



BEUDO TECHNICAL GUIDE:

Covered Properties & Building Configuration

**CITY OF
CAMBRIDGE**

Office of
Sustainability

Identifying your BEUDO Covered Properties, and understanding key choices for reporting compliance

The Basics

The Building Energy Use Disclosure Ordinance (BEUDO) requires owners of large buildings to reduce emissions over time. For greater flexibility, BEUDO allows owners of Covered Properties containing multiple buildings to group the buildings for reporting in different ways. BEUDO also allows you to omit residential space from emissions requirements for multi-use buildings.

This guide reviews how to confirm whether your property is included in BEUDO; the emissions reduction requirements based on the size of your building(s); and, if you have multiple buildings on a parcel, your options to group buildings using a Default Configuration or Alternative Configuration.

These choices may influence whether your buildings are on a path to net zero energy by 2035 or 2050. What you decide now will impact your decarbonization targets under BEUDO.

By December 31, 2025, all owners of a Covered Property must confirm the building(s) living area via the BEAM Owner Portal as well as choosing 1) the Default Configuration of the buildings, or 2) if there are multiple buildings on the parcel, whether to apply for an Alternative Configuration.

What is a Covered Property?

BEUDO covers parcels in Cambridge based on two factors:

- ▶ Total size = combined living area of all buildings, recorded as covered square feet (csf)
- ▶ Property type = based on percentage of residential vs. non-residential area

A parcel is a Covered Property if it contains any of the following:

- ▶ Nonresidential building(s) totaling 25,000+ csf



Note: "Covered square feet" or "csf" refers to the **living area** defined in the City's Property Database, not gross floor area, as is reported in your ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager (ESPM) account. Parking garages, balconies, and unfinished basements are examples of spaces that do not count toward a property's covered square footage.

- ▶ Residential building(s) with 50 or more residential dwelling units
 - A building is considered residential if >75% of csf is residential. See *Multi-Use Covered Properties* below for more details.

A Covered Property must report data and/or reduce emissions, based on building type and size:

Property Type (csf)	Emissions Reduction Requirement
Residential	Must report energy data; No Building Performance Standard (BPS) requirement
Non-Residential (25,000 to 100k csf)	Net Zero Emissions by 2050
Non-Residential (≥100k csf)	Net Zero Emissions by 2035

How Do I Know If My Property Is Covered?

Owners of Covered Properties receive a notification letter annually. The **BEUDO Covered Properties Tool**, available at camb.ma/BEUDOTool allows you to search for your property and check:

- ▶ BEUDO Covered Property status
- ▶ All buildings on the parcel
- ▶ Living area data, as recorded in the City's Property Database

If your property is listed as a Covered Property and you disagree with its inclusion in BEUDO, contact the BEUDO Help Desk at: beudo@cambridgema.gov.

Options for Property Configuration

1. Default Configuration

By default, all buildings on a parcel are grouped together as one Covered Property, or a single compliance entity.

Even if you would like to keep the Default Configuration, you still must confirm the use type and living area by December 31, 2025.

2. Alternative Configuration

Property Owners have the option to report one or more buildings on a parcel separately from others in an Alternative Configuration. This allows Property Owners to ensure that their decarbonization plan for individual buildings aligns with the intended reduction requirements of the Ordinance.

An approved Alternative Configuration will become the Covered Property(ies) for BEUDO compliance, including reporting and emissions reduction obligations.

Each Alternative Configuration Covered Property is categorized as either:

- ▶ Residential
- ▶ Non-Residential

- ▶ Multi-Use (upon approval of a forthcoming application; *additional guidance in development*)

Who Qualifies for Alternative Configuration?

You may apply for an Alternative Configuration if your proposed configuration of buildings:

- ▶ Totals $\geq 25,000$ sq ft of living area (or $\geq 10,000$ sq ft for municipal properties).
- ▶ Divides the parcel at the building level.
- ▶ Can report all energy use for the chosen buildings clearly and completely.
- ▶ Can provide baseline energy data (by default, averaged from 2018-2019 data) for the same. See [Technical Guide: Establishing Your Baseline](#), for more details.

 **For existing properties: Deadline to select an Alternative Configuration is December 31, 2025**

Multi-Use Covered Properties

Owners of buildings containing both residential and non-residential uses may apply for their property to have the *Multi-Use* designation in the Property Configuration Form. The intent is to allow flexibility in how properties comply, and to ensure the Ordinance's standards are applied fairly across different property types. **Specifically, it allows multi-use buildings to follow requirements for non-residential buildings by allowing exclusion of emissions reduction requirements from the residential part of the building.** Buildings with 50 or more units will still need to benchmark (i.e., provide energy data for) their residential area.

- ▶ To be designated as a Multi-Use Property, the Covered Property needs to have one or more non-residential buildings and more than one residential unit. The residential area must cover less than 75% of total covered square footage.
- ▶ If it is not possible to separate the residential from the non-residential energy use, such as if offices and apartments share a utility meter, this designation is not available, and all building(s) will be considered a Non-Residential Covered Property.

We recognize that Multi-Use Covered Property criteria are complex. If you would like assistance determining whether your Covered Property is a Multi-Use Covered Property, contact the BEUDO Help Desk at beudo@cambridgema.gov.

Once approved, the Property Owner reports energy data and reduces emissions as a Non-Residential Covered Property, excluding residential energy use from:

- ▶ Benchmarking
- ▶ Baseline calculations
- ▶ Emissions reduction calculations

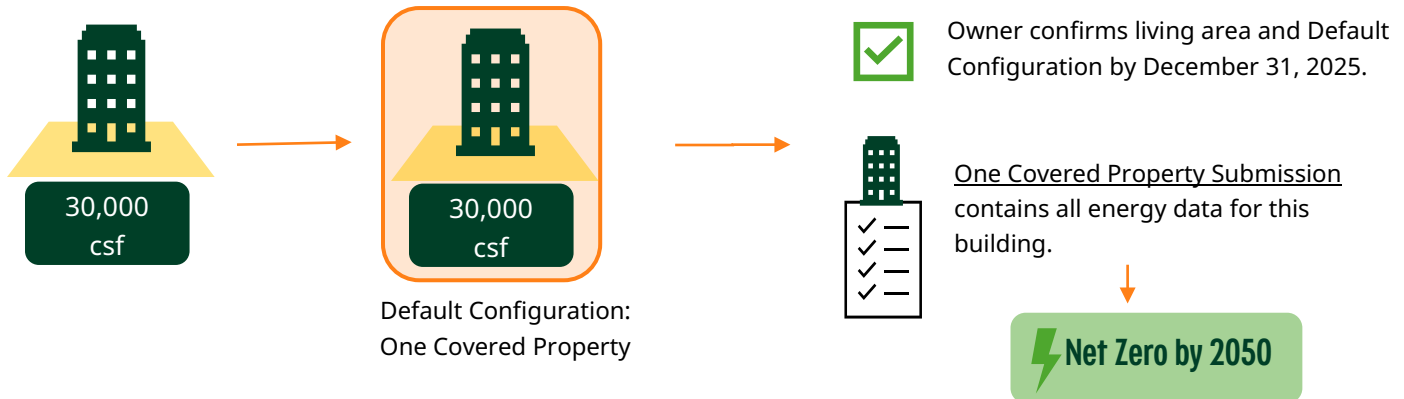
For residential properties larger than 100,000 csf that contain 50 or more dwelling units, you must benchmark residential energy use (even if excluded from other requirements).

Examples of Parcel Configurations

These examples show how different property types might approach configuration and reporting.

Example 1: One building on one parcel—*Default Configuration*

In the most basic scenario, one large building sits on the parcel with a living area of 30,000 csf. By default, this building composes the Covered Property. Still, the Property Owner must confirm the living area, or covered square feet, by December 31, 2025.

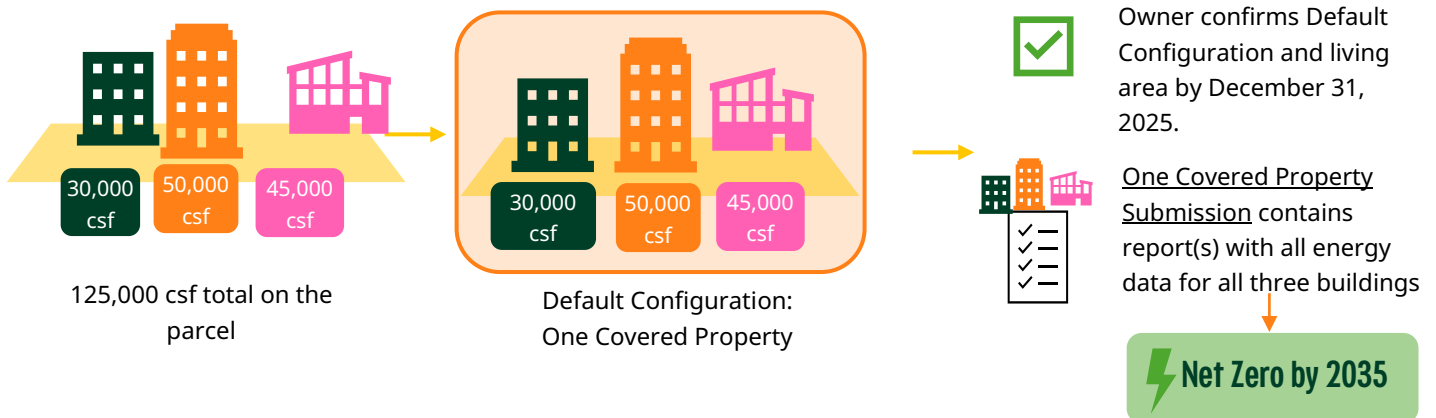


Example 2: Multiple buildings comply as one Covered Property—*Default Configuration*

By default, multiple buildings on one parcel are grouped together as one Covered Property. In this case, the parcel hosts three office + retail buildings with 125,000 sq ft of combined living area. These three non-residential buildings compose one Covered Property, and energy for all buildings must be reported together.

In the Default Configuration, these buildings exceed 100,000 csf and must reach net zero emissions by 2035.

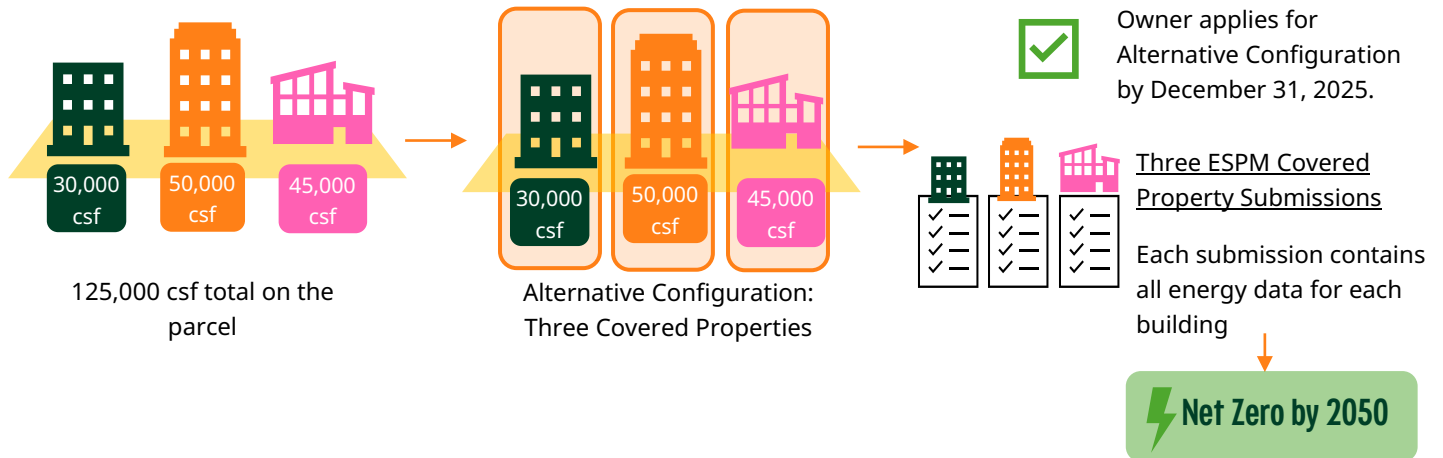
While these buildings may have separate *ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager* (ESPM) accounts, all energy used to power these buildings must be included in the ESPM Covered Property Submission.



Example 3: Each building complies as an independent Covered Property—*Alternative Configuration*

Using the same example parcel as Example 2, an owner may choose to report the energy use of each building on a parcel separately, such as if the buildings on this parcel are unrelated in operations (e.g., a school and a retail space), or if building renovations are on different timelines.

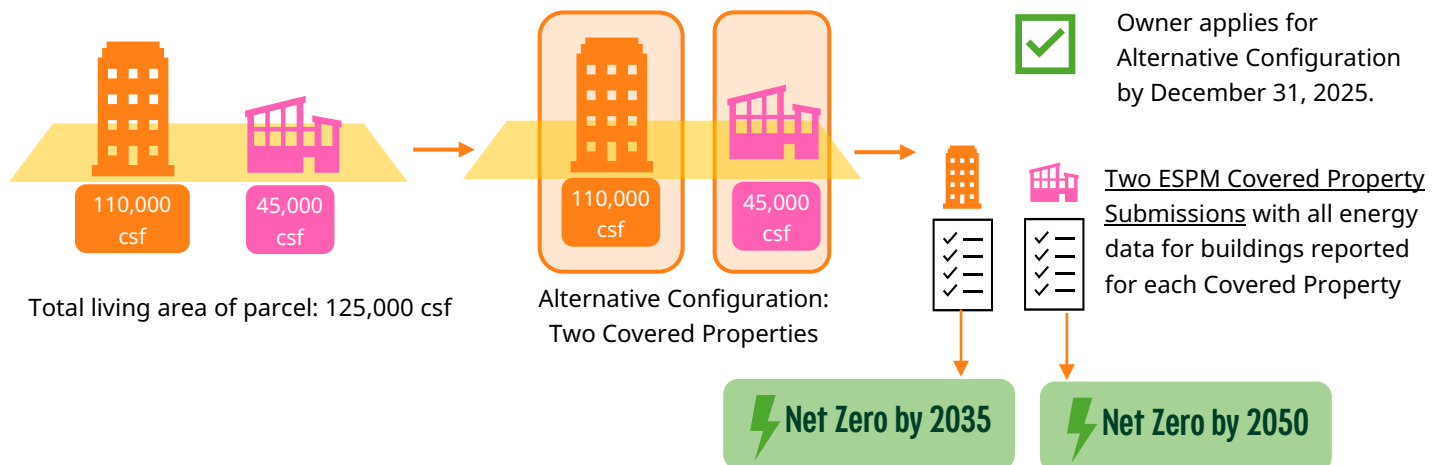
Since each non-residential building on this parcel is larger than 25,000 csf, each building can be considered a separate Covered Property. Energy must be reported separately, and there cannot be overlap in the ESPM submissions, to prevent double counting.



In this Alternative Configuration, these buildings should reach net zero emissions by 2050.

Example 4: Two buildings become separate Covered Properties—*Alternative Configuration*

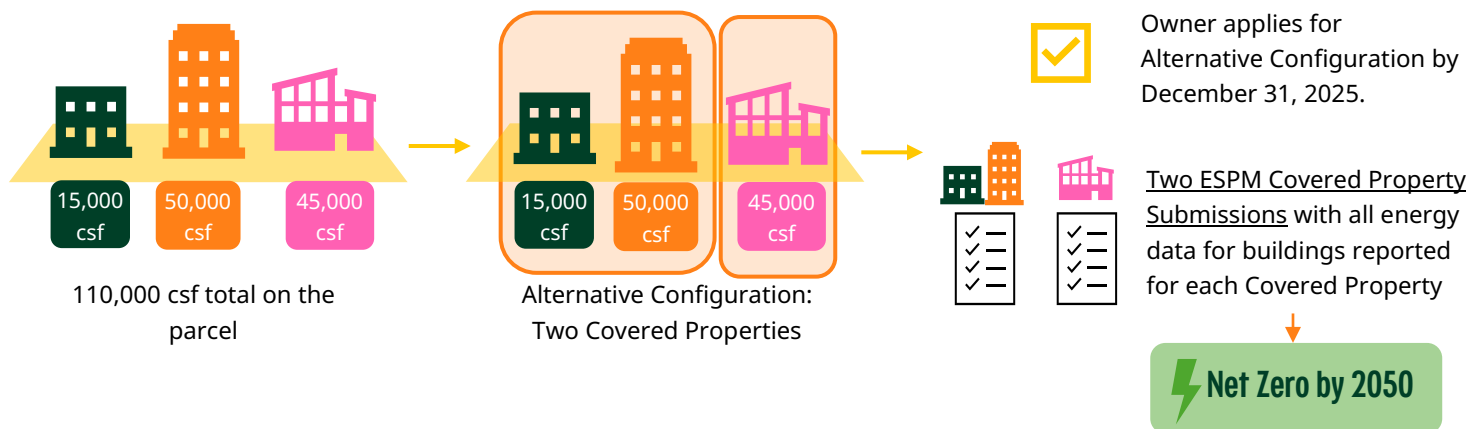
For the below parcel of two buildings—one greater than 100,000 csf and one smaller—the owner may choose to separate the buildings into their own Covered Property. In this Alternative Configuration, the two Covered Properties are now on different emissions reduction trajectories. The building larger than 100,000 csf must reach net zero by 2035, and the building smaller than 100,000 csf must reach net zero emissions by 2050.



Example 5: Covered Properties with Buildings Under 25,000 csf – *Alternative Configuration*

If one or more of the buildings on the parcel has a living area under 25,000 csf, it must be grouped with one or more buildings larger than 25,000 csf. As long as an individual building on the parcel is larger than 25,000 csf, it may compose its own Covered Property. Energy must be reported separately, and there cannot be overlap, to avoid double counting.

The following parcel includes three buildings totaling 110,000 csf. Since the ordinance sets requirements based on the total parcel, all buildings on this parcel are subject to reporting and emissions reduction requirements, including in this example a 15,000 csf building.



How Will My Configuration Affect Reporting?

Once your Covered Property is configured, whether by default or through an approved Alternative Configuration, you must report energy using that configuration for all future compliance periods. If you use the Default Configuration, energy data from all buildings on your parcel is reported in one submission via *ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager*. If you have multiple Covered Properties, you will need to create *ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager* accounts with complete data for each Covered Property.

Annual Reporting Basics

- ▶ All Covered Properties must report energy use in *ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager* for full calendar years.
- ▶ Reporting can involve multiple *ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager* accounts, especially for Alternative Configuration setups, but connected accounts must include all energy sources (e.g., electricity, gas) used by the building(s).
- ▶ You are responsible for ensuring accuracy and completeness, regardless of meter layout.

HOW TO SUBMIT

The Property Configuration Form in the BEAM Owner Portal offers step-by-step instructions. Navigate to the side menu → Help Desk → New Ticket → Property Configuration Form.

Shared Meters

Buildings with shared meters may still pursue Alternative Configuration, but additional meter allocation and documentation rules will apply. *Additional guidance coming soon.*

Summary for BEUDO Property Owners

To ensure your property is correctly configured for BEUDO compliance, follow these steps:

Confirm that your Building(s) is a Covered Property

- ▶ Look for your property in the **BEUDO Property Lookup Tool**: camb.ma/BEUDOTool.
- ▶ If your property is listed as a Covered Property and you disagree with its inclusion in BEUDO, contact the **BEUDO Help Desk** at: beudo@cambridgema.gov.

Create Your Owner Accounts for BEUDO Reporting

- ▶ Follow [this step-by-step guide](#) to connect your ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager Owner Account to your Covered Property.
- ▶ BEAM is a tool that imports data from ESPM. Access your BEAM Owner Portal: camb.ma/BEAM.

By December 31, 2025, Confirm and Configure your Covered Property

- ▶ Confirm **living area and use** via the **Property Configuration Form** in the [BEAM Owner Portal](#).
 - Navigate to the side menu → Help Desk → New Ticket → Property Configuration Form. Instructions are on the landing page.
- ▶ Choose **Default Configuration** or apply for **Alternative Configuration**.
- ▶ If using Alternative Configuration:
 - Ensure configuration meets size, data, and building separation requirements.
 - Submit request by **December 31, 2025**.
 - Form must be submitted and approved prior to choosing an Alternative Baseline. See [Technical Guide: Establishing Your Baseline](#) for more.

Consider Multi-Use Designation

- ▶ If your building includes both residential and non-residential space, determine if **Multi-Use designation** is appropriate.

Keep up with Energy Reporting & Prepare for Emissions Reduction Target

- ▶ Update data that comes from **all energy uses** (electricity, gas, steam, etc.)

Need more help?

If you need additional support, email the BEUDO Help Desk: beudo@cambridgema.gov.

For more detailed information, review BEUDO policy documents on the BEUDO page: camb.ma/BEUDO.



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