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City announces Laneway House Design Competition results

by Contributor on Friday February 07 2020

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In first place is the Kootenay Three-Step design, submitted by Tony Osborn Architecture + Design Inc. of Vancouver. The design provides variations ranging from 571 to 858 square-feet. — Submitted photos

The City of Nelson is proud to announce the results of the 2019 Laneway House Design Competition and invites all residents to look through the design proposals and cast their vote online for the 'People's Choice' award.

The competition was launched in June 2019 and publicized across the country to solicit submissions of laneway house designs. To the City's knowledge, this was the first competition of its kind in Canada. In the first open round of the competition, which closed in September 2019, twenty-nine entries were received from coast-to-coast, including nine submissions from West Kootenay-based entrants.

The submissions were subject to a blind review (without knowledge of who the entrants were) by a five-member expert design review panel. Five were invited to participate in the second round. At the end of January, the panel made its final award decisions. The three winning designs will be made available to residents and pre-reviewed and pre-approved by the City, subject to foundation and siting adjustments in order to fit onto a given lot, to help homeowners with the process of realizing a laneway house on their property. All winning entries, however, will supply plans that accommodate flat and sloping sites alike.

The public is invited to get involved and evaluate these three designs by nominating one for the People's Choice award. There is no cash prize associated with the award, but going forward, the winning design will benefit from this designation. Voting takes place at www.nelson.ca/designcompetition (<http://www.nelson.ca/designcompetition>) from February 6th until February 21st, 2020. A full prospectus of each design is available online.

"Nelson will benefit in many ways from the addition of more laneway houses in our community, and this competition does its part by promoting high-quality designs at accessible prices to homeowners," says Mayor John Dooley. "I am confident the winning designs will inspire more homeowners to build laneway housing while keeping design costs reasonable."

The City anticipates that pre-reviewed designs will be most popular amongst those who would otherwise design their own laneway house without hiring a professional or seek to purchase stock plans online. The objective is to provide easy access to high-quality designs and code-compliant plans that strike the right balance between affordable construction and ecologically-sound design. They are designed for Nelson, offering exceptional value-for-money for homeowners.

All submissions were evaluated according to five criteria. In summary, these were:

- Design
- Good Home, Good Neighbour
- Affordability
- Flexibility and Longevity
- Eco-Design

The design review panel preferred designs that are useable, practical, buildable, and liveable, and of course, adaptable to various topographies and budgets. Each panel member individually commented on and scored each entry, which was followed by a lengthy discussion that reached a consensus on whom to carry forward.

The City is currently waiting on the winners to submit their full building plans for review and expects to be able to make the plans available for sale near the end of March. It is expected that City Council will decide on the final sale price of the pre-reviewed plans at its March regular meeting. An announcement will be made once the plans are finalized and available to the public. More details on the process of acquiring and using the plans will be made available at that time.

For more information on the competition, visit www.nelson.ca/designcompetition (<http://www.nelson.ca/designcompetition>).

The Call for Submissions document provides all background information on the competition, competition rules, and profiles of the design review panel members.



The second-place winner, which also received the "eco-choice" designation from the design review panel, is entitled 'Nelson Peaks', submitted by Tyler Reynolds & Adrienne Gerrits, Intern Architects (NSAA) of Halifax, Nova Scotia. It offers 850 square feet of living space.



The third-place winner, which also received the “affordable choice” designation, is ‘The Pica’, designed by Carmen DiPasquale of SNT Engineering and Rod Taylor of Rod Taylor Design, both Nelson locals. The base design provides 400 square feet of living space, with options to add another 165 square-feet of building footprint plus a basement.

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