

**QUITMAN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
BUSINESS APPEARANCE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM**

**QDC Project Number 2009-001**

**Background**

Appearance plays heavily in customers' decisions to patronize or not patronize a given business. Moreover, an especially pleasant or unpleasant appearance of a single business place can have a positive or negative affect on other businesses in its immediate vicinity. Finally, the general appearance of businesses, in aggregate, defines the character of the city they are part of.

**Program Purpose**

To provide assistance to Quitman businesses and commercial property owners undertaking facility/property appearance enhancement projects thus improving the appeal of the business utilizing the program , and its immediate area, to potential customers.

**Program Funding**

This program will be funded through a Revolving Loan Fund (RFL).

**Assistance Offered**

The Quitman Development Corporation (the QDC) Board of Directors (the "Board") may approve low or interest free loans of no more than three year terms as one-to-one matching funds to be used to enhance the appearance of commercial business facilities or property in amounts that will ordinarily not exceed \$5,000.

**Use and Disbursement of Funds**

Funds may be used to enhance the observable appearance of a business facility as per a detailed improvement plan completed by a person having authority to undertake such projects on the property. Improvements to both structures and landscaping are allowed. Awarded funds will be disbursed following depletion of owner's funds as evidenced by paid invoices, etc., attributable to observable improvements to the property in question. Funds will only be paid directly to vendors against invoices for observable improvements defined on a detail appearance enhancement plan. Business owners may be reimbursed for approved costs, i.e., those defined on the enhancement plan, upon presentation of a receipt for allowed items, e.g., a credit card receipt.

**General Requirements for QDC Appearance Enhancement Assistance**

To be eligible for QDC Financial Assistance applicants must:

- Own or occupy commercial property within the corporate limits or extra territorial jurisdiction (ETJ) of the City of Quitman. However, a \$50.00 service fee will be assessed on businesses located outside Quitman's corporate limits.
- Have been in business for at least twenty-four (24) months
- Have developed a detailed appearance enhancement plan, preferably with drawings of the final result, which includes cost estimates.
- Complete an assistance application including a detailed description of improvements to be made.

- Provide documentation verifying that matching funds are available.
- Be able to complete the project in six (6) months or less from date of contract execution.
- Agree to allow the QDC advertise its contribution to the project via a sign provided by the QDC for a period of no more than three (3) months following project completion.
- Formalize the association with the QDC via contract.

### **Assistance Request Approval Process**

QDC staff or representatives will evaluate the applications and recommend action to the QDC Board of Directors. The QDC Board of Directors will evaluate and act to approve or reject the request based on its merits. The QDC Board may approve funding requests for \$5000 or less. Requests for more than \$5000 will be forwarded to the City Council for approval. The QDC Board may reject any request regardless of amount involved. The Board will establish the duration of each loan not to exceed three (3) years.

### **Program Funding**

This program will be funded through a Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) established by the QDC.

### **Assistance Limitations**

Financial assistance will be provided through the QDC Revolving Loan Fund (RLF). Consequently, the amount of financial assistance available depends on the funds available in the RLF at the time assistance is requested. If funding is not immediately available for a given approved project the approved project will be held and funded in order as funds do become available. Or, if in the Board's considered opinion, the approved project possesses the potential to generate an especially significant return on investment the Board may act on it as a separate matter outside the boundaries of this Program.

Although each loan will be of a definitive duration of not to exceed three (3) years, assistance recipients will be urged to repay loans as early as possible since the QDC's ability to serve other business and property owners depends on replenishment of the RLF through repayment of previously awarded loans.

### **Disclaimer**

The Quitman Development Corporation Board of Directors has a fiduciary responsibility to act in the general best interests of the community. Accordingly, the Board of Directors will deny assistance to any legally or morally questionable business or to any business questionable value to the community. Additionally, the Board may reject any project which it deems unbeneficial to the city including those which would not improve the appearance of the property to an significant degree.

### **Certification**

The Business Appearance Enhancement Program was approved by a majority vote of a quorum of members present at the Quitman Development Corporation Board of Directors held on March 16th, 2009 and by the City Council of the City of Quitman at its meeting held on \_\_\_\_\_, 2009.

Certified:

Charles E. Thompson  
Secretary of the Board  
Quitman Development Corporation Board of Directors