

Strategic Objective

The DC Housing Finance Agency (DCHFA) designed the ribbon cutting ceremony for The Ana Townhomes as a strategic marketing event to accomplish:

- Increase awareness of workforce homeownership opportunities in the District
- Demonstrate impact of innovative financing through the Hagan’s Impact Investment Platform (HIP)
- Build trust and momentum within an historically underserved community

Rather than hosting a traditional ceremonial event, DCHFA intentionally developed a place-based, community-focused activation that combined public policy visibility, buyer engagement, cultural celebration, and media outreach.

Event Context and Marketing Challenge

The Ana Townhomes is a 20-unit workforce homeownership development in Ward 8, a community where residents disproportionately experience poverty and unemployment when compared to the District overall. As a result, the project required a marketing approach that would:

- Reach local residents and prospective first-time buyers
- Humanize workforce housing and reduce stigma
- Highlight DCHFA’s non-traditional financing model, which includes joint-venture capital and developer capacity building
- Position the development as a neighborhood asset, not simply a housing transaction

This context shaped the marketing strategy and event execution.

Integrated Marketing Strategy

DCHFA employed an integrated, multi-channel strategy before, during, and after the ribbon cutting.

Target Audiences

- Future homebuyers
- Ward 8 residents and community stakeholders
- District leadership and policymakers
- Housing partners, lenders, and investors
- Local and regional media

Key Marketing Themes

- Workforce homeownership as economic mobility
- Community investment and neighborhood pride
- Public-private collaboration
- Equitable development

Pre-Event Marketing & Lead Generation

Digital & Social Media

DCHFA promoted the event through Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and X, emphasizing community impact and block-party programming. During the campaign period, engagement on DCHFA’s X account increased by 740%, signaling strong audience resonance.

In-Person Activation

In observance of National Homeownership Month (June 2025), DCHFA strategically leveraged its Second Annual Homeownership Conference and Fair to generate demand for The Ana Townhomes.

At the Fair:

- District residents toured move-in-ready units
- Participants received pre-approvals and financial counseling
- Attendees connected directly with lenders and the development sales team

This experiential marketing approach converted education into action and sustained interest leading into the ribbon cutting.

Adaptive Marketing & Message Refresh

DCHFA demonstrated marketing agility by foregrounding project updates that increased demand:

- Expanded income eligibility from 120% AMI to 170% AMI (Spring 2025)
- Partnership with Citibank’s HomeRun program (Summer 2025)
- Relaunch of a refreshed website (September 2025) featuring:
 - Updated pricing
 - FAQs
 - Integrated social media content
 - Promotion of the ribbon cutting

This ensured messaging remained timely, accessible, and responsive to buyer needs.

The Ribbon Cutting as a Marketing Event

Event Date

September 12, 2025

Concept

The ribbon cutting was executed as a neighborhood block party, a hallmark of high-performing special event marketing—creating authenticity, inclusivity, and local buy-in.

Signature Elements

- Remarks from Mayor Muriel Bowser, DCHFA leadership, elected officials, and residents
- Live music, food trucks, and balloon installations
- In-home art exhibits featuring DC-based artists, spotlighting local small businesses

- Resident testimony from Ty'on Jones, one of the first homeowners at The Ana Townhomes
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The combination of policy leadership lived experience, and cultural programming reinforced credibility and emotional connection core elements seen in past winning entries.

Media and Visibility Outcomes

The event garnered coverage from ABC, CBS, and NBC local affiliates, dramatically expanding reach beyond event attendees. Media attention elevated:

- Awareness of workforce homeownership
- Visibility of Ward 8 investment
- DCHFA's reputation as an innovative housing finance agency

Results & Impact

- 740% increase in social media engagement during campaign period
- Sustained buyer interest and touring activity
- Strong community turnout and stakeholder participation
- Expanded awareness of HIP as a scalable financing model
- Positive media placement across all major local broadcast outlets

Replicability and Value to Other HFAs

This event model is highly replicable for other housing finance agencies because it:

- Combines education, celebration, and sales in one activation
- Leverages existing outreach events for lead generation
- Uses local culture to strengthen trust and visibility
- Maximizes limited marketing budgets through partnerships

Conclusion

The Ana Townhomes ribbon cutting exemplifies Special Event Marketing excellence by transforming a traditional ceremony into a strategic marketing platform that advanced homeownership, elevated community voice, and showcased innovative financing. Its results-driven, community-centered approach aligns squarely with the standards demonstrated by prior NCSHA award recipients.

Supporting Documents

DC Housing Finance Agency
“The Ana Townhomes Ribbon Cutting Ceremony”
Special Event Marketing – Communications



Media Coverage:

[New affordable housing development opens in Anacostia – NBC4 Washington](#)

[DC mayor's office celebrates new homes in Anacostia | wusa9.com](#)

[DC Mayor opens a new affordable housing complex](#)

Video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1TH0K7fFk8I>

Press Releases:

<https://mayor.dc.gov/release/mayor-bowser-cuts-ribbon-ana-townhomes-anacostia>

<https://anacostiabid.org/news/ribbon-cutting-celebrates-the-ana-townhomes-in-ward-8>

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