

## **Planning Your Own Event: Tips & Considerations**

Coordinating a successful ceremony involves thoughtful preparation and attention to detail. We've put together a helpful checklist to guide you through planning a memorable and impactful event. Use the checklist below to help ensure everything runs smoothly:

**When Should I Hold a Ribbon Cutting?** It's common for businesses to officially open before hosting a ribbon-cutting ceremony—and that's perfectly acceptable. Your top priority is getting operations up and running smoothly. Ideally, schedule your ribbon cutting within two months of opening to celebrate your launch while the excitement is still fresh.

**Set the Date:** Choose a date and time that works well for your team, target audience, and the broader community. Evening or weekend events can increase attendance. Consider sending a "Save the Date". Send reminder emails one week before the ceremony.

**Build a Run of Show:** Draft a clear agenda to keep your event organized and flowing on time. The ceremony should last no longer than 20-30 minutes, with 10-15 minutes being ideal. Be sure to start the event on time.

**Gather the Essentials:** Don't forget the ceremonial ribbon, scissors, and a microphone or sound system to ensure everyone can hear the remarks.

**Document the Day:** Arrange for a professional photographer or designate someone to capture key moments with photos and video.

**Plan for Parking:** Make sure there's adequate parking for guests. If needed, identify nearby overflow parking options.

**Prepare Your Remarks:** Craft a brief, heartfelt speech that shares your business story, thanks supporters, and expresses your vision for the future.

**Who's Cutting the Ribbon?** Decide ahead of time who will participate in the ribbon-cutting ceremony and who will have the honor of making the official cut. Planning this in advance ensures a smooth and meaningful moment.

**Engage the Community:** Invite your team, friends, family, customers, business partners, and community members to join the celebration. Decide who will take part in the photo.

**Promote Your Event:** Create engaging content to promote your ceremony on social media and your website. Mention giveaways, door prizes, or special offers.

**Refreshments:** Offering light refreshments is a great way to create a welcoming atmosphere and can help encourage more people to attend your event—especially those who may be undecided.

**Gifts or Souvenirs:** Providing a small token or keepsake can leave a lasting impression and make your event even more memorable for guests.

**Share the Highlights:** After the event, post photos and a recap on your social media channels, and consider sending a media release with photos to our Economic Development & Tourism office to generate continued buzz and visibility for your business.

**Leave a lasting impression:** Send thank you notes/emails to attendees.

**Back-up Plan:** If you're planning an outdoor event, it's important to have a contingency plan in case of bad weather. Consider setting up a tent or identifying an indoor space where the ceremony can be moved if needed. Being prepared ensures your event can go on—rain or shine.