

HOME > REAL ESTATE

---

## Laneway Houses Make Home Ownership More Affordable

Noa Glouberman | 1/26/2012



IMAGE BY: [Jon Benjamin Photography](#)

At just 220 square feet, the L41 prototype laneway house is small but smart

---

Laneway houses prove that “living large” no longer has to mean taking up a lot of space☒

Ever since Vancouver city council passed a bylaw in July of 2009, laneway houses – detached backyard dwellings meant for rental or family use that measure up to a maximum of 750 square feet in size (depending on lot size) – have been popping up behind “standard-sized” homes in designated single-family neighbourhoods across the city.

Now, two years later, architects, designers and builders have big plans for these little houses, coming up with innovative techniques and features that aim to make small-space living as affordable, comfortable and sustainable as possible – not just in Vancouver, but around the world.

## L41 is Affordable





*The sofa folds down into a bed, shelves offer storage and double as a desk.*

"It's 2011; it's time we started to take a closer look at how we're living on this earth," says Vancouver architect Michael Katz, who, along with his wife, designer Janet Corne, created a prototype of an "ultra-compact, affordable, sustainable, high-design" house that was on public display during the 2010 Winter Olympic Games.

Dubbed L41 (a nod to the notion of "all for one and one for all"), the original objective of the factory-built unit, which has since been tapped for laneway housing, was "to play a part in mass-producing houses that are so affordable that, before the end of this century, all the people in the world can have proper shelter," says Katz.

As such, he and Corne concluded that, in order to make a house affordable, they had to make it small. At 220 square feet, the L41 demonstration unit certainly fits the bill; but don't let its diminutive dimensions fool you.

