

# NEW CONSTRUCTION DECISION TREE

UPDATED JUNE 2023

Use this tool to quickly identify key decisions, map out options, and communicate clearly the chosen pathways that demonstrate Massachusetts energy code compliance.

## HOW TO USE:

1. **START** with the main decision tree, existing or new construction

2. Consider **ONE USE** at a time, answering questions to

- **IDENTIFY** the code "branch"
- Navigate through the appropriate **CODE BRANCH** by establishing the path that represent your project

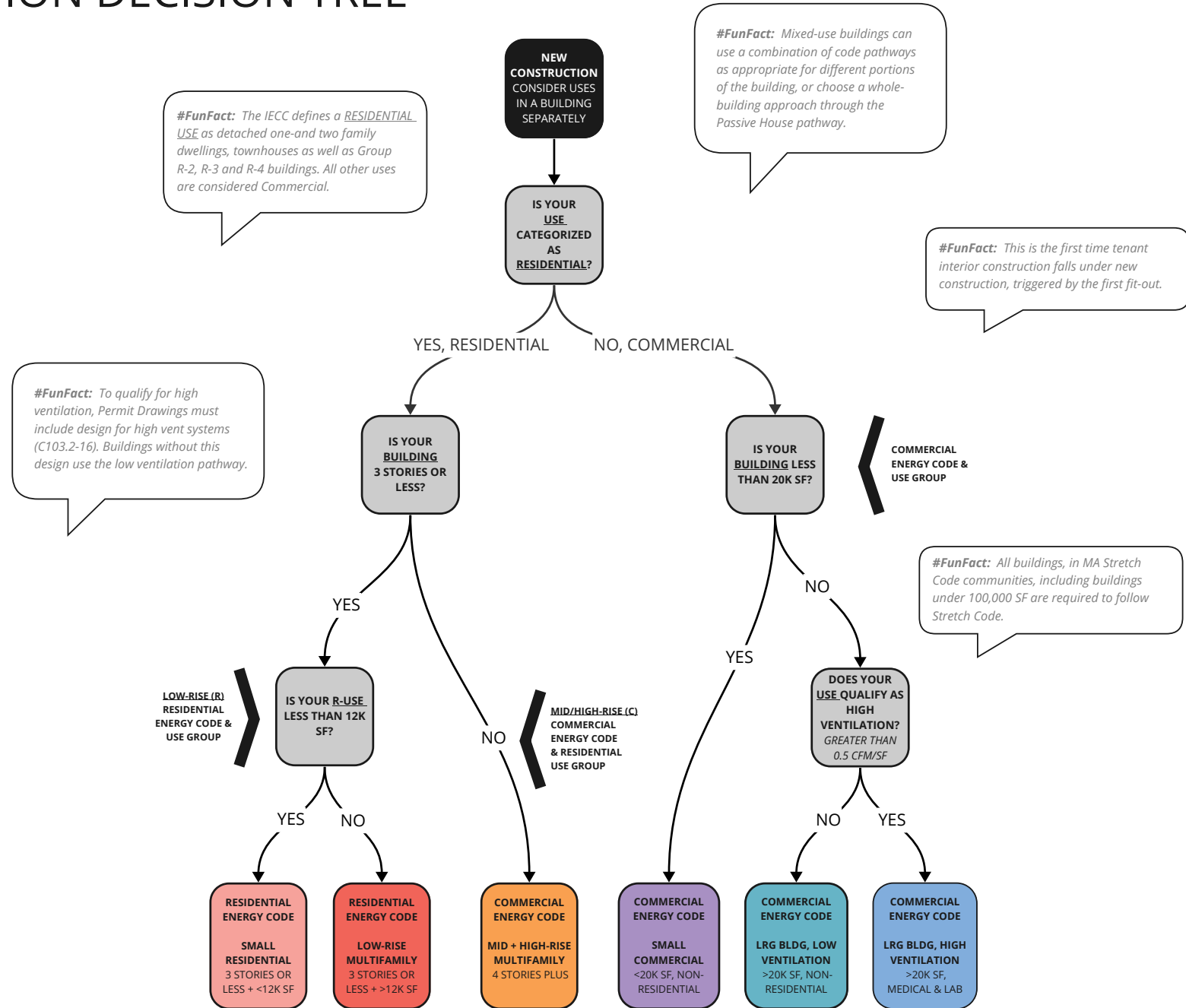
3. For **MIXED-USE BUILDINGS**, repeat the process for each use group

The branches do not contain all energy code requirements. Instead, it notes options or decisions which send you down a path. The path points to the relevant code section(s), detailing project requirements.

## BE MINDFUL:

The International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) is a model energy code, which forms the basis for the Massachusetts energy codes. The first bucket, the **Base Energy Code**, is the minimum required energy code in Massachusetts. The second bucket, the **Stretch Code**, is a stricter option towns and cities have already voted to incorporate. The third bucket, the **Specialized Opt-in Code**, includes additional requirements in addition to the Base and Stretch Code and is available for municipal vote as of December 2022.

This effort to map out MA Energy Code compliance pathways does not account for impacts of other codes and ordinances that may apply to projects.

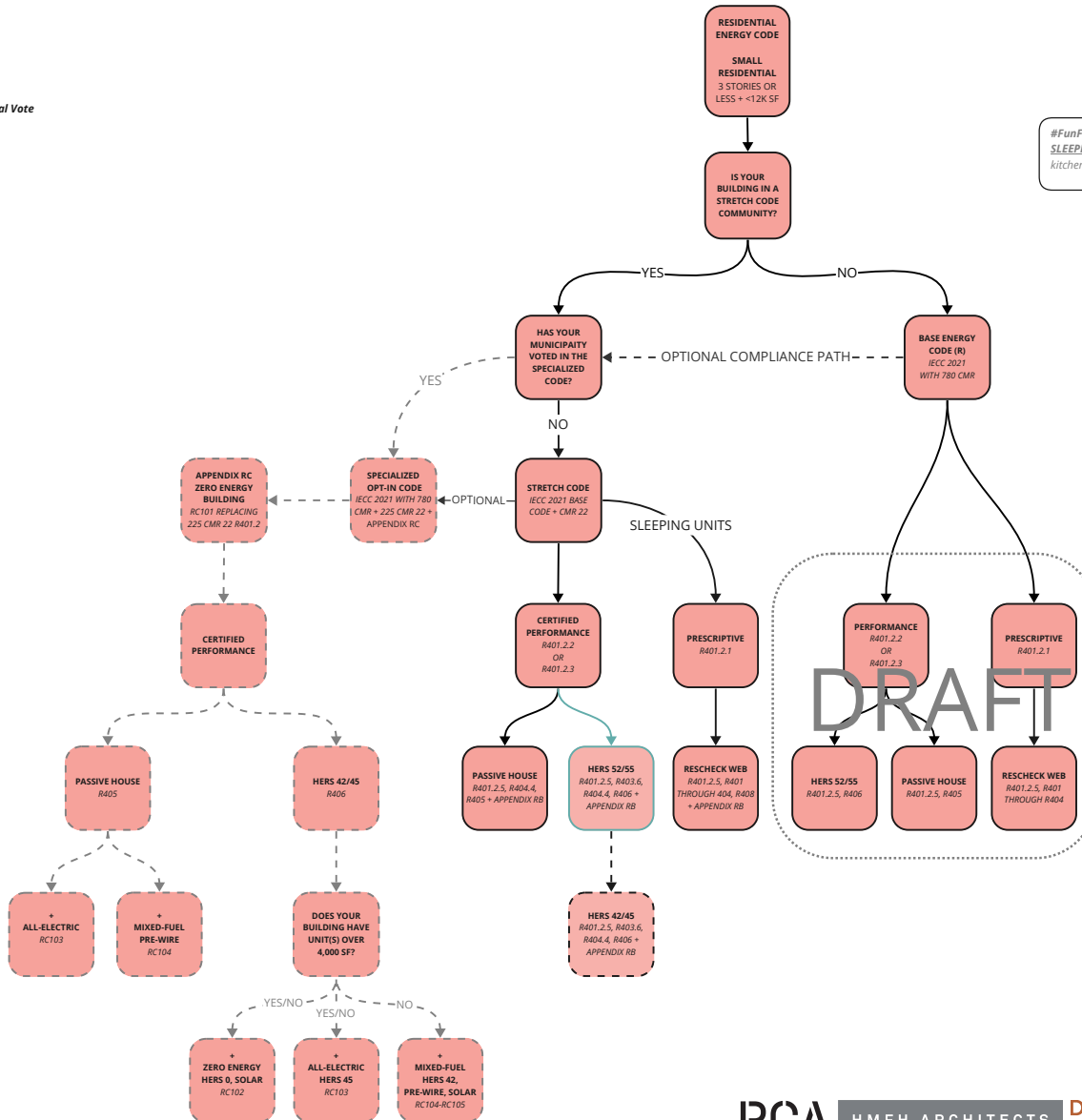


# LOW-RISE RESIDENTIAL BRANCH: 3 STORIES OR LESS <12,000 SF

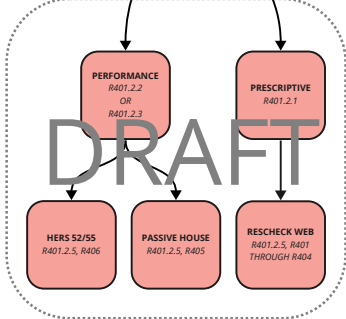
UPDATED JUNE 2023

## LEGEND

- 2023-2026
- Until July 2024
- - - After July 2024
- - - Effective After Municipal Vote



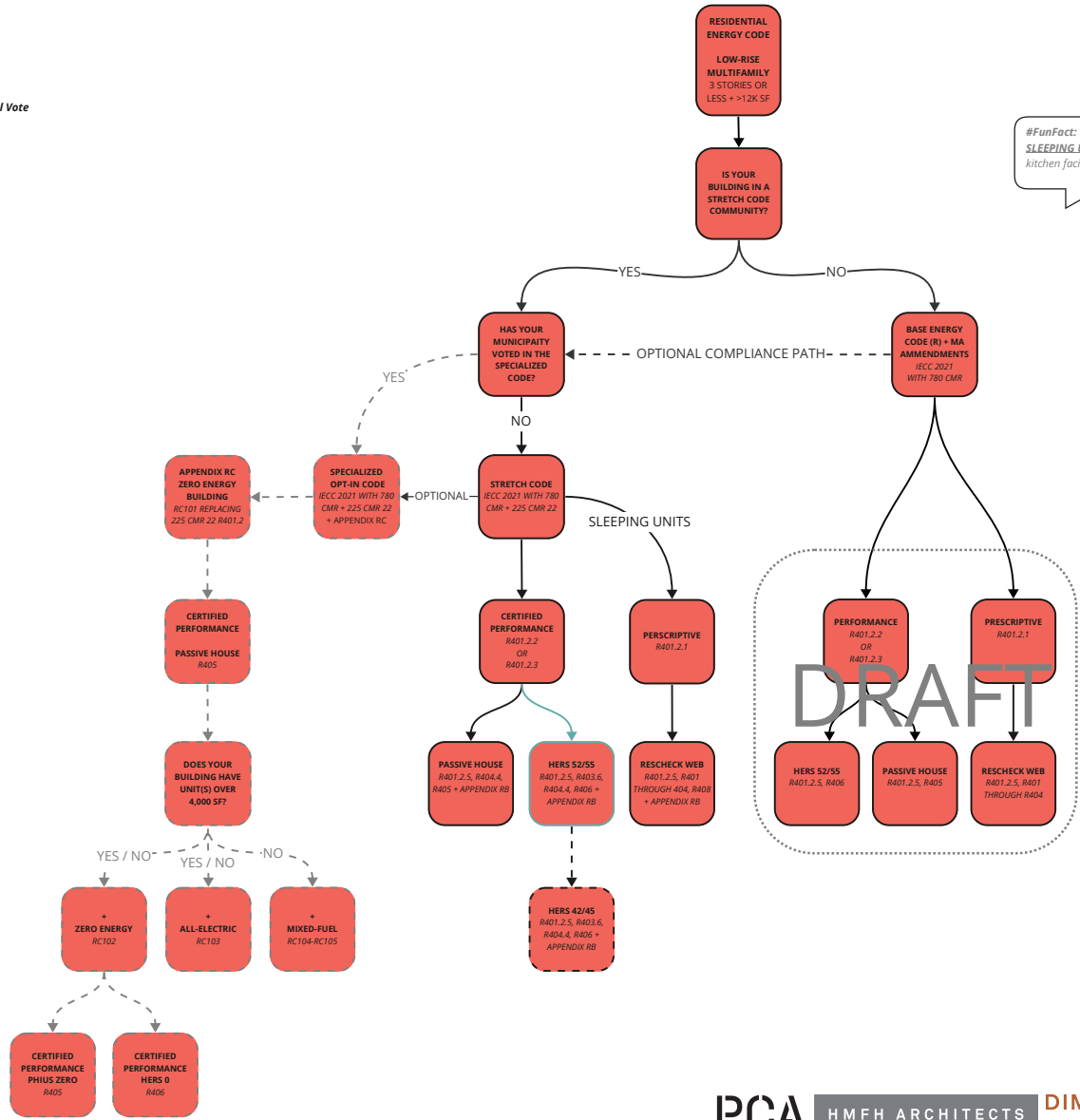
#FunFact: unlike a DWELLING UNIT, a SLEEPING UNIT has either sanitation or kitchen facilities but not both.



# LOW-RISE RESIDENTIAL BRANCH: 3 STORIES OR LESS >12,000 SF

UPDATED JUNE 2023

- LEGEND**
- 2023-2026
  - Until July 2024
  - - - After July 2024
  - - - Effective After Municipal Vote



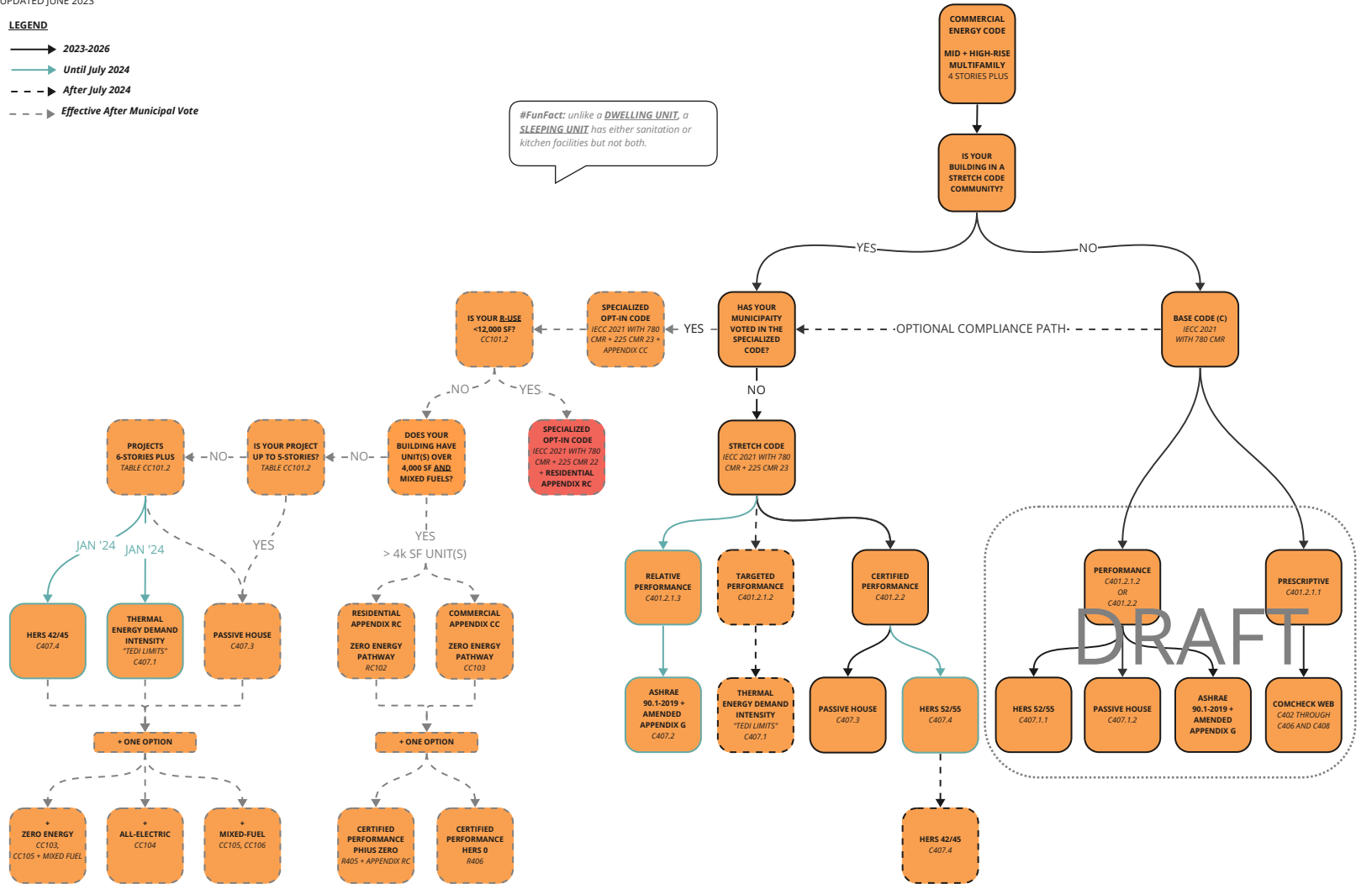
#FunFact: unlike a DWELLING UNIT, a SLEEPING UNIT has either sanitation or kitchen facilities but not both.

# COMMERCIAL BRANCH: RESIDENTIAL 4 STORIES OR MORE

UPDATED JUNE 2023

- LEGEND**
- 2023-2026
  - Until July 2024
  - - - After July 2024
  - - - Effective After Municipal Vote

#FunFact: unlike a **DWELLING UNIT**, a **SLEEPING UNIT** has either sanitation or kitchen facilities but not both.



# COMMERCIAL BRANCH: <20,000 SF

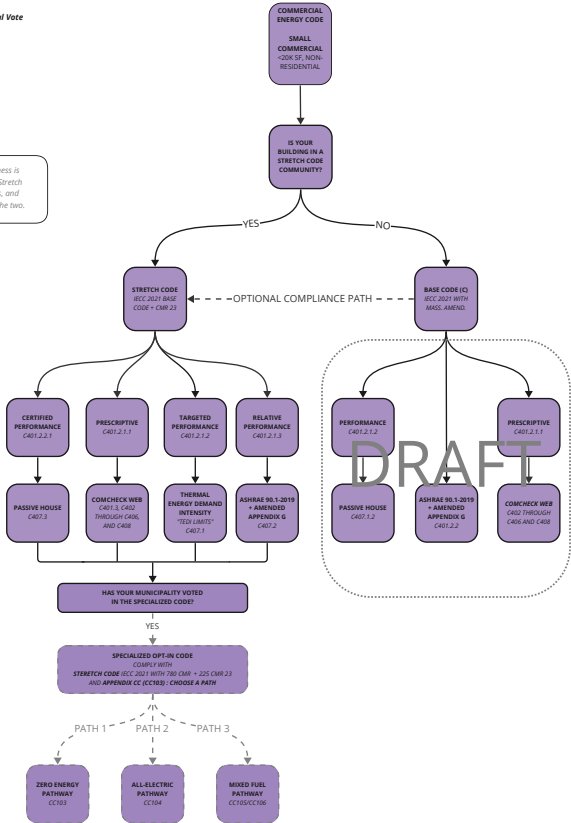
UPDATED JUNE 2023

**LEGEND**

→ 2023-2026

- - -> Effective After Municipal Vote

#FunFact: EV and PV readiness is required for all paths in the Stretch and Specialized Opt-in Codes, and requirements vary between the two.



# COMMERCIAL BRANCH: LOW-VENTILATION >20,000 SF

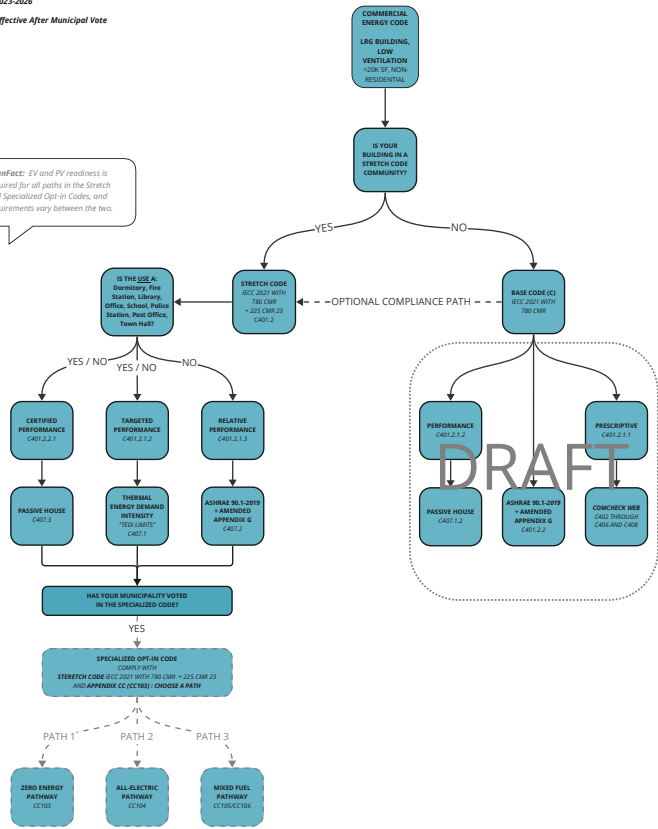
UPDATED JUNE 2023

**LEGEND**

→ 2023-2026

- - -> Effective After Municipal Vote

**#FunFact:** EV and PV readiness is required for all paths in the Stretch and Specialized Opt-in Codes, and requirements vary between the two.



# COMMERCIAL BRANCH: HIGH-VENTILATION >20,000 SF

UPDATED JUNE 2023

**LEGEND**

- 2023-2026
- - -> Effective After Municipal Vote

COMMERCIAL ENERGY CODE  
 LRG BUILDING,  
 HIGH VENTILATION  
 >20K SF,  
 MEDICAL & LAB

IS YOUR BUILDING IN A STRETCH CODE COMMUNITY?

**#SuperFunFact:** To qualify for high ventilation, Permit Drawings must include design for high vent systems (C10.3.2-16). Buildings without this design use the low ventilation pathway.

**#FunFact:** EV and PV readiness is required for all paths in the Stretch and Specialized Opt-in Codes, and requirements vary between the two.

YES  
 STRETCH CODE  
 IECC 2021 WITH  
 780 CMR  
 + 225 CMR 23

NO  
 BASE CODE (C)  
 IECC 2021 WITH  
 780 CMR

OPTIONAL COMPLIANCE PATH

CERTIFIED PERFORMANCE  
 C401.2.2.1

TARGETED PERFORMANCE  
 C401.2.1.2

RELATIVE PERFORMANCE  
 C401.2.1.3

PERFORMANCE  
 C401.2.1.2

PRESCRIPTIVE  
 C401.2.1.1

PASSIVE HOUSE  
 C407.3

THERMAL ENERGY DEMAND INTENSITY "TED3 LIMITS"  
 C407.1

ASHRAE 90.1-2019 + AMENDED APPENDIX G  
 C407.2

PASSIVE HOUSE  
 C407.1.2

ASHRAE 90.1-2019 + AMENDED APPENDIX G  
 C407.2.2

COMCHECK WEB  
 C402 THROUGH C406 AND C408

HAS YOUR MUNICIPALITY VOTED IN THE SPECIALIZED CODE?

YES

SPECIALIZED OPT-IN CODE  
 COMPLY WITH  
 STRETCH CODE IECC 2021 WITH 780 CMR + 225 CMR 23  
 AND APPENDIX CC (C183) : CHOOSE A PATH

PATH 1

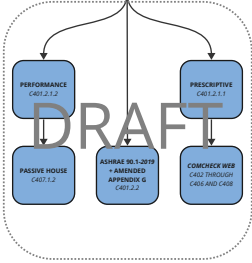
PATH 2

PATH 3

ZERO ENERGY PATHWAY  
 CC183

ALL-ELECTRIC PATHWAY  
 CC184

MIXED FUEL PATHWAY  
 CC183/CC186



**#FunFact:** Any building in a Stretch Code community can choose to follow the TED1 path. Because a building has to model ventilation rates as no lower than the ASHRAE 62.1 minimum, high vent buildings are unlikely to choose this path.

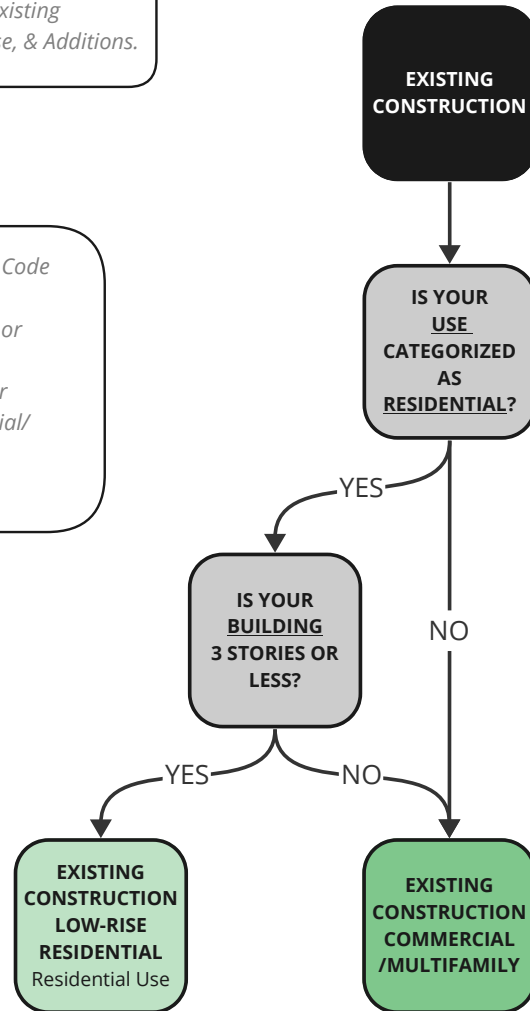
# EXISTING CONSTRUCTION DECISION TREE

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**#FunFact:** This is the first time the Stretch Code applies to Existing Alterations, Change of Use, & Additions.

**#FunFact:** The Specialized Opt-in Code pertains to new buildings only. Reference CMR 23 Section CC101.4 or Section RC101.1.  
\*This is an important distinction for Low-Rise Residential and Commercial/Multifamily Existing Construction.

**#FunFact:** Energy code defines a RESIDENTIAL USE as detached one-and two family dwellings, townhouses as well as Group R-2, R-3 and R-4 buildings. All other uses are considered Commercial.







# EXISTING BRANCH: COMMERCIAL/MULTIFAMILY

UPDATED JUNE 2023

