HOUSTON. Following Governor Greg Abbott’s announcement that business have the option to implement any coronavirus mitigation strategies they feel are necessary for safe operations, Project Row Houses will remain closed at this time. Staff and vendors who must come to the site for essential reasons will be required to wear masks and follow other CDC recommendations for hygiene and physical distancing.

“We can overcome anything except loss of life. Right now, Project Row Houses’ mission to empower people and enrich communities through engagement, art, and direct action can best be carried out by staying closed and doing everything in our power to slow the spread of coronavirus,” explained Executive Director Eureka Gilkey.
“The pandemic and the economic downturn it triggered have had a disproportionately harsh impact on Black and Brown communities like ours. Third Ward has a higher percentage of adults without health insurance than the average in the city or the state, and we know this is true of other historically Black communities. We must look out for one another, and prevention is the best way.”

Gilkey concluded: “We strongly encourage our neighbors and the nonprofit community to join us in observing all coronavirus mitigation techniques recommended by the CDC for the sake of Houston’s most vulnerable populations. We are lonely for the community that is the soul of our mission but buoyed by the fact that even in this time of crisis, we have found ways to work together to elevate and celebrate Black art, culture, and history.”

ABOUT PROJECT ROW HOUSES (PRH)

Project Row Houses (PRH) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering people and enriching communities through engagement, art and direct action. PRH was founded in 1993 to be the catalyst for transforming community through the celebration of art and African-American history and culture. Inspired by the
work of German avant-garde artist Joseph Beuys and African-American painter Dr. John Biggers, the seven founders – James Bettison, Bert Long, Jr., Jesse Lott, Rick Lowe, Floyd Newsum, Bert Samples, and George Smith – purchased 22 historic shotgun-style row houses on two blocks in a disinvested neighborhood in Houston’s Historic Third Ward and began using the houses as spaces for thematic art interventions.

The PRH site, 39 structures over five city blocks, serves as home to numerous community enriching initiatives, art programs, and neighborhood development activities. Since its inception, PRH has demonstrated that collective community artmaking is a sustainable vehicle for community transformation. Today, PRH serves as a model in Houston and throughout the world. For more information, please visit projectrowhouses.org.

# # #