

# Courtyard Living in Portland



Lloyd Alter (@lloydalter)  
Design / Sustainable Product Design  
December 27, 2007

Share on Facebook



Keith Rivera and Kristin Anderson—Santa Barbara, CA

So many of our cities are designed around the traditional model of house facing street with backyard behind; in newer suburbs the car and garage dominate the front; in older cities there are often networks of forbidding back lanes. In Portland, Oregon, the City sponsored a competition to look at an alternative: the courtyard plan. According to Metropolis,

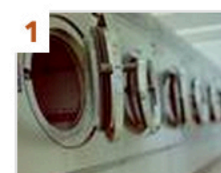
The competition promotes courtyard housing as an affordable way of increasing neighborhood densities without sacrificing public space and environmental sustainability. The courtyard model also extends Portland's tradition of street oriented urbanism. "Suburban houses avoid the street," said Mark Gillem, a competition director and a professor of architecture at the University of Oregon. "The courtyard can engage it."

Google™ Custom Search

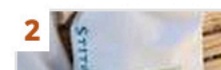
**A HALF DOZEN PROJECTS THAT ARE FOR THE BIRDS**

[LEARN MORE >](#)

**MOST POPULAR RIGHT NOW**



Patagonia admits there's a problem with synthetic clothes



16 more tips for living without plastic





**Inner Site Honor Award- Keith Rivera and Kristin Anderson—Santa Barbara, CA**

This project clusters six freestanding structures around a permeable pavement courtyard that also accommodates slow moving vehicles. Semi-private patios and front porches border the courtyard and terminate in a shared greenspace. Rooftop solar panels, bioswales, and rainwater barrels are among the project's sustainable features.

Metropolis continues:

Despite the common theme, the entries encompassed a range of contemporary and traditional architectural styles, says Gillem. For example, a commendation award was given to a design that stacks recycled shipping containers around a courtyard framed by wood trellises, eco-roofs, and pedestrian bridges. The Portland merit award winner showcases "future proofing," in which a starter house—boxy and modern with an ancillary rental unit—evolves into a single family residence, and then, finally, into multi-generational quarters.



without plastic



**3** No, Sweden does not recycle 99 percent of its waste.



**4** This new gadget promises to transform food scraps into fertilizer in 24 hours



**5** Family with 3 kids downsizes to tiny home to gain more space



**Sponsored**  
Think you know how to recycle? Think again.  
[Read on MNN PARTNER STORY](#)

AdChoices

dyson pure hot+cool link

Intelligently purifies, heats and cools you.

Learn more

**WHAT'S HOT ON FACEBOOK**



**Skip the rake and leave the leaves for a healthier, greener yard**  
Nature's autumn bounty of





Eastern Site Citation Award  
Steven Dangermond and Christopher Keane—Portland, OR

Although the jury selected a winner, anyone can go online and vote for the People's Choice Award (until December 28) ::[Portland Courtyard Housing](#) via ::[Metropolis](#)

### Related on TreeHugger.com:

- [Terraced 'agritecture' house combines architecture with urban agriculture](#)
- [A look at this year's Carbuncle Cup candidates](#)
- [5 architectural pavilions at the Serpentine Gallery this year](#)

Tags: [Architecture](#) | [Portland](#)



FACEBOOK



TWITTER



GOOGLE+



PINTEREST



fallen leaves isn't usually a problem for lawns and ...



by [Derek Markham](#) in Lawn & Garden

### Finally, a sandwich bag that's endlessly reusable



These flexible, airtight, watertight "bbagz" are made of platinum silicone, are multipurpose, and ...



by [Katherine Martinko](#) in Green Home



### Spanish house is dug into a hillside, needs no heat or cooling

But could it be the ugliest house we have ever shown on TreeHugger?



by [Lloyd Alter](#) in Green Architecture

### Emma Watson hides feminist books in London subway



As part of her fight for global gender quality, the British actress is ...



by [Katherine Martinko](#) in Culture

