



Guide to Hosting a Groundbreaking or Ribbon Cutting Event

(Updated January 2026)

Groundbreakings and ribbon cuttings are ceremonial events organized to honor a major milestone for a business/organization.

Eligibility Requirements

- Hosts must be member investors in good standing.
- Ribbon cutting or groundbreaking must fall into one of the following categories:
 - New Business/Organization (Within One Year of Start of Operation)
 - Established Business/Organization – New Location
 - Established Business/Organization – New Ownership
 - Established Business/Organization – Completed Major Expansion/Renovation*
 - Established Business/Organization – Significant Company Re-Brand/Name Change

**The expansion/renovation must be of the host's facility, not a project completed for another business/organization.*

(Note: Rental scissors, ribbon, a limited number of shovels and hard hats may be available to member investors in good standing if host does not meet the criteria listed above and/or the event will be held independently from the GWCC).

Cost

- There is no charge to host a groundbreaking or ribbon cutting event for legacy members and members who invest at a deeper level of membership.
- Those members at the Base level of investment are charged \$250 for each qualifying ribbon cutting or groundbreaking.

Application

- Hosts must complete the [Groundbreaking & Ribbon Cutting Interest Form](#) at www.wausauchamber.com a minimum of one month in advance of the preferred event date. Host must request the event (third-party requests are prohibited). Upon receipt, GWCC will determine if host meets the eligibility criteria and confirm a date and time. The event is not officially scheduled until confirmation has been received.

Planning

- Event must take place on a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday at Noon or 4 pm (unless otherwise pre-approved by GWCC). Federal holidays are prohibited.
- For an outdoor event, host must provide a tent or indoor alternative in case of inclement weather. Event location

must be handicap accessible and have working restrooms. Event location is subject to approval by the GWCC and may require a site visit to determine appropriateness. If the event location will be open to the public during the event, there must be a semi-private or private area for the event.

- As a rule, the ceremonial proceedings should not last longer than 20 to 30 minutes, with five to ten minutes being ideal. Hosts are encouraged to hold an open house before or after the event to maximize exposure.
- Hosts must prepare an agenda to be shared with GWCC and any key individuals. The agenda provides insight into the event objectives, activities and provides a look at the total offering for the event.

Sample agenda:

- Welcome guests—Done by owner.
 - Business owners—explain what business does if it is new, about the location—if a second location or a move, include hours and introduce staff (five to eight minutes).
 - Cut the ribbon for a photo opportunity—usually done by head of company representatives as Ambassador presents certificate to the representative. Some choose to have all employees involved. The GWCC is not responsible for technical/mechanical failure of the camera, photo processing or software.
 - Offer everyone to browse the facility hosts may want to offer tours. Unguided self-tours are not nearly as valuable.
- If host plans to provide food or beverages, they must be purchased or prepared in a commercial kitchen. Homemade food is prohibited. Visit the GWCC's [member directory](#) for a list of potential vendors to work with.
 - For purposes of promotion, hosts are encouraged to set up a table or a display booth outlining products and/or services.
 - Hosts may opt to provide a door prize. Collect business cards/entry slips as leads. Host must provide drawing bowl, entry slips, signage. If prize is known in advance, GWCC can promote. It is recommended that attendees be present to win.

Marketing

- The GWCC will post details, video and photos from the event on GWCC social media channels before, during and after the event. Hosts are encouraged to share on their social media channels as well to increase visibility.
- Who to invite to the event:
 - Current customers and suppliers
 - Friends and family
 - Board of directors (if applicable)
 - Employees and their spouses
 - Those who have helped the business/organization get started (banker, contractor, accountant, attorney, advisor)
 - Fellow businesspeople in the area
 - Dignitaries (mayor, city council member from the district where your business is located)
 - Media

Membership Upgrade Benefits

Want to increase the visibility of the event? Consider upgrading your membership to include the premium benefits for groundbreakings and ribbon cuttings. Contact **Kathy Peterson** at 715.848.5951 for more information. Already have an

upgraded membership? The benefits below are included:

- The GWCC will send a press release to local media prior to the event. Please send event details to botten@wausauchamber.com.
- The GWCC will create a Facebook event and share across social media.
- Expanded video from the event will be created and shared.

GWCC Requirements & Responsibilities

- Provide all pre-event marketing.
- GWCC will arrive prior to the start time with the ceremonial supplies.
- GWCC will organize the Ambassadors on-site. Because the Ambassadors are volunteers, they may or may not be able to stay at the event longer, based on their business schedules.
- Ambassadors will assist with holding the ribbon and presenting the certificate. They also on hand to aid with any questions about the GWCC, area business resources and general networking.
- GWCC will provide a photo of the ribbon cutting in electronic format to the host.
- Ambassadors will provide their business card (if applicable) to host.