

## 4.2 POPULATION AND HOUSING

### 4.2.1 REGIONAL SETTING

#### *EXISTING POPULATION AND HOUSING*

The four PG&E power generation plants being considered for divestiture are located in Northern California. One of the three fossil-fueled plants, Potrero, is located within the City and County of San Francisco, a densely populated city; the other two, Contra Costa and Pittsburg, are located in suburban portions of the Bay Area, in Contra Costa County. The Geysers geothermal plant is located in rural portions of Sonoma and Lake Counties.

The Bay Area population grew at an annual rate of 1.9 percent between 1960 and 1980, and a rate of 1.5 percent between 1980 and 1990. According to projections by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), the Bay Area region will continue to add residents at a rate of about 1.0 percent per year through 2005 (Association of Bay Area Governments, 1997a). As of 1995, the nine counties that comprise the Bay Area had a combined population of about 6.3 million, making it the fourth largest metropolitan area in the nation.

The Bay Area economy has recovered from the recession of the early 1990s. The economy is currently quite robust and job growth is strong. Unemployment is under 5 percent, an all time low. The nine counties comprising the Bay Area are expected to add 21 percent more jobs between 1990 and 2005, from a base of 3,073,000 to 3,725,960. While the mean household income is rather high, \$66,900 in 1995<sup>1</sup>, ABAG indicates that housing affordability is declining. The 1997 Bay Area median housing price of \$300,600 is the second highest in the country (Association of Bay Area Governments, 1997b).

#### **San Francisco County**

San Francisco is the only jurisdiction in California that is both a city and a county. It is an urbanized area situated on a mountainous peninsula surrounded by the Pacific Ocean to the west, the San Francisco Bay to the east and north, and San Mateo County to the south. San Francisco experienced a 5 percent drop in population between 1970 and 1980, but grew 7 percent between 1980 and 1990 (see Table 4.2-1). Job growth is currently quite strong. The San Francisco economy is based on finance, insurance, tourism, law, communications, trade and high-technology. Although total jobs fell from 566,640 in 1990 to 534,610 in 1995, San Francisco is expected to add almost 50,000 new jobs by 2000 and 25,000 more by 2005, for a total job base of 613,650 in 2005. Unemployment was 4.3 percent in the third quarter of 1997, down from 6.2 percent in 1990 (Association of Bay Area Governments, 1997b). The mean household income in 1995 was \$59,600, 12 percent less than the Bay Area average of \$66,900.

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<sup>1</sup> ABAG provides *mean* household income which is not directly comparable with the *median* household income provided by the 1990 U.S. Census.

**TABLE 4.2-1  
1990 POPULATION/HOUSING INDICATORS FOR SAN FRANCISCO, CONTRA COSTA, SONOMA, AND LAKE COUNTIES AND THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

City/County:	San Francisco	Contra Costa	Sonoma	Lake	California
Population	723,959	803,732	388,222	50,631	29,760,021
Employed Residents	391,292	409,351	194,387	17,184	14,266,398
Unemployment Rate	6.2	5.0	4.7	8.4	6.6
Housing Units	328,471	316,170	161,062	28,822	11,182,882
Percent Housing Units Owner-Occupied	34.5	67.6	62.9	71.2	55.6

SOURCE: 1990 U.S. Census, STF3

San Francisco has a jobs/housing balance of 0.71, meaning that there are about seven employed residents for every ten jobs. Job/housing balance is an indicator of the opportunity for employed residents to work in the same community in which they reside.

According to the 1990 Census, 7 percent of the 328,470 housing units in San Francisco were vacant and about one-third were owner-occupied. Roughly 60 percent of the total number of housing units were built before 1939. In 1990, the median gross rent was \$653 per month and the median house value was \$294,800, as compared to California figures of \$620 and \$194,300, respectively. The more recent 1996 San Francisco Housing Inventory reported a median 1997 rent of \$1,637 for a two-bedroom apartment, and a median 1996 sales price of \$288,240 for a three-bedroom house. These figures, however, are not directly comparable to 1990 Census data, and more recent statewide figures are not available.

Because of the scarcity of developable land, and higher than average land and construction costs, San Francisco has one of the slowest population growth rates in the state. As a percentage of existing housing stock, new residential construction in San Francisco was one-quarter of the state average (23 percent) between 1980 and 1990 (see Table 4.2-2).

### **Contra Costa County**

Contra Costa County is located east of San Francisco, across the San Francisco Bay. It is bounded on the north by Solano County, across the Suisun Bay, to the south by Alameda County and to the east by San Joaquin County. Contra Costa is one of the most rapidly growing counties in the Bay Area, with a population that increased by 22 percent from 1980 to 1990. ABAG projects that it will continue to experience strong population growth in the future, growing from 803,732 residents in 1990 to 992,800 by 2005. In addition to its population growth, Contra Costa is also becoming a sizable employment center, with an economic base focused on finance, insurance, communications and trade sectors. The county is expected to add almost 70,000 jobs

**TABLE 4.2-2  
2005 FORECASTS FOR SAN FRANCISCO, CONTRA COSTA, SONOMA,  
AND LAKE COUNTY POPULATION INDICATORS**

City/County	Year	Population	Households	Employed	Jobs
San Francisco	1990	723,959	305,584	391,292	566,640
	2000	785,900	317,970	403,700	586,950
	2005	794,700	324,270	427,900	613,650
	1990-2000 % increase	8.6%	4.1%	3.2%	3.6%
	2000-2005 % increase	1.1%	2.0%	6.0%	4.6%
Contra Costa	1990	803,732	300,288	409,351	303,830
	2000	927,900	339,210	458,000	339,150
	2005	992,800	361,490	499,000	370,100
	1990-2000 % increase	15.4%	13.0%	11.9%	11.6%
	2000-2005 % increase	7.0%	6.6%	9.0%	9.1%
Sonoma	1990	388,222	149,011	194,387	149,890
	2000	450,000	170,960	220,400	184,810
	2005	482,100	183,890	249,700	210,640
	1990-2000 % increase	15.9%	14.7%	13.4%	23.3%
	2000-2005 % increase	7.1%	7.6%	13.3%	14.0%
Lake	1990	50,631	N/A	19,244	N/A
	2000	72,000	N/A	27,683	N/A
	2005	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	1990-2000 % increase	42.2%	N/A	43.9%	N/A

SOURCE: Association of Bay Area Governments, *Projections '98*; Lake County General Plan

by 2005, from a 1990 base of 303,830. Contra Costa County has about 14 employed residents per ten jobs, or a jobs/housing ratio of 1:4. Unemployment has fallen from 5 percent to 4.1 percent in third quarter 1997 (Association of Bay Area Governments, 1997b). The mean household income in 1995 was \$70,700.

Of the 316,170 housing units in the county, 5 percent are vacant, and over two-thirds are owner occupied. Reflecting its recent rapid growth, one-quarter of the housing units surveyed in the 1990 Census were constructed between 1980 and 1990. In 1990, the median gross rent was \$675, and the median housing value \$217,100.

## **Sonoma and Lake Counties**

Sonoma County is located north of San Francisco, bounded by Marin County to the southwest, San Pablo Bay on its southern tip, Napa and Lake Counties to the east, Mendocino County to the north, and the Pacific Ocean on the west. Much of the county is rural, but its population grew by 29.5 percent between 1980 and 1990, from 299,684 to 388,222. Most of this growth is centered on the U.S. Highway 101 corridor that runs north and south through the middle of the county. Sonoma will continue to add residents, with a projected increase to 482,100 by 2005, a 24 percent increase from 1990 (refer to Table 4.2-2). Job growth, primarily in the service, manufacturing and wholesale sectors, is also increasing, with about 35 percent more jobs expected by 2005, from a base of 149,890 in 1990. Sonoma County has a jobs/housing balance of 1.26, or 12.6 employed residents per ten jobs. Unemployment fell from 4.7 percent in 1990 to 3.4 percent in third-quarter 1997 (Association of Bay Area Governments, 1997b). The mean household income in 1995 was \$58,100.

Sonoma County contains 161,062 housing units, with a vacancy rate of 7.5 percent and a 62.9 percent owner-occupancy rate. The county added over one-half of its housing stock between 1970 and 1990 (27 percent during the 1970s and 27 percent during the 1980s). Housing is slightly more affordable in Sonoma County in comparison to San Francisco and Contra Costa Counties, with a 1990 median gross rent of \$645 and a median housing value of \$200,600.

Lake County, which lies east of Sonoma County, is a predominantly rural county that does not constitute part of the San Francisco Bay Area. In 1990, Lake County had a population of 50,631 residents. The unemployment rate in 1990 was 8.4 percent (two points higher than other area counties) and 9.2 percent in the third quarter of 1997. The ratio of employed residents to all residents was under 40 percent, as opposed to roughly 50 percent in other area counties, reflecting both higher unemployment and a higher number of retirees than in the more urbanized Bay Area counties. Housing is inexpensive by Bay Area standards, with a 1990 median gross rent of \$460 and a median housing value of \$95,400. Over 30 percent of the county's housing stock consists of mobile homes.

### **4.2.2 LOCAL SETTING**

#### ***POTRERO POWER PLANT***

The Potrero Power Plant is located in southeastern San Francisco, in the Potrero Hill/Central Waterfront community, directly adjacent to the Bay. According to the U.S. Census, the Central Waterfront area in which the plant is located had 9,972 residents in 1990, with a median household income of \$36,888 compared to a citywide figure of \$33,414. The unemployment rate in the vicinity of the Potrero Power Plant was 6.8 percent, similar to San Francisco's 6.2 percent rate.

As of 1990, 9.6 percent of the 4,462 housing units in the Central Waterfront were vacant. Approximately 57 percent of the units were of pre-1939 construction. The owner-occupancy rate was 39.7 percent which is similar to San Francisco's rate of 34.5 percent. The median gross rent

in 1990 was about \$720, 10 percent higher than the citywide rent of \$653. Median home values near the Potrero plant were \$263,284, which was about 90 percent of the city median.

***CONTRA COSTA POWER PLANT***

The Contra Costa Power Plant is located on the outskirts of the City of Antioch, along the southern edge of the San Joaquin River<sup>2</sup>. As of 1990, Antioch had 62,000 residents (see Table 4.2-3), but its population and economic growth is outstripping that of Contra Costa County. During the period from 1990 to 2005, Antioch’s population is expected to increase by 55 percent, and jobs by 59 percent. In contrast, Contra Costa County’s population is expected to increase by 23 percent, and jobs by 21 percent (see Table 4.2-4). However, in 1995 the mean household income in Antioch was \$63,200, 10 percent less than the county’s average of \$70,700.

**TABLE 4.2-3  
1990 POPULATION/HOUSING INDICATORS FOR THE POTRERO, CONTRA COSTA,  
AND PITTSBURG POWER PLANTS**

Power Plant	Potrero <sup>a</sup>	Contra Costa <sup>b</sup>	Pittsburg <sup>c</sup>
Population	9,972	62,195	47,564
Employed Residents	5,684	29,735	22,018
Unemployment Rate	6.8	6.6	7.1
Housing Units	4,462	22,973	16,709
Percent Housing Units Owner-Occupied	39.7	59.9	57.5

- <sup>a</sup> Census Tract 226, 227 and 607
- <sup>b</sup> City of Antioch
- <sup>c</sup> City of Pittsburg

SOURCE: 1990 U.S. Census, STF3

Of the 22,900 housing units in Antioch, roughly 60 percent are owner-occupied, compared with 64 percent in Contra Costa County. About 62 percent of the City’s housing stock is of post-1970 construction, as opposed to under 50 percent in Contra Costa County. The housing vacancy rate in 1990 was 6.8 percent in Antioch, compared to 5.0 percent in the county. Typically, housing costs are more affordable in Antioch as compared to Contra Costa County as a whole. In 1990, the median rent in Antioch was \$675, or 94 percent of the median rent in the county.

<sup>2</sup> ABAG figures include both the City of Antioch and the surrounding area in its sphere of influence.

**TABLE 4.2-4  
2005 POPULATION FORECASTS FOR CITIES OF ANTIOCH,  
PITTSBURG, AND SAN FRANCISCO**

City/County	Year	Population	Households	Employed	Jobs
San Francisco <sup>a</sup>	1990	723,959	305,584	391,292	566,640
	2000	785,900	317,970	403,700	586,950
	2005	794,700	324,270	427,900	613,650
	1990-2000 % increase	8.6%	4.1%	3.2%	3.6%
	2000-2005 % increase	1.1%	2.0%	6.0%	4.5%
Antioch <sup>b</sup>	1990	63,062	21,729	30,130	13,680
	2000	86,900	29,300	41,900	18,590
	2005	97,800	32,810	47,600	21,800
	1990-2000 % increase	37.8%	34.8%	39.1%	35.9%
	2000-2005 % increase	12.5%	12.0%	13.6%	17.3%
Pittsburg <sup>b</sup>	1990	65,230	21,670	29,690	15,900
	2000	71,500	23,210	31,800	20,890
	2005	76,800	24,930	35,000	22,600
	1990-2000 % increase	9.6%	7.1%	7.1%	31.4%
	2000-2005 % increase	7.4%	7.4%	10.1%	8.2%

a ABAG data at the census tract level were unavailable, thus the City and County of San Francisco growth projections have been used.

b ABAG figures include the city sphere of influence, so they are larger than U.S. Census figures for the respective cities.

SOURCE: ABAG, Projections '98

Furthermore, median housing values were about 25 percent lower than those in the county; \$155,600 in Antioch versus \$217,100 in Contra Costa County.

### ***PITTSBURG POWER PLANT***

The Pittsburg Power Plant is located near the City of Pittsburg, along the southern edge of the Suisun Bay. Pittsburg is a small city of 47,000 (as of 1990) whose population and economy are growing at similar rates to Contra Costa County, where it is located. During the period from 1990 to 2005, Pittsburg's population is expected to increase by 17 percent, and jobs by 42 percent. In contrast, Contra Costa County's population is expected to increase by 23 percent, and jobs by 21 percent. However, 1995 mean household incomes in Pittsburg were 30 percent lower than in the county: \$50,000 versus \$70,700 in Contra Costa County.

About 70 percent of Pittsburg's housing stock is of post-1970 construction, while about half of the county's housing stock is post-1970s construction. The housing vacancy rate is 6.4 percent in Pittsburg, compared to 5 percent in the county. Of the 16,700 housing units in Pittsburg, about 57 percent are owner-occupied, compared with 64 percent in Contra Costa County. In comparison to the county, housing is also more affordable in Pittsburg. In Pittsburg in 1990, the median gross rent was \$622, about 92 percent of the median gross rent in the county as a whole, and the median housing value of \$138,300 was two-thirds of the county's median housing value.

### ***GEYSERS POWER PLANT***

The Geysers Power Plant is located in unincorporated portions of Sonoma and Lake Counties, spread over an area of about 10 by 15 miles. The twelve Geysers units in Sonoma County are in the rural northeast subregion of the county. By 2005, this area is expected to have only 6,600 residents, 3,300 employed residents, and 2,590 jobs. However, in 1995 this area had a mean household income of \$79,300, significantly higher than the countywide mean household income of \$58,100. The nearest town in Sonoma County is Healdsburg, about 25 miles away. Healdsburg is expected to have 11,500 residents by 2005, along with 6,200 employed residents and 3,810 jobs. Two of the 14 Geysers units are located in southwest Lake County. The nearest inhabited areas are along Route 175 near Cobb, about five miles north of the Geysers. In 1980, the Cobb/Middletown area had just over 3,200 residents, making it one of the least populated areas in the county. Lake County prepares population forecasts only for the county as a whole. In 1980, it was projected that the county would reach 72,000 residents by 2000, but the county has not experienced as much growth as anticipated since those forecasts were completed. Currently it has about 55,000 residents.

### **4.2.3 SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA**

Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines (Governor's Office, 1997) states that a project is deemed to have significant effects if it either induces substantial growth or concentration of population, or displaces a large number of people.

### **4.2.4 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

#### **Impact 4.2-1: The proposed project would not induce substantial growth or concentration of population. (Less than Significant)**

A growth-inducing impact is defined as one that could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Included in the definition are public works projects that would remove obstacles to population growth. Any infrastructure project involving the creation of capacity to serve any new level of development (e.g., extension of roads, sewer lines, water lines, etc.) may be growth-inducing.

The environmental effects of growth are secondary, or indirect, impacts of a proposed action. Secondary effects of growth include increases in the demand on community services and infrastructure, increased traffic and noise, and conversion of agricultural and open space land to developed use.

One of the purposes of restructuring the electric industry is in fact to induce economic growth. As noted in Section 4.8, a legislative goal of electrical restructuring is to lower California's price of electricity and cause more businesses to locate or expand their operations in the state. Divestiture is one part of the restructuring process. Divestiture is expected to promote competition and mitigate the market power of the IOUs. In addition, because incentives exist for the new owners of the divested plants to operate the plants at higher, more constant levels than PG&E currently operates them (as discussed in Chapter 3), the supply of electricity in the region may increase. Increased supply is expected to lower electricity prices. Together, increased competition and increased supply is expected to lower electricity prices and encourage economic growth.

However, it is not known where within the state increased economic growth might occur as a consequence of lower electricity prices. Economic growth could take place in the vicinity of the four divested plants, or it could take place in other areas that also experience a decrease in electricity prices as a consequence of restructuring and divestiture. The potential environmental impacts of such growth are at present too speculative to consider in this EIR.

The project may involve construction of minor structures, such as fences, that may be necessary to separate generation facilities from transmission facilities, that PG&E plans to retain. This minor construction activity would not involve the development or expansion of infrastructure, such as roads and sewer lines, and would not be growth inducing. It is not foreseeable that particular units at the divested plants would be replaced (repowered) by new owners in a manner differently than by PG&E under restructuring without divestiture by 1999.

Substantial growth or concentration of population would occur if the proposed divestiture project resulted in substantial new employment or population growth. At the present time, it is not known whether the future plant owners and operators would increase or decrease the number of employees at any of the plants being considered for divestiture. Overall, if plants remain in operation, there will be some level of employment at each of the plants regardless of changes in ownership, as employees will be required to operate and maintain the plant facilities. In addition, Assembly Bill 1890 requires that the purchaser of each plant enter into an Operations and Maintenance (O/M) Agreement with PG&E for PG&E to operate and maintain the plant for two years following the closing of the sale. It is PG&E's intent to staff the plant during the O/M agreement period with existing PG&E employees. After this period, the new owner would develop a staffing plan to operate and maintain the plant facility. Potential employment growth at each of the plants is considered below.



### **Potrero Power Plant**

Under divestiture, the plant would continue to operate in its present form in 1999, although possibly at higher levels of capacity, up to the technical maximum capacity of the plant.

The Potrero Power Plant is located within a sizable metropolitan area with a large and diverse employment base. The plant employs 34 workers, the fewest of the four plants proposed for divestiture. Compared to the 586,950 jobs that San Francisco is projected to have in 2000, the Potrero Power Plant represents less than 0.1 percent of city jobs. Although it is not known whether the future plant owner would increase or decrease the number of employees at the plant, even operations at the technical maximum capacity of the plant and doubling the existing jobs at the plant would also represent less than 0.1 percent of city jobs. A change of this magnitude would not substantially affect San Francisco's current jobs/housing ratio of 0.71 residents per job. Thus there would be no substantial growth or large concentration of population in the vicinity of the plant. The project would have a less than significant impact on population growth.

### **Contra Costa Power Plant**

Under divestiture, the plant would continue to operate in its present form in 1999, although possibly at higher levels of capacity, up to the technical maximum capacity of the plant.

The Contra Costa Power Plant is located on the outskirts of Antioch, a town that is experiencing rapid growth in employment. Contra Costa County is projected to have 339,150 jobs in 2000. Antioch is projected to have 18,590 jobs by 2000, while between 2000 and 2005, jobs in the city are projected to increase by 17.3 percent. The Contra Costa Power Plant employs 64 workers, which is less than 0.1 percent of county jobs and 1 percent of city jobs. It is unknown if the future plant owner would increase or decrease the number of employees at the plant. Nevertheless, even operations at the technical maximum capacity of the plant and doubling of staff levels at the plant would still represent less than 1 percent of city jobs and well under 1 percent of county jobs. A change of this nature would not substantially affect Contra Costa County's current jobs/housing ratio of 1.40 employed residents per job. Therefore, there would be no substantial growth or large concentration of population in the area near the plant, and the project would have a less than significant impact on population growth.

### **Pittsburg Power Plant**

Under divestiture, the plant would continue to operate in its present form in 1999, although possibly at higher levels of capacity, up to the technical maximum capacity of the plant.

The Pittsburg Power Plant is located near Pittsburg and employs 157 workers. In 2000, Pittsburg is projected to have 20,890 jobs and Contra Costa County is expected to have 339,150 jobs. Employment in Pittsburg is projected to increase by 8.2 percent between 2000 and 2005. The power plant employs less than 0.1 percent of all county jobs and less than 1 percent of city jobs. Currently, it is unknown whether future plant owners would increase or decrease the number of employees at the plant. However, even if the plant were assumed to operate at its technical maximum capacity and to double its staff, the Pittsburg Power Plant would still represent

1.5 percent of city jobs and well under 1 percent of county jobs. A change of this nature would not substantially affect Contra Costa County's current jobs/housing ratio of 1.40 employed residents per job. Thus there would be no substantial growth or large concentration of population in the area. The divestiture project would have a less than significant impact on population growth.

### **Geysers Power Plant**

Under divestiture, the plant would continue to operate in its present form in 1999, although possibly at higher levels of capacity, up to the technical maximum capacity of the plant.

The Geysers plant, which employs 204 workers, is located in rural portions of Sonoma and Lake Counties. Twelve of the 14 units are located in Sonoma County, so the number of workers at the Geysers is compared to Sonoma County jobs. In 2000, Sonoma County is projected to have 184,810 jobs. Employment in Sonoma County is projected to increase by 14 percent between 2000 and 2005, representing nearly 26,000 jobs. The 204 jobs constitute 0.1 percent of Sonoma County's jobs. Although it is not known if the future plant owner would increase or decrease the number of employees at the plant, a doubling of the existing jobs at the plant would represent 0.2 percent of Sonoma County jobs. A change of this nature would not substantially affect Sonoma County's current jobs/housing ratio of 1.26 employed residents per job. Therefore, there would be no substantial growth or large concentration of population in the area, and the divestiture project would have a less than significant impact on population growth.

### ***Mitigation Measures Proposed as Part of Project***

None.

### ***Mitigation Measures Identified in this Report***

None required.

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### **Impact 4.2-2: The proposed project would not displace a large number of people. (Less than Significant)**

### **Potrero Power Plant**

The Potrero Power Plant is located in an industrial area and the proposed divestiture project would not displace any residents or housing units. In addition, there are no plans to expand the plant geographically beyond the existing site, and any such plans would be subject to future additional environmental review and permitting. No residents would be displaced as a result of the proposed divestiture, as there is no housing at the site. Thus, the project would have a less than significant impact near the Potrero Power Plant.

### **Contra Costa Power Plant**

As the plant is located just outside Antioch in an existing industrial area, the proposed divestiture project would not displace any residents. In addition, there are no housing units on the site and no plans to expand the plant beyond the existing site. Any such plans would be subject to future additional environmental review and permitting. No people would be displaced as a result of the proposed divestiture of the Contra Costa Power Plant, since there are no housing units at the site. Therefore, the project would have a less than significant impact.

### **Pittsburg Power Plant**

The Pittsburg plant is located near Pittsburg in an existing industrial area. The proposed divestiture project would not displace any residents or housing units. Furthermore, there are no plans to expand the plant beyond the existing site boundaries, and any such plans would be subject to additional environmental review and permitting. Therefore, no residents in or around Pittsburg would be displaced as a result of the proposed divestiture project, since there is no housing in the vicinity of the site. The project would have a less than significant impact.

### **Geysers Power Plant**

The Geysers Power Plant is interspersed throughout rural portions of Sonoma and Lake Counties. No existing residential units have been identified on the power plant property and therefore the proposed project would not displace any residents or housing units. Additionally, there are no plans to expand the plant beyond the existing boundaries, and any such plans would be subject to additional environmental review and permitting. No residents in Sonoma or Lake Counties would be displaced, since there are no housing units on the Geysers site. The project would therefore have a less than significant impact.

### ***Mitigation Measures Proposed as Part of Project***

None.

### ***Mitigation Measures Identified in this Report***

None required.

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## **REFERENCES – Population and Housing**

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