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Winners unveiled for DL&W Corridor Design Ideas Competition

On Friday, the Western New York Land Conservancy will announce the winners of the DL&W Corridor International Design Ideas Competition. The Land Conservancy received nearly one hundred design idea proposals from individuals and teams across the region, the country, and around the world. These winning designs acknowledged the ways that the new nature trail and greenway can create an anchor for investment while creating opportunity, connectivity, and prosperity for local neighborhoods and the region.

"These design ideas demonstrate the ways that this project can provide connections, bring people together with our natural environment, and help to create a cohesive waterfront between Canalside and upland public access sites on the Buffalo River that is a vibrant and exciting place to explore," said Congressman Brian Higgins.

"The interest in this competition from around the globe demonstrates just how excited people are to see this existing land transformed into an integral space for the surrounding neighborhoods and Western New York as a whole," said Senator Tim Kennedy. "So many of these designs reflect the community's vision for this urban green space, and I have no doubt these innovative ideas will inspire the Land Conservancy as they move this project forward."

A jury of community leaders and international experts in design, community engagement, and infrastructure reuse reviewed each of the designs submitted and selected the top proposals for monetary prizes. The winner of the Community Choice Award was selected by the community through online voting as well as in-person voting at an Open House at M&T Center, and at a series of smaller exhibitions in the Valley, First Ward, and Perry neighborhoods.

The Land Conservancy is pleased to announce the following winners of the juried design ideas competition:

**First Place Design:** “All Aboard! Reclaiming Hill & Del” was submitted by MNLA, a NYC-based landscape architecture firm. Their design was created by team members Molly Bourne, Greg Leonard, Katherine Cannella, Ilana Cohen, Katie Drummond, Sonya Gimon, Emily Gordon, Rae Ishee, Johanna Phelps, and Yelena Zolotorevskaya. (Entry #0348)

**Second Place Design:** “The Dell, The Link & The Wander” (DLW) was a joint effort by: Marvel Architects – a NYC-based Landscape Architecture, Architecture & Placemaking firm with team members Yadiel Rivera, Tyler Silvestro, Yanick Lay; Buro Happold – Planning & Engineering firm with team members Alice Shay, Cristobal Correa; Patrick Cullina – Horticulture & Design firm; and NOWHERE Office – Graphic Design & Wayfinding firm with team member Yeju Choi (Entry #1324)
Third Place Designs: The Jury determined that two designs tied for third place: “Rail” and “The Loop Line.”

“Rail” was designed by a team of 6 graduate students of Landscape Architecture from Beijing Forestry University, including Ou Xiaoyang, Ni Yongwei, Lin Qiao, Liang Shuyu, Li Jiayi, and Ai Xin. (Entry #4190)

“The Loop Line” was designed by Kerry O’Connor of OSA, an emerging design practice based in Brooklyn, NY. (Entry #7836)

Honorable Mentions

“Del Buffalo: Connecting and Reconnecting” was designed by a Buffalo-based team comprised of Seth Amman, Dylan Burns, Nicole Lipp Duffin, Matt Wattles, Stephanie (Cole) Adams, Daniel Seiders (Entry #2535)

“The Verdant Vein” was designed by team ‘Echo’ which is comprised of four master students in the field of Landscape Architecture from Cornell University, including Lingyi Xu, Zhuohan Xie, Zhuojia Lou, Zikun Zhang (Entry #0770)

The community has selected the following designs as the recipients of the Community Choice Award:

First place: "The Del: A Steel and Rail Heritage Trail" was designed by Matt Renkas, who has a degree in Landscape Architecture from SUNY Environmental Science and Forestry. Matt is currently a firefighter for the City of Buffalo. (Entry #9163)

Second Place: “Del Buffalo: Connecting and Reconnecting” was designed by a Buffalo-based team comprised of Seth Amman, Dylan Burns, Nicole Lipp Duffin, Matt Wattles, Stephanie (Cole) Adams, Daniel Seiders (Entry #2535)

Third Place: “The Del-Line” was designed by Cannon Design of Grand Island & Supermass Studio of NYC. Team Members include Michael Tunkey, John P. Reed, Taewook Cha, Luke Johnson, Mark Nowaczyk, Nhan Bui, Ryan Koella, Sean Eno, Luyao Kong, Nicole Sowinski (Entry #9190)

“It is exciting to see that the winning designs focused on creating a gathering place for the community that is alive with the history and the voice of the surrounding neighborhoods,” said Assembly Majority Leader Crystal Peoples-Stokes. “It’s just another move toward reconnecting the people with our most treasured resource – our waterfront.”

Land Conservancy Executive Director Nancy Smith said, “These designs boldly capture the essence of this place as it is now, and all that it could become. They point the way forward for a corridor of connections – connecting our community with the Buffalo River, with nature, and with emerging regional destinations. They promise to help define Buffalo as a place where nature leads the way towards renewal and economic vibrancy.”

To view the winning designs, as well as the others submitted to the competition, please visit wnylc.org/dlw-design to access the design ideas gallery.

Over the next year the Land Conservancy will conduct the next phase of the project, which includes concept and schematic design. This concept and schematic design is funded through a grant from the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP). This part of the project will take place for a year beginning later in 2019, and will include many opportunities for community engagement. The final design will build from all of the design proposals, not just the winners, and will be developed in partnership with the community and other partners. It will be inspired by the innovative ideas generated through the design competition.
“This is a very exciting time to be in Western New York as we are finding unique ways to ‘green’ and connect our community while encouraging residents to get outdoors. I am so pleased that Governor Cuomo and OPRHP are playing such a large role in not only this project but many others throughout the region,” said NYS Parks, Western District Director Mark V. Mistretta.

The Land Conservancy is also working with Block Club, a local marketing firm, to develop a new name and identity for the project based on almost two years of feedback and input received throughout the community vision and design ideas process. The Land Conservancy is working with partners to offer a calendar of community events and outdoor programs for residents living near the corridor, sponsored by BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York Blue Fund. The Land Conservancy also just received a grant from the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Legacy Funds at the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo to create an equitable development plan for this project, which will help ensure that this project benefits the communities around the DL&W corridor.

The Design Ideas Competition was made possible through generous support from M&T Bank, BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York Blue Fund, the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Legacy Funds at the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the Land Trust Alliance, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy through the Doppelt Family Trail Development Fund, and numerous individual Land Conservancy members and donors. The total funding raised for the project to date is close to $1 million.

If you are interested in learning more about this project or the Western New York Land Conservancy, please visit wnylc.org/dlw. You can also reach out to the Land Conservancy at (716) 687-1225 or info@wnylc.org.

Right now, the Land Conservancy needs to raise another $200,000 by the end of the year to continue the next phase of the project. You can contribute by making an online donation at wnylc.org or by sending a check to P.O. Box 471, East Aurora, NY 14052.

The Western New York Land Conservancy is a regional, not-for-profit land trust that permanently protects land with significant conservation value in Western New York for current and future generations. The Land Conservancy envisions a future in which open spaces, working lands, wildlife habitat, and scenic beauty are cherished and protected as part of the landscape and character of Western New York. The Land Conservancy is accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission and is one of 1000+ land trusts nationwide, including 90 in New York State. Land trusts have protected 56 million acres of land. For more information on upcoming events, volunteer opportunities, or the mission of the Land Conservancy, please call (716) 687-1225 or visit wnylc.org.

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