



**Welcome To:**

*Hiawassee*

**Planning a Ribbon  
Cutting Ceremony**

**HIAWASSEE DOWNTOWN  
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

50 River St. Hiawassee, GA 30546

(706) 896-2202

[hiawasseeega.gov](http://hiawasseeega.gov)



**HIAWASSEE  
DOWNTOWN  
DEVELOPMENT  
AUTHORITY**

# Welcome to Hiawassee!

## 4 Easy Steps to Planning Your Ribbon Cutting

We're thrilled you have chosen Hiawassee to be the home of your business! Following is a quick overview of the process to schedule and promote a ribbon cutting, as well as a few tips for making the event successful. As the economic and business development organization for the city, the team at Hiawassee Downtown Development Authority is here to assist you every step of the way.



### Step 1

- Contact Steve Harper at Hiawassee DDA to begin the process (contact info below). It is best to plan at least 30 days in advance of when you'd like to have the event. (A good time to contact Steve is when you are applying for your business license)
- Below, you will find an overview of how a ribbon cutting works. We will also meet with you to discuss your business and individual needs and then work with you to identify 3-4 tentative dates for the event.
- For maximum attendance, we recommend scheduling events on weekdays and typically recommend holding the event mid-day (11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.) or late afternoon (3:00– 4:30 p.m.).
- Please note – you do not need to have your ribbon cutting the day you officially open your doors to the public. In fact, we suggest having a “soft” opening several weeks before holding your official ribbon cutting.

**STEVE HARPER**  
**HIAWASSEE DDA PROGRAM MANAGER**

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### Step 2

- Hiawassee's elected officials are committed to attending as many ribbon cuttings as possible. Our team will work directly with City Hall to coordinate the date that works best for the mayor and city council.
- We typically set the date within 24-72 hours.
- While dates are based on the availability of the mayor & council, the city cannot guarantee their attendance on the day of the event.

### Step 3

- Once the date is set for the ribbon cutting, we will send out a calendar invite for the event. The list of who we will invite is on the following page.
- A list of who you should invite is also on the next page. We suggest creating a social media event or sending personalized invites to supporters of your business.

### Step 4

- General considerations to help make your event successful follows.
- The DDA will provide ribbon & scissors.
- The DDA will also take a ceremony photo and post on the City & DDA social media



## Event Suggestions

- Consider a small giveaway for attendees. Perhaps a 20% off coupon, a coffee mug with your logo on it, notepad with your logo on it, etc.
- Have fun with your ribbon cutting! Look for creative ways to tell your business story through this event. This is your time to shine.
- Consider having someone there (staff member, friend, etc.) who can take photos and video of the event, so you can use those to promote on social media and your website.

# The Process

Promoting and Inviting

## Promoting

- The DDA will share pictures of your event on social media and our website.
- Photos of your event will also be shared with the mayor and local chamber to help promote your business.
- You will be responsible for sharing photos/videos on your business social media account/website.



## Who Should Attend

The DDA will invite the following people to your event:

- Mayor & City Council of Hiawassee
- Hiawassee DDA Board of Directors & Staff
- Towns County Elected Officials
- Lake Chatuge Chamber

You should invite:

- Family Members
- Friends
- Supporters



## Event Suggestions

- Consider having a variety of appetizers and refreshments available for attendees to enjoy following the ceremony.
- Consider having a 'Grand Opening' banner & balloons to draw attention to your business
- Consider creating a Facebook event to share on your business social media pages.
- Be sure to have adequate staffing available to assist attendees. This is your first impression on the community!

# Event Program

What to expect

## Sample Itinerary

This is the flow of a typical ribbon cutting happening over the lunch hour:

- 11:30 - Guests Arrive & Networking
- 11:45 - Ceremony Begins
  - Welcome - Hiawassee DDA Representative
  - Hiawassee Mayor Speaks
  - Business Owner Speaks
  - Photo Op - Ribbon Cutting (we provide ribbon & scissors)
  - Countdown - Led by Mayor/Elected Official
  - Cut the ribbon & celebrate!
- 12:00 - Event Reception
  - Facility Tour
  - Refreshments
  - Networking



**HIAWASSEE**  
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# Ribbon Cutting Ceremony Checklist

- Business License Applied for or obtained
- Contact Steve Harper at (706) 896-2202 or [sharper@hiawasseega.gov](mailto:sharper@hiawasseega.gov)
- Prepare your invitation list
- Send your invites & coordinate with the DDA
- Publicize the event

## Congratulations!

**You have successfully  
planned your ribbon cutting**

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