

BLUE MEANS BUSINESS

TOWN OF THE BLUE MOUNTAINS BUSINESS TOOL KIT

A Guide for New & Growing Businesses in The Blue Mountains

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Welcome to The Blue Mountains WE'RE GLAD YOU'RE HERE

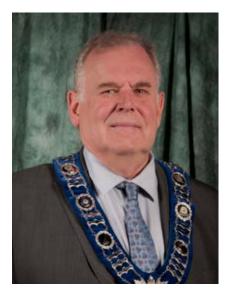
In The Blue Mountains, we mean business and the entrepreneurial spirit and mindset of our area is a true testament to what makes our business community strong, vibrant, and unique. We recognize that business excellence is a foundational building block to ensuring our community continues to diversify its local economy and is prepared to welcome new and unique business operations and sectors into The Blue Mountains.

The Town's 2021-2025 Economic Development Strategy outlines three economic development goals, with financial and economic prosperity at the core of creating an innovative and resilient local economy. At the heart of this pillar is ensuring our community continues to make strategic investments and build relations with key stakeholders and partners to ensure we continue to diversify our workforce and foster an environment where entrepreneurs can thrive.

As such, we are pleased to offer this business toolkit as a guide for new and growing businesses in The Blue Mountains. This document serves as a key resource for anyone aspiring to locate, relocate or expand their business operations in the Town and provides valuable information to assist your goals including access to key contacts, local networks, municipal information, and resources available to support your business' success and growth for years to come.

When our businesses have access to the tools and resources they need, we create an environment for good jobs, and in return, our local economy thrives. We hope this tool kit provides our business community with the starting point they need to accelerate their goals and success.

Mayor Alar Soever



Business in The Blue Mountains EXPLORE THE POTENTIAL

Entrepreneurship and small business success are at the economic core of The Blue Mountains. With a respected and highly sought-after quality of life, the success of the local economy has been driven by strong year-over-year industry growth led by agriculture, tourism, construction, small business, and hospitality/service. Together, these sectors account for over \$584 million in annual economic exports and employ over 4,500 individuals within the Town of The Blue Mountains.

Recognized as Ontario's true four-season tourism and recreation destination, the Town welcomes over 2.5 million visitors annually and has earned a world-class reputation as a respected community whose natural environment and allure attracts creative, forward-thinking entrepreneurs and businesses.

Through strategic consulting, support services and business resources, The Blue Mountains provides the necessary tools to sustain and strengthen your entrepreneurial and business goals.





ONTARIO'S PREMIER FOUR-SEASON LIFESTYLE DESTINATION



\$584 million in annual economic exports

Year-over-year industry growth accounts for over \$584 million in annual economic exports.

Whether you are an aspiring entrepreneur looking to start your journey, or a seasoned business owner looking to expand or relocate your services, The Blue Mountains offers plenty of opportunities to support your business goals.

2.5 million annual visitors

Recognized as Ontario's true four-season tourism and recreation destination. the Town welcomes over 2.5 million visitors annually.

4,500 employed job positions

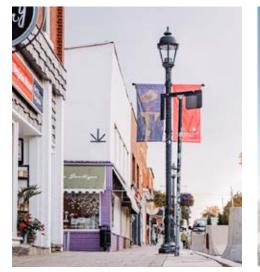
Sectors including agriculture, tourism, construction, small business, and hospitality/ service employ over 4,500 individuals within the Town.

Community Snapshot WELCOME TO THE COMMUNITY

Located along the ridged landscape of the Niagara Escarpment and the sparkling shores of Georgian Bay, the Town of The Blue Mountains is situated two hours northwest of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). The Town is composed of many unique communities that are rich with history and built on a foundation of agriculture, processing, manufacturing, and recreation.

Home to over 9,300 permanent residents and an additional 6,000 seasonal and part-time residents, The Blue Mountains offers a high-guality lifestyle that caters to families looking to build a solid foundation, adventurers looking to go off the beaten path and relaxation seekers taking in and experiencing the very best the area has to offer.









The Blue Mountains is home to a large network of business associations, support services, organizations and programs that are dedicated to supporting your business, whether you are seeking to start-up, relocate or grow your mature business.



Business Associations & Partners

The Blue Mountains is home to six key business associations and local partners that dedicate their efforts to advocating for the business community and support the overall success of your business - providing the tools and resources needed to help you realize your goals.



Business Development & Support

The South Georgian Bay region is home to several organizations that provide targeted business development support services. These services range from consultation, workshops and mentoring, funding and financing assistance, to help your business development needs.



Community Events & Networking

The Blue Mountains, through the support of local associations and partners, plays host to various business networking opportunities and community events. From connecting one on one with business owners and entrepreneurs to Town-wide events and initiatives, there's plenty of ways to get involved in the community.

Local Business Associations









Learn more! To view the full community profile, please visit: www.thebluemountains.ca/community-profile







Your Economic Development Team SUPPORTING YOUR GOALS

The Town's Economic Development Division is available to help guide and connect entrepreneurs, business owners and operators to the strong network of local business resources and support available in South Georgian Bay.

Contact Us



(519) 599-3131 ext. 282



economicdevelopment@thebluemountains.ca

WHAT WE DO:



Work with the Economic Development Advisory Committee to ensure business input and feedback in the implementation of strategic initiatives is incorporated;



Develop partnerships to promote and sustain local and regional economic prosperity;

Meet with entrepreneurs and business owners to support their business start-up/ growth and connect them with local resources, networking opportunities, and business supports;



Provide information for available government grants and programs;





Provide data, economic indicators and statistics relating to The Blue Mountains; and

Implement and support strategic programs and initiatives to support the local business community.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Economic Development Advisory Committee serves as an advocate for the business community to Town Council, working to identify opportunities and resolve issues as it relates to local economic development and growth in The Blue Mountains. The Committee works through close collaboration and partnership with Town Staff, the business community and key stakeholders to support and accelerate economic growth through strategic initiatives and events.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY & GOALS

The 2021-2025 Economic Development Strategy serves as the Town's first action plan aiming to facilitate business growth and success by leveraging strategic partnerships, investing in community development, enhancing the quality of life, and mitigating economic risk factors. The strategy outlines 24 action items that are aligned with the following three strategic goals:



1. Financial & Economic Prosperity:

To create an innovative and resilient local economy and diversified workforce and foster an environment where entrepreneurs can thrive.



2. Community Well-being:

To foster the development of a sustainable community and support long term residency through strengthened quality of life factors and social well-being.



3. Environmental Resiliency

To protect and preserve the natural environment for future generations through sustainable development and businesses practices.

Did you know? The Town conducts an annual business survey to stay informed & connected with business owners. To learn more, please visit: www.thebluemountains.ca/business



Business Resources, Support & Networking

Business Associations & Local Partners

BLUE MOUNTAINS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Blue Mountains Chamber of Commerce works on behalf of its members to advance business interests to create a thriving business community in The Blue Mountains.

BLUE MOUNTAIN VILLAGE ASSOCIATION

Blue Mountain Village Association is an innovative and inclusive destination management organization that enhances and promotes the Blue Mountain Village experience to the benefit of its members, visitors and stakeholders.

CLARKSBURG VILLAGE ASSOCIATION

The Clarksburg Village Association promotes the community of Clarksburg as a vibrant and flourishing destination and focuses on downtown beautification efforts to attract visitors and residents to the community.

THORNBURY BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA

The Thornbury Business Improvement area is focused on making Thornbury a top destination by enhancing the visitor and shopping experience of downtown Thornbury through community events and beautification.

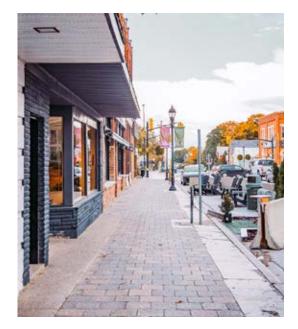
MADE IN GREY

Made in Grey is led by the Grey County Economic Development team that works to attract new businesses and support existing businesses that contribute to the overall economic prosperity of Grey County.

SOUTH GEORGIAN BAY TOURISM

Provides a cost-effective marketing portal for tourism-based businesses, allowing businesses to reach visitors searching for experiences and attractions in the South Georgian Bay region.





Business Development Resources

The Town provides annual funding to local organizations that provide targeted business development support services. Services range from consultation, workshops, education, and mentorship to funding/ financing assistance and more.

SOUTH GEORGIAN BAY SMALL BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CENTRE

Provides support to start-up and existing small business enterprises during their development, retention, and operation. The centre provides entrepreneurs with easy access to business consulting services and information covering management, marketing, technology, and financing. Serves as a one-stop business resource for new and expanding businesses, providing support in community economic development, coaching/ mentoring, business loans and more. **GREY COUNTY BUSINESS**

CATAPULT GREY BRUCE

Propels opportunities by empowering established entrepreneurs with knowledge, connections, and space to take their business to the next level.

BIZ GRID

Serves as an interactive online directory designed to help entrepreneurs access the resources and assistance they need in South Georgian Bay.

Local Job Boards

Whether you're looking to hire or seeking employment in the area, there are many local resources to assist in your search. To view a list of job boards, visit: **www.thebluemountains.ca/business-resources**

Did you know? The Blue Mountains Chamber of Commerce hosts regular Chamber After 6 networking events to provide local business owners an opportunity to connect with one another. Learn more at www.bluemountainschamber.ca

List your business! Share your business with the community by creating a business listing on www.exploreblue.ca/business-directory

COMMUNITY FUTURES SOUTH GEORGIAN BAY

GREY COUNTY BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CENTRE

Provides entrepreneurs throughout Grey County with the information, tools and guidance needed to successfully start, expand and grow their small business.

SOUTH GEORGIAN BAY ACCELERATOR

Provides mentorship to technology based businesses within the community and offers a range of supports specific to the needs of businesses through its intensive accelerator program.



Getting Started

For a guick overview on what you'll need to consider before you start your business journey, please review the South Georgian Bay Small Business Enterprise Centre's Start-Up Checklist below:

PLANNING:

- Choose form of ownership/business structure
- Select your business name
- Conduct SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, **Opportunities & Threats)**
- Define your market, identify suppliers, identify competitors
- Calculate start-up costs
- Develop your business plan

PROVINCIAL REQUIREMENTS:

- Register Business Name (Master Business License)
- Obtain special Provincial licenses and permits if applicable
- If employees need to be hired, contact the Canada Revenue Agency for a payroll account and the WSIB with 10 days of hire date if applicable
- **Obtain information on Employment Standards** and Occupational Health & Safety

MUNICIPAL REQUIREMENTS:

- Determine business location and check Municipal zoning
- ✓ Obtain special Municipal licenses and permits if applicable
- Schedule Health and Fire inspections if applicable

OTHER RECOMMENDED STEPS:

- Contact applicable offices to arrange for utility hook-up
- Set up business bank account, payment systems
- Investigate purchasing and/or purchase business insurance
- Hire advisors: accountant, bookkeeper, lawyer as needed
- Maintain records on all receipts and expensesupdate monthly
- Register a domain name if planning on developing a website
- Review other regulations to ensure you are in compliance (i.e. health & safety, employment, etc.)

BOOK A FREE CONSULTATION!

The South Georgian Bay Small Business Enterprise Centre (SBEC) provides entrepreneurs with all the tools they need to start and grow their businesses. To book a free business consultation visit: www.enterprisecentre.ca



P. 705-446-3355 E. sbec@collingwood.ca W. enterprisecentre.ca

REGISTERING & NAMING YOUR BUSINESS

Under Ontario's Business Names Act, you must register your business name with the province if you are operating a business under a name other than the legal name of the owner of the business. **Registration applies to:**

- Sole proprietorships who are operating a business that is different from the owner's name
- Partnerships (except for partnerships operating under the Limited Partnerships Act)
- Corporations that are doing business under a different name than their corporate name

You can register or renew your business, search for business names, or obtain a Master Business Licence online, by appointment at the South Georgian Bay Small Business Enterprise Centre, at a self-service kiosk at any Service Ontario location, or by mail. Before paying for a formal business name, search to make sure your name is available. You may wish to search online for names that you are considering.

Once you have narrowed down business names that appear to be free, you can then proceed with a formal paid search before you register your business. To learn more about Ministry registration fees, your Business Identification Number (BIN) and your Business Number (BN), please visit: ontario.ca





BUSINESS LICENCES & PERMITS

The Town of The Blue Mountains does not require businesses to obtain a municipal business license or permit, with the exception of Short Term Accommodations, which must be licensed. Certain business types (i.e. restaurant, daycare, etc.) do require additional permits and licenses. **BizPaL** is a free, interactive tool that identifies the permits, licenses, and inspections that your business may require from the provincial and federal government.

We're Here to Help WORKING WITH THE TOWN

When starting a business, there are many considerations to account for, including municipal by-laws, building permits and property zoning. It is highly recommended to contact the **Town's Building Department** if you are planning to:

Renovate an existing property (inside or outside)

Buy a new property (to ensure it is zoned for your purpose)

- Convert a residential property to a business property
- Operate a business in your home
- Install a sign for your business

GET IN TOUCH:

Looking to discuss your business operations with the Town? Please contact the Town's Economic Development Division by visiting: www.thebluemountains.ca/business

If you are looking to operate a food premises or a personal service setting, you are required by law to notify and contact the Grey Bruce Public Health Unit. For more information, please visit: www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca

Site Selection & Zoning Process

When searching for a potential site for your new or expanded business, the Town's Economic Development Division can assist with questions regarding available lands throughout the municipality and can serve as a catalyst to additional search tools and resources. Owners/operators can also work with local commercial realtors to assist with any further questions they may have while finding the right site for your business. You can also check out current land availability by visiting the **Grey County Land & Building Inventory webpage**.

Once you've landed on a potential site, it's important to know what the land is zoned for. Designations such as R1, M3 and C5 permit different uses. Your property's zoning information can be found online with the **Interactive Zoning Map**. It's important to schedule a conversation with the Town's Building Department to review the property's zoning before you sign a lease or purchase property to ensure the permissible use of the site aligns with your business' vision.

Resources to use while considering your site location:

Interactive Town Zoning Map

Active Development Projects Map

Active Infrastructure Projects Map

If you're looking for a building or property to operate your business, it's important to understanding what's permitted within the zoning by-law. For details, visit: www.thebluemountains.ca/zoning







PLANNING & ZONING CONSIDERATIONS

If you are looking to make any formal zoning, development or building amendments to your newly acquired or potential site, you must contact the Town's Planning Division to set up a preconsultation meeting for the following:





Draft Plan of Subdivision and Condominium





Minor Variance at the Committee of Adjustment



SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION FOR AN AMENDMENT

Before you submit an application, it is mandatory to book a pre-consultation meeting with the Town's Planning Division. This consultation provides the opportunity for staff to preview the proposal, identify any major issues, and confirm the requirements for a complete application. To arrange for a formal pre-consultation, please complete the online Pre-Consultation Form.



HOME BUSINESSES

Home businesses are a great opportunity for residents to become entrepreneurs without the need for additional commercial space. It is important to understand that Town's Zoning By-Law (see page 53) outlines provisions that allow specific types of businesses to operate as home-based.

There are provisions to keep in mind before you turn your extra space into your new place of work, including:



The operator of the business must reside in the home



Business is restricted to the home and can't be conducted in accessory buildings or private garages

Town By-Laws & Licences

There are various Town By-Laws that you should consider and understand while preparing for your business operations. If you have any questions regarding any By-law, please contact the Town's By-Law Enforcement Department.

SHORT TERM ACCOMMODATION:

All properties being rented on a short-term basis (less than 30 days) require a Short Term Accommodation (STA) Licence under the Town's Licencing By-law 2021-70.

NOISE BY-LAW:

This By-law ensures noise is kept at acceptable levels across the Town. Business owners and operators should review the By-law to be aware of what is acceptable and what is unacceptable.

SIGN BY-LAW:

This By-law ensures all signs erected in the Town are compatible to the heritage and unique scenic characteristics of the community. Business owners should contact the Town before installing signage.

PROPERTY STANDARDS BY-LAW:

This By-law regulates and sets standards for all properties located in the Town. Business owners and operators should review the By-law to be aware of minimum property standards.

For a comprehensive list of Town By-laws, please visit: www.thebluemountains.ca/bylaws

PARKING BY-LAW:

This By-law enforces and maintains legal parking requirements in the Town in efforts to regulate traffic movement and ensure public safety. Business owners and operators should review the By-law to understand parking requirements and how it may affect availability to business locations and surroundings.

BUILDING CODE ACT:

This Provincial Act is the legislative framework governing the construction, renovation, and change-ofuse for buildings in Ontario to ensure minimum health and safety requirements are met.

SEWER USE BY-LAW:

This By-law regulates the discharge of water and waste into the Town's sanitary or storm sewer systems and wastewater treatment works. Business owners and operators should review the By-law to understand water and waste standards.

AXLE WEIGHT RESTRICTIONS:

The Town seasonally restricts load limits on certain roads throughout the community, making it an offence to conflict with the provision of Section 122 of the Ontario Highway Traffic Act.

Agricultural Business in Blue

The Blue Mountains serves as one of the largest apple-producing regions in Ontario, accounting for over 15% of total acres in apple crops in the province. Our community also serves home to over 11% of total agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting jobs in Grey County, with over 340 jobs, and has total gross farm receipts of over \$21 million.



The total gross farm receipts in 2015 was \$21,696,889.



Over 17.500 acres of productive agricultural land



A total of 119 farms in operation with a total of 165 operators.







The top three number of farms by industry include fruit and tree nut tree farming (29), other animal production (22), and oilseed and grain farming (20) which account for nearly 60% of the total number of farms.

Local Agricultural Resources

THE TOWN OF THE BLUE MOUNTAINS AGRICULTURAL COMMITTEE

The Agricultural Advisory Committee is an advisory committee of Council established to identify, review, discuss, and make recommendations to Council on agricultural related issues.

MADE IN GREY AGRI-FOOD ASSET MAP

The Grey County Agri-Food Asset Map is a comprehensive tool that maps the region's entire agrifood value chain. The map includes farms, processors, distributors, consumer access places, input and service providers, and public assets and infrastructure. You can access this tool and create or edit your own listings, with the map assisting Grey County to identify gaps and opportunities while aiding in strategic decision-making for the agriculture and food sectors.

Provincial and Federal Agricultural Resources

ONTARIO MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE. FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) assists with business retention and expansion programs and works with business organizations such as Chambers and BIAs on downtown revitalization. OMAFRA also provides various funding programs to assist business operations.

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD CANADA

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada supports the Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector through initiatives that promote innovation and competitiveness

APPLE PIE TRAIL

The Apple Pie Trail is a regional, self-guided tour to markets, farms, orchards, bakeries, restaurants, shops, cafes, breweries, cideries and wineries that create food, drink and artisanal crafts inspired by the apple. If you are interested in learning more, including membership opportunities please visit their website.

AG-GRID

Ag-Grid is a resource guide for agriculture and agrifood businesses in Simcoe, Grey and Bruce Counties who are looking for information about starting up, expanding or improving their businesses. This guiding document includes key information on funding, mentorship, expertise and supports available across the region.



Celebrate Your Grand Opening

If you would like to arrange an official ribbon cutting to celebrate your grand opening, with representation from the Town of The Blue Mountains, please contact the Economic Development Division. The Division can assist with arranging official Council representation, ribbon and big scissors and can guide you through any specific guestions you may have regarding your celebration with The Blue Mountains community.



CONSIDERATIONS FOR YOUR BIG DAY

The grand opening of your business provides a great opportunity to gather the community and celebrate local business success. There are many considerations to take into account before your big day:



1. Event Details: Include the date, time, itinerary, food, etc.



2. Invitations to the Community: Invitations could be sent out through social media, website, email, etc.



3. Media Representation: Promote your big day through community news sources

Inside The Blue Mountains DINE & SHOP

The Blue Mountains is known for its various culinary experiences served up by award-winning chefs, made with locally grown produce. From local artisan shops, bakeries and restaurants to large-scale farming, apple orchards, cideries and wineries your inner foodie will always be satisfied with a culinary tour through The Blue Mountains.

Make sure to explore stops along the Apple Pie Trail, experience the cozy dining opportunities offered in the Blue Mountain Village, stroll Thornbury's many shops, bakeries and restaurants, and delve into the arts scene of Clarksburg, affectionately dubbed "Artsburg." For a scenic adventure, stop into the many villages and hamlets including Clarksburg, Ravenna, and Heathcote, to name a few, that offer markets, outfitters for adventure, restaurants and of course. apple orchards.

Visit the Town's YouTube Channel!

Scan the OR code to experience The Blue Mountains online!





DOWNTOWN THORNBURY



DOWNTOWN CLARKSBURG





VILLAGES & HAMLETS

Experience The Blue Mountains online! Visit the Town's YouTube Channel to explore the very best of our community, from views atop the Escarpment to discovering the rich history of the Thornbury Fishway, Apple Industry, the Mary

EXPERIENCE

The Blue Mountains community is rich with history and offers a wide variety of arts and cultural experiences. Visit our online Community Events Calendar for upcoming festivals and events in our community.



MARSH STREET CENTRE 187 Marsh St., Clarksburg

THORNBURY FISHWAY 45 Bridge St. #9, Thornbury

THORNBURY HARBOUR

41 Bruce St. N, Thornbury

APPLE PIE TRAIL

applepietrail.ca











SHEFFIELD PARK BLACK HISTORY MUSEUM 241 Clark St., Clarksburg

CRAIGLEITH DEPOT AND MUSEUM

113 Lakeshore Rd. E, The Blue Mountains

TOMAHAWK RECREATIONAL

417230 10th Line, Thornbury

L.E. SHORE LIBRARY

173 Bruce St. S, Thornbury

COMPLEX

EXPLORE

Explore over 285 km of public trails that weave their way throughout the community. Whether you're looking for a casual family-friendly stroll, an active and challenging hike through the wonderous Niagara Escarpment, or seek to pedal along the open road by bike, there's no shortage of opportunities to head outdoors and take in the expansive views of Georgian Bay and the countryside. Visit our website to discover our beaches, parks and trails.



Explore Blue

The Town's recently launched recreation and tourism platform is evolving and expanding! Launched in March 2020 to support businesses and address challenges faced from COVID-19, the Explore Blue website has grown, providing residents and visitors with key information on shopping and recreational opportunities, highlights on top experiences found across the community, as well as videos and blog posts featuring stories on culture, art, business, life, and history in The Blue Mountains.







Business E-Newsletter! Subscribe to the Town's business e-newsletter for updates on business support, grant information, opportunities and more. To sign up, visit: www.thebluemountains.ca/subscribe



LIST YOUR BUSINESS:

Looking to be included in the Town's **business directory?**

Visit exploreblue.ca to submit a business submission form.

Once approved by the Economic Development Division, your listing will be featured on both the Town website directory and the directory on Explore Blue.

YOU'LL LOVE WHERE WE'LL TAKE YOU



Shop Local Initiatives SHOWCASING BUSINESS SUCCESS

Working alongside business associations and partners, the Town is committed to celebrating and showcasing business success through dedicated video experiences, individual profiles, blog posts, contests, and more to promote and support The Blue Mountains business community and engage residents and visitors 365 days a year.

SHOP LOCAL VIDEO CAMPAIGN

Launched in 2021, this educational video series highlights the importance of shopping local through behind the scenes interviews with local businesses and owners throughout the Town.



GIVE THE GIFT OF BLUE

Launched during the holiday season in 2020, this annual contest emphasizes shopping local businesses over the holidays and generates an estimated \$100,000 of reported retail sales at businesses throughout the community.



Did you know? In partnership with local business associations, the Town hosts an annual holiday Shop Local contest from mid-November to early January encouraging the community to shop local over the holiday season.

Helpful Information & Municipal Contacts



COMMUNICATIONS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT 519-599-3131 ext. 282



PLANNING SERVICES 519-599-3131 ext. 263



BUILDING SERVICES 519-599-3131 ext. 239



FIRE SERVICES 519-599-3131 ext. 101



COMMUNITY SERVICES 519-599-3131 ext. 254



OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT 519-599-3131 ext. 276



FINANCE DEPARTMENT 519-599-3131 ext. 221



CLERKS DIVISION 519-599-3131 ext. 232

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VISIT US ONLINE! www.thebluemountains.ca

TOWN OF THE BLUE MOUNTAINS BUSINESS TOOL KIT

www.thebluemountains.ca/business