

# Abstract

Many rural regions and small towns within Canada are experiencing an extended period of economic and social restructuring due to a changing global economic climate. This process is evidenced by the automation of industries, changes in delivery of goods and services, as well as the transportation of people. Altogether, this economic and social evolution has led to a de-localization of local economies and has had a profound impact on traditional Canadian resource towns.

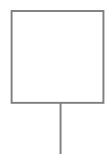
De-localization is often characterized by population out-migration, loss of youth residents and a shift away from primary resource industries. The reality of sustained population loss and dwindling natural resource availability has resulted in fewer economic development opportunities in resource towns. However, despite the economic and population-based instability experienced by these communities, they remain a common and a very relevant part of the Canadian landscape. Expressly, t **KH FRQWULEXWLRQ RI &DQDGDpV UXUDO HFRQRPA** GDP should not be overlooked.

One solution proposed by academics to mitigate the fluctuating population within resource towns is to diversify the population composition. Attracting and retaining families has the potential to be particularly effective in achieving sustainable town development.

In light of the current issues affecting resource town development, this report sought to determine whether existing resource communities have utilized the attraction and retention of families as a strategy for stabilizing and growing local economies. Three Northern British Columbian resource towns were chosen as case studies, Kitimat, Fort St. John and Tumbler Ridge. Research on these towns were used to explore two research questions:

**™** How can municipal planning facilitate the attraction and retention of families in northern British Columbian resource towns in order to stabilize and grow local economies?

**™** What policies have n



The foundation of this research

