report and Recommendations Concerning Changes to the 2010 Standards for Delineating Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas

We are pleased to transmit to you the attached report presenting this committee's recommendations for modifying the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB's) 2010 standards for delineating metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas. The recommendations represent our best technical and professional advice for how the standards could better account for and describe changes in settlement and activity patterns throughout the United States and Puerto Rico, yet still meet the data reporting needs and requirements of Federal agencies and the public. We also are providing the specific 2020 standards recommended by the committee, including definitions of key terms. We hope that OMB will find these recommendations informative and helpful in making its decisions on what changes, if any, to adopt in the standards for delineating geographic areas for collecting, tabulating, and publishing Federal statistics.

Attachment

## **Part A. Recommendations From the Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Area Standards Review Committee to the Office of Management and Budget Concerning Changes to the 2010 Standards for Delineating Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas**

### **Discussion of Recommendations**

The committee notes that the 2010 standards, the result of an extensive and comprehensive review of the 1990 standards and a more narrowly tailored review of the 2000 standards, have served the Federal statistical community well over the past decade. However, the committee determined that aspects of the standards—particularly those concerning the minimum required urban area population to qualify a metropolitan statistical area; the delineation of New England city and town areas (NECTAs), NECTA divisions, and combined NECTAs; territorial coverage of the classification; metropolitan and micropolitan statistical area update procedures; and an update schedule—need to be revised to better serve data users. Also, the committee recommends continued use of American Community Survey commuting data in determining intercounty connectivity, though the committee discussed societal and economic trends that could indicate a revision of the standards in 2030.

### **1. Recommendation Concerning the Minimum Required Urban Area Population to Qualify a Metropolitan Statistical Area**

*The Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Area Standards Review Committee recommends increasing the minimum required urban area population to qualify a metropolitan statistical area from 50,000 to 100,000. (Core based statistical areas with an urban area of 50,000 to 99,999 population would qualify as micropolitan statistical areas.)*

Since standard metropolitan areas were first delineated in anticipation of the 1950 decennial census, 50,000 has served as the minimum population to qualify as a metropolitan core.

In reviewing the 2010 standards, the committee noted that the minimum population required for an urban area to qualify a metropolitan statistical area had not kept pace with population growth of the United States. They observed that the population of the United States had more than doubled since the 1950 census (the population in 2019 is about 2.2 times larger than in 1950), while the standards have maintained the same minimum population. Thus, the committee recommends doubling the minimum required population of an urban area to qualify a metropolitan statistical area from 50,000 to 100,000. Areas with a core of 50,000 to 99,999 population would become micropolitan statistical areas. (Note: areas with an urban area population of between 10,000 and 49,999 also would continue to qualify as micropolitan statistical areas, as they did under the 2000 and 2010 standards.) See Table 1 in this report for a list of metropolitan statistical areas with a 2010 Census urban area population of 50,000 to 99,999 (or that qualified as metropolitan based on population estimates in an annual update).

## **2. Recommendation Concerning New England City and Town Areas, New England City and Town Area Divisions, and Combined New England City and Town Areas**

*The committee recommends that delineation of NECTAs, NECTA divisions, and combined NECTAs be discontinued. (County-based areas should serve the entirety of the United States and Puerto Rico.)*

Under the 2000 and 2010 standards, metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas have used counties and equivalent entities as their geographic building blocks in all of the United States and Puerto Rico, including the six New England states (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont). This was a change from previous decades, when cities and towns, not counties, were the geographic building blocks of metropolitan areas in New England. (Under the 1980 and 1990 standards, OMB also delineated an alternative, county-based set of areas, New England county metropolitan areas.) The decision in the 2000 standards to use counties as building blocks was made to establish the use of a consistent geographic unit nationwide. At the same time, OMB provided for delineation of NECTAs, NECTA divisions, and combined NECTAs as second set of areas for New England.

In reviewing the 2010 standards, the committee noted that NECTAs and related statistical areas add considerable complexity to the statistical areas system. The committee further found that Federal agencies made little use of NECTAs, NECTA divisions, and combined NECTAs. As a result, the committee recommends the discontinuation of NECTAs, NECTA divisions, and combined NECTAs in the standards.

## **3. Recommendation Concerning Territorial Coverage of the Classification**

*The committee recommends that OMB launch a research effort into delineating territorially exhaustive areas.*

The September 2018 OMB delineations of metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas account for about 94 percent of the U.S. population—about 86 percent in metropolitan statistical areas and about 8 percent in micropolitan statistical areas. Of 3,142 counties in the United States, 1,180 are in 384 metropolitan statistical areas, and 660 counties are in 542 micropolitan statistical areas (1,302 counties are outside the classification).

In reviewing the 2010 standards, the committee was reminded that a large portion of the territory of the United States is not within a metropolitan or micropolitan statistical area. The portion of population and territory outside of metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas is addressed less in Federal statistical data. The committee also noted that there is significant demand for a territorially exhaustive classification both inside the Federal statistical system to undertake statistical activities such as collecting, tabulating, and publishing Federal statistics as well as outside the Federal statistical system. Some Federal agencies currently prepare delineations that exhaust the territory of the United States and Puerto Rico in support of their statistical programs. Research should examine

the development of a standard set of areas that accounts for all territory and population and considers metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas. The committee recommends that OMB launch a research effort into delineating statistical areas for the entirety of the United States and Puerto Rico.

#### **4. Recommendation Concerning Area Delineation Update Procedures**

*The committee recommends incorporating the results of the decade's first annual update review into the results of the decade's decennial census-based update.*

The committee found that in recent decades a small number of areas have experienced repeated change in delineation status between the comprehensive, decennial delineations issued in the “3 year” and in the subsequent annual update. This outcome follows in part from availability of different geographic units for the data derived from the decennial census and used in the decennial updates and for population estimates data used in annual updates. More specifically, the decennial census provides data for urban areas, but the Census Bureau’s Population Estimates Program does not. Annual updates use population estimates for places as proxies for urban area data.

The committee regards the repeated entering and then exiting from the statistical area inventory undesirable; it recommends incorporating outcomes from the decade’s first, estimates-based annual update in the results reported from the decennial update in an effort to minimize “churn” in the inventory.

#### **5. Recommendation Concerning an Update Schedule**

*The committee recommends OMB's public release of an area delineation update schedule.*

The committee recommends that a schedule be established for the decennial, five-year (or “mid-decade”), and annual delineation updates for coming years to facilitate planning by Federal statistical agencies. More specifically, the committee recommends that OMB work with the Census Bureau to arrive at a published, practicable schedule that will reflect input data availability as well as processing and program considerations.

#### **6. Recommendation Concerning Intercountry Commuting**

*The committee recommends that OMB continue use of American Community Survey commuting data to measure intercounty connectivity but discussed societal and economic trends that could lead to revisions of the standards in 2030.*

The committee recommends continuing use of American Community Survey commuting data in measuring intercounty connectivity. Both intercountry commuting and working at home have seen only slight increases in recent years according to American Community Survey 5-year estimates. This relative stability notwithstanding, the committee discussed apparent nascent societal and economic trends that could indicate needed changes to the standards in 2030.

Alternative or supplemental datasets addressing patterns of connectivity such as data from the Census Bureau’s Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics program were considered by the committee for possible use in the standards. At this time, however, no

additional data sources have been identified that meet requirements of being available for all of the United States and Puerto Rico, being straightforward and intuitive, and being publicly available to data users.

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**Table 1: September 2018 Metropolitan Statistical Areas That Have a Most-Populous 2010 Urban Area Population Below 100,000**

Presented here are the 144 (out of a total of 392) September 2018 OMB-delineated metropolitan statistical areas in the United States and Puerto Rico for which the most populous 2010 urban area had a total 2010 Census population between 50,000 and 99,999. (Also included among the 144 areas on the list are two metropolitan statistical areas, Enid, OK and Twin Falls, ID, that qualified as metropolitan on the basis of place population estimates in annual updates.)

(Note: this list is for illustrative purposes and does not change the status of any metropolitan statistical area prior to application of the 2020 standards. Qualification of metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas after 2020 will reflect use of urban areas defined using 2020 Census data.)

<b>CBSA Code</b>	<b>Metropolitan Statistical Area Title</b>
10500	Albany, GA
10540	Albany-Lebanon, OR
10780	Alexandria, LA
11020	Altoona, PA
11180	Ames, IA
11500	Anniston-Oxford, AL
12220	Auburn-Opelika, AL
12620	Bangor, ME
12980	Battle Creek, MI
13020	Bay City, MI
13220	Beckley, WV
13460	Bend, OR
13900	Bismarck, ND
13980	Blacksburg-Christiansburg, VA
14100	Bloomsburg-Berwick, PA
14540	Bowling Green, KY
15260	Brunswick, GA
15680	California-Lexington Park, MD
16020	Cape Girardeau, MO-IL
16060	Carbondale-Marion, IL
16180	Carson City, NV
16220	Casper, WY
16540	Chambersburg-Waynesboro, PA
16820	Charlottesville, VA
16940	Cheyenne, WY
17020	Chico, CA
17420	Cleveland, TN

<b>CBSA Code</b>	<b>Metropolitan Statistical Area Title</b>
17660	Coeur d'Alene, ID
18020	Columbus, IN
18700	Corvallis, OR
19060	Cumberland, MD-WV
19140	Dalton, GA
19180	Danville, IL
19300	Daphne-Fairhope-Foley, AL
19460	Decatur, AL
19500	Decatur, IL
20020	Dothan, AL
20220	Dubuque, IA
20700	East Stroudsburg, PA
21060	Elizabethtown-Fort Knox, KY
21300	Elmira, NY
21420	Enid, OK
21820	Fairbanks, AK
22140	Farmington, NM
22380	Flagstaff, AZ
22500	Florence, SC
22520	Florence-Muscle Shoals, AL
22540	Fond du Lac, WI
23460	Gadsden, AL
23900	Gettysburg, PA
24020	Glens Falls, NY
24140	Goldsboro, NC
24220	Grand Forks, ND-MN
24260	Grand Island, NE
24420	Grants Pass, OR
24500	Great Falls, MT
25020	Guayama, PR
25220	Hammond, LA
25260	Hanford-Corcoran, CA
25500	Harrisonburg, VA
25620	Hattiesburg, MS
25940	Hilton Head Island-Bluffton, SC
25980	Hinesville, GA
26140	Homosassa Springs, FL
26300	Hot Springs, AR
26820	Idaho Falls, ID
27060	Ithaca, NY
27100	Jackson, MI

<b>CBSA Code</b>	<b>Metropolitan Statistical Area Title</b>
27180	Jackson, TN
27500	Janesville-Beloit, WI
27620	Jefferson City, MO
27780	Johnstown, PA
27860	Jonesboro, AR
27900	Joplin, MO
27980	Kahului-Wailuku-Lahaina, HI
28100	Kankakee, IL
28740	Kingston, NY
29020	Kokomo, IN
29420	Lake Havasu City-Kingman, AZ
29940	Lawrence, KS
30020	Lawton, OK
30140	Lebanon, PA
30300	Lewiston, ID-WA
30340	Lewiston-Auburn, ME
30620	Lima, OH
30860	Logan, UT-ID
30980	Longview, TX
31020	Longview, WA
31460	Madera, CA
31740	Manhattan, KS
31860	Mankato, MN
31900	Mansfield, OH
33140	Michigan City-La Porte, IN
33220	Midland, MI
33540	Missoula, MT
33780	Monroe, MI
34060	Morgantown, WV
34100	Morristown, TN
34580	Mount Vernon-Anacortes, WA
34620	Muncie, IN
34900	Napa, CA
35100	New Bern, NC
35660	Niles, MI
36140	Ocean City, NJ
36780	Oshkosh-Neenah, WI
36980	Owensboro, KY
37620	Parkersburg-Vienna, WV
38220	Pine Bluff, AR
38340	Pittsfield, MA



<b>CBSA Code</b>	<b>Metropolitan Statistical Area Title</b>
38540	Pocatello, ID
39150	Prescott Valley-Prescott, AZ
39660	Rapid City, SD
40580	Rocky Mount, NC
40660	Rome, GA
41100	St. George, UT
41140	St. Joseph, MO-KS
41540	Salisbury, MD-DE
41660	San Angelo, TX
42020	San Luis Obispo-Paso Robles, CA
42140	Santa Fe, NM
42700	Sebring-Avon Park, FL
43100	Sheboygan, WI
43300	Sherman-Denison, TX
43420	Sierra Vista-Douglas, AZ
44220	Springfield, OH
44300	State College, PA
44420	Staunton, VA
44940	Sumter, SC
45460	Terre Haute, IN
45500	Texarkana, TX-AR
46300	Twin Falls, ID
46660	Valdosta, GA
47020	Victoria, TX
47220	Vineland-Bridgeton, NJ
47460	Walla Walla, WA
48060	Watertown-Fort Drum, NY
48140	Wausau-Weston, WI
48260	Weirton-Steubenville, WV-OH
48300	Wenatchee, WA
48540	Wheeling, WV-OH
48660	Wichita Falls, TX
48700	Williamsport, PA
49020	Winchester, VA-WV
49500	Yauco, PR

## **Part B. Draft 2020 Standards for Delineating Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas and Key Terms**

(If approved by the Office of Management and Budget, the proposed standards below would be used to delineate core based statistical areas beginning in 2023.)

A Core Based Statistical Area (CBSA) is a geographic entity associated with at least one core of 10,000 or more population, plus adjacent territory that has a high degree of social and economic integration with the core as measured by commuting ties. The standards designate and delineate two categories of CBSAs: Metropolitan Statistical Areas and Micropolitan Statistical Areas.

The purpose of the Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Area standards is to provide nationally consistent delineations for collecting, tabulating, and publishing Federal statistics for a set of geographic areas. The Office of Management and Budget establishes and maintains these areas solely for statistical purposes.

Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas are not designed as a general-purpose geographic framework for nonstatistical activities or for use in program funding formulas. The CBSA classification is not an urban-rural classification; Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas and many counties outside CBSAs contain both urban and rural populations.

CBSAs consist of counties and equivalent entities throughout the United States and Puerto Rico.

The following criteria apply to nationwide county-based CBSAs. Commuting and employment estimates are derived from the Census Bureau's American Community Survey. Whenever American Community Survey commuting and employment data are referred to below, the criteria use point estimates and do not incorporate a measure of sampling variability of the estimates.

### *Section 1. Population Size Requirements for Qualification of Core Based Statistical Areas*

Each CBSA must have a Census Bureau-delineated Urban Area of at least 10,000 population. (Urban Areas include both Urbanized Areas and Urban Clusters.)

### *Section 2. Central Counties*

The central county or counties of a CBSA are those counties that:

- (a) Have at least 50 percent of their population in Urban Areas of at least 10,000 population; or
- (b) Have within their boundaries a population of at least 5,000 located in a single Urban Area of at least 10,000 population.

A central county is associated with the Urban Area that accounts for the largest portion of the county's population. The central counties associated with a particular Urban Area are grouped to form a single cluster of central counties for purposes of measuring commuting to and from potentially qualifying outlying counties.

### *Section 3. Outlying Counties*

A county qualifies as an outlying county of a CBSA if it meets the following commuting requirements:

- (a) At least 25 percent of the workers living in the county work in the central county or counties of the CBSA; or
- (b) At least 25 percent of the employment in the county is accounted for by workers who reside in the central county or counties of the CBSA.

A county may be included in only one CBSA. If a county qualifies as a central county of one CBSA and as outlying in another, it falls within the CBSA in which it is a central county. A county that qualifies as outlying to multiple CBSAs falls within the CBSA with which it has the strongest commuting tie, as measured by either 3(a) or 3(b) above. The counties included in a CBSA must be contiguous; if a county is not contiguous with other counties in the CBSA, it will not fall within the CBSA.

### *Section 4. Merging of Adjacent Core Based Statistical Areas*

Two adjacent CBSAs will merge to form one CBSA if the central county or counties (as a group) of one CBSA qualify as outlying to the central county or counties (as a group) of the other CBSA using the measures and thresholds stated in 3(a) and 3(b) above.

### *Section 5. Identification of Principal Cities*

The Principal City (or Cities) of a CBSA will include:

- (a) The largest incorporated place with a 2020 Census population of at least 10,000 in the CBSA or, if no incorporated place of at least 10,000 population is present in the CBSA, the largest incorporated place or census designated place in the CBSA; and
- (b) Any additional incorporated place or census designated place with a 2020 Census population of at least 250,000 or in which 100,000 or more persons work; and
- (c) Any additional incorporated place or census designated place with a 2020 Census population of at least 50,000, but less than 250,000, and in which the number of workers working in the place meets or exceeds the number of workers living in the place; and
- (d) Any additional incorporated place or census designated place with a 2020 Census population of at least 10,000, but less than 50,000, and at least one-third the population size of the largest place, and in which the number of workers working in the place meets or exceeds the number of workers living in the place.

### *Section 6. Categories and Terminology*

A CBSA is categorized based on the population of the largest Urban Area within the CBSA. Categories of CBSAs are: Metropolitan Statistical Areas, based on Urban Areas of 100,000 or more population, and Micropolitan Statistical Areas, based on Urban

Areas of at least 10,000 population but less than 100,000 population. Counties that do not fall within CBSAs will represent “Outside Core Based Statistical Areas.”

#### *Section 7. Divisions of Metropolitan Statistical Areas*

A Metropolitan Statistical Area containing a single Urban Area with a population of at least 2.5 million may be subdivided to form smaller groupings of counties referred to as Metropolitan Divisions. A county qualifies as a “main county” of a Metropolitan Division if 65 percent or more of workers living in the county also work within the county and the ratio of the number of workers working in the county to the number of workers living in the county is at least .75. A county qualifies as a “secondary county” if 50 percent or more, but less than 65 percent, of workers living in the county also work within the county and the ratio of the number of workers working in the county to the number of workers living in the county is at least .75.

A main county automatically serves as the basis for a Metropolitan Division. For a secondary county to qualify as the basis for forming a Metropolitan Division, it must join with either a contiguous secondary county or a contiguous main county with which it has the highest employment interchange measure of 15 or more. After all main counties and secondary counties are identified and grouped (if appropriate), each additional county that already has qualified for inclusion in the Metropolitan Statistical Area falls within the Metropolitan Division associated with the main/secondary county or counties with which the county at issue has the highest employment interchange measure. Counties in a Metropolitan Division must be contiguous.

#### *Section 8. Combining Adjacent Core Based Statistical Areas*

(a) Any two adjacent CBSAs will form a Combined Statistical Area if the employment interchange measure between the two areas is at least 15.

(b) The CBSAs thus combined will also continue to be recognized as individual CBSAs within the Combined Statistical Area.

#### *Section 9. Titles of Core Based Statistical Areas, Metropolitan Divisions, and Combined Statistical Areas*

(a) The title of a CBSA will include the name of its Principal City with the largest 2020 Census population. If there are multiple Principal Cities, the names of the second-largest and (if present) third-largest Principal Cities will appear in the title in order of descending population size. If the Principal City with the largest 2020 Census population is a census designated place, the name of the largest incorporated place of at least 10,000 population that also is a Principal City will appear first in the title followed by the name of the census designated place. If the Principal City with the largest 2020 Census population is a census designated place, and there is no incorporated place of at least 10,000 population that also is a Principal City, the name of that census designated place Principal City will appear first in the title.

(b) The title of a Metropolitan Division will include the name of the Principal City with the largest 2020 Census population located in the Metropolitan Division. If there are multiple Principal Cities, the names of the second-largest and (if present) third-largest Principal Cities will appear in the title in order of descending population size. If there are no Principal Cities located in the Metropolitan Division, the title of the Metropolitan

Division will use the names of up to three counties in order of descending 2020 Census population size.

(c) The title of a Combined Statistical Area will include the names of the two largest Principal Cities in the combination and the name of the third-largest Principal City, if present. If the Combined Statistical Area title duplicates that of one of its component CBSAs, the name of the third-most-populous Principal City will be dropped from the title of the Combined Statistical Area.

(d) Titles also will include the names of any State in which the area is located.

#### *Section 10. Updating Schedule*

(a) The Office of Management and Budget will delineate CBSAs in 2023 based on 2020 Census data and 2016-2020 American Community Survey 5-year estimates. Release of these delineations will take place during June 2023.

(b) In the 2023 delineations and in subsequent years, the Office of Management and Budget will designate a new Micropolitan Statistical Area if:

- (1) A city that is outside any existing CBSA has a Census Bureau special census count of 10,000 to 99,999 population, or a population estimate of 10,000 to 99,999 for two consecutive years from the Census Bureau's Population Estimates Program, or
- (2) A Census Bureau special census results in the delineation of an Urban Area of 10,000 to 99,999 population that is outside of any existing CBSA.

(c) Also in the 2023 delineations and in subsequent years, the Office of Management and Budget will designate a new Metropolitan Statistical Area if:

- (1) A city that is outside any existing Metropolitan Statistical Area has a Census Bureau special census count of 100,000 or more population, or a population estimate of 100,000 or more for two consecutive years from the Census Bureau's Population Estimates Program, or
- (2) A Census Bureau special census results in the delineation of an Urban Area of 100,000 or more population that is outside of any existing Metropolitan Statistical Area.

(d) Outlying counties of CBSAs that qualify in this section will qualify according to the criteria in Section 3 above, on the basis of American Community Survey 5-year commuting estimates.

(e) The Office of Management and Budget will review the delineations of all existing CBSAs and related statistical areas in 2028 using 2021-2025 5-year commuting and employment estimates from the Census Bureau's American Community Survey. The Urban Areas used in these delineations will be those based on 2020 Census data or subsequent special censuses for which Urban Areas are created. The central counties of CBSAs identified on the basis of a 2020 Census population count, or on the basis of population estimates from the Census Bureau's Population Estimates Program or a special census count in the case of postcensally delineated areas, will constitute the central counties for purposes of these area delineations. New CBSAs will be designated in 2028 on the basis of Census Bureau special census counts or population estimates as described above in Sections 10(b) and 10(c); outlying county qualification will be based on 5-year commuting estimates from the American Community Survey.

(f) Other aspects of the Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Area and related statistical area delineations are not subject to change between decennial censuses.

(g) The Office of Management and Budget will issue delineation updates (one per year in those years when there is an update) in years other than 2023 during December.

*Section 11. Definitions of Key Terms*

*Census designated place*—A statistical geographic entity that is analogous to an incorporated place, delineated for the decennial census and consisting of a locally recognized, unincorporated concentration of population that is identified by name.

*Central county*—The county or counties of a Core Based Statistical Area containing a substantial portion of an Urban Area, and to and from which commuting is measured to determine qualification of outlying counties.

*Combined Statistical Area*—A geographic entity consisting of two or more adjacent Core Based Statistical Areas with employment interchange measures of at least 15.

*Core*—A densely settled concentration of population, comprising an Urban Area (of 10,000 or more population) delineated by the Census Bureau, around which a Core Based Statistical Area is delineated.

*Core Based Statistical Area (CBSA)*—A statistical geographic entity consisting of the county or counties associated with at least one core (Urban Area) of at least 10,000 population, plus adjacent counties having a high degree of social and economic integration with the core as measured through commuting ties with the counties containing the core. Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas are the two categories of Core Based Statistical Areas.

*Delineation*—The establishment of the boundary of a statistical area, or the boundary that results.

*Employment interchange measure*—A measure of ties between two adjacent entities. The employment interchange measure is the sum of the percentage of workers living in the smaller entity who work in the larger entity and the percentage of employment in the smaller entity that is accounted for by workers who reside in the larger entity.

*Geographic building block*—The geographic unit, such as a county, that constitutes the basic geographic component of a statistical area.

*Main county*—A county that acts as an employment center within a Core Based Statistical Area that has a core with a population of at least 2.5 million. A main county serves as the basis for delineating a Metropolitan Division.

*Metropolitan Division*—A county or group of counties within a Core Based Statistical Area that contains an Urban Area with a population of at least 2.5 million. A Metropolitan Division consists of one or more main/secondary counties that represent an employment center or centers, plus adjacent counties associated with the main/secondary county or counties through commuting ties.

*Metropolitan Statistical Area*—A Core Based Statistical Area associated with at least one Urban Area that has a population of at least 100,000. The Metropolitan Statistical Area comprises the central county or counties containing the core, plus adjacent outlying counties having a high degree of social and economic integration with the central county or counties as measured through commuting.

*Micropolitan Statistical Area*—A Core Based Statistical Area associated with at least one Urban Area that has a population of at least 10,000, but less than 100,000. The Micropolitan Statistical Area comprises the central county or counties containing the

core, plus adjacent outlying counties having a high degree of social and economic integration with the central county or counties as measured through commuting.

*Outlying county*—A county that qualifies for inclusion in a Core Based Statistical Area on the basis of commuting ties with the Core Based Statistical Area’s central county or counties.

*Outside Core Based Statistical Areas*—Counties that do not qualify for inclusion in a Core Based Statistical Area.

*Principal City*—The largest city of a Core Based Statistical Area, plus additional cities that meet specified statistical criteria.

*Secondary county*—A county that acts as an employment center in combination with a main county or another secondary county within a Core Based Statistical Area that has a core with a population of at least 2.5 million. A secondary county may serve as the basis for delineating a Metropolitan Division, but only when combined with a main county or another secondary county.

*Urban Area*—A statistical geographic entity delineated by the Census Bureau, consisting of densely settled census tracts and blocks and adjacent densely settled territory that together contain at least 2,500 people. For purposes of delineating Metropolitan Statistical Areas, at least one Urban Area of 100,000 or more population is required; for purposes of delineating Micropolitan Statistical Areas, at least one Urban Area of 10,000 to 99,999 population is required.

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