



2017

Groundbreakings and Dedications

A Tool Kit for Ohio Historic and Cultural Sites

March 2017



OHIO FACILITIES CONSTRUCTION COMMISSION

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Officials from historic and cultural sites across Ohio

FROM: David M. Williamson, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Groundbreakings and Dedications - A Tool Kit for Our Partners

The Ohio Facilities Construction Commission (OFCC) is proud to be a partner with you in the development and preservation of historic and cultural sites across Ohio. The celebration of this work is an important milestone not only for your organization, but also for your community and the state.

While every construction project is unique, there are some common ways to ensure your celebrations are successful and memorable. This tool kit has been developed to help you plan and implement your event for the best possible outcome. It includes guidance and helpful tips for:

- Creating a guest list
- Enlisting the participation of the governor's office or other state offices
- Ensuring public participation
- Planning your event's agenda and program
- Working with the media

We hope this tool kit will be helpful to you as you plan your next event. We also welcome the opportunity to share in the excitement with your administrators and community members. While OFCC staff cannot always attend these events, we do attend as many as possible.

In the meantime, if you have more questions about scheduling groundbreaking or dedication ceremonies, please feel free to contact us at 614-466-6290.

About the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission

The Ohio Facilities Construction Commission (OFCC) is responsible for guiding capital projects for state agencies, state-supported universities and community colleges, and Ohio's comprehensive public K-12 school construction and renovation program. The Commission also manages grant programs for cultural facilities, school security, community school classroom facilities, and lead plumbing fixture replacement in schools.

In 2013, the Commission assumed the duties of the former Ohio Cultural Facilities Commission. The Cultural Facilities component of the OFCC administers funding for the planning, design, and construction of Ohio's cultural facilities through cooperation with nonprofit and local government project sponsors.

The Commission's role is to ensure that state funds are invested in facilities that will present educational and cultural programming to the public and to provide technical guidance that adds value to the projects. In accordance with our statutory charge, the Commission works to ensure that the facilities can be completed with the available resources, that the state's appropriations contribute to Ohio's tourism industry, educational infrastructure, and cultural heritage, and that projects being funded will operate for the benefit of the public into the future.

Groundbreaking Timeline and Task List

When	What	Responsible	Status
90 days before event	Determine possible dates based on construction schedule, organization's calendar and availability of project partners		
80 days prior	Finalize date and time		
60 days prior	Develop guest list		
	Contact vendors to reserve rental of tent, chairs, outdoor carpet, sound equipment, etc.		
	Order shovels		
	Develop media list for advisory		
	Develop and send letters of invitation to state, local and community officials		
	Notify OFCC		
45 days prior	Arrange for color project renderings and display easels		
14 days prior	Send invitations to community groups		
	Finalize speakers and other participants		
	Draft and finalize news release and advisory		
	Draft and finalize script/agenda based on dignitaries in attendance		
	Develop fact sheet		
Seven days prior	Send media advisory fax/e-mail with fact sheet attached		
Two days prior	Follow-up calls to stations/papers		
	Arrange TV interviews		
Day of	Hold event		
Immediately after (day after, if event late in day)	Send news release and building rendering to media not in attendance		
	Send thank you notes to dignitaries, participants and other significant attendees		

Considerations for Invitations

Groundbreaking Ceremonies

When a planned project involves actual construction or renovation, many organizations use the opportunity of a groundbreaking ceremony as a chance to bring their project into the spotlight. In other instances, an announcement ceremony talking about the project is more appropriate. Planning your ceremony should include consideration for those whom you plan to invite.

The calendars for public officials are often set weeks or months in advance, so the earlier you contact your potential guests, the more chance there will be for their participation. Additionally, the more you can highlight aspects of the project that relate to their public mission, the more interest they will have in attending.

Potential Invitees

Project partners:

- Ohio Facilities Construction Commission: Executive Director, Grant Administrators
- Construction managers
- Architect
- Building users
- Sponsors of community programs

State and local officials:

- Governor
- Local State Representative and Senator
- Mayor or city council president
- County commissioners
- Township trustees

Community members:

- Neighborhood association president
- Police or sheriff's department
- Local benefactors, such as businesses who sponsor or support cultural programs
- News media

Contacting State Officials

It is appropriate to invite the Governor or another ranking state official, the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission (OFCC), and local members of the Ohio General Assembly to your groundbreaking. While state officials generally appreciate an invitation, they have complicated schedules and must choose from a number of competing events that may be occurring at the same time. Following a few simple guidelines will improve your chances that one or more of them will attend your celebration. For example:

- Provide at least 60 days notice to the Governor's Office, OFCC or other state department
- Provide a cover letter that explains the significance of the project and its value to the State of Ohio
- Include any facts that make your project historic or unique
- Include the names of other key invitees
- Keep the letter to one page
- With the letter, include a draft agenda that indicates the role the invitee would play in the event
- Include a formal invitation that notes the name of the event, its time, date and place

Nearly all state officials have publicly posted contact information on the Internet. While they may provide a method for contacting them using e-mail, a formal invitation for your groundbreaking ceremony *should be made in a letter sent by U.S. mail.*

Governor

The Honorable John Kasich
30th Floor
77 South High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
614-466-3555
<http://governor.ohio.gov>

Lt. Governor

The Honorable Mary Taylor
30th Floor
77 South High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
614 466-3396
<http://governor.ohio.gov/About/LtGovernorTaylor.aspx>

Ohio Facilities Construction Commission

David Williamson, Executive Director
Ohio Facilities Construction Commission
30 West Spring Street, 4th floor
Columbus, OH 43215
614-466-6290
<http://ofcc.ohio.gov>

Ohio House of Representatives

<http://www.ohiohouse.gov>

Ohio Senate

<http://ohiosenate.gov>

Sample Letter to State and Local Officials

Groundbreaking Ceremonies

[Date]

The Honorable []
[Address]

Dear [],

(Introduction, date and other key facts)

On July 23, the Community Arts Center will break ground on a new ceramics wing that, when complete, will provide modern creation spaces, classrooms and a showcase studio for community members of all ages. I am writing to invite you to this exciting celebration.

(Significance of project, key facts about construction planning/process)

This new wing will be named the Henry Sullivan wing after the first ceramics teacher at the Community Arts Centers, when the Center opened in 1954. The Sullivan wing will be our community's first new arts space dedicated solely to the creation of ceramic art. When it opens in November, it will offer a number of new courses that will benefit our community as well as offer a bright, airy space for our student's artwork to be displayed and sold.

(Request for attendance and remarks)

We would be honored if you would be our guest at the groundbreaking [if appropriate: and perhaps say a few words to attendees]. We have also invited State Rep. [name] and Sen. [name]; [city name]'s mayor and city council; some of our arts teachers and a number of supportive businesses and community organizations.

(Enclosures and closing)

I have enclosed a tentative agenda for the event, indicating where you would appear on the program if you are able to participate. I have also enclosed a formal invitation with the time and location. If you or a member of your staff should have any questions, I would be glad to answer them. Please feel free to call me at [phone number] or email [email address].

Sincerely,

Director
Community Arts Center

SULLIVAN CERAMICS WING GROUNDBREAKING

Wednesday, July 23, 6:30pm
2494 Anywhere Lane, Chrisney, OH 43129



Celebrate our Expansion!

We're breaking ground for a new ceramic wing:

- State-of-the-art ceramics equipment
- New classroom space
- Studio space to display and sell artwork

Event Logistics: Groundbreakings

The following are some things to think about as you plan your groundbreaking.

Dealing with the Elements and Initial Considerations

Because groundbreakings are scheduled around the construction calendar, flexibility is not always possible when setting a date. Weather is always a factor with groundbreakings, especially during cold weather. It's important that guests have protection from the elements if weather turns wet or windy.

Some things to include in your planning are:

- A tent or awning large enough for guests to stand under should weather turn bad
- Some kind of ground covering, such as outdoor carpet, to both soften the ground and protect guests from muddy conditions
- Number of guests – Because you will need to provide protection from rain or snow, make sure you have invited no more participants than can be accommodated under a tent or awning.
- A “Plan B” – Be prepared to move indoors if worse comes to worst. Because a groundbreaking is a purely symbolic event, it can be held anywhere – even in a nearby building where a sandbox can substitute for the real thing.
- U.S. and Ohio Flags should flank the podium where speakers will talk or the groundbreaking area, with the U.S. flag on the left (as the audience is looking at the podium) and the Ohio flag on the right.

Type and Length of Program

Groundbreakings are the symbolic start of construction. As such, there is not much to see. The success of groundbreakings are measured by how well guests are able to visualize the future building and its importance to the community.

The facility director should preside over both groundbreakings and dedications, though it is also appropriate for the board president, the construction manager, an OFCC representative and others to participate. Visiting dignitaries, such as the governor, should also be offered the opportunity to speak. However, because of the weather factor, groundbreakings should be kept simple and brief, no more than a half-hour in length. Limit speakers to two or three minutes each, if possible, with no more than five for the main speaker.

Content of Remarks and Program

Comments should focus on the significance of the project. Plan to include the following:

- Cost and timetable for construction
- How many people will be served
- New educational capabilities that were not possible before
- Interesting details about the project such as how many bricks it will take, how many gallons of paint, how many construction jobs it will support, etc.
- Cultural performance or remarks – may include the pledge of allegiance led by a long-time supporter, participation in the actual “dig” by a program leader, or a musical number performed by a community group

You will also need shovels and hard hats for each of the dignitaries participating in the official groundbreaking. Hard hats can be purchased from local hardware stores, or check with the construction manager (who oftentimes will provide these items on loan) to get the name and contact information of a company from which to purchase hats. You can purchase regular shovels at the local hardware or home improvement store and decorate them by painting the handles or tying bows at the base of the handle (top of the blade) with ribbons.

Event Logistics: Groundbreakings (cont'd)

You will also need to designate someone to line up the dignitaries, pass out hard hats and shovels and take photographs. The facility director, board president or program leader should lead the dig once all dignitaries are lined up by saying “one...two...three...dig.” At that time, all dignitaries place their shovels into the dirt and dig at the same time.

Be sure to include color renderings that are large enough for a TV camera to get a good shot of it. Plan to distribute smaller renderings to print reporters and guests, along with a fact sheet listing key elements of the project.

SULLIVAN CERAMICS WING GROUNDBREAKING

Wednesday, July 23, 6:30pm
2494 Anywhere Lane, Chrisney, OH 43129



PROGRAM

Welcoming Remarks - Mr. Smith, Board President

Introduction of Special Guests - Ms. Harper, Director

Remarks:

- State Senator Payne
- State Representative Turner
- Mayor Turner

Performance - CAC Community Choir

Groundbreaking

Inviting the Media

If your project is important enough to hold a groundbreaking ceremony, you should consider inviting the local media. However, an invitation is not a guarantee that reporters will attend. Competing news of the day, staffing issues, time of your event and other factors all will influence news coverage.

Identifying the News

Because groundbreakings are symbolic, and because no building yet exists, the media do not always consider groundbreakings to be news. That's why it is important to spell out the significance of the project and to provide a "news hook" that the media believes will be of interest to their viewers and readers.

When inviting media, be sure to emphasize the significance of the project itself: the "firsts" it represents, the new capabilities it will provide, and the benefits to the community.

While the most important thing is the project itself, an interesting groundbreaking program – especially one with a strong visual component – will improve your chances of media coverage. For example, some kind of student or community group participation activity – a musical performance, perhaps – is more interesting than listening to a speaker at a microphone.

Because no building yet exists when groundbreaking ceremonies are held, be sure to provide large color renderings of the building that TV cameras can focus in on. Distribute to print reporters smaller renderings of high enough quality to be reproducible.

To communicate with the media efficiently and succinctly, two tools are essential: the media advisory and the news release.

A media advisory is a one-page invitation to reporters. It contains the "who, what, where and when" information about the ceremony you are planning. The media generally do not need as much lead time as state and local officials who are asked to participate. But you should be mindful of their deadlines and make sure they have a day or two of advanced notice.

The advisory is intended to entice the media to cover the ceremony as news. A sample media advisory follows.

Media Advisory

Community Arts Center to Break Ground on New Ceramics Wing

Who: State Senator Payne, State Representative Thomas, Mayor Turner

What: Groundbreaking for the new Henry Sullivan Ceramics Wing

Where: Community Arts Center
2494 Anywhere Lane, Chrisney, OH 43219

When: Wednesday, July 23, at 6:30 p.m.

Media inquiries can be sent to shelia.thompson@cacarts.org.

Inviting the Media (cont'd)

When preparing the media advisory, it is especially important to designate a key contact for media interested in attending the groundbreaking. Also, your advisory should specify who can they contact for interviews if they are unable to attend.

The news release contains the central announcement of the event. It is distributed the day of the event to attending media, and it is also distributed to those media who were unable to attend the event. The release should only be distributed at or following your event – never beforehand. News releases should be formatted using double spaced type.

The news release should lead with the announcement that warranted the ceremony, capture key background information about your project, and provide a contact for additional information. A sample news release format follows.

News Release

July 23, 20XX – Chrisney, OH – Today, the Community Arts Center broke ground for the new Henry Sullivan Ceramics Wing. The expansion will be the first time in the organization's history to add an addition to its 1954 home and will be the only dedicated ceramics space in the county.

Named after the first Community Arts ceramics teacher, The Henry Sullivan Ceramics Wing will provide classroom space for community members of all ages to explore their creative side. The new kilns will provide ample space for even large pieces of art. The new studio space will house ceramic pieces created by resident artists and community members alike. ABC Architects designed the new space to be functional, yet match the feel of the rest of the Center. Field's Construction will build the new wing.

"Projects like this show the importance our state and community place on the arts as not only an economic benefit, but also as a way to improve the lives of our community at large," said State Senator Payne.

More information about the project and the Community Arts Center is available by contacting Shelia Thompson at shelia.thompson@cacarts.org, or calling 216-555-0000.

Dedication Timeline and Task List

When	What	Responsible	Status
90 days prior	Determine possible dates based on construction schedule, organization calendar and availability of project partners		
80 days prior	Finalize date and time		
	Determine gifts or takeaways, if any, for participants or attendees (for example, framed photo of new building, commemorative plaque)		
60 days prior	Develop guest list		
	Contact vendors to reserve food, banners, etc.		
	Develop media list for advisory		
	Develop community invitations		
	Develop and send letters of invitation to state and local officials		
	Notify OFCC		
45 days prior	Determine tour details: building features to highlight and who leads		
14 days prior	Send invitations to community groups		
	Finalize speakers and other participants		
	Draft and finalize news release and advisory		
	Draft and finalize script/agenda based on dignitaries in attendance		
	Develop fact sheet		
	Produce building photos for media		
	Take delivery of gifts or takeaways		
Seven days prior	Send media advisory with fact sheet attached		
Two days prior	Follow-up calls to stations/papers		
	Arrange TV interviews		
One day prior	Set up for event		
Day of	Receive food deliveries		
	Hold event		
Immediately after (day after, if event late in day)	Send news release and building rendering to media not in attendance		
	Send thank you notes to dignitaries, participants and other significant attendees		

Considerations for Invitations

Dedication Ceremonies

Planning your project dedication should include consideration for those who you plan to invite. The calendars for public officials are often set weeks or months in advance, so the earlier you contact your potential guests, the more chance there will be for their participation. Additionally, the more you can highlight aspects of the project that relate to their public mission, the more interest they will have in attending.

A few other things to consider are proper representation of:

- Partners involved in the project
- Those who will use the project
- Local and state officials
- Appropriate representatives of the general public

Potential Invitees

Project partners:

- Ohio Facilities Construction Commission: Director, Grant Administrators
- Construction managers
- Architect
- Building users
- Sponsors of educational or community programs

State and local officials:

- Governor
- Local State Representative and Senator
- Mayor or city council president
- County commissioners
- Township trustees

Community members:

- Neighborhood association president
- Police or sheriff's department
- Local benefactors, such as businesses who sponsor or support cultural programs
- News media

Contacting State Officials

It is appropriate to invite the Governor or another ranking state official, OFCC staff, and local members of the Ohio General Assembly to your dedication ceremony. While state officials generally appreciate an invitation, they have complicated schedules and must choose from a number of competing events that may be occurring at the same time. Following a few simple guidelines will improve your chances that one or more of them will attend your celebration. For example:

- Provide at least 60 days notice to the Governor's Office, OFCC or other state department
- Provide a cover letter that explains the significance of the project and its value to the State of Ohio
- Include any facts that make your project historic or unique
- Include the names of other key invitees
- Keep the letter to one page
- With the letter, include a draft agenda that indicates the role the invitee would play in the event
- Include a formal invitation that notes the name of the event, its time, date and place

Nearly all state officials have publicly posted contact information on the Internet. While they may provide a method for contacting them using e-mail, a formal invitation for your groundbreaking ceremony should be made in a letter sent by U.S. mail.

Contact information for state officials includes:

Governor

The Honorable John Kasich
30th Floor
77 South High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
614-466-3555
<http://governor.ohio.gov>

Lt. Governor

The Honorable Mary Taylor
30th Floor
77 South High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
614 466-3396
<http://governor.ohio.gov/About/LtGovernorTaylor.aspx>

Ohio Facilities Construction Commission

David Williamson, Executive Director
Ohio Facilities Construction Commission
30 West Spring Street, 4th floor
Columbus, OH 43215
614-466-6290
<http://ofcc.ohio.gov>

Ohio House of Representatives

<http://www.ohiohouse.gov>

Ohio Senate

<http://ohiosenate.gov>

Sample Letter to State and Local Officials

Dedication Ceremonies

[Date]

The Honorable []
[Address]

Dear []:

[Introduction, date and other key facts]

On November 7, the Community Arts Center will host the grand opening of the Henry Sullivan Ceramics Wing. The new space provides modern creation spaces, classrooms and a showcase studio for community members of all ages. I am writing to invite you to this exciting celebration.

[Significance of project, key facts about construction planning/process]

This new wing, named the Henry Sullivan Wing after the first ceramics teacher at the Community Arts Centers, when the Center opened in 1953. The Sullivan wing will be our community's first new arts space dedicated solely to the creation of ceramic art. The Center can now offer a number of new courses that will benefit our community as well as offer a bright, airy space for our student's artwork to be displayed and sold.

[Request for attendance and remarks]

We would be honored if you would be our guest at the dedication ceremony [if appropriate: and perhaps say a few words to attendees]. We have also invited State Rep. [name] and Sen. [name]; Chrisney's mayor and city council; some of our arts teachers and a number of supportive businesses and community organizations.

[Enclosures and closing]

I have enclosed a tentative agenda for the event, indicating where you would appear on the program if you are able to participate. I have also enclosed a formal invitation with the time and location. If you or a member of your staff should have any questions, I would be glad to answer them.

Sincerely,

[name]
Director
Community Arts Center

**SULLIVAN
CERAMICS WING
DEDICATION**

Saturday, November 7, 2:00pm
2494 Anywhere Lane, Chrisney, OH 43129



Celebrate our Expansion!

Refreshments provided

Please RSVP to info@cacarts.org

Event Logistics: Dedications

Dedication programs have a big advantage over groundbreakings: you have a great visual – a new building or a completed renovation. You can plan the entire program inside or hold part of it outside.

Numbers of Guests

Let the size of your facility be your guide: Invite as many people as can comfortably sit in a common meeting place and as many as can be accommodated on tours.

Type and Length of Program

The dedication is an opportunity to thank those who have made the building or project possible and to show it off to the wider community. You might begin your dedication on the front steps with a ribbon-cutting, or a special flag raising. You might then move indoors for remarks by the appropriate officials. Comments should acknowledge:

- The new possibilities the building/project represents
- The role of the organization's board in planning the project
- The architects, construction manager and the State of Ohio
- Community leaders who have supported the project

A short performance or demonstration of the cultural programming offered at the facility is a good way to get supporters involved.

Tours

Dedications or grand openings are meant to show off the results of the project to those who have eagerly anticipated the advent of the new building or expanded cultural project. If possible, the program should include a tour (or if a very large group, more than one tour) to give the public a better idea of what the project provides.

To make the tour more engaging for participants consider the following ideas – or come up with a creative one of your own:

- Have a scavenger hunt where participants can win inexpensive prizes with the organization logo (mugs, pennants, t-shirts, etc.).
- Giving a commemorative item noting the date and dedication event at the end of the tour to all attendees.

Refreshments

It is customary to provide refreshments for guests after the formal part of the program. Depending on the time of day, refreshments may include finger foods, a continental breakfast, cake and cookies or a light lunch.

SULLIVAN CERAMICS WING DEDICATION

Saturday, November 7, 2:30pm
2494 Anywhere Lane, Chrisney, OH 43129



Program

Welcoming Remarks - Director Harper
Keynote Speaker - Lt. Governor Ellison
Ribbon Cutting
Refreshments
Tours/Ceramic Demonstrations

Inviting the Media

If your building project is important enough to hold dedication ceremonies, you should consider inviting the local media. However, an invitation is not a guarantee that reporters will attend. Competing news of the day, staffing issues, time of your event and other factors all will influence news coverage.

Identifying the News

The media are often more likely to cover a building dedication or facility grand opening than they are groundbreaking, simply because there is more to see and show. However, you still need to convince reporters that the event is newsworthy. Just as with groundbreakings, it's important to spell out the significance of the project and to provide a "news hook" that the media believes will be of interest to their viewers and readers.

When inviting media, be sure to emphasize the significance of the project itself: the "firsts" it represents, the new capabilities it will provide and the benefits to the community. Demonstrate those capabilities, including those with a strong visual component. For example, at an arts center, have a demonstration of how a new art class will be developed. Such a demonstration is more interesting than listening to a speaker at a microphone.

Offer reporters a preview of the building the day of the dedication ceremonies – before the rest of the community has had a chance to tour it. All of these things will improve your chances of media coverage.

To communicate with the media efficiently and succinctly, two tools are essential: the media advisory and the news release.

A media advisory is a one-page invitation to reporters. It contains the "who, what, where and when" information about the ceremony you are planning. The media generally do not need as much lead time as state and local officials who are asked to participate. But you should be mindful of their deadlines and make sure they have a day or two of warning.

The advisory is intended to entice the media to cover the ceremony as news. A sample media advisory follows.

Media Advisory

Community Arts Center Henry Sullivan Ceramics Wing Dedication

- Who: Community Arts Center Staff; Lt. Governor Ellison
- What: Ribbon-cutting and dedication of the new Henry Sullivan Ceramics Wing
- Where: Community Arts Center
2494 Anywhere Lane, Chrisney, OH 43219
- When: Saturday, November 7, at 2:00 p.m.

Media inquiries and interview requests can be sent to shelia.thompson@cacarts.org.

Inviting the Media (cont'd)

When preparing the media advisory, it is especially important to designate a key contact for media interested in attending the dedication. Also, your advisory should specify whom can they contact for interviews if they are unable to attend.

The news release contains the central announcement of the event. It is distributed the day of the event to attending media, and it is also distributed to those media who were unable to attend the event. The release should only be distributed at or following your event – never beforehand. News releases should be formatted using double spaced type.

The news release should lead with the announcement that warranted the ceremony, capture key background information about your project and provide a contact for additional information. A sample news release format follows.

NEWS RELEASE

Community Arts Center Henry Sullivan Ceramics Wing Dedicated

November 7, 20XX – Chrisney, OH – Today, the Community Arts Center opened the new Henry Sullivan Ceramics Wing. The expansion is the first time in the organization's history to add an addition to its 1954 home and will be the only dedicated ceramics space in the county.

Named after the first Community Arts ceramics teacher, The Henry Sullivan Ceramics Wing provides classroom space for community members of all ages to explore their creative side. The new kilns will provide ample space for even large pieces of art. The new studio space will house ceramic pieces created by resident artists and community members alike. ABC Architects designed the new space to be functional, yet match the feel of the rest of the Center. Field's Construction built the new wing.

"Projects like this show the importance our state and community place on the arts as not only an economic benefit, but also as a way to improve the lives of our community at large," said Lt. Governor Ellison.

More information about the project and the Community Arts Center is available by contacting Shelia Thompson at shelia.thompson@cacarts.org, or calling 216-555-0000.

Contact Information

OFFICES

Main Office: Ohio Facilities Construction Commission
30 West Spring Street, 4th floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Telephone: (614) 466-6290
Fax: (614) 466-7749

NE Office: 1410 Highland Road, Suite 1
Macedonia, Ohio 44056

Telephone: (330) 425-2288
Fax: (330) 425-2364

Website: <http://ofcc.ohio.gov>
info@ofcc.ohio.gov