

## SPECIAL FOCUS: REVENUE GROWTH IN BC'S URBAN CENTRES

The 22 Urban Centres as defined in the *Tourism Room Revenue Report* account for nearly 80% of the room revenue earned in the province. The bulk of this is earned in BC's two largest metropolitan areas: the Greater Vancouver Regional District (consisting of 3 urban centres) and the Capital Regional District (2 urban centres). The 17 remaining urban centres earned, in 1995, 24% of the province's room revenue.

The relative share earned by the 17 smaller urban centres has grown steadily since 1989, when the proportion was 22%. The non-urban areas held steady, but the GVRD and CRD experienced a 2% drop in share of provincial room revenue. While the CRD share of provincial revenue fell ½ of one per cent since 1989, the bulk of the decline was borne by the GVRD.

A dramatic change has been seen in revenue earned in Whistler. In 1989, properties in the municipality earned 4.9% of the provincial total (\$32.0 million). By 1995 this had risen to \$76.8 million, 7.7% of the provincial total.

Only three other urban centres earned in excess of \$20 million in 1995: Kelowna, Kamloops, and Prince George. Only two of the remaining 13 urban centres earned more than \$8 million: Penticton and Nanaimo.

In the case of Whistler's rapid increase, annual average growth is a most telling statistic. Provincially, revenue has risen an average of 7.3% since 1989. Growth in both the GVRD and CRD has been below the provincial rate, at 6.6% and 6.8% respectively. In dramatic contrast, Whistler has averaged 15.7% growth over the seven year period. It is worth noting that May 1996 was the first month since July 1993 that Whistler experienced a drop in year-over-year revenue.

Other urban centres that posted above-average annual average growth between 1989 and 1995 were Smithers (10.7%), Fort St. John (10.4%), Kelowna (9.0%), Prince George (9.1%), Port Alberni (8.3%), and Quesnel (8.2%).

### Whistler leads long-term revenue growth

	<u>1995 Revenue</u> <u>(\$,000)</u>	<u>Growth</u> <u>1994 to 1995</u>	<u>Annual average growth</u> <u>1989-1995</u>
BRITISH COLUMBIA	\$995,359	10.8%	7.3%
<b><u>Regional Districts</u></b>			
Greater Vancouver	\$425,225	12.8%	6.6%
Capital	\$120,779	8.5%	6.8%
<b><u>Urban Centres</u></b>			
Whistler	\$76,807	22.7%	15.7%
Kelowna	\$34,594	7.0%	9.0%
Kamloops	\$25,842	6.9%	7.1%
Prince George	\$23,263	9.2%	9.1%
Penticton	\$11,889	4.4%	0.5%
Nanaimo	\$11,664	4.3%	5.5%
Vernon	\$7,707	-1.5%	2.5%
Prince Rupert	\$7,659	3.7%	3.9%
Fort St. John	\$6,169	-5.6%	10.4%
Smithers	\$5,607	9.9%	10.7%
Cranbrook	\$5,045	8.4%	4.5%
Williams Lake	\$4,946	12.2%	4.7%
Port Alberni	\$4,281	22.2%	8.3%
Quesnel	\$4,269	19.9%	8.2%
Dawson Creek	\$3,390	10.8%	3.2%
Terrace	\$3,063	8.2%	1.5%
Nelson	\$2,388	1.8%	3.1%