

## This O House Housing Light, Air, Water and Earth

Zui Ng  
Prairie View A&M University

### Abstract

Photo journalist Natacha Pisarenko published an image of La Cava neighborhood that demonstrating stark contrast at the border of slum and gated neighborhood in San Isidro, Bueno Aires. Besides size of houses and backyard lawn, private pool becomes another vivid element in that image showcasing the gap of wealth. This image reflects the reality that human are born with equal ability to enjoy basic natural elements such as light, air, water and earth, but the ability to harvest and store them is not equally gifted. Architecture as a vessel of light, air, water and earth has helped amplified this inequality. This O house is a housing prototype that aims to challenge this reality by giving equal opportunity

for low cost housing to access basic natural elements and to empower its residents to harvest them (figure 1). First of all, the design utilizes stem wall foundation system to form a pool that could be used for recreational or rain harvesting. The central open air pool also invites natural light and air into the house. The pool can also be covered with deck to provide courtyard space to accommodate food garden or as play area (figure 3). Its roof is equipped with solar panel to harvest solar energy. In addition, This O house empowers home owner with adaptive floor plan allowing them to easily convert the house into a duplex for rental (figure 2). This gives them the ability to sustain their home ownership and potentially generate wealth.

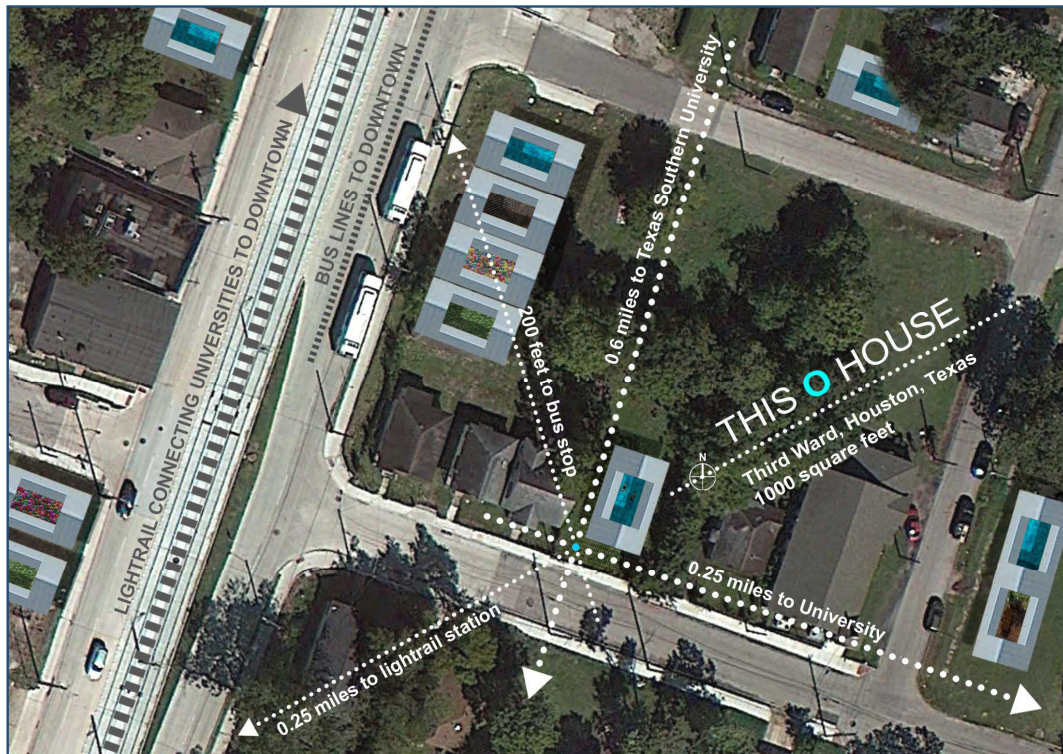


Figure 1: Site plan demonstrating different arrangements of This O House.





Figure 2: This O House can easily be converted into a duplex for rental income.



Figure 3: The versatile courtyard has myriad function such as pool, garden or play area.