

The Row House Community Development Corporation

Providing appropriate housing and public spaces for residents with a low income in Houston



The Row House Community Development Corporation (Third Ward, Houston) was set up in 2003 to relocate families from substandard living conditions in one of Houston's most challenged neighbourhoods, into new affordable rental units. Meanwhile, it is working its way toward providing owner-occupied homes in the area. Row House CDC is a remarkable offspring of what a decade prior had started as the artistic initiative Project Row House (PRH), which resulted from the drive among African-American artists to establish a positive, creative presence in their own community. In 1993, when in one of the city's oldest African-American communities an abandoned site with 22 shotgun-style houses got discovered by the artist and community activist Rick Lowe as the site to start action, this became the perfect opportunity to pursue the creation of a new form of art. In 2003, the need to broaden PRH focus to preserve the community (not least from opportunistic developers and real-estate speculators) sparked the initiation of a less artistic affiliate to PRH: the Community Development Corporation. Meanwhile, the Row House Community Development Corporation has activated two sites with 24 affordable housing units, mainly in a contemporary "duplex" adaptation of the typical shotgun/bungalow architecture of Third Ward. At this moment, through a Rehabilitation/Rent-to-Own Project assisted by in-kind and financial contributions from various donors, the Row House CDC is acquiring, renovating, and (affordably) renting up to 38 further units. The Row House CDC does not only address the urgency of appropriate housing for low-to-moderate income residents, but it also aims at providing public spaces and protect the character of the historic neighbourhood.

Project author or developer:
The Row House Community Development Corporation

Where:

Website:
www.rowhousecdc.org/

