



THE 5-OVER-1 MIXED-USE BUILDING

ISSUE **01**

Like it or not, the defining housing typology of New Haven's current era will be the 5- to 7-story, rectilinear, wood and concrete buildings that are popping up all over the city. Depending on who you ask, 5-Over-1s (so called because they are typically constructed with 5 floors of wood-framing above 1 floor of concrete) are one of the best things to happen in the built environment in decades, or one of the worst. Proponents claim that they represent a turn towards densification, mixed use, and active mobility, and away from the environmental degradation and social exclusion of the suburbs. Skeptics object on several grounds: from the safety of wood construction in the city; the cheapness of materials; the banality of aesthetics; and the active debate on gentrification and affordability. The reality, of course, is that both sides are correct, to a degree. Opinions aside, the fact remains that these buildings are here, and their rise - literally and metaphorically - is only just beginning. While many look on with a wry

mixture of confusion and amazement, expecting that their high rate of construction will outpace consumer demand,

data shows that the opposite is actually true: they are renting and the vacancy rate is low. The annual number of new

projects is trending upwards.

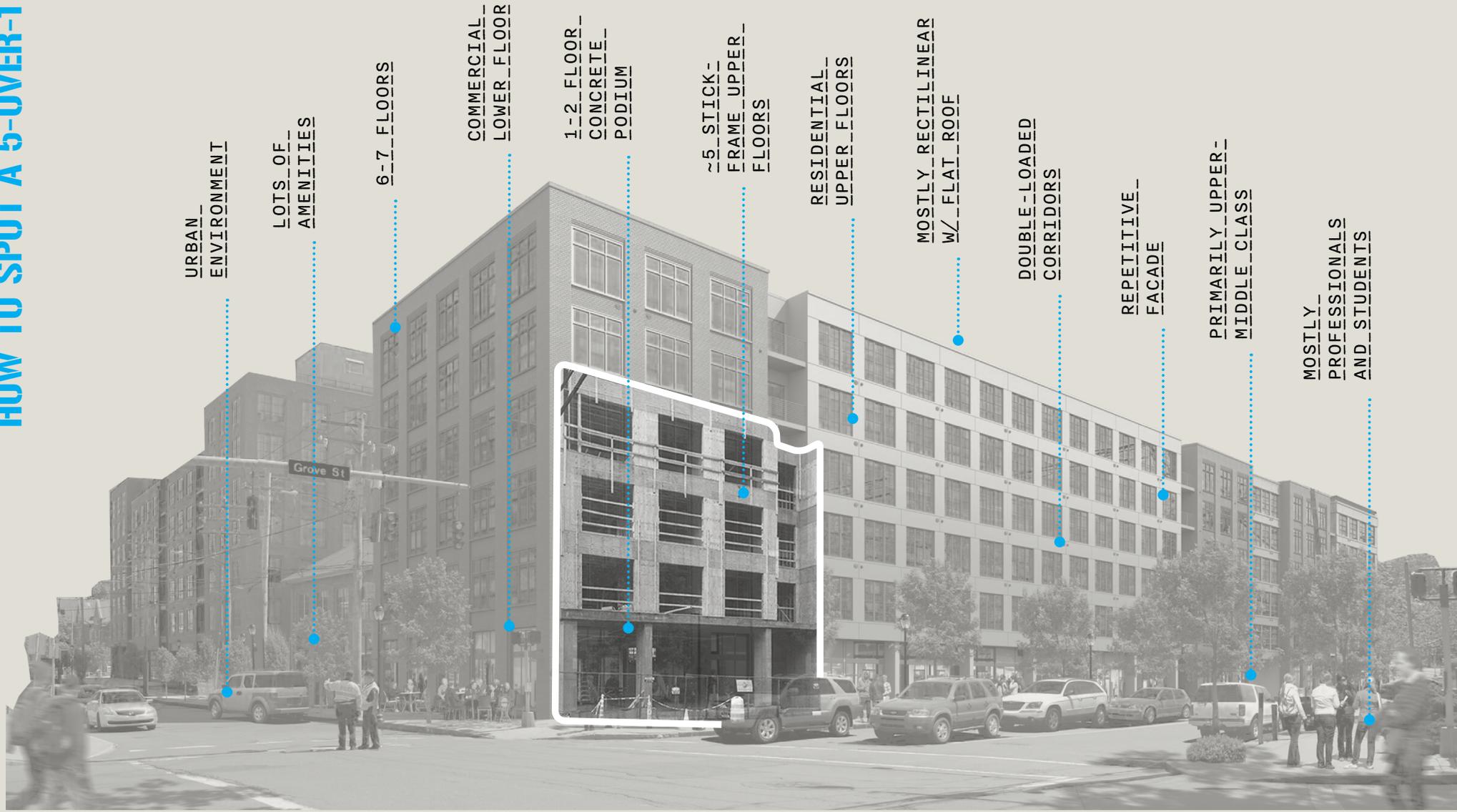
How long this trend continues remains to be seen, but the fact that it continued despite the supposed urban exodus of COVID-19 likely signifies the 5-Over-1's staying power.

Much like the double-deckers and the single-family homes from decades past, 5-Over-1s are the product of a confluence of economic, social, environmental, political, and technological factors. They're so popular for developers, politicians, and renters alike for a rather simple reason: they satisfy the needs and wants of each of these groups. So, given their obvious prevalence - and the fact that they will be a defining part of the built environment for decades to come - it's worth understanding some more about them. This newsprint attempts to do so with a variety of methods, providing some identifying characteristics (second fold), some background (third fold), a debate about their merits (fourth fold) and illustrating their local context (fifth fold). We hope you'll read on to see how this unfolds...

Authored by Zach Felder with Elihu Rubin. The "New Haven Building Newsprint" is part of Yale Urban Media Project (YUMP).

**NEW
HAVEN
BUILDING
NEWSPRINT**

HOW TO SPOT A 5-OVER-1



URBAN ENVIRONMENT

LOTS OF AMENITIES

6-7 FLOORS

COMMERCIAL LOWER FLOOR

1-2 FLOOR CONCRETE PODIUM

~5 STICK-FRAME UPPER FLOORS

RESIDENTIAL UPPER FLOORS

MOSTLY RECTILINEAR W/ FLAT ROOF

DOUBLE-LOADED CORRIDORS

REPETITIVE FACADE

PRIMARILY UPPER-MIDDLE CLASS

MOSTLY PROFESSIONALS AND STUDENTS

AVERAGE 5-OVER-1 UNIT INFO
(NEW HAVEN, 2022)

APT. TYPE	TOTAL AMOUNT (%)	SIZE (SF)	COST/SF (\$/SF)	COST/MONTH (\$)
STUDIO	25-35	500	3.70	1,900
1 BED	35-45	800	3.30	2,500
2 BED	10-15	1100	3.10	3,200
3 BED	0-5	1400	2.90	3,700
4 BED	0-5	1700	2.80	4,200

LET THE DEBATE BEGIN

5-over-1s tend to elicit some strong opinions
We've collected (and cleaned up) some hot topic quotes



5-over-1s promote density, which is inherently good! Density enhances sustainability, economic value, and social cohesion.

DENSITY

Is density actually a good thing? Is it actually safer to have people in close proximity during, for instance, pandemics?

More housing in general is a good thing. The market rate apartments in 5-over-1s have a trickle-down effect that promotes apartment availability for all.

AFFORDABILITY

More market rate housing without any affordable housing provisions only hurts those who are already living in the city and contributes to gentrification.

5-Over-1s are mostly wood, and wood is far more sustainable than concrete, as a renewable resource.

SUSTAINABILITY

Is it really sustainable if you're building quickly and creating buildings that may not last for a long time?

It's better that we're at least building new housing in the cities, instead of the single-family homes of the suburbs.

LOCATION

These buildings are simply bringing suburban issues of exclusion into the city, furthering social fracture.

New fire safety regulations and sprinkler systems make building with wood completely safe, particularly with regulatory oversight.

SAFETY

Have we learned nothing from the fires of the 1800s? And also, several 5-over-1s have already burned down during construction.

There's nothing wrong with a type of building that's everywhere - look at the Brooklyn brownstones!

OMNIPRESENCE

The lack of quality of architecture of these buildings makes the city seem the same everywhere.

At least architects are involved in the construction of 5-over-1s - unlike for the suburban house

ROLE OF ARCHITECT

This type of building represents the reduction of the architect to the lowest-common-denominator

5-over-1s' relatively affordable construction cost makes living more affordable for everyone who lives there

CONSTRUCTION

If so, then 5-over-1s should be used for lower-income families, like many of the first 5-over-1s were.

Cities cycle through buildings quickly, so longevity is not paramount

DURABILITY

Will these be able to last for a long time, with such basic construction techniques?

Every city needs background buildings that don't call attention to themselves

AESTHETICS

These buildings are just ugly, with cheap materials and repetitive facades

Design value is inherently arbitrary, and depends on the eye of the beholder.

DESIGN VALUE

Design should value public health - the materials and layouts of 5-over-1s does not.

From houses to skyscrapers, zoning always affects the shapes of buildings, and that's not a problem

ZONING

Zoning issues are simply making the buildings fit into prescribed boxes of predetermined blandness.

The chic industrial decor inside many 5-over-1s recognizes the industrial labor heritage of cities.

DECOR

This industrial chic decor is a whitewashing of low-paying jobs to lend fake authenticity to 5-over-1s

Tons of amenities are great opportunities for apartment dwellers to stay in shape, have social lives, etc.

AMENITIES

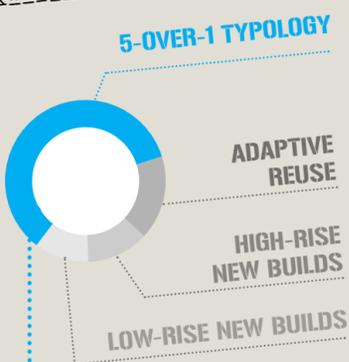
So many amenities within these compounds further privatizes the city and divides by class lines.

Many theorists say that 4-6 story buildings promote a healthy street life and social-ecological connection.

MASSING + SIZE

Do these 5-over-1s really contribute to a healthy street life, as they block sun and may remove public space?

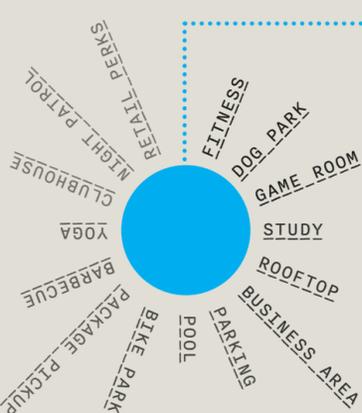
TOTAL NEW RESIDENTIAL UNITS
(NEW HAVEN, 2014-2024, %)



ASSORTED 5-OVER-1 NICKNAMES

- LOMO HOUSING!
- DEVELOPER MODERN
- SPONGEBUILD SQUAREPARTS
- BLANDMARKS
- REVITECTURE
- SQUARESPACE BUILDINGS
- PODIUMS

AMENITIES! AMENITIES!!

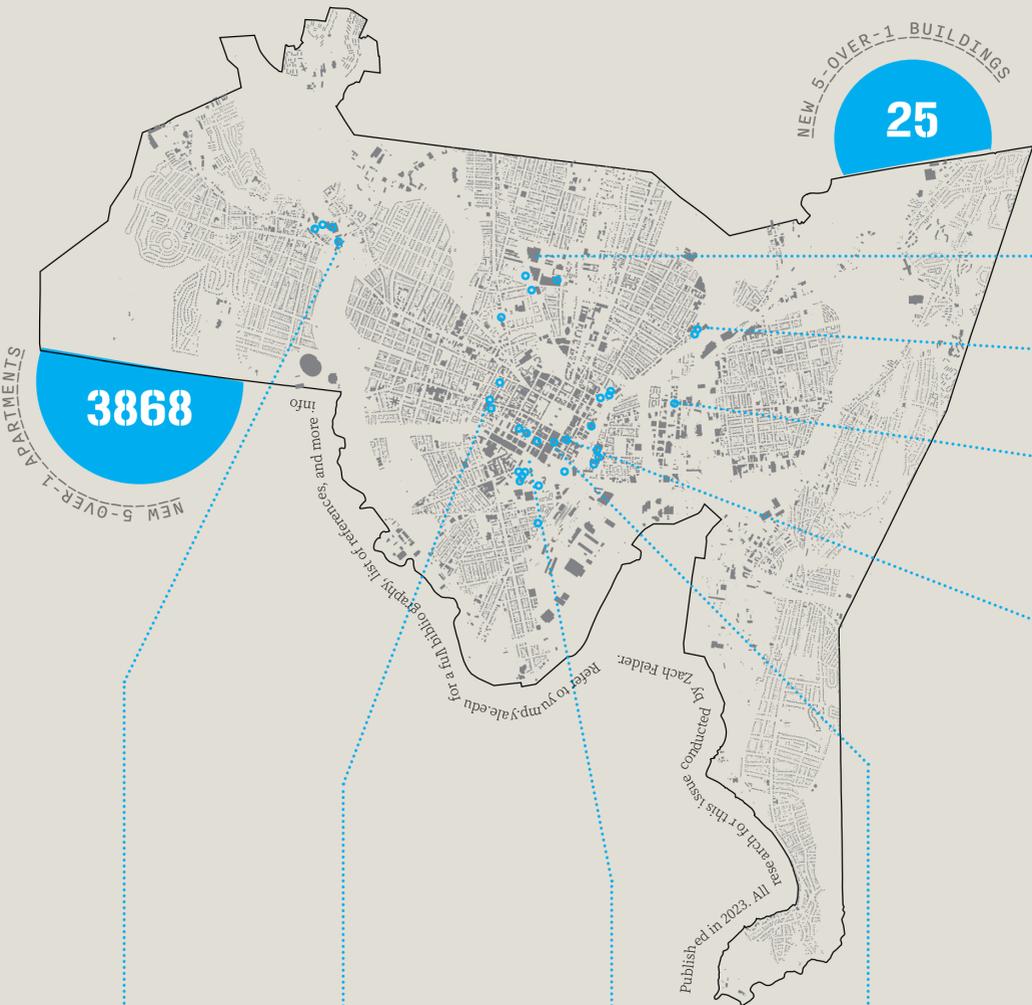


ADD YOUR THOUGHTS TO THE DEBATE! EMAIL
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THE RISE OF THE MID-RISE

New Haven's 5-Over-1 Boom, *by the Numbers*



2007



2013



2015



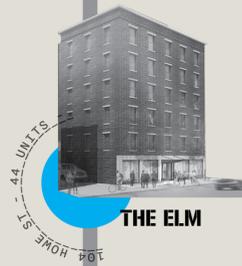
2018



2019



2021



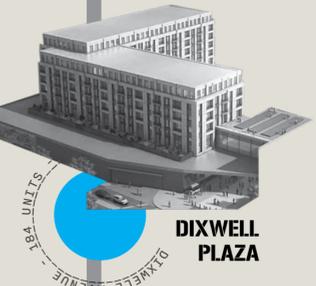
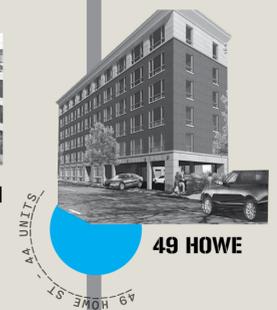
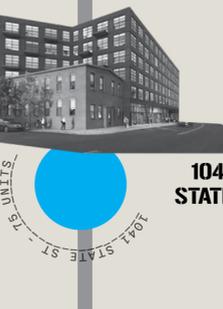
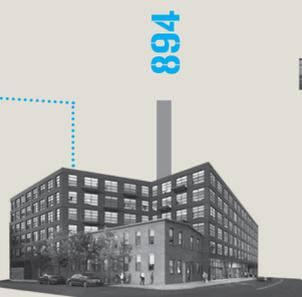
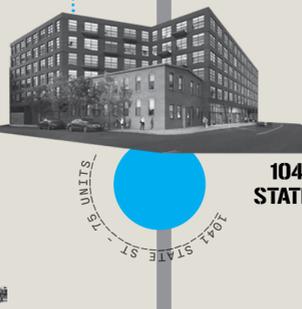
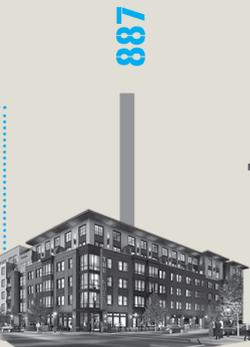
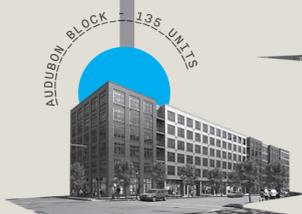
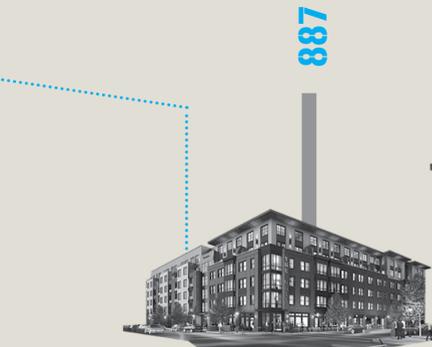
2022



2023



2024



999

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