

RELOCATION OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES

The availability and accessibility of government services through local offices contribute to the quality of life in a community and have a significant impact in retaining people in their community.

In the last five years, many communities have experienced the closing and/or moving of federal government offices out of their community. In an effort to centralize many of the federal government services, many of the small and medium sized communities have experienced the loss of well paid jobs and valuable government services. In one case the head reporting office for BC had moved to Alberta.

Some of the federal government departments and programs that have been effected are: Service Canada, (Labour Market Information, Canada Pension), RCMP Call Centers', and Canadian Citizenship and Immigration.

If the Federal Government is investigating the move of a service delivery office out of a community, it is crucial that a community be consulted ahead of time in order for that community to have time to work with the federal government in addressing concerns of its citizens.

Recommendation:

That the Federal Government:

1. conduct a review of the centralization of Federal Government offices in British Columbia and its effect on service delivery to its citizens. .
2. in consultation with the Provincial Government investigate ways to ensure that service delivery structures respond to the needs of all communities and is done in a fair and equitable manner.
3. consult with local communities prior to relocation of government offices or services in order that the communities have an opportunity to provide a business or needs case for the retention of the office.

Submitted by Venture Kamloops