Exploring the LIFE program:
Collaboration in the Greater Victoria Area

by
Caleigh F. Ellis
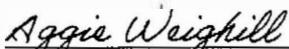
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Presented as part of the requirement for the award of Master of Sustainable Leisure Management
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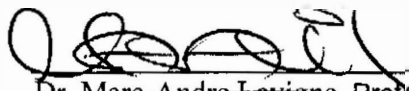
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THESIS EXAMIANTION COMMITTEE SIGNATURE PAGE

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Department of Recreation & Tourism management for acceptance, the thesis titled "Exploring the LIFE program: Collaboration in the Greater Victoria Area", submitted by Caleigh Ellis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Sustainable Leisure Management.

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This Thesis is a product of my own work and is not the result of anything done in collaboration.

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Abstract

Leisure economic accessibility policies are common practice in many Canadian municipalities. Little research has been done on the implementation of these policies and even less research has been done on municipal collaboration to successfully implement these policies. This study explores the LIFE program in the Greater Victoria Area using the Local Leisure Policy Analysis Framework. The LIFE program is a collaborative governance mechanism used in the Greater Victoria Area to implement leisure economic accessibility policies. Recreation managers in the Greater Victoria Area were interviewed and these interviews were analyzed using the Lavigne's (2014) Local Leisure Policy Analysis Framework. This study found that for municipalities to successfully collaborate they had to exchange resources. These resources include: social capital, financial capital, human capital, intellectual capital, and legitimacy capital. It was also found that this collaboration contributed to sustainable development in the Greater Victoria Region.

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Chapter One: Introduction

A neoliberal economy has resulted in funding decreases to the areas that are central to the health and wellbeing of Canadian citizens. This means that public funding for childcare, post secondary education, housing, retirement resources, and recreational opportunities are decreasing and that these services are expected to be bought and paid for by the individual (Gore & Kothari, 2012; Mikkonen & Raphael, 2010). This creates two issues in relation to accessing community recreation services. The first is that a decrease in funding to recreational opportunities increases the cost of the opportunity for individuals. The increase in cost may create a structural barrier to participation - a constraint that becomes an intervening factor in an individual ability to participate in a preferred activity (Crawford, Jackson & Godbey, 1991). The second issue that is created is that families are expected to spend more of their disposable income on childcare, education, housing, and retirement and in turn they have less disposable income to use for recreational opportunities than when those services were subsidized by the government.

Lower income households face an increasing number of barriers because of the current public funding model when they are accessing community recreation programs. In an attempt to remove these barriers, developed countries have created policies for citizens disenfranchised by low incomes to have access to recreation opportunities. These are commonly known as Leisure[1] Economic Accessibility Policies (LEAPs). Most municipalities in British Columbia (BC), Canada, have LEAPs that enable citizens with incomes below a predetermined threshold to participate in recreational activities provided by the local government (Torjman, 2012). Equitable access to recreation is the foundation of many socioeconomic accessibility policies (McCarville, 2008). Unfortunately, each municipality in BC uses policies created by their own local leadership and the policies vary greatly among them resulting in inequities between municipalities that can greatly affect citizens' quality of life.

Within most western countries, Korpi (2006) found that there were major inequalities in citizens' standard of living. Living conditions of individuals and the general population are influenced by the societal factors that shape their health (Mikkonen & Raphael, 2010; Bryant et al., 2011), and these factors are known as the social determinants of health (Mikkonen &

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[1] Leisure, in this paper, is used interchangeably with the term recreation. Recreation, as defined by the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (2015), "is the experience that results from freely chosen participation in physical, social, intellectual, creative and spiritual pursuits that enhance individual and community wellbeing."

Raphael). Income is one of the most important social determinants of health because it affects overall living conditions, psychological function, and influences health-related behaviors (Mikkonen & Raphael). Citizens who face adverse social and material living conditions also have higher levels of physiological and psychological stress, making it hard for them to participate in leisure activities (Mikkonen & Raphael).

Economic barriers that affect citizen participation in recreational activities are increasing (Balmer, 2011). Local governments in BC have a legal obligation to provide facilities for recreation but not for recreational programs or services to take place in these facilities. A strong case for the provision of recreation programs and services is made when the social, physical, and economic benefits of participation are considered, as well as how these benefits contribute to alleviating the social problems in society (Driver et al., 1991; McCole & Vogt, 2011; Thibault, Frisby & Kikulis, 1999).

Public leisure agencies evaluate their service delivery in three criteria: effectiveness, efficiency, and equity (West & Crompton, 2013). Ethical and equitable resource allocation is essential for the wellbeing of a community (Edwards, 2005). In the context of leisure provision, equity does not refer to equality; instead, it is related to fairness and justice in the allocation of services (Crompton & West, 2008; Lucy, 1981; Rawls, 1971; West & Crompton, 2013). Equitability recognizes that people are different and need to be treated with those differences in mind (Anderson & Stone, 2005). Equality involves allocating resources so either all residents receive equal input allocation, or all residents receive equal benefits of services, regardless of need, tax contribution, or price paid (Crompton & Wicks, 1988).

The purpose of this research is to explore how recreation managers, within the Greater Victoria Area (GVA), collaboratively implement the LIFE program. The following section will outline the political context of Canada leisure policy development. The area in which the study was conducted will also be contextually laid out. The theoretical framework that is used in this research project will also be introduced. Finally, this section will conclude with the research questions that were used in this study.

1.1 Political Context

Governance is described as a network of public actors whose interactions create a system for decision-making and taking action of concern to citizens' public lives (Harvey, 2001). Public policy can be defined as "a relatively stable, purposive course of action or inaction followed by an actor or set of actors in dealing with a problem or matter of concern (Anderson, 2011, p. 6).

The governance perspective on public policy includes the procedures and instruments that actors use to coordinate their actions in the process of creating collectively defined agendas (Pierre, 2005).

Canada is among the "most decentralized federations in the world" and its government structure can have a profound effect on recreation service delivery (Cohn, 2008, p. 30). In general, the different levels of Canadian government are federal, provincial, and municipal; however, in BC there is an additional level between provincial and municipal, known as regional districts. Regional districts can be composed of multiple municipalities and areas that do not lie within municipal boundaries. They can also help to facilitate the collaboration between multiple municipalities who otherwise do not have the tax base to coordinate services to their citizens independently.

All levels of government are interdependent, but the decisions made at the federal or provincial level often have a strong effect on regions and municipalities. Municipal governments provide general government services as well as specific services such as policing, water and sewage, libraries, waste management, and recreation. Provinces have a great deal of autonomy from the federal government and are responsible for all social equity issues such as health, welfare, and education. The following sections will discuss the influence that the Federal and Provincial governments have on local governments. This section will finish with a discussion of the responsibilities and challenges with which local-level governments in BC are faced.

1.1.1 Federal Responsibilities. Until recently, the federal government has not had a significant role in local governments but there has been an increase in federal funding through infrastructure grants (McLean, Paget & Walisser, 2006). The federal government's ability to influence agenda-setting through monetary grants "entails power in the form of institutional isomorphism [the resemblance of a central organization to other organizations in its environment (Deephouse, 1996)] that plays or can play an important role in the dynamics of the policy subsystem" (Lavigne, 2014, p.33). With the exception of a few specific areas - high performance sport and the national park system - the federal government has downloaded the responsibility of public recreation policy to the provinces (Harvey, 2001).

1.1.2 Provincial Government. The provincial government in BC is responsible for the legislative framework that creates, maintains, and restructures all local governments within the province (Ministry of Community Services, 2006). The provincial government is involved in the direct delivery of recreation services through the provincial park system, and indirectly, through

financially assisting municipalities, charitable organizations, community programs, and capital projects through granting programs (Bish & Clemens, 2008; Searle & Brayley, 2000). Provincially funded grants that are accessible to organizations such as minor and amateur sporting groups are often known as gaming grants because they are funded through the taxes generated by legal gambling operations. It is up to local governments to use the funding based on the parameters outlined by the granting organization.

At the provincial level, complexities and contradictions of policy can be observed most acutely because of the smaller size, and frequent government changes leading to large ideological shifts (McArthur, 2007). The three most significant ways the provincial government affects municipal governments' ability to deliver recreation are through: a) changing the rules under which local governments are organized, b) legislating mandatory functions and activities to be performed, and c) authorizing all activities that local governments may undertake (Bish & Clemens, 2008).

Provincial government ministries set the rules and mandates for local governments but the functions, responsibilities, names, and reporting relationships of these ministries are ever changing (Bish & Clemens). Throughout the 1990s, social policies changed because of the limiting financial support from the federal government to the provinces for social programs. Several cost-shared programs also ended and were replaced with block grants, limiting social assistance programs (Rice & Prince, 2013).

In British Columbia, the 2001 election brought about change that saw the end of the decade-long New Democrat Party (NDP) reign when the BC liberal party came into power. Several social democratic public policies instituted by the NDP became obsolete. The Liberal party won 77 of 79 of the seats in the legislature and quickly implemented their short-term agenda to increase confidence by cutting personal income tax by 25% (Cohn, 2008). The result of this political transformation was the restriction of local government's financial resources (Cohn). This mandate engineered a "financial crisis for itself to drive a reinvention of government, both in terms of its mandate and paradigm of public administration" (Cohn, p. 39). The effects from the 2008 financial crisis also play a factor in government spending as it has not returned to the same levels it was at before the financial crisis of 2008.

1.1.3 Local Governments. BC has a dual-stream system of local government composed of municipalities and regional districts. Municipalities are the basic devices for local government while the regional governments are considered federations of municipalities (McLean, Paget &

Walisser, 2006). McLean et al., (2006) found that both municipal and regional governments are responsible for the provision of local services including the regulation of people and property, as well as the guiding of physical and social development of their communities. They also found that this collaborative approach to governance allows for local governments to achieve more through acting collectively rather than individually and should be considered a lateral, not hierarchical, arrangement.

Legislation was adopted in 1965 which created the regional district system as a federation of municipalities and rural territories, unique to BC where municipal councils agree upon a governing board of directors to govern regional districts (McLean, Paget & Walisser, 2006). Bish and Clemens (2008) found this to be an important feature of the regional district system because it creates the belief that local representatives know their communities' position best and that they will undertake action of mutual benefit.

Regional Districts are granted powers or service responsibilities through their member municipalities by essentially borrowing power from the municipalities (Mclean, Paget & Walisser, 2006). There are three important responsibilities of regional districts (Bish & Clemens, 2008). The first is that they act as the local government in the unincorporated areas. Second, they offer a framework for intermunicipal cooperation. Finally, they are the regional government for voluntary activities and some provincially mandated activities. Bish (1999) found that regional government services do not possess economies of scale and no local government can efficiently produce every service necessary. Table 1 is the breakdown of regional, intermunicipal and local responsibilities.

Services that are provided by regional governments in BC often include water supply, sewage and its treatment, solid waste management and emergency services such as disaster preparation and policing. Services that are provided by municipal organizations include sewage collection, fire protection, building inspections, community planning and land use regulation. Areas of overlap are considered areas of intermunicipal service delivery. This is when the service can be provided by either the regional district or the municipality. It is common for both organizations to deliver these services, especially in the creation and maintenance of parks and the delivery of recreational services. Services that are related to leisure pursuits have been bolded in Table 1.

1.2 Study Context

This study took place in the Greater Victoria Area (GVA) located on the southern end of Vancouver Island, BC. This following section provides a description of the regional district and

its municipalities. It also discusses several sustainability threats that affect the region and how these relate to the equitable economic access to leisure.

Table 1

Regional District Service Provision

Provider	Service
Regional (supplied to entire region by regional district)	- general government **regional parks** - regional planning - water supply - sewage treatment and disposal - solid waste management - emergency 9-1-1 system
Intermunicipal Services (supplied to two or more members within the region)	**recreation** **parks**
Local Services (provided by regional district to rural areas of the regional district)	- community planning and land use regulation - building inspection - nuisance regulation **community parks** - water distribution - sewage collection - fire protection - street lighting **recreation**

1.2.1 The Greater Victoria Area. The Capital Regional District (CRD) is the Regional District government that operates in the GVA. It is composed of a range of municipalities and facilitates intermunicipal service cooperation (Bish, 1999). Figure 1 shows the administrative boundaries of the CRD. The CRD is directly accountable to municipal partners and electoral areas for regional and sub-regional services and is the local government for the electoral areas (CRD, n.d., para. 2). It encompasses more than 200 service, infrastructure, and financing agreements to deliver a broad range of services that can be grouped into three main categories: a) Local areas, where the CRD is the local government (CRD, n.d., para. 3); b) Regional, where all municipalities and local areas are served; or c) Sub-regional, where two or more jurisdictions are served.
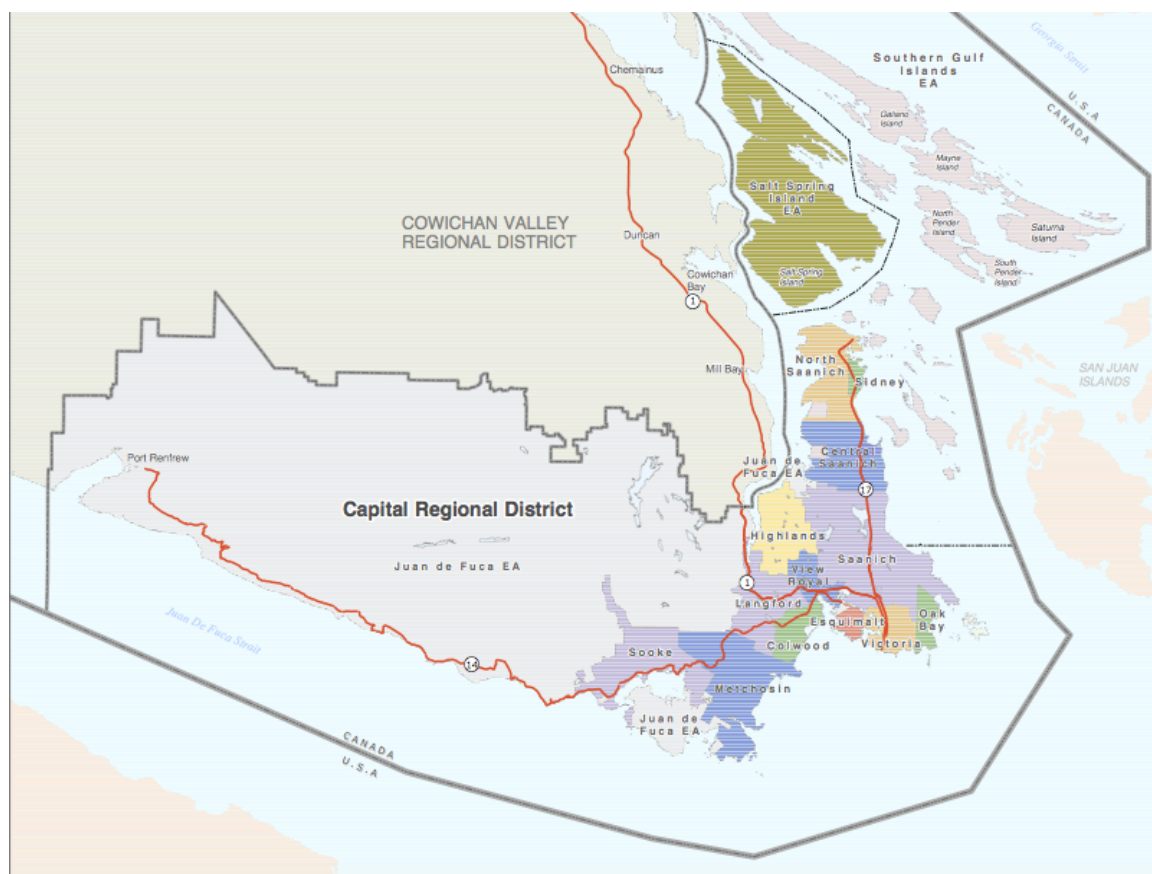
Figure 1. Capital Regional District Administrative Boundaries.

The Southern Gulf Island and Salt Spring Island are located in the CRD but are not considered part of the GVA. The municipalities located in the GVA and their populations are listed in Table 2. This table also shows the Recreation Centres that the municipalities' taxpayers support. Some of these are independent to the municipality. Three are facilities governed by the CRD but financial support may come from multiple municipalities.

Most disagreements in the CRD "involve cases where one group of citizens or one municipality wants others to pay for something of 'regional' importance. Some of these differences appear to be 'free rider' behavior" (Bish, 1999, p. 25). This is when citizens of one municipality frequently use the services of another municipality without offering financial remuneration. Many recreation centers across the province are in close proximity to each other, allowing citizens easier geographical access to the centre of their choosing whether or not it is in the municipality where they pay taxes. This means that one community's tax base supports a facility that is accessed by a large number of citizens who do not pay into that tax base.

Table 2

Municipality Population and Facility Affiliation(s)

Municipality	Population (2011)*	Facility Name
Central Saanich	15,936	Panorama
North Saanich	11,089	Panorama
Sidney	11,178	Panorama
Colwood	16,093	West Shore
Highlands	2,120	West Shore
Langford	29,228	West Shore
Metchosin	4,803	West Shore
View Royal	9,381	West Shore
Sooke	11,435	SEAPARC
Victoria	80,017	Crystal Pool
		Save-On Centre
Oak Bay	18,015	Oak Bay Rec
		Henderson Rec
Saanich	109,752	Commonwealth
		Cedar Hill Rec Centre
		Gordon Head Rec Centre
		Pearkes Rec Centre
Esquimalt	16,209	Esquimalt Rec Centre
		Archie Browning Sport Centre

* Retrieved from Statistics Canada 2011 Census: https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/as-sa/fogs-spg/Facts-cma-eng.cfm?LANG=Eng&GK=CMA&GC=935

In the GVA, a collaborative program, LIFE, is used to implement each municipalities LEAP. The LIFE program has been designed to provide no-cost and low-cost recreation opportunities for individuals and families with limited incomes (CRD, 2014). LIFE is available in all Greater Victoria municipalities but applications are completed and returned to the municipality in which the applicant resides, or to the centre that the municipality funds. The program is for individuals and families whose combined gross income per household falls within or below the low-income threshold levels recognized by Statistics Canada and commonly referred to as the Low Income Cut-Off's (LICOs). Table 3 shows the LICOs by annual income per number of individuals who reside in the household.

Table 3

2015 LICOs

# in Household	Combined Income
1	$20,550
2	$25,582
3	$31,450
4	$38,185
5	$43,307
6	$48,845
7	$54,381

Retrieved from CRD webpage https://www.crd.bc.ca/panorama/admission-registration/life-program.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

This research project explored how recreation managers, within the GVA, collaboratively implement the LIFE program. The framework used to conduct this study was the Local Leisure Policy Analysis Framework (LLPAF) (Lavigne, 2014). This framework was created to explore the partnerships between local institutions and partners outside the public sphere in relation to urban governance, coproduction of leisure services, and sectoral policies (Lavigne, 2014). The model was developed on the premise that public leisure, through local public administration, establishes close connections with private non-profit organizations, and furthermore, that citizens play an active role in the planning of their community. The research presented here used this framework to explore the collaboration of local public administrators through their implementation of the LIFE program.

1.3.1 Local Leisure Policy Analysis Framework. Lavigne (2014) noted that comparative analysis specific to local leisure policies is nearly absent in the leisure literature, and in response,

he created the LLPAF. Lavigne's model is built upon: a) the study of networks, b) the cognitive analysis of public policies, and c) neo-institutionalism approaches. The model has four central dimensions: a) the role of internal and external actors in the governing coalition; b) the structures of governance and the shared resources; c) institutional structures; and d) the collective action "reference framework" (Table 4).

Table 4

Description of Local Leisure Policy Analysis Framework

Dimensions	Variables
A. Actors	A1. Structure of the governing coalition
	A2. Other coalitions
	A3. Local elites and urban regimes
	A4. Supralocal governments
	A5. Other actors
B. Resources and Governance Mechanisms	B1. Control of resources
	B2. Resource exchange interface
C. Institutional Structures	C1. Institutional Rules
	C2. Constitutional Rules
	C3. Local Culture
D. Global- Sectoral Relation	D1. Global and sectoral "reference frameworks"

1.3.1.1 Actors. The identification of internal and external actors in the governing coalition is a core component in the analysis of governances (Lavigne, 2014). It can create an understanding of the actors' roles and if collaboration exists in specific policy subsystems. Collaboration is a dynamic process, and decisions and activities within a policy are not independent of each other. If actors agree on core beliefs, fewer problems arise from the opposition (Lundin, 2007; Sabatier, 1998). This framework explores the importance of understanding the opposition that could arise from external actors (Lavigne, 2014). Although opposition is likely weak between subsystem actors due to the core values shared in the leisure sector, it is possible that there is interest in understanding the conflict that comes internally from coalition cooperation even with shared core beliefs (Schlager, 1995).

1.3.1.2 Resources and Governance Mechanisms. Relationships between actors in a subsystem need to be analyzed using boundaries that facilitate their collaboration (Lavigne, 2014). Analyzing the means of resource exchange paints a picture of the dimension of resource and governance mechanisms. Governance mechanisms are crucial to the dynamic of

relationships between local bodies and partners. Lavigne's framework distinguishes itself from others by the identification of means, formal and informal, for resource exchange. These resources can become taken-for-granted even though they are an integral part of the coalition without being associated with their owners.

1.3.1.3 Institutional Structures. Interplay between actors needs to be analyzed using interfaces that facilitate their collaboration (Lavigne, 2014). Actors in the governing coalition influence the institutional structures. Institutional structures are particularly important when exploring the relationships and responsibilities between levels of government. In the Greater Victoria Area (GVA) the relationships between the regional and municipal governments can be particularly complex because of the shared responsibilities, especially in the leisure sector.

1.3.1.4 Global-Sectoral Referentials. Finally, global-sectoral relations are understood through exploring a global reference framework that reflects societies main values (Lavigne, 2014). Sectoral frameworks are made of the social construction of the field and are concerned with the dominant groups' interests. Sectoral referential frameworks can be understood by exploring the ideas shaping the actions of coalition and other actors. Actors in the sectoral referential framework are continually adapting their orientations and strategies to the ideas structuring the global referential framework (Lavigne, 2014).

1.3.2 Context for Using the Framework. Within the LLPAF, the relationships between actors in a subsystem were analyzed using boundaries that facilitate their collaboration. In this study, the managers in the GVA were actors in the coalition that implemented the LIFE program. To better understand their collaboration the resources they exchange and the mechanisms for exchange were explored. Analyzing the mechanisms of resource exchange painted a picture of the resources and governance mechanisms and how they are used. Understanding the institutional structures of the managers in the GVA was achieved by describing the structures or institutional rules present and exploring how they aided or restricted the coalition and what societal structures were influencers on the actions of the coalition. Finally, global-sectoral relations were understood through exploring the global reference framework that reflects societies main values. The sectoral frameworks were made of the social values that define community recreation and was considered the managers main interest in the delivery of recreation services (Lavigne, 2014).

1.4 Research Questions

Little is known about how municipalities in close geographical proximity implement individual policy by using collaborative programs. To better understand how managers in the GVA collaboratively implement the LIFE program, this research explored the following questions:

1) What governance mechanisms exist in the implementation of Leisure Economic Accessibility Policies?

2) To what extent are municipalities linked to each other through economic accessibility policies within the GVA?

3) What resources are exchanged between actors involved in the implementation of the Leisure Economic Accessibility Policy?

4) What do managers perceive to be the benefits and challenges of collaboration in the implementation of leisure economic accessibility policies?

Chapter Two: Review of Literature

This chapter provides a review of critical background information necessary for addressing the purpose of the research. The chapter outlines a brief history of recreation in Canada, the benefits-based movement, and the pressure for recreation to politically reposition itself. Second, this chapter reviews leisure policies through understanding policy development and policy implementation through governance mechanisms. The use of Leisure Economic Accessibility Policies (LEAPs) will also be discussed. The third topic of discussion in this chapter is the pricing of recreation programs and its impact on service delivery. Finally, this chapter will explore intermunicipal collaboration.

2.2 Canadian Recreation History

Throughout the 20th century, public recreation was considered a public good that was accessible for all. This was rationalized by the belief that recreation was a benefit to the entire community and not just to individual users (Canadian Parks and Recreation Association [CPRA], 2015). Between 1945 and 1975, western industrialized countries, such as Canada, committed financial resources to enhance the social welfare of citizens resulting in "large-scale, direct delivery of several social goods and services" including that of public sector parks and recreation (Glover, 1999a, p. 74).

During the 1960s the federal government reduced financial support to municipal recreation departments in an attempt to redefine their responsibility for public recreation (Cureton, 2010). A slow Canadian economy towards the end of the 1970s caused a decrease in the growth of the local tax base leading to a reduction in public spending at the municipal level (Crompton & Wicks, 1988; Glover, 1999b). The early 1980s saw a rise in funding and programs to increase participation of women and people with disabilities, who until this time had not had equitable access to recreation services (Tirone, 2003). However, in the mid 1980s government funding for sport and recreation was decreased again. This created significant barriers for those who could not afford to participate in costly activities (Tirone). In the 1990s, public recreation faced increasing pressure for cost recovery and revenue generation. The recreation field shifted from the mandate of public good to a focus on meeting the demand for service from the portion of the population that could afford to pay for it (CPRA, 2015). From the 1990s to the present, recreation organizations in North America have been decentralizing, diversifying services, trying to attract broader constituencies, and becoming reliant on community partnerships (Crompton, 2009). This shift has made recreation a public good that is available to those who can afford it, a

stark contrast from the roots of community recreation. LEAPs are a local government commitment to the provision of recreation for citizens who may not be able to afford the services.

2.2.1 Benefits-Based Movement. The Benefits Movement began in the late 1980s as a response to increased competition for local government resources and to the realization that better performance and accountability measures were needed to illustrate the essential role of recreation and parks services in both social and community development (Parks and Recreation Ontario, 2009). In an attempt to defend resources, the field has had to articulate the value of the intangible services they offer communities, such as: a) increased quality of life, b) leadership building, and c) supporting families (CPRA, 1997). The benefits-based movement in recreation has created a greater acknowledgment of the relationship between health, physical activity and recreation (Henderson et al., 2001).

Although the Benefits Movement has been extremely important in helping further the field of study, it has mainly been done from the psychological perspective. By pairing leisure with psychology, it implies that recreation experiences start and end with relevance to the individual and ignores the impact on the greater community (Glover & Stewart, 2006). Recreation services will only be accepted as an essential service if they deliver potential benefits to individuals and if they can help address critical issues facing communities (CPRA, 1997). The Labour Relations Board of British Columbia (2017) defines essential services as "services related to the health, safety or the welfare of British Columbia residents, or to the provision of primary or secondary educational programs" (Chapter 7). Community recreation must be repositioned in the minds of both taxpayers and elected officials from services that are perceived as beneficial only to individual citizens to those that are essential for the creation and health of the community (Kaczynski & Crompton, 2004). The goal of this reposition is to change the sectoral framework to reflect a global framework that would have recreation services viewed as an essential investment into healthy communities to fit into the neoliberal climate of the day.

2.2.2 Repositioning. Recreation services are an important function of local governments. The key to sustaining them is to reposition them so policy makers can acknowledge that recreation services contribute to the alleviation of prevailing political problems (Godbey, et al., 2005; Crompton, 2009).Recreation advocacy needs to be built from the major issues that affect communities. Advocates need to focus on the economic savings recreation provides by positioning recreation as a solution to these issues which can justify the demand for proper

funding, research, and policy development. One of the most serious financial issues that provincial governments face is health care costs. In Canada, the cost of obesity, and the 18 chronic diseases linked to it, is close to $7.1 billion Canadian dollars (Hodgson, 2011). Another governmental concerns is Canada's aging population because as life expectancy continues to increase there will be mounting pressure on pensions, social services, and healthcare until the baby boomers begin to die off in the 2030s (Battle, 1998). By addressing these issues through recreation, citizens will see improvements to their quality of life by staying more physically active, socially connected, and supported by their communities.

One way to reposition is by looking for new funding arrangements and partnerships that utilize a sustainable, long-term approach. Leisure-service professionals must continue to develop new skills to negotiate effectively with partners who have different educational backgrounds, professional languages, and values (Thibault, Frisby & Kikulis, 1999). It would be irresponsible for any publicly funded sector not to acknowledge the expertise and knowledge of like-minded agencies (Wollenburg et al., 2013). Valued resources such as knowledge, facilities, and both social and financial capital can be gained through partnerships between governments and public, private, and nonprofit organizations that deliver recreation to communities (Cousens et al., 2006).

Many different governmental agencies can affect policy regarding a community's ability to facilitate public and collective good. However, recreation can be highlighted as one that can play multiple roles through the creation of partnerships and coalitions (Cousens et al., 2006; Kaczynski & Crompton, 2004; Thibault, Frisby & Kikulis, 1999). Policies can also focus on what leisure can contribute to social resilience and sustainability, quality of life, citizenship, and sense of place. The following sections discuss each of these contributors in more detail.

2.2.2.1 Social Resilience. Social resilience is the ability of communities to withstand external shocks to its social infrastructure (Adger, 2000). Social infrastructure includes both the physical spaces used for social purposes and the activities that contribute to positive wellbeing (Cuthill, 2010; Torjman, 2012). Resilience is the existence, development, and engagement of community resources by community members to thrive in an environment characterized by change, uncertainty, unpredictability, and surprise (Magis, 2010). Keck and Sakdapolrak (2013) found that all definitions of social resilience involve social entities, such as communities, and their "ability or capacity to tolerate, absorb, cope with and adjust to environmental and social threats of various kinds" (p. 8).

Resilience is embedded in the idea that sustainable development is essential to improve the quality of life for all citizens in a community (Torjman, 2006). When a community invests in purposeful recreation programs, it is contributing to its resilience through the strengthening of its social infrastructure. For a community to be resilient, recreational programs and spaces must be accessible to all, regardless of income; and if income becomes a barrier, then policies must be put in place to accommodate access for every citizen. These policies contribute to the strengthening of social resilience as well as resilience as a whole. More research is needed to meet the needs of those with low-income within a recreational access setting (Tirone, 2003).

2.2.2.2 Social Sustainability. Sustainable development is related to resilience, which is essentially a community's ability to survive in the face of change (Torjman, 2006). Although there has been considerable academic and political attention paid to sustainable development, there is still some belief that the social aspect gets neglected (Cuthill, 2010). Many recent initiatives that are working toward the creation of sustainable communities involve park, recreation, and tourism organizations because "they are so directly linked to the main principles of most sustainability definitions: environment, economy and socio-cultural" (McCole & Vogt, 2011, p. 40).

One challenge concerning sustainability is defining it in the context in which it is being used (Virden & Budruk, 2011). The use of sustainability in the recreational context is much less developed and defined than the parks and natural resource context (Virden & Budruk). This study was concerned with the social aspects of sustainability including, as defined by the Berkeley Group (2011), quality of life, citizenship, and sense of place.

2.2.2.3 Quality of Life. Recreation fosters the wellbeing of individuals, communities, and the natural environments (CPRA, 2014). Quality of life is also influenced, directly or indirectly, by several factors including personal health, employment, family, education, housing, race and leisure (Rice & Prince, 2013). Recreation is one of the services that governments can provide to enhance the quality of life among disadvantaged citizen groups and it should be accessible to everyone (Coalter, 1998; Allison & Schneider, 2000). Recreation experiences include participation in physical activity and sport, and in artistic, cultural, social, and intellectual activities (CPRA, 2014).

Social cohesion, compassion, and tolerance are more likely to thrive in an environment where all members of the community feel that their contribution to the whole is appreciated and where equitable distribution of resources is recognized as essential for the long-term viability of the

society (Edwards, 2005). Quality of life is an important marker of social sustainability. Citizens who have a higher quality of life are more resilient and able to persevere in times of crisis.

   2.2.2.4 Citizenship. Formally, citizenship is defined as membership in a nation state (Bottomore, 1992). Dean (2013) believes that citizenship is not constructed as a status but is more of a social process or practice. Participating in recreation activities is about more than just individual welfare because the act and process of participation is central to the idea of citizenship; therefore, participation in public recreation services is an "expression and affirmation of citizenship" (Coalter, 1998, p. 26).

   Local community represents an important environment for individuals to learn how to become active citizens (Lenzi et al., 2013). When recreation programs promote social inclusion, they promote full citizenship (Harvey, 2001). One of the keys to achieving community wellbeing is the opportunity for citizen involvement in the development of local government programs and policies (Cuthill, 2003). Individuals create an inter-subjective understanding of community through social processes associated with recreation (Glover & Stewart, 2006), making recreation an important activity in the development of active citizens. The inability to participate in recreational opportunities should be viewed as a threat to the social sustainability of a community.

   2.2.2.5 Sense of Place. Worldwide, communities are going through great social and economic turmoil as they are faced with changing technologies, stressed social and ecological environments, and shifting priorities of society (Reid, 2009). One of the key requirements to creating a sustainable community is to foster a sense of place (Torjman, 2006). Place focuses on the subjective and lived experience of a geographical location and the meanings we attribute to it (Smale, 2006). Recreation contributes to this through the creation of physically vibrant and attractively designed parks and facilities (Crompton, 2008). Public spaces create a sense of civic pride, encourage citizen interaction, and promote inclusive democratic practices. Therefore, the quality of public spaces, and quality of public life in general, is dependent on allowing accessibility to a diverse group of citizens (Nemeth & Schmidt, 2011). Sense of place is the feeling a citizen has through creating an "awareness of the spirit associated with place and the qualities it possesses" (Smale, p. 372).

2.2 Leisure Policy

Governance is described as a network of public actors whose interactions create a system for decision-making and acting on the concerns of citizens (Harvey, 2001). The governance

perspective on public policy includes the procedures and instruments that actors use to coordinate their actions in the process of creating collectively defined agendas (Pierre, 2005). Public policies in the leisure context often include the participation of non-profit groups and private sector organizations to construct and manage the public services that these policies create (Lavigne, 2014).

Traditional leisure policy had the government regulating recreation services and using recreation directly and indirectly to encourage societal health and wellbeing. This has shifted greatly as leisure has been commodified (Nicholson & Stewart, 2013) causing a significant increase in cost barriers over the last three decades (Balmer, 2011). These barriers can be significant, and many public-sector recreation organizations have implemented public policies to try to mitigate these barriers.

2.2.1 Policy Development. Very little literature exists regarding the leisure policy development process (Weed, 2001). Current public policy views leisure as a commodity and focuses on the ways it is provided, marketed, consumed, and measured (Nicholson & Stewart, 2013). Traditional leisure policy consisted of governments regulating leisure, both directly and indirectly, in an effort to champion societal health and wellbeing (Coalter, 1993; Nicholson & Stewart).

2.2.3 Policy Implementation. Policy implementation almost always require institutions to transform general policy intent into a variety of rules, routines, and social processes, thus converting policy intention into action (O'Toole, 2003). One of the benefits of taking an implementation perspective to policy research is that it allows for the distinction between politics and administration (Schofield, 2001). Top-down research often looks at the formal implementation structure related to one particular policy or program (Winter, 2003).

Schofield (2001) found that research on policy implementation could address the knowledge, learning, and capacity through an understanding of the complexity of achieving policy goals, the role and importance of technical details, and procedural information in implementation. It can also address the process of implementation through the framing of policy advice, the dynamic and continuum-based nature of policy initiation, and practical issues on the day-to-day effects of policy at street level and how this can impact political work.

Nivola (1979) described one of the most popular models, the traditional government model, for policy implementation, which is still in use (as cited in West & Crompton, 2013). Nivola (1979) described a process that began with citizens vocalizing their priorities and values,

which influenced elected officials, and caused the implementation and distribution of public services. Elected officials then convert demands into formal policies that are given to leisure-agency staff to carry out.

West and Crompton (2013) offered several criticisms to the traditional government model. They argued that it fails to realize that many policy decisions are not made proactively because they are based on a community's past culture and tradition. They also argued that citizens are apathetic regarding local government involvement, unless the decisions that are being made have a direct adverse effect on them. Local practices are not always the same as the intentions stated in documents that politicians endorse because they cannot implement a policy by themselves and must rely on public employees.

Network theories have been important in explaining collaboration in implementation and its effects on policy outcomes (Winter, 2003). Administrators working to implement interorganizational policies will need to develop infrastructure of communication including channels, language, signals, etc., to help achieve policy objectives (O'Toole, 2003). Cooperation means that resource consumption and conflicting activities can be avoided. This could make public programs more effective, even if implementation is not enhanced (Lundin, 2007).

2.2.4 Leisure Economic Access Policies. Tax-supported leisure services work to serve a wide range of citizens irrespective of gender, ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, age, and ability (Allison & Hibbler, 2004; Balmer, 2011). A growing realization among leisure professionals is that different service delivery is needed to address the increase of societal diversity (Anderson & Stone, 2005; Balmer). Reductions in public spending have forced leisure practitioners to do more with less, while being under constant threat because of inconsistent funding (Coalter, 2004; Crompton & Lamb, 1986; Dawson, 2000; Glover, 1999a; Golob, 2010; Howell & McNamee, 2003; Martin, 1999). Leisure agencies must balance a decline in government funding and an increase in operational costs with the desire to maintain quality services and programs (Coalter; Gladwell, Anderson & Sellers, 2003; Schneider & Budruck, 1999; Wicks & Crompton, 1989).

After the addition of fees, many citizens are unable to access recreation services and programs. Recognizing the barriers created by fees, communities developed Leisure Economic Access Policies (LEAPs) to create organizational mandates and ensure the inclusion of low income citizens (Cureton, 2010). The intention of LEAPs are to ease the financial burden associated with participation through subsidies that create discounts or price reductions on registration fees (McCarville, 2008).

To qualify for LEAPs, Cureton (2010) found that citizens must go through an invasive application process requiring government-approved documents to prove the level of poverty they live in. McCarville (2008) found that many participants felt the need to apply to LEAPs unnecessary. Participants find it needlessly embarrassing because they are already on social assistance, which cannot be used as proof of qualification for LEAP subsidies.

Another challenge is that most programs only allow access to subsidies if the total family income is below the low-income cut-off (LICO). "LICOs are estimated thresholds below which a family is likely to spend significantly more of its income on food, shelter, and clothing than the average family," (Zhang, 2016). LICOs do not always determine an individual's financial need; however, many public recreation department staff members are unable to provide assistance to anyone who can show need, but who have an income above the cut-off.

2.4 Pricing

To better understand how to create socioeconomic accessibility policies, it is important for policy makers to understand what the barriers to participation are. When referring to socioeconomic barriers, the largest barrier is often the price of the program. Pricing of public leisure services received considerable attention from the mid 1980s to the mid 1990s and mainly focused on the negative consequences (McCarville, Crompton & Sell, 1993; McCarville, Reiling & White, 1996; Reiling, Cheng & Trott, 1992).

Pricing is a technically difficult and politically sensitive area in the public leisure sector. Much of the responsibility for interpreting a fair and impartial allocation of resources is created by governments because they collect resources from private sectors of the economy and redistribute them in the form of public services (Crompton & West, 2008). Prices that are interpreted as fair receive little negative attention whereas unfair prices can be controversial and lead to considerable hostility within a community (McCarville, Reiling & White, 1996). When pricing public services, general societal benefits are taken into consideration, as are the benefits to an individual (McCarville & Crompton, 1987). Historically, most leisure service pricing is a "product of history, precedent, and inertia" (Crompton, 2011a, p. 2).

Price can be a major barrier to participation, and a policy objective of increased participation can be achieved through subsidizing entrance fees (Coalter, 1993). Cost recovery and fee-for-service are seen as means of ensuring the effectiveness and efficiency of client service provision in the public sector. However, the addition of fees for recreation services can create a major financial barrier for citizens (Balmer, 2011). Recreation departments are often the first to fall

victim to budget restraints and cutbacks. Unfortunately, over the past several decades, the position of recreation and leisure services that exists in the minds of decision makers is that it is a discretionary and non-essential service (Crompton, 2009; McCole & Vogt, 2011).

Funding is possibly the most important factor impacting the delivery of public park and recreation services because of how it influences all aspects of the sector (Gladwell, Anderson & Sellers, 2003), including the ability of local governments to offer low-to-no cost recreation opportunities or to highly subsidize programs of higher cost. The ability to subsidize programs and offer low- to-no cost recreation are two ways that can be used to create opportunities for participation. However, it can also create more barriers. Tirone (2003) stated that more research is needed to understand the factors that hamper or enhance the ability for those with a low-income to access recreation programs and services.

2.4.1 Fee-For-Service. It is common for public sector organizations to use cost recovery and fee-for-service provisions to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of the services offered (Gladwell et al., 2003; Schneider & Budruck, 1999). Schneider and Budruk found that even though cost recovery has become a goal of many agencies, fees can have an unattractive effect because they can "restrict use by low-income users, serve as a form of double taxation, are inefficient to administer, conflict with the idea of recreation as a merit of public good, and create an authoritarian, intrusive atmosphere inappropriate given the ideal of freedom" (p. 77) expected while participating in leisure activities. This makes every decision about the allocation of resources result in the creation of winners and losers. Thus, every decision made by governments becomes an equity decision (West & Crompton, 2013). Those opposed to fees dispute this from an equity perspective because they believe recreation is a social good with benefits that go beyond monetary values (Nyaupane, Graefe & Burns, 2007).

Low-income earners are more likely to reduce leisure participation when there is an increase in fees, or try to substitute with an activity or location of less cost (Burns & Graefe, 2006; Reiling, Cheng & Trott, 1992). Using a fee recovery, or market-based, approach to managing monetary leisure resources can create a have and have-not society (Glover, 1999a) by discriminating against senior citizens, persons with disabilities, minority groups, and impoverished people (Martin, 1999; Nyaupane, Graefe & Burns, 2007).

When leisure services are offered, a constituency is nurtured and a level of expectation and dependence among members of that constituency is established (Crompton & Wicks, 1988). An increase or addition of prices could negatively affect the allegiance of the public to that

recreation space and the government agencies that manage it (Winter, Palucki & Burkhardt, 1999). Price increases for programs that benefit a majority in a community may be considered differently from those that benefit only a small segment of the population (McCarville & Crompton, 1987).

2.4.2 Reference Pricing. One of the most common ways governments decide on what fees to charge is reference pricing. It is the price that a consumer expects to pay for a service (Coalter, 2004; Crompton, 2011b). Reference pricing is an estimate using a range of prices that users find acceptable to pay (Crompton, 2011a) and it is often used to measure customers' reactions to prices (Crompton & Sell, 1993; McCarville, 2008).

2.4.3 Attitudes Towards Fees. As long as recreation departments have been charging for services, there has been an interest in the dynamics between fees and participant patterns in public leisure programming (McCarville, 2008). If citizens believe the price to be fair, there is likely to be little resistance. If citizens feel the actual price is higher than the reference price there can be opposition (Burns & Graefe, 2006; McCarville, Crompton & Sell, 1993). To help make programs more affordable, many recreation providers offer subsidies through programs that are designed as a governance mechanism to implement LEAPs. Subsidies are the provision of a dollar amount with which citizens purchase program entry or an arranged discount/price reduction (McCarville, 2008).

2.5 Collaboration

Partnering to pool diverse resources can be one of the ways overburdened public-sector staff can manage the problem of having inaccessible programs for those living in poverty (Frisby & Millar, 2002). Glover (1999) found that agencies could draw upon relative experiences from their partners to develop strategies that were more refined than ones they could generate alone. Research on collaboration in public recreation typically focuses on partnership with commercial and non-profit agencies, but little research has focused on municipalities partnering with each other (Glover).

Intermunicipal partnerships are when two or more municipalities arrange a service and each partner contributes to the delivery costs (Burton & Glover, 1998). Glover (1999) noted that the willingness of municipal councils to form partnerships was essential for the establishment of a partnership. Glover's study also found that the establishment of an intermunicipal agreement involves three stages: a) partner selection; b) agreement preparation; and c) agreement maintenance.

Benefits that arise from collaborative partnerships mean that agencies have more stability and are able to acquire necessary resources, access specialized expertise, and adopt efficient organizational structures that they may not have had access to before (Glover, 1999). It creates the opportunity to identify tangible ways for same-sector organizations to work together. This can enable all Canadians to enjoy recreational opportunities in environments that are physically and socially supportive (CPRA, 2015).

Challenges to intermunicipal collaboration include differences in managerial structures and processes (Frisby, Thibault, & Kikulis, 2004). Competing agendas also threaten to undermine the ability to partner (Shaw & Allen, 2006). It is the differences in organizational cultures that can make partnering especially challenging, and although this has been studied in the partnership of organizations from different sectors, there is little research that focuses on same-sector alliances (Glover, 1999).

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter reviewed literature regarding the history of recreation in Canada, leisure policies, the pricing of recreation programs, and intermunicipal collaboration. The review revealed several gaps in research that will be addressed through the research questions of this case study.

By understanding the governance mechanisms that exist in the provision of economically accessible leisure services in the Greater Victoria Area, this project helped to understand what is being done to meet the needs of Canadians living in low-income. Tirone (2003) stated that more research needs to be done to meet the needs of Canadians living in low-income communities. This project also explored the processes that are used for the implementation of leisure economic accessibility programs. Adding to Weed's (2001) call for more research in the leisure policy process.

Finally, through exploring the extent that municipalities in the GVA are linked to each other through LEAPs and the governance mechanisms used to implement them, this research addressed the gaps identified in Glover's (1999) study on intermunicipal partnership. Glover identified that few scholars chose to investigate partnerships involving two or more municipalities' delivery of recreation services.

Chapter Three: Methodology

This research project was an exploratory qualitative study on the collaborative implementation of the Leisure Involvement for Everyone (LIFE) program in the Greater Victoria Area (GVA). The study focused on the public recreation services providers in the GVA, including four municipalities and three joint use facilities. The research began with a review of publically available documents produced by governments in the GVA. Interviews were then conducted with the recreation managers of the municipalities and facilities. The Local Leisure Policy Analysis Framework (LLPAF) created by Lavigne (2014) was used to analyze these interviews and draw conclusions around the collaborative implementation of LIFE.

Using publically available documents helped create a better understanding of the policies and political priorities in the GVA and created a contextual understanding of the political landscape. All the documents used were available online through the municipal and regional government webpages including the recreation maters plans, integrated community sustainability plans, official community plans, and any available information related to Leisure Economic Accessibility Policies (LEAPs). The documents helped to refine the research questions and develop the interview guide. The documents were first reviewed inductively and then deductively based on the themes that had emerged through the initial inductive analysis. They were also used reviewed deductively using the LLPAF to help create the interview guide.

3.1 Sampling

Sampling was purposeful because the participant selection was based on their understanding and ability to inform the research questions (Cresswell, 1998). Interviews with seven different recreation managers were conducted. Recreation managers within the GVA were chosen for interviews because in their position they were likely to understand how the LIFE program was developed and how it is used. Managers were identified through municipal and regional websites.

Potential participants were contacted by phone to explain the study and ask if they would be willing to participate in an interview that would last about an hour. Phone calls were then followed by an email that contained more information about the study, and research consent forms. All participants contacted (n=7) participated in the study and interviews were set up for a time of the interviewee's convenience at their office. Two of the interviews had to be conducted over the phone.

3.2 Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with recreation managers who are involved in the implementation of the LIFE program and LEAPs in their community or recreation centre. Interviews were conducted using an interview guide (Appendix A) based on the emergent themes from the government documents, literature review, and from the theoretical framework. Interviews took place in May of 2015, were conducted in the managers' offices, and lasted between 20 and 60 minutes. Two interviews were conducted over the phone as this was the interviewee's preference due to their busy and changing schedules. The same interview guide was used for all interviews and participants gave verbal consent to participation and recording prior to the start of the interview.

Each interview was digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim. The transcripts were then sent back to participants for review. Returning the transcripts to participants allowed them to verify their answers, correct misinformation, expand on points, and search for correct information to questions that they may have had trouble answering at the time of the interview (Glover, 1999a). None of the interviewee's changed their responses.

3.3 Reflexivity

Within qualitative research, the inquirer must reflect on how their role in the study and personal background, culture and experience can shape their interpretation of data (Creswell, 2013). Thus it is important to share that, currently, I am a recreation professional working on Vancouver Island but outside of the GVA. I have a strong interest in municipal recreation as well as related undergraduate and graduate education related to recreation. It is important to acknowledge that I am employed in the field because it helped me: a) build a rapport with interviewees, b) understand any jargon or slang that may be used, and c) understand any implied inferences that may be made during the interviews.

When this study began, my career goals were to move into a recreation management position while being involved in the advancement of leisure and leisure policy through repositioning. While working on this research project I accepted a management position with another municipality outside of GVA, and was promoted several times during this process. These new positions involved the creation and implementation of policies, including LEAPs. This process may have influenced interpretation of the data collected because I was able to have a firsthand understanding of the processes similar to those that the managers discussed.

Another reason to make this acknowledgment is because involvement in the field may create

preconceived ideas or notions that could be apparent in the results of this research. Having a strong passion for recreation and the belief that it should be accessible to everyone is a bias that should be acknowledged. In addition to using methodological processes to reduce bias, the researcher worked with the thesis committee to ensure that this is minimized.

3.4 Data Analysis

After interview transcripts were returned by participants, they were loaded into NVivo version 10.2.2 which was used for data analysis. Analysis consisted of reading each transcript twice before data were coded deductively using the LLPAF. Data were coded first at the dimensional level. The dimensions in the LLAPF are: a) Actors, b) Resources and governance mechanisms, c) Insitutional structures, and d) Global-sectoral relation. The second level of coding was organized by the variables within each dimension (as shown in Table 4). The third, and final, level of coding was the by specific research questions in the LLPAF (Lavigne, 2014). Any data that had not been coded was also reviewed to determine if there were any significant findings that could add to the framework or understanding of this case.

Chapter Four: Results

This chapter shares the results from the analysis of the interview transcripts. All the managers worked for organizations with policies that dictate the requirement of their organizations to assist citizens with a low socio-economic status access recreational opportunities. The managers in this region worked collaboratively to create a governance mechanism to implement their Leisure Economic Accessibility Policies (LEAPs). The governance mechanism was a regional program known as Leisure Involvement For Everyone (LIFE).

Results from the interviews are organized using four components of the Local Leisure Policy Analysis Framework (Lavigne, 2014). First, the actors who are involved in the coalition are presented. Next, the resources and governance mechanisms will be shared. Then, the institutional structures encountered in the region will be outlined. Finally, the global-sectoral relation and the effect this has on the managers is summarized.

4.1 Actors

This section presents the different actors involved in the delivery of the LIFE program in the Greater Victoria Area (GVA). First, the actors in the coalition that implement the LIFE program will be explored. Next will be the other coalitions that are working in the area and what they are offering. Then the local elites and supra-local governments involvement in the implementation of the LIFE program will be shared. Finally, the other actors and programs that may be involved are explored.

4.1.1 Structure of the Governing Coalition. Public recreation service providers in the Greater Victoria area include the City of Victoria, Town of Esquimalt, City of Saanich, District of Oak Bay, West Shore Recreation, SEAPARC Recreation, and Panorama Recreation (Figure 2). The lowest tier of the figure shows the municipal management position that make up the coalition that implements the LIFE program. Although these are all communities in the Capital Regional District (CRD), this coalition is not organized by the CRD from a government perspective, rather it was created by the managers who work within the area (also referred to the region). Four of the organizations are municipalities which have their own Mayors and Councils. *"I think obviously the CRD model is a very interesting model how they do it and it's not necessarily the CRD so to speak, it's the region"* described Manager A.
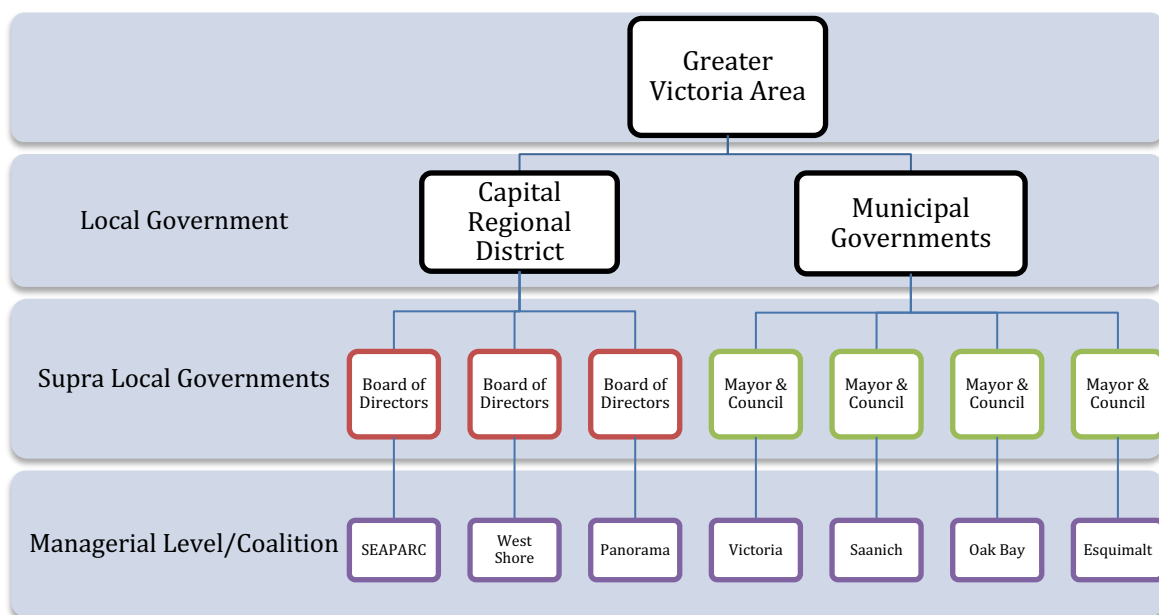
Figure 2. The structure of leisure service providers in the Capital Regional District. This figure shows the flow of legislative strategic priorities.

Coalition members were strongly tied together through the Greater Victoria Active Communities (GVAC) initiative. This coalition became the heart of the regional collaboration. It was the inter-municipal management group where the directors meet monthly, the managers meet monthly, and there were several other inter-municipal committees that met, including a LIFE committee.

The group has grown since its inception to now include many different working groups, including the LIFE working group. The working groups can have staff, who are not management, assigned to them by the municipalities. *"We have all sorts of inter-municipal working groups. There is an admin group and they're the people that work in reception and they're often the ones on the front line meeting the people"* explained Manager B. This was extremely helpful in the areas with fewer staff because they are able to bring other interested staff into the conversation while also reducing the workload for the managers. Managers explained that working groups put together work plans, picked a Chair for their group, and had manager liaison. The managers present to the directors every year for feedback on their working plans.

Manager B explained that "*Saanich was the department that introduced the LIFE program and the idea of having it a regional program to the region*". Manager D echoed this and expanded on the ability to work as a coalition to increase the intellectual capital was important to this coalition:

That's what's good about the managers meeting is that we share our successes and our challenges [...] we look at things and try to say what things are better if we could do it together.

Citizens found it challenging that organizations were so closely located, geographically, because there were no clear boundaries as to where one ends and one begins. Each organization chose to work as a coalition because of the benefits for the users. Manager D's justification is that:

... the reason we do the LIFE program is that as much as we are individual municipal governments, which have our own mayor and council and we set out own fees and have our own philosophy or they have their own philosophy on how much to recover, the person out there doesn't see those borders. They can be on the other side of the border in Victoria but this is the centre they want to come to.

4.1.2 Other Coalitions. Allies to the coalition include local businesses looking to give back to their communities through recreation. There are also programs that municipalities offer to increase access in ways that may not fit with the LIFE program or be necessary at a regional level. The work of the coalition has resulted in the collaboration with actors from other sectors. These actors could be perceived as rivals because they have similar goals but the coalition has embraced their involvement and work closely with them to ensure that they are working in collaboration rather than competition.

One of these actors is JumpStart, a national charity organized through the Canadian Tire Jumpstart Foundation. They are an actor outside of the coalition that is working to remove financial access boundaries for children and youth across Canada. This program offers subsidies to families in need to register their children for physical activity programs. This program should not be seen as a threat to the coalition as it is a national program and it is administered regionally, Manager G emphasizes:

We have an amazing chapter of the Canadian Tire Jumpstart here [...]. Which has been so, so valuable. They have given us thousands and thousands of dollars over the years for kids with financially disadvantaged families to participate in swim lessons or golf lessons or whatever

the case may be. [...] We certainly work collaboratively with them and provide our LIFE
clients with those opportunities as well.

Jumpstart offers support in two ways: a) participants can apply directly for funding to apply to a program, or b): actors in the coalition can apply for grants that can be used to lower the cost of programs. There are restrictions on the grants that can be applied to lower the cost of programs because they require the organization offering the program to prove that a percentage of participants are from low income families. It was explained by Manager G that:

One [jumpstart grant] is like a community one and so we take regular applications for that and then some [jumpstart grant] funding we get is earmarked for the programs at our facility. So, we would run swim lessons for a whole class at a low-income school, and use the [jumpstart grant] funding to do that.

The region uses the regional statistic from the LIFE program to determine how funds from JumpStart should be proportionately distributed. The distribution of funds is not based solely on the number of residents in each area but rather the number of residents who are accessing the LIFE program. They use the LIFE program statistics as a "*lens to the community*", as described by Manager B, to allocate funding. This removes the competition that could arise between municipalities and ensures that the areas of higher need have a higher allocation of money available to them. Manager B explained:

When we are dividing that [JumpStart money] up amongst the seven rec departments that all
sit together, we say for example 'the LIFE program is extremely small in Oak Bay and that
reflect out in to their community. They are a community that a higher proportion of them have
the ability to pay.' We move down that way by saying if we total up the number of people on
our LIFE program regionally, and then we assign a percentage to each of those numbers,
then that's how we percentage out the allocation of Jump Start funding.

This collaboration can happen very informally through email which speaks to the social capital that is present in the area. The strength of this collaboration was emphasized by Manager D:

There is always that email going out, so we have to put in our invoice for JumpStart money if
you didn't use your money, let us know, because somebody else maybe could use the money.
So we don't want to lose that [money and have it go to an organization outside the GVA].

KidSport is another national charitable organization, that could be perceived as a rival coalition, working to remove financial barriers for children and youth to increase their

participation in organized sports. Manager C stated that coalition members feel they "*have a great working relationship with KidSport*" and many offer opportunities for their LIFE programs to access KidSport funds. Funds like KidSport and JumpStart can be used to compliment the LIFE program to decrease costs. Managers discussed how they would refer citizens to KidSport or JumpStart to provide additional subsidy if necessary.

There is also a partnership, explained Manager E, with Coast Capital Savings, a Credit Union, who sponsor 26 free swims and 10 free skates at different centres throughout the region. They give the coalition a $10,000 grant which "*pay[s] for the staff, basically, but we provide those free opportunities for everybody. It's just one way of capitalizing for those folks that have economic barriers to come in for a swim or skate*" clarified Manager C.

Another corporate sponsor was Thrifty Foods who offer the Young Chef on the Run program. The program was a camp promoting healthy nutrition and according to Manager B it "*was really big for them [Thrifty Foods] to have it really low cost.*" The program was offered on a weekly basis and was rotated around the different communities. It originally started as a free program but manager B said that they found:

> *Some people were hopping around the city to get free daycare. Although Thrifty Foods is very, very generous it wasn't quite covering all of our costs so now it's $50 for a whole week of camp so that is really trying to make it accessible for everybody and that fills up in all municipalities really, really quickly.*

4.1.3 Local elites and urban regime. Local elites such as Mayors, Councils, and Regional Society Boards of Directors played a minor roll in the implementation of the LIFE program. They were involved at the policy level which was then implemented by the coalition through the LIFE program. Manager B mapped out the role a society board would play in the implementation of an economic accessibility policy:

> *Anytime there is a policy that is going to guide how people access or what people access or what people have to pay or don't pay, and how we support our community and those in the community that don't have the ability to pay. That kind of policy would go to the board and would probably be [...] approved at the board level and I'm not sure if it would go on to the municipalities for further approval. Some of the discussion points and our reports and recommendations just stop at the board, at the society board. That's all we need to say yes we are proceeding. Something [...] like our budget, like fees and charges, bigger issues, they go from the board and are recommended out to all the member municipalities for approval.*

Municipalities also have council involvement or have to get council approval for the amounts they can charge. This was common across all municipalities in the area. Some municipalities have this set up as a bylaw while others just have it set as a policy that gets endorsed by council. Manager C explains a typical example for this process is to:

Have a fees and charges policy that addresses how we charge for our programs and drop in admissions and things. […]. That fees and charges policy is renewed or reviewed every year and it goes to our parks and trails and recreation advisory committee with a recommendation to council to approve the annual fees and charges rates. So our fees and charges policy is actually a council endorsed and authorized policy and from there we get our direction from what we charge and then we implement operationally.

4.1.4 Supralocal Governments. Other levels of government are not involved in offering the LIFE program but are involved in the delivery of some affordable recreational programs. One partnership is with BC transit, which operates under the provincial Ministry for Transportation. Manager C described the program from a participant's point of view:

If I have an expired bus pass for April I can use it in the month of May for a [one time] free admission into any of the Rec Centres. A lot of folks don't have vehicles and use transit a lot, this is another opportunity for them to have free access to a facility.

There are also several programs that involved Island Health (IH). One program was with the John Howard Society, in partnership with IH, where they bring their clients into a centre to do weight training. Manager D, explained that "*they come with a staff person and we provide a staff person […] the group can all come in together they've got the support they need and we don't have the expertise maybe to handle all of the issues.*"

Another initiative IH was involved with was the Eat Well, Get Moving campaign. Manager E explained that originally, they had a full time nutritionist whose position had been cut back. They brought the issue to the managers table and discussed the importance of the program and if GVAC should be picking up the slack to ensure the program continues.

When the LIFE program was first created, the provincial government was involved; however, they have had no involvement since. One issue facing the sustainability of the program is the continual changing of the provincial government portfolio's and without a consistent cabinet member who can advocate on behalf of recreation. Manager B explained some of the history:

Initially when we brought the program forward we were very involved with the Ministry of Social Services, which is no longer that ministry but Children and Families, or whatever the

current name is. We were very involved in them and talking to them about the program and what it would mean for perhaps some of their clients.

4.1.5 Other Actors. The municipalities also have other actors involved who were not governments. The group that meets to talk about the LIFE program also involves the YMCA and Pisces, a non-profit group that supports low-income citizens in the area, but as explained by Manager D "*they partner with some things we do and not other things.*" Manager E also discussed these actors adding that the YMCA honors the LIFE program to help remove financial barriers to their clientele and that Pisces is an organization that works closely with citizens that would greatly benefit from using the LIFE program and helps to disseminate the information to their clients and assists them in completing the application if needed.

One of the actors that demonstrated the challenge of implementing this program were the contract instructors. Contract instructors hire out their services to organizations to run programs. In return, they are paid a percentage of the revenue or an amount per person registered, based on the cost of the program. This adds an interesting complexity because they are commonly small businesses who can offer a specialized program or instructional opportunity to the public. It is not common for contract instructors to have to adhere to the accessibility policies that are outlined by the local government and therefore they do not fit well in the deliver of the LIFE program. Manager F explained the intricacies of using the LIFE program with contract instructors:

We sort of give a little bit and really push them to participate, but they participate at different levels. So, some of them say 'no, there is no discounts on the program' some of them may say 'once I meet my minimums I'm fine to take any discounted registrations' and some will say 'I'm fine at any level but maximum two of three, whatever'. Based on the contract split we split that discounted registration.

Some of the actors in the coalition also offer their own free programming, separate from the LIFE program, in their local parks. One municipality has an evening program where they "*bring our giant inflatable [a large transportable toy], and games and stuff, and every weeknight during the summer we offer free physical activity and recreation at local parks, [we] rotate around every weeknight during the summer.*" That organization budgets for the staff costs and does their best to get donations. This includes getting "*a little bit of money from the Rotary [Club] and few get a few organizations that are able to provide us with a little bit of funding.*"

A different municipality offers a free roaming parks program with a different set up. "*We are there all day and the kids come, sign themselves in, they say from 9 to 3 and they have a day camp experience. In the following week it's at another park, then another park, then another park and then repeat,*" explained Manager A. That program is a $30,000 program which is budgeted by the manager and funded through other program revenue and grants.

Special events are also used as a means to offering free programming and engaging community members who otherwise may not be able to afford regular programs. These are often independent programs offered by individual municipalities but they are not seen as a threat to the coalition. Some specific programs that Manager D mentioned were bike festivals, that are done to teach community members about bike safety in a fun and interactive setting.

Many municipalities set up events to assist other community programs through fundraising or awareness, making them loose members of the coalition. Manager A discussed how they "*do a lot of events via donations, and generally by donation to the food bank, so we partner with the food bank. The last one we did was an Easter event and we got a ton of food.*"

The City of Victoria uses events to fundraise for another program they use to provide financial support to children from low socio-demographic families attend summer camps at the Crystal Pool. They call this the campership program and the program gives families who qualify $150 per child per year. The manager shared information about the program "*we have an application for Campership that is quite similar to the LIFE program, it looks at that same income level. So we get a lot of our same patrons who are on the LIFE program who access Campership.*"

4.2 Resource and Government Mechanisms

This section presents the results focused on the managers' perspectives on resource and governance mechanisms. First, the control of resources was explored, including the different resources and capitals that each organization contributes to the coalition. The resource exchange interface was also explored and how the organizations work together to share and exchange resources in the GVA.

4.2.1 Control of Resources. There were six different types of resources as described in the Local Leisure Policy Analysis Framework, including financial resources, human resources, physical resources, intellectual capital, social capital and legitimacy capital (Lavigne, 2014). The resources in relation to the collaboration are described in this section.

4.2.1.1 Financial Resources. Financial resources are all forms of resources that can be translated into monetary figures. All the municipalities, except one, consider the drop-ins available through LIFE program a soft cost. This means they do not have budget allocated to cover the lost revenue that occurs when offering discounted spaces in programs. Manager F further discussed how *"as far as the visits it's a soft cost for us. There is no real provision for that other than it's the same as when we do passes for promotional giveaways."*

LIFE participants receive discounts on regularly priced programs but managers did not view that discount as a loss in revenue. Instead, it was viewed as revenue that would not otherwise be generated. Manager B explains that:

> *[The LIFE program] doesn't really get budgeted for, specifically. It would be, the way we look at it is we are allowing, or we are helping, or assisting people to participate in a program they may not have been able to participate at all in. So far as discounting the program by 50%, it's less revenue but it's more revenue that potentially not participating at all. The revenue is very, very secondary of course. It's more about smashing a few obstacles for people so that it helps.*

Although, as discussed in the last section, this can be more difficult when working with contract instructors Manager F insisted that:

> *With our own registered programs like swim lessons and skate lessons, we may take a little bit of a hit. They usually aren't such a high ticket item that it really impacts us too much on that. We kind of see it as that if they couldn't afford the full fee then it's not a registration we are getting anyways, so because of their financial status if they are able to register that's revenue coming in that wouldn't normally be.*

Manager E discussed how giving away free visits was a soft cost that did not impact the budget. However, some organizations do have guidelines around program registration. Manager E explained that they will have a cap of 2 or 3 LIFE clients per program to ensure that the program does not run at a loss.

The only organization that differs is the City of Victoria, because they give LIFE clients credit on their accounts. They have a line item in their budget that they are accountable to their City Council on. Although this is vastly different from the other actors in the coalition they have set it up so that the application process is not different for any citizen. They also work closely with the other actors in the coalition to ensure access for citizens and mitigate any barriers this may cause. Manager G expands on this by adding that:

most of the greater Victoria municipalities who are also part of the LIFE program and offer it to their residents don't do a subsidy portion they just do a discount on their programming. They would say every family has this [an amount chosen by the organization] number of 50% discounts for these programs that they can use throughout a calendar year. Where as [Victoria] have actual dollars that as a credit for the family to use towards whatever program they choose.

Organizations do not have to individually contribute monetarily to the LIFE program but each organization does contribute to the larger GVAC working committee. One manager believed that last year each organization contributed around $3000. That money is then distributed to all the different committee's and initiatives. That amount fluctuates yearly depending on if there is a surplus from the year before and if they decide to keep surplus as a contingency. The financial contribution is not scaled to the size of the community. It is a contrasting view to have a coalition that is focused on decreasing the financial costs of recreation relies very little on financial resources. The actors often rationalize the financial costs by taking a loss on the revenue rather than compensating for the revenue.

To be able to provide other economically affordable programs municipalities must access grants or partner with organizations willing to offer financial contributions. Many do this in partnership with these organizations providing either staff or facility space. In other situations, like JumpStart or KidSport, the organizations facilitate the program administratively or sit on the boards.

4.2.1.2 Human Resources. Data analysis revealed that organizations like Saanich, who have more staff, or West Shore, who have a direct marketing person, are depended on more than some of the smaller organizations. Saanich has one person whose job it is to administer the LIFE program and she has become a resource for the entire coalition. "*They see [her] as a real resource and somebody they can call for information or a sounding board*" explained Manager E. This was expanded on, and echoed by several managers who also noted that staff time was not distributed equally throughout the coalition. This staff time was worked out unofficially between the organizations and was up for constant discussion. If organizations felt that they were putting a lot of resources into an initiative and needed support from the other organizations, they would bring this to the group for discussion and from their group could make adjustments. Human Capital is perceived to be just as valuable as Financial Capital.

Managers are also very reliant on their front line staff to get people signed up for the program. "*It's our administrative team, the receptionists take in the applications and they're responsible for processing them in the day to day as they come in, signing off the visits and registering them*" explained Manager F. It was important to managers that clients had consistent, exemplary customer services regardless of what municipality they were accessing services in. They believe that the reason they are able to offer this is that one of the sub-committee's of GVAC is an administrative committee, where those who work on the front line and manage front line office staff can also meet to discuss challenges they are facing and use each other as a sounding board. Manager D found this important for implementing the LIFE program because "*it gives us a framework and I think it's done with dignity. Like 'it's a regional thing, this is cool', when I've heard staff explaining it they are really friendly and upbeat.*"

An administrative concern that was raised by many managers was the collection of personal information from clients, outlined by Manager A:

> *I think it's the same challenges everywhere. […] you know the challenges along the lines of people trying to prove their income, people bring in photocopies of their T4's or their 150-net income and we end up with a bunch of personal information and I don't think we as recreation departments should be in that business. I think we should have a relationship with the service providers in the community and if you are going to get your welfare cheque or your disability, you're going to get something from social services, they can just provide you with the access pass.*

When the LIFE program was introduced, organizations had to go to their Boards and Councils to discuss the program. Politicians were concerned with giving people free access so they asked for reports back on who was getting access. Through these reports, it was found that even though they were giving away free access they also did get new revenue that they would not have otherwise gotten. Manager D expanded on the benefits of the collaboration on reports "*It's gone really well, and it's given confidence to the councils that if we are beginning something, to them that's collaborative, it could be a good thing.*"

Managers who were newer in their position found that there was not much interaction needed with their Boards, as the program has run so smoothly. This means there is little influence from the political level on how the program is administered in each municipality. Manager F found that "*because the program has been rolled out for a number of years and operates seamlessly, it's not something on their [the Boards] constant radar.*"

4.2.1.3 Physical Resources. Physically, the only resource that is shared between the organizations is the marketing of the program. Manager C discussed how the *"If that was a cost item to come forward [an informative brochure or rack card] when we [GVAC] do our annual work plan, we put that in our budget for the year and would share that cost."* Manager D shared that *"the marketing piece is huge!"* The program is marketed through *"all of our websites, we have a regional website called fitinfitness.ca, so it's on there. Everyone includes it in their Active Living guides. There are posters at the centres,"* explained Manager C.

Organizations have even worked together to evolve the paper applications "*we kind of have a similar look*" described Manager D, "*it started out with people hav[ing] separate ones and then the admin group comes together and they look at it*" and they adopted similar logo's just with different organization names being used on the application. They also have the "*same kind of colouring [so] it looks pretty much the same*" in all the organizations, justified Manager D.

4.2.1.4 Intellectual Capital. Managers talked extremely highly of each other, and when referencing other organizations or managers they would often include that the manager *"was very knowledgeable."* They stressed when certain managers would be able to speak to a specific issue in more depth. Managers in the collaboration were all very experienced. Many have worked in different municipalities or societies in the collaboration and were able to speak to the processes in other communities, or offer history in a community they had previously worked it. They also relied on each other greatly for support and feedback.

Communities were also very open to acquiring different forms of intellectual capital. One of the actors worked with a graduate student from the University of Victoria to do a community profile as part of their practicum. The student profiled the surrounding municipalities by looking at the "*configuration of families, the median age, the median salary, how far they travelled for work, how many people in the family, and so on,*" explained the manager. The area that the study had been done in had undergone a large amount of growth, so by having this community profile they were able to make predictions regarding population growth and community needs.

4.1.2.5 Social Capital. Social capital was created within the coalition and shown through their willingness and ability to work together. They work to solve problems collectively and are willing to help all the actors in their coalition. This capital was built over a long period of time as the actors have been working together for many years. Many of the actors have worked in more than one municipality in the GVA which gives them a unique understanding to the entire area

and not just the municipality they work in. This contributes to the success of the LIFE program as well as the strength of Social Capital in the GVA.

4.1.2.6 Legitimacy Capital. All these organizations hold a large amount of legitimacy capital with each other and throughout the region. The program speaks for itself and other community groups know about the program and reach out, explained Manager B:

> *I don't think we do a mail out, but we do community meetings, if we are invited to a young moms group or any number of community meetings, we would use that as one of our tools to help make sure people know about it.*

4.2.2 Resource Exchange Interface. This section discusses the mechanisms were used for resource exchange in the collaboration, resources that were exchanged, and the effect that these exchanges had on the dynamics of the group.

4.2.2.1 Mechanisms Used For Resource Exchange. Resources are exchanged in several ways, both formally and informally, that contribute to the creation of intellectual capital. Formally, the GVAC meets several times a year. Manager G reviewed the format of the meetings "*we just bring forward common issues and use each other as a resource 'how do you handle this situation?' 'have you ever had someone apply that comes from this type of scenario?' [...], problem solve those types of things together.*" To ensure this information is shared Manager C noted that "*there are minutes taken at meeting and those are shared regionally. We do try to keep, the working group, will keep the managers up to date who will keep the directors up to date.*" To keep the directors up to date, Manager B explained that, the managers:

> *formalize a work plan and report out on that work plan every year. We do go to our directors and our regional directors and give a report out on 'here's what we have done together', 'here is how it went', 'here is the successes', ' here is what the dollar figure was attached to that' and 'here is how it rolled up as a total budget and injection of dollars' ' here is everything we were able to produce with that''. That's kind of the formal of it. People via email are sharing resources all the time.*

There was also continuous informal communication amongst the actors, which spoke to the strong social capital among the coalition. According to Manager C "*We are just so lucky, we talk a lot. Really and truly we pick up the phone and chat and it doesn't have to be something formal. We are very lucky that way.*" Manager D emphasized that "*we have lots of emails flying back and forth about 'I just had this issue, would you guys ever have this issue' all the time. So it's really good.*"

4.2.2.2 Resources Exchanged. Resources that are exchanged are information about participants in the program, issues with the program, and reporting about programs or reporting on other aspects of service delivery that could have an effect on the LIFE program.

Some of the resources exchanged are about participants in the LIFE program. One manager explained that they have to put a disclaimer on the application, "*regionally, we've had to […] get together and add to the application 'your information is going to be shared regionally'. So if they have an issue in once facility, I'm going to share the information with another facility.*" Manager C discussed how this helped them individually manage the program as well as avoid potential issues before they arose:

> *we also share[…], if we do have a problem child in the LIFE program because they can use their pass for every recreation centre in Greater Victoria. We will share information about our problem children, you know 'watch out for this person, they've been taking advantage of the program' or 'geeze, we just gave that guy a pass and know he has gone to Saanich for a pass'. Those things happen very, very rarely but we do try to resolve them at a regional level for consistency of application of our policies.*

There are many different resources that were shared including reports, reporting templates, and statistics. By sharing reporting templates informally, Manager B described ways that this can lead to the standardization of formal communication and the ability to have a strong regional voice for recreation:

> *Even with fees and charges, if I write up my report and do my recommendations and I'm probably or might be ahead of everybody, because everybody does it in a slightly different time frame. I would gladly send that out to everybody. That's a huge time saver. It's kind of like you've got a sample in front of you or […]. I would definitely share who is going to what recommended fee and what's mine, because we are geographically, there is so many municipalities, as you know, in this fairly small imprint of land. Everybody can compare and does compare, so it's important that we are in touch with one another.*

4.2.2.3 Effect of Resource Exchange. There were three themes that arose from the interviews about the effects of resource exchange. First was the benefits to the clients, second was the growth of resource exchange beyond the LIFE program, and finally the third was the potential for more exchange in the future.

For those that access the program, Manager B examined the effect that the exchange of resources has on those who access the LIFE program:

I think the cooperation, first of all, for the people that access the program it just means that it doesn't matter where you live or what municipality you live in, that the program is going to be available to you. I think fundamentally it's our most important piece, is that we are not going to exclude someone from View Royal because they live in View Royal, it's across the board. That's what we feel best about.

Working together, the managers have been able to build on the momentum of the LIFE program, create legitimacy capital and collaborate on other programs. Manager F discussed how they "*found that our inter-municipal partnerships have been extremely valuable to us. So not only do we roll out the LIFE program as a region, we rolled out our own set of standardized skating lessons.*" Manager B examined the benefits to the organization that collaborate on leveraging resources for future collaboration:

I think also […] that because we offer the program regionally we have a better chance of accessing support potentially from businesses or from grants, etc., because they also like the collaboration. They don't have to pick and choose a municipality. It feels fair to all and I think that's been a big driver as well. We see that when we come together and remove the competitiveness between us and just really focus on the issue that everybody benefits and the supporters like it as well.

Managers were keen to talk about future areas for collaboration. Currently the software system most community recreation organizations use is being phased out. The managers saw this as an area where their collaborative practices could be beneficial. Manager C explained that they "*have talked about when we replace CLASS, which is the registration software system, to do that regionally. As well, so then we could have a common database,*" also that this "*would be one way we could strengthen our collaboration and our support of the program from a regional point of view.*" Manager D expanded on the benefits:

When I have that LIFE pass, now they show it and we mark off an x, whatever, but they're not in our system but if you had a server that would just share the regional programs I could just swipe the card here and everyone could see […] or if I'd had to ban a patron here then it would just go out to all the servers, so that would be nice to have.

The largest exchange between the municipalities in the coalition are intangible resources including social, legitimacy and intellectual capacity. Social capital was built through regular meetings held by actors and the informal and formal communication done over the phone, email and in person. Legitimacy capital was created by a group of already reputable organizations

coming together to create a program based on similar policies. Intellectual capital was developed through the problem solving and creation of the program. The creation of these capitals adds to the sustainability of recreation in the GVA.

4.3 Institutional Structures

In this section, the institutional structures that affect the implementation of the LIFE program are presented. First, the institutional rules are shared which will discuss the details of the program within the coalition. The constitutional structures of the region are then explored through trying to better understand the political structure of the region and its importance in the implementation of the LIFE program. Finally, the section presents the importance of the local culture created by managers in the implementation of the LIFE program and other collaborative programs.

4.3.1 Institutional Rules. There are similarities and differences in the way the LIFE program is implemented in the Greater Victoria Area. This section will review the application processes, what the program provides and the differences in some municipalities. How the geographic make-up of the area affects the LIFE program will be examined. This section will also consider some of the regional collaboration on decision making, and what those decisions are. Finally, the political strength of the program will be touched on.

Everyone in the collaboration has worked together to make the application process similar. The form is similar across all municipalities, outlined by Manager F they "*try to make it as simple as possible so it's just a basic form that we ask to be filled out with accompanying documents because they have to apply in the area that they live.*" This was also echoed by Manager B who said "*the application form is pretty consistent regionally. We tried to make it look and feel similar. There is a requirement to show address confirmation as well as income verification.*"

The managers recognized that paperwork can be a barrier to access the LIFE program "*the more paperwork, the more you have in place, the less likely those who actually need it are going to get it*" explained Manager A. To be able to access the program, Manager C explained that potential participants "*just have to come with a couple pieces of ID and a proof of income. You just present that and you get your card and your coupon book right then and there. There really is no questions asked.*"

It was recognized by the managers that proof of income could be a barrier to access the program so they created an adjudicator form. Manager B explained the one of the benefits to

using an adjudicator form because "*it allows people to still not get stumped by a barrier of not having a certain piece of paper.*" The form can be filled out by someone who is vouching for the family's financial situation, such as a teacher or social worker, and be used in place of government forms that prove income.

Organizations did their best to reduce the stigma attached to being a member of the LIFE program. One of the way they did this was explained by Manager C:

I think another big advantage is that it's not a 'special' card that you give to the staff member and they know automatically that you are a LIFE client and you get that sympathy, or sometimes people can get their back up a little s someone who is not in their socio-demographic. So, it's seamless that way. You couldn't tell a LIFE client coming to the door versus somebody who lives in Oak Bay in a $2 million house. So I think it provides some dignity for LIFE clients.

Once clients received their LIFE memberships they received several benefits. They were given 52 free drop-in admissions for use in any of the recreation centres in the municipality. They also receive four 50% discounts on registered programs per year. Members can also choose to forgo the 52 free admissions and four program discounts and receive a 50% discount on their annual drop-in pass. Manager F explains how this is beneficial:

Some people [...] say 'I just want to come and just do drop in activities but I want to do that a lot, I don't want to register for programs, I just want to drop in but I want to do that more than once a week.' [For those people] cutting the annual fee by half can be helpful.

One of the biggest differences in the way the City of Victoria offers the program is that instead of offering a program discount they give successful applicants a dollar amount that they can use to access programs. In the past they have allowed participants to use that dollar amount also to make purchases from their swim shop. However, this is changing because "*at the end of the year people were just spending it on items instead of on programs and it wasn't really in the spirit of what we were trying to deliver, so we just made that adjustment,*" explained the manager.

The geographic makeup of the Greater Victoria Area could be given some credit to the success of the LIFE program, as Manager C explains, "*another reason it works so well here [the LIFE program] is because we are so close in proximity to one another and our municipalities really aren't that big geographically so the cross border use of facilities is really easy.*" This was echoed by Manager F who said "*The geography of this area and how small the municipalities*

are and how close together they are, means that we share customers." Manager F also added that they "*don't have people who just stay in their own little districts. They might live in one, or work in another, and they might have family in another so they would cross over quite a bit.*"

Managers found that having the program structured regionally allowed for a collective approach to improving the program. Manager E discussed how over the last couple of years they have been looking at the set minimum income levels and comparing that to the cost of living and deciding whether or not to increase the bench-mark levels. By having someone else making these benchmarks, Manager E felt, it took some of the pressure of the coalition to create these cutoffs themselves. Manager D discussed "*the trouble, the issue, for us is that where do you get the numbers [income cut-off's] you should be at? It's nice when someone else produced and this is what they're using across country and whatever.*"

One of the issues with using these benchmarks or Low Income Cut-Offs (LICOs) is that there is a group of people just above the cut-offs who can not afford to participate in recreation, but have too high of an income to qualify. Manager D explained that "*through the LIFE program it gives us the benchmark of a certain income level for families or individuals and if you're below than we know, provide free access. Probably, the benchmark is too low.*" All managers said they consider applications on a case by case basis. Most accepted applications up to $1000 over the advertised LICOs. Manager E explained how they took people's life situation into account, it's possible someone had fallen on hard times and they want to be able to help members of their community get back on their feet.

Offering free and heavily discounted services can politically be hard to justify, as the social return on investment can be hard to measure. A part of the regional collaboration was also to look at how they can promote the program and other things they can give away to benefit individuals without just completely giving 100% free access. The ability to work together to come up with other options for providing access has helped politicians buy in to the LIFE program. Manager A described how the political buy in of the LIFE program has led to its success regionally:

> *You don't go out and say this is how many people we are serving who can't afford, that's a good way to get a program cut. I think the political impacts are just as important as the staff because without political support none of this would happen. So it's this balance between saying 'hey look we hand out $100,000 worth of free swims, or free visits, in the CRD this year' and being careful that [politicians] don't end up saying 'well that's too much or why*

would you do that?' Recreation is very interesting because it does come from this place of goodness that we want to improve everyone's lives and if it was free that'd be great but we are all running a business in the background. We are all accountable to a budget. That's where this railroad really collides. How do you improve the wellness of the community by providing something and the flipside of that is how do you justify it in your budget and your line items. [The managers have] done tons of great work, this is a great program.

4.3.2 Constitutional Structures. Each organization has a unique governmental structure to report to. The first noticeable difference is that some of the organizations were run as societies with boards. West Shore Recreation Society represents six municipalities, including Langford, Colwood, View Royal, Highlands, Metchosin and a small piece of the electoral district of Juan de Fuca. The Board of Directors has fifteen members who each represent their municipality. There are four representatives from Colwood, five from Langford, two from Metchosin, one from Highlands, two from the Town of View Royal and one from the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area. The society provides recreation services to the residents of the member municipalities whose tax dollars contribute to the operation of the centre.

Panorama reports to the Peninsula Recreation Commission. The Peninsula Recreation Commission is a partnership between the municipalities of Sidney, North Saanich and Central Saanich. The commission serves 36,000 residents of these municipalities as well as the 2,400 residents of the Pauquachin, Tsawout, Tseycum and Tsartlip First Nations. This commission is funded through user fees and requisitions from the three municipalities.

SEAPARC recreation is also governed by a board made up of six commissioners that meet once a month. The Mayor of Sooke and the Director of the Juan de Fuca electoral area are two members that sit on the board. The manager of this area explains "*that's how we are governed and we are attached to the CRD because those directors, the Mayor of Sooke and the Director of the Juan de Fuca are at the CRD board*". They created "*two bylaws, one for the pool and one for the arena, […] that gives us the tax authority or requisition on the tax base. So we set the requisition based on the operating and the recovery for users.*" Despite the use of bylaws the manager of this area feels that "*there isn't a lot of influence of the mayors and councils of the area other than the fact that they are on our commission and they can help govern us.*"

Victoria has a slightly different set-up than the other municipalities because they give out a dollar amount subsidy rather than a percentage discount. This means they have to include the LIFE program in their budget because their council wants to track the amount of subsidy given.

Council also has an approved cap on the amount of dollars that can be spent. This dollar amount is determined by the department based on past years. The manager explained that "*it hasn't changed too much, apart from our regular yearly increases for inflation and so on.*" Council is also responsible for approving the budget and subsidy amount every year. This budget has stayed relatively stable since the first few years as explained by Manager B "*that there was huge growth in the program [in the City of Victoria] in the first three or four years, as people came to know about the program, and then it stabilized.*" Although this is different from the other organizations, the manager does not believe it has affected the ability to deliver the program because they "*haven't seen it be over spent to the point where we needed to ask for more money from council. So, I think we are meeting the needs of the customers we have.*"

In the Greater Victoria Area there is also an overarching regional government called the Capital Regional District (CRD). Although the CRD would dictate policy that would affect the three facilities that are managed by societies, the coalition did not see the CRD as a government that had much affect on the delivery of the LIFE program or any program. This was emphasized by one manager "*I would say we do very little with the true CRD organization. […]. From a recreation point of view, I'd say that the organization, the CRD, has very little influence on how we do our business.*"

One manager found that the structure of the CRD did not impact the ability to work collaboratively but the CRD structure did affect the timeliness of getting approval for certain programs or initiatives. They felt that:

sometimes, not a lot of times […] the organization behind the municipality, like the CRD for example, they are more complex with their approvals and what they need to vet and so on. Then other times we might sit at the table and everyone can just speak for their municipality. I think it depends on the size of the initiative and what we are talking about. I think the CRD is the most complex organization and they probably feel like they have the greatest need, they can't move quite as fast as some of [the other organizations], because there are more approvals that they need to do. Where as, I may just have to go back to the society or the city just might have to go to council.

4.3.3 Local Culture. The social structure of the organization influences the actions of the governing coalition. Their success can be attributed to the people in the organizations who are sitting at the table and their commitment to their organizations, the area and delivering quality recreational services to their communities. "*It's just that whole collaboration with other*

departments. We know we have got each other's back. So that's a real trust factor for sure. Ultimately, it benefits the community having this opportunity," clarified Manager B.

Their ability to collaborate has been good organizationally and politically. Manager A explained that "*the collaboration in the CRD is unbelievable. [...]. There is constant collaboration going on and there is initiatives coming out of it [...]. But that collaboration lends itself to a lot of success because everyone is talking.*" Manager B discussed how "*politically people love it. So, politicians will support it with more money or more to the program. The more people we have that are participating the better off we all are for our community.*"

The history of the development of the LIFE program lends a lot to understanding how this collaboration began. It can also give a lot of insight into the values of the managers at the table during the development. Manager B discussed this in depth:

> *Victoria [was] one of the first to have a leisure access program, and so it really felt counterproductive that if you don't live in the City of Victoria but you live in Saanich, that we would have to be saying to people you don't qualify. So, one of the main drivers, and shortly after that Saanich started to look at having a program as well, but we thought that one of the main drivers for all of us would be that if we all had a similar type program, and we could all articulate that, that it would be a powerful statement about recreation being available to all. The profile of the message would be higher.*

This program has a rich history, and the collaboration has been successful through staff turnovers. When asked about why this program has stayed successful through the succession of different managers, Manager E explained that some of the managers around the table have been there since the conception of the program and the collaborative managers group. Manager E felt that as organizations have staff that rose up through the ranks it created awareness of the regional programs. Then when they have the opportunity to sit at the managers table or new people are brought in, they are easily educated on the importance of the collaboration. Manager C echoed these sentiments and added "*it just works. A lot of it works because the people that are sitting around the table. Really and truly*".

4.4 Global-Sectoral Relation

The British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA) is the organization that influences the social constructs for the public recreation field in the province. They are not involved in the delivery of programs but were seen by managers as the organization that facilitates discussions, shares best practices, recognizes successes and can supply information

about alternative funding opportunities. Another major function that managers saw for the BCRPA was for them to advocate to higher level governments about community needs.

Manager A discussed the BCRPAs ability to facilitate discussion and how this was advantageous in developing a program to assist low income community members in another region:

Some of the best information I got though was from the BCRPA, it was from them, it was a roundtable discussion on low income. [...] Kelowna did a lot of work in their neighborhood houses. Talking to them, talking to where their challenges were and those types of things. It facilitated dialogue, which then led to improvement, and what I've learned now to what I knew then is a process.

Managers felt that part of the role of the BCRPA was to share best practices in the sector. Manager G felt that "*we kind of are very centered on our own community and the GVA but it would probably be cool to know what else BC is doing in other municipalities around offering low-income options to customer,*" and that the BCRPA should play a role in this. Manager B felt that the:

BCRPA has become very good at sharing best practices and being able to give municipalities a platform or profile to be able to talk about what they are doing, how they are doing it, and share that so others can learn from it.

The view that BCRPA was a useful place to mobilize knowledge was shared by most managers, including Manager D who explained that although they are involved with the sharing of programs they "*don't really develop programs, I don't see that as their function or what they do.*" Manager A expanded on why it would be difficult for the BCRPA to build programs due to the diversity among communities in BC:

I think that a community has a culture around it and I think that [the BCRPA] can advocate best practices. They can say 'you should be at least giving someone who is economically disadvantaged 52 free passes, so they can come out once a week. However, I think the political interference is, you could not generate a report or generate a 'this is what the BCRPA is doing' because they are not going to know what the community make-up is.

Through the sharing of information, the BCRPA recognizes programs including the LIFE program. When discussing if the BCRPA was involved in the development of the LIFE program, Manager E explained that they were not really involved much at all, except for assisting in recognition for the program through awards or the opportunity to discuss the program at annual

conferences. Manager C shared that "*we are BCRPA award winners, so that's always kind of fun [...] they did recognize us.*"

It was felt that the BCRPA was or could be a good location for more information on funding opportunities. Manager C considered "*that BCRPA hands out grants every now and then. If they have something that we could be capitalizing on, I'm not aware of it*" and the reasons for not being aware were "*probably a bit of both reasons why, it's my own ignorance for not looking on the website or asking the questions but they often haven't done a good job of promoting what opportunities they have as well.*" This was corroborated by Manager G who, when asked what the BCRPA could provide information on, responded:

> *If there is different funding that is out there [the BCRPA] would also be an interesting way to find out about those things. I think people in my role are not researching available funding but if there were other things we could apply for out there it would be great to know about them definitely.*

One of the biggest functions managers saw for the BCRPA was to provide advocacy to higher level government organizations. Manager C saw them "*certainly being an advocate to the Provincial or the Federal government to provide more access to recreation in some way, shape or form. I see and think they are doing a fairly good job on that.*" One manager felt that the focus on advocacy caused the BCRPA to lose their function as a professional association. When asked what the role of the BCRPA should be, this manager replied "*I think there is advocacy. What I feel, they're a lobby group more than what used to be a professional association. I think that has a strength but it's a loss.*"

Federally, the only involvement that was mentioned was the National Recreation Framework. Manager C explained "*you know there is the National Recreation Framework that also adheres and supports accessibility.*" This Framework was not developed by the Federal Government but by the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association in partnership with the Interprovincial Sport and Recreation counsel and was endorsed by the Federal Government at the time. The goal of the Framework was to "*provide a new vision for recreation and suggest common ways of thinking about the renewal of recreation based on clear goals and underlying values and principles*" (CPRA, 2015). This was done through the creation of goal areas and priorities for each of those areas. The second area is Inclusion and Equitability with the priority of "*equitable participation for all, regardless of socioeconomic status, age, culture, race, Aboriginal status, gender, ability, sexual orientation or geographic locations*" (CPRA).

Chapter Five: Discussion & Conclusion

This chapter discusses how the results found in the previous chapter are linked to the Local Leisure Policy Analysis Framework (LLPAF) (Lavigne, 2014), the implications of these findings for practice, and the limitations of the study. The purpose of this research is to explore how recreation managers, within the Greater Victoria Area (GVA), collaboratively implement the LIFE program. Municipalities in the GVA worked together to create the LIFE program to help remove barriers for low-income citizens trying to access recreation at public recreation facilities. The municipalities each have their own Leisure Economic Accessibility Policies (LEAPs), which are organizational mandates to ensure inclusion of citizens with low incomes (Cureton, 2010). The LIFE program is the collaborative governance mechanism used for the implementation of LEAPs. Managers of municipal facilities in the Greater Victoria Area (GVA) were interviewed and those interviews were analyzed using the LLPAF to answer the following questions:

1) What governance mechanisms exist in the implementation of Leisure Economic Accessibility Policies?

2) To what extent are municipalities linked to each other through economic accessibility policies within the GVA?

3) What resources are exchanged between actors involved in the implementation of the Leisure Economic Accessibility Policy?

4) What do managers perceive to be the benefits and challenges of collaboration in the implementation of leisure economic accessibility policies?

5.1 Connections to the Framework

The framework used for analysis in this project was the Local Leisure Policy Analysis Framework (Lavigne, 2014). Having governance perspective on public policy includes the procedures and instruments that actors use to coordinate their actions in the process of creating collectively defined agendas (Pierre, 2005). Governance perspective on public policy is that it is a tool used to coordinate collective action. The framework was especially useful in exploring the resources exchanged and the mechanisms for their exchange; however, there were results from this research that also add to the framework. Finally, the results that do not fit with the framework are stated.

5.1.1 Resource Exchange. Resource exchange was essential to successful collaboration among coalition members. As most resources were intangible they were shared through communication. O'Toole (2003) cautions that administrators working to implement

interorganizational policies would need to create an infrastructure of communication including channels, language, and signals to help achieve their policy objectives. The managers in the GVA have done this as the channels of communication are formal, through the Greater Victoria Active Communities (GVAC) working groups and committees that work together. They are also informal as managers frequently communicate with each other through email, phone calls and post mail to offer support. They also have set language for the program; this is shown in the marketing materials each organization has for the LIFE program to ensure that the program looks the same to citizens. Although there are slight differences in the program, these do not need to be implicitly communicated to the public which adds to the clarity of implementing a regional program. Finally, they also share the same signals in that they all use the same income cut-offs and have the buffer of forgiveness around those cut-offs.

There were many resources exchanged in the delivery of the LIFE program. Financial resource exchange was minimal and there was a small fee contributed to the working group that was explained by managers to be used for marketing materials. It is anomalous to consider that a program with the goal of reducing the financial barriers of recreation relies so little on financial resources. This can be attributed to the managerial attitude of constantly having to do more with less due to inconsistent funding (Coalter, 2004; Crompton & Lamb, 1986; Dawson, 2000; Glover, 1999a; Golob, 2010; Howell & McNamee, 2003; Martin, 1999).

Managers could share human capital resources, although they were not shared equally by every member of the coalition, those that were able to contribute human capital help to reduce costs to all municipalities because they did not have to make a significant increase their current staff time or hire staff. Frisby and Millar (2002) concur that pooling resources is one way that managers can lessen costs. Two examples of how managers have pooled their staff resources are by through program administration and marketing. One municipality has an entire staff position devoted to delivering the LIFE program and become an administrative hub to the coalition as they are able to answer questions, troubleshoot concerns, and create standardized action to the concerns that arise across the region. Another municipality has a full-time staff person designated to marketing, where they became responsible for developing the branding behind the LIFE program and ensured that it was promoted uniformly throughout the region.

It was found that the coalition was very rich in intellectual capital. Intellectual capital is the ability to generate and disseminate knowledge. One of the most prominent ways this was done was through the shared problem solving done by the managers. This aligns with Glover (1999),

who found that when agencies collaborated with partners to create strategies around related experiences, they were much more refined than the ones generated individually.

Managers were also able to share report structures so that all reports coming out of the area have a similar and cohesive look. This type of cohesion added to the political strength of recreation in the area. Another form of intellectual capital that was developed amongst the group was the creation of the regional standardizes skating lessons. Similar to the LIFE program the lessons started in one municipality but with the coalition supporting and helping develop the lessons they have been implemented throughout the GVA.

Collaboration among the actors happened very informally which is an indicator of the strength of the social capital in the coalition. The social capital amongst actors was developed over a long period of time and continues to develop as new actors joined the coalition. This was important because as actors retire from their positions, the coalition was able to quickly groom the new additions. Since many of the actors had worked for other organizations in the coalition they were able to empathize with each other. Edwards (2005) found that when actors feel their contributions are appreciated and resources are distributed equitably then social cohesion, compassion, and tolerance are likely to thrive. The actors had a strong sense of trust which enabled them to work so cohesively because they felt appreciated amongst the coalition.

The benefits of collaboration described by Glover (1999) that lend themselves to the creation of legitimacy capital within the coalition include greater stability, ability to acquire resources, increased opportunities for access to specialized expertise, and formed an efficient structure for which to share and create knowledge. The collaboration originated around the LIFE program but has grown into other initiatives such as standardized skating lessons. The LIFE program has become a best practice throughout British Columbia (BC), it was recognized with an award from the British Columbia Parks and Recreation Association. Other communities in BC, such as Campbell River, have modeled their LEAP governance mechanisms after the LIFE program. The actors felt the reputation of the collaboration aided in their ability to access funding from businesses or potential grants.

5.1.2 Municipal Collaboration for Regional Sustainability. Having the municipalities collaborate on major policies by creating governance mechanisms to implement the policies contributes to sustainable regional development, as outlined in figure 3. It does this by increasing access throughout the region. All citizens who access the LIFE program could participate in recreation at any of the public recreation centres in the region. Having this access can improve

citizens overall quality of life, citizenship, and sense of place, three things that the Berkeley Group (2011) found contributes to the development of social sustainability. This is important because social sustainability is often overlooked in the study of sustainable development (Cuthill, 2010).

Figure 3. Model for Sustainable Regional Development.

5.1.3 What Parts of the Framework Do Not Apply. Using the Local Leisure Policy Analysis Framework uncovered many interesting findings. Two areas of the framework did not have data that were supportive. The fist was Local Elites and Urban Regimes as these were not explored in depth. Second, no actors or other coalitions were found to be in opposition of the coalition. This could also have been due to the sample chosen for interviews. Although there was a 100% response rate, this could have changed if interviews were done with other actors in the region.

5.2 Implication for Practice

There are several implications for practice that can be derived from this study. The following section stars with a discussion of the benefits of having a regional coalition partner on a government mechanism to implement policy. The second part of this section will look at the challenges faced by the coalition.

5.2.1 Benefits. One benefit to regional collaboration in the GVA is that recreation departments can coordinate their efforts and only collect personal information once. Cureton (2010) found it to be a challenge for citizens having to go through such an intrusive application process requiring specific government documents to prove their socio-economic status. With the LIFE program, citizens are only required to go through the process once but can still get access to facilities throughout the GVA. The cooperation and sharing of information thus increases the citizens sense of freedom and allows them more autonomy over their choices of recreation providers. Wollenburg et al., (2013) concur that it would be irresponsible for any publicly funded sector not to recognize the expertise and knowledge of likeminded agencies. The managers are formally and informally in contact sharing information about the LIFE program and participants to support each other, citizens, and their organizations.

Another benefit of the collaboration was that all actors in the coalition were using the same Low Income Cut Offs (LICOs) provided by Statistics Canada, even if LICOs themselves can be viewed as a challenge, as discussed previously. Zhang (2016) states that "LICOs are estimated thresholds below which a family is likely to spend significantly more of its income on food, shelter, and clothing than the average family". The organizations having the same cut-offs delivered consistent messaging throughout the region. Managers were also were able to agree on a buffer of forgiveness around these LICOs. If citizens are over the LICO by $1000, or less, they will still be eligible for the program.

The collaboration of the managers also benefited by pooling their resources, especially human capital. Frisby and Millar (2002) found that pooling resources is one way that managers can lessen the cost of programs and in turn lessen the problem of having programs that are not accessible to those living in poverty. For example, the managers have pooled their staff resources in program administration and marketing.

Shaw and Allen (2006) found that organizations with competing agendas can undermine their ability to partner together. The findings of this study do not support this, as municipalities in the GVA have a history of working together regardless of their competitive agendas. The managers have been able to include new managers as they come in to the region in this collaboration by creating a culture where this collaboration is expected. This has lead to a culture of collaboration among the managers and the creation of great programs for all citizens residing in the area.

Frisby, Thibault and Kikulis (2004), noted that coalitions can be challenged by differences in managerial structures and processes. This was not seen as a challenge to the coalition in the GVA even though municipalities in the GVA have different managerial structures and different budget processes. The working group was able to satisfy their individual municipal budget requirements to ensure that their ability to participate in the LIFE program was not compromised.

5.2.2 Challenges. The collection and storage of citizens personal information is a challenge. Information around a citizens income is required to qualify for the program. Some managers discussed their concerns with collecting citizens personal tax forms and having to keep them on file. Having partnerships between Federal Government agencies, such as Canada Revenue Agency, or Provincial ministries, such as the Ministry of Family and Childhood Development, that have records of this information would be beneficial for municipalities to explore so they are

not having to collect the information themselves but rather verify citizens' needs and work with those organization to ensure citizens who require assistance are receiving it. McCarville's (2008) research also echoes this because many participants in his study found it needlessly embarrassing going through the application processes when they are already on social assistance, which cannot be used as proof of qualification for economic accessibility programs.

Although managers in the GVA found that using the same Low Income Cut Offs (LICOs) was a benefit there are also challenges to using them. Using the LICOs from Statistics Canada is a challenge because the cost of living fluctuates across the country and the GVA is known for having an extremely high cost of living in comparison to the rest of the country. This means that there are a large number of citizens who make more than the LICO but still can not afford the necessities of life such as safe accommodation, clothing, medical care, food and recreation.

5.3 Study Limitations

There were several limitations to this study that should be noted. One limitation is that this research was done in one area in the province of British Columbia. It is not representative of all Canadian municipalities and results could be drastically different in other areas of the country and even other areas of British Columbia. Another limitation is that interviews were only done with the facility managers. This is a limitation because there is not a perspective from outside the coalition. Interviews with outside actors were not conducted due the size and scope of the research project. Had interviews been conducted with elected officials it is possible that there could have been additions to the LLPAF in that area. The final limitation, being discussed, is that two of the interviews were conducted over the phone. Although rich data was still collected from these interviews had the interview had the opportunity to interview them in person body language and mannerisms could have been observed and changed the perception of some participant answers.

5.4 Directions for Future Research

This study revealed several areas that could be explored in future research. The first area of future research would be to expand and include other actors who work with the coalition. The second area is research looking at other areas that are similar, in that they have multiple municipalities in a small geographic area who do not collaborate to understand why they are unable to collaborate at the managerial level and how does this impact citizens in this area? Finally, another area of interest is understanding how these policies and programs would help or hinder the amalgamation process, if it were to happen.

The Local Leisure Policy Analysis Framework was extremely useful in the analysis of the LEAPs and associated governance mechanisms in the GVA. Future areas for research using this framework could be in an region with communities in close geographic location to each other but where collaboration does not exist. Another area of research could be in communities where there is opposition to LEAPs to better understand the different values that can exist in the delivery of equitable recreation programs. Finally, it would be interesting to do the same study twenty years from now when many of the managers have retired to see if the levels of social, human and intellectual capital still exist and to explore how the growth of the communities has impacted the ability of these organizations to deliver socio-economically accessible leisure.

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Appendix A

Interview Guide

1. Tell me about yourself?

- How long have you been with municipality?
- How long have you been in this position for _____?
  - Have you held any other positions with municipality?
  - Have you worked for any other municipalities in the CRD?
  - Which ones and positions?

2. Can you tell me about the municipality's socioeconomic accessibility policies?

• Who in your municipality is involved in implementing these policies? • What role does council play in the implementation of policy?

- Do other government partnerships influence these accessibility policies? Ex. Education or health.

- Are there new policies that are being developed to increase access to those with socioeconomic barriers?

2. Can you tell me about the LIFE program in municipality?

- How long have you been involved in implementing the LIFE program?

- What is the involvement of municipality with the LIFE program?

- Who in municipality is involved in implementing the LIFE program?

- Who decides on changes to the program?
- How is the program reviewed and by who?

- Who in municipality is involved in delivering the LIFE program?

- How is this program budgeted for?

- Does the municipality offer program discounts to LIFE participants?

- How do program discount decisions get made?• How many citizens access the LIFE program through your organization?
- Are you willing and/or able to share demographic information on the citizens that access this program?
- What challenges arise during the implementation of this program?
- What benefits come from the implementation of this program?

3. Do you collaborate with other municipalities or organizations to provide the LIFE program?

- What municipalities or organizations?
- What are the reasons to collaborate with them?
- Who leads the collaboration?
- What are the respective roles of collaboration members?

4. How does the collaboration work?

- Are there municipalities/organizations that you collaborate with more?
- • How often?
- How is collaboration initiated?
- How is collaboration facilitated?
- What is the structure of the financial collaboration?
- Do you share information resources about program delivery, participate in joint marketing or problem solving?

    o What is shared?

    o How often?

    o How do the structure and the organization of the regional district influence the actions of the collaboration?

5. Do you consider municipality as a part of a network with other municipalities who use the LIFE program?

- Do you plan for and share goals with other municipalities? • Which municipalities and goals?

- What is the vision for the future of the LIFE program?

- Is there a champion for the LIFE program?

- Who takes the lead and drives collaborative activities?

- Who should take the lead and drive collaborative activities?

- What could strengthen the ties between the organizations involved?

- Are there any other organizations that could be involved that are not currently?

6. What about this program do you think is useful for citizens with socioeconomic barriers residing in the CRD?

- How is it marketed to them?
- How do you consider individual cases? Ex. Someone with an address in a different municipality but that resides closer to your facility than the one in their area.

7. How has being a part of the LIFE program benefited municipality?

8. What other programs exist in municipality to help those in financial need participate in recreation programs and services?

- Are these programs done in collaboration with any other municipalities?
- Are these programs done in collaboration with any other organizations? (ex. Boys and Girls, YMCA, Big Brother/Sister, other NGO's)

9. What role does BCRPA play in the implementation of the LIFE program and other programs that remove socioeconomic barriers?

10. Do you have any advice for other regions that maybe considering a similar accessibility policy program?

11. Is there anything else you would like to add or share about leisure economic accessibility policies in your municipality?