

# **Community Sport Development & the Olympic Games - Outcomes from Vancouver 2010**

by

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## **Abstract**

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) requires that all Olympic host cities plan for post-Games legacies. In the case of the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games, a key legacy promise concerned benefits for the local sport community. This promise played a vital role in securing political and citizen support to host the Games. This research explores the relationship between hosting the Games and the actual operational impacts and legacies experienced by community sport organizations in Vancouver's Lower Mainland during and immediately following the Games. Qualitative interviews conducted with representatives of the local sport community provide insight into the diversity of experiences and perspectives on the topic of legacies at the community sport level following the Games in Vancouver. In many cases outcomes reported by local sport organizations differed from organizational expectations in the lead up to the Games. What is also noteworthy is the variance between local sport clubs and provincial sport organizations (hereafter "PSOs") in both their operational approaches to the Games and reported outcomes.

**Keywords:** Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games; community sport organizations; legacy; impacts; sport and urban life; qualitative interviews

## **Dedication**

For Sheila O'Kelly who epitomizes the difference one person can make to their community and to local sport through hard work, unwavering vision and the engagement of others and who provided me with incredible learning opportunities.

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# 1. Introduction

The Olympic Games are the largest and most complex sporting event in the world. Hosting the Games requires a tremendous investment of financial and human resources, yet the diverse effects of hosting the Games, both positive and negative, on the local host community are not well understood. The purpose of this research project is to explore some of the effects of the Games on one specific sector of the local community: community sport organizations (hereafter, "CSOs"). Community sport organizations play a vital role in providing opportunities for both sport participation and community social engagement in urban communities. A relevant definition of how people create and maintain community social engagement is provided by Swyer (2010): "Community is best defined as a set of practices through which participants arrive at self-consciousness of themselves as a group with a particular relationship to the larger world." (Swyer, 2010, 3) According to research by Statistics Canada (Ifedi, 2008), in 2005 28 percent of Canadians participated in sport and more than two million volunteered for amateur (community) sport organizations. Sport is an important part of the daily lives of many Canadians and the vast majority are involved at the community level. Most people have heard the common argument that 'sport participation is good for us.' Long and Sanderson (2001, 187) assert that "such a belief underlies not only some of our personal decision making but also public policy." Gratton and Henry (2001) contend that the significance of sport in contemporary cities has only recently become a focus in social analysis, even though the significance of sport is undeniable. Mayer (1994) provides a summary of how sport is beginning to play an increasing role in public policy development: "As cities compete with one another for inward investment and struggle to deal with problems of social and economic disruption, increasingly cultural policy, including policy for sport, is developed to address the twin aims of economic development and social inclusion" (Mayer, 1994, 316).

Emery (2001) builds on this argument, suggesting: "Sport, and more specifically, the hosting of major sports events is a recent global phenomena, where cities utilise the

medium as an economic development tool for urban regeneration” (Emery, 2001, 90). Despite the increasing advocacy of use of sport as a mechanism of urban social and economic development policy, a review of the academic literature reveals a profound lack of research that demonstrates the actual impacts sport may have in influencing the social and economic conditions intended by the policy prescriptions. In the same manner that many of the claimed economic and social benefits of sport have influenced public policy development generally, so too did claims of benefits for community sport also influence legacy planning and public support in Vancouver for the hosting of the 2010 Olympic Games.

Yet, the Games have not always delivered benefits for community sport in previous host cities. For instance, Mangan (2008) suggests that:

It seems that the most substantial sports participation-related impact of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games was an increase in passive involvement, such as television spectating. Shortfall active grassroots activity went hand in hand with the under-utilisation of Games sports facilities, a consequence of disagreement over their use which inter alia led to the unexpected costs of adapting the facilities. ... Regrettably elite sport has benefited at the expense of sport for all, at a time when obesity and associated ill-health is a national problem. Can any warning of this nature be premature? And is there a warning here for London 2012? Grassroots deprivation as a result of the cost of the 2012 Games is already a fact in 2008. (Mangan, 2008, 1871)

Mangan’s observations about the anticipated and unanticipated impacts of the 2000 Olympics upon community and amateur sport in Sydney raise a number of issues that warrant further examination not only with respect to that city’s experiences, but indeed those of any city that takes on the onerous and expensive task of hosting the Olympics.

Accordingly, this project addresses this challenge by examining the impacts of the staging of the 2010 Olympics upon community and amateur sports in and around Vancouver. It does so first by reviewing relevant literatures and policy documents: What were the outcomes promised by the Vancouver Games Organizing Committee for local community sport? How is community sport practiced in Canada within an urban context, and what were the theoretically predicted impacts of the Games on local sport? The research will then explore, through the analysis of data gathered by conducting a

qualitative survey and exploratory interviews with CSO and PSO representatives, some of the actual reported effects of the Games on these organizations at the community and provincial sport level. These exploratory findings will be drawn upon to identify and reflect upon questions that may help inform future research in this area.

Doherty and Misener (2008) define community sport organizations as “non-profit, voluntary organizations that provide many of the recreational and competitive sport opportunities we enjoy in our communities” (Doherty and Misener, 2008, 114). The term community sport organization is synonymous with terms such as local voluntary sport clubs or associations. CSOs provide opportunities for children, youths, and adults to participate in recreational and competitive sport. More than 76% of Canadians who participate in sport do so through a community sport organization (CFLRI, 2005). Additionally, CSOs account for 21% of all volunteer activities in Canada (Hall et al., 2006). Therefore, these organizations play a leading role in providing opportunities for sport participation and community engagement in urban communities. Additionally, community sport funding is derived primarily from local community sources. Sport fields and recreational facilities are overwhelmingly funded by municipal tax dollars, while families and/or individuals pay fees to participate in one or another community sport. Community sport organizations rely on membership fees and volunteers to provide services. Their existence depends upon and reflects demand from the community. Thus, it is essential to understand any effects on community sport that result directly or indirectly from a mega-event hosted in the community. Yet, the effects that may be experienced at the local level by local organizations are not currently readily captured by the indicator measures used by the IOC mandated Olympic Games Impact Assessment. Moreover, few additional studies have been done by other researchers on this topic.

My interest in examining the potential impacts of a mega-sporting event on the local sport community of a host city stems from my personal experience as Event Manager of a World Championship Triathlon event staged more than ten years ago in Edmonton, Alberta. The people involved in organizing that event and the experience of doing so left a profound impact on me. This successful event was organized almost entirely by tireless volunteers who dedicated their evenings and weekends to ensuring the event would be dubbed the ‘best-ever’ by the International Triathlon Union, athletes and spectators. The event organizing committee was comprised of 12 volunteer board

members, approximately 40 core organizing committee volunteers, approximately 400 event week volunteers and two paid staff officials (of which I was one). A determined executive director, who assembled and motivated the organizing committee, spearheaded the event. This was not an initiative driven by a provincial, national or international sport organization. The event was truly a grass roots initiative, organized for the International Triathlon Union by a group of local triathlon activists, with a clear mission of providing a safe, high quality event and, if possible, to leave a funding legacy to support coaching fees for a local youth triathlon club. In the case of Edmonton's triathlon hosting experience, my appreciation of the profound impact a sporting mega-event could have on the development of new networks, further knowledge development, and the attraction of participants to a sport is anecdotal. But my sense was that much of the positive experience accrued in Edmonton was due to the strong connection of event organizers to the local sport community, local government officials, and local volunteers. I was also aware that the experience of the Edmonton Triathlon event might not be mirrored by all large sporting events, thus, underlining the importance of taking into account varying individual perspectives when evaluating an event. Different individuals or groups may experience the same event in differing ways, depending upon their positioning. My experience, however, sufficed to peak my interest to understand better the potential impacts, positive and negative, on the sport community in Vancouver following the 2010 Olympic Games (hereafter "Games").

## **1.1. What the 2010 Olympic Games Promised to the Local Sport Community**

Prior to the Games, community sport in Vancouver was identified as a legacy beneficiary. In the words of John Furlong, CEO of the Vancouver Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games (VANOC), "Since the idea of hosting the 2010 Winter Games surfaced in Vancouver back in 1996, the vision has been consistently clear – in addition to hosting outstanding Games, they must create benefits and legacies for sport and communities" (VANOC, 2007, 7). This promise was delivered to assist in securing political and citizen support to host the Games in Vancouver.

The actual benefits promised to local sport during the bid phase of the Games were not clearly defined. The Vancouver 2010 Bid Book, submitted to the IOC in 2003 as part of the bid to host the Games, spoke briefly about the intended legacy use of new facilities but did not provide specific sport legacy objectives (Government of Canada 2010, 2010). The following quote from the opening paragraphs of the bid book demonstrates that legacies for sport was considered one of the critical elements of the bid: “Our plan has drawn on the knowledge and advice of the IOC. It is focused on the needs of the athletes, and on ensuring sustainable legacies for sport and for our communities” (Canada 2010, 2012; Vol. 1, 3). However, the section of the bid book related to sport legacies was not specific in outlining the legacy objectives for community sport:

The federal and provincial governments have committed \$71 million to an endowment trust to ensure the long-term operations of new Olympic venues. The provincial government has also committed funds for legacy programs including the new Olympic Arts Fund, valued at \$13 million, and an endowment for the Physical Fitness and Amateur Sports Fund, valued at \$14.2 million. In addition, the LegaciesNow initiative is a first for a Canadian bid. It is a \$3 million program, available during the bid process, to ensure province-wide sports development from the playground to the podium. By providing athletes with world-class programs, services and training, as well as helping community capacity in hosting international sports events, we are committed to ensuring we have podium performances in 2010 (Canada 2010, 2012; Vol. 1,19).

In June of 2000, prior to submitting its bid to host the Games, the Vancouver 2010 Bid Committee, in conjunction with the BC Provincial Government, created 2010 LegaciesNow “to create sport legacies and build support for Vancouver’s Olympic bid” (2010 LegaciesNow, 2012). The 2005 report of 2010 LegaciesNow, one of its earliest publications, uses broad based terminology to describe its sport development program objectives: “to open doors to participation and keep people active for their whole life” (2010 LegaciesNow, 2012). The initial sport development programs were named or “branded” SportFit and Sport Tourism/ Hosting BC. SportFit is an interactive tool designed to encourage youths to discover new sports. Youths are expected to complete activity stations that measure physical activity skill as well as to complete a short survey about personal preferences. The SportFit tool then tabulates the top three winter and top three summer sports that may best suit the participant based on his/her physical

capabilities and personal preferences (2010 LegaciesNow, 2012). Hosting BC is a program that allows community sport organizations to apply for event hosting grants to stage championship events (at local, provincial, national or international levels). In subsequent years these programs were joined by additional sport development programs such as the BC Sport Participation program, which funded initiatives by provincial and multi-sport organizations to increase sport participation. The BC Sport Participation program had an annual budget allocated by the federal and provincial governments. Sport organizations could apply for funding to support initiatives that promoted participation. LegaciesNow provides the following retrospective program summary:

The BC Sport Participation Program (BCSPP) helped provincial and multi-sport organizations extend their community reach and improve the quality of sport and recreation delivery. The funding support was invested in developing tools and resources, training coaches and leaders and attracting new participants.

Since it began in 2004, the BCSPP has invested more than \$4 million and captured more than 200,000 new sport participants in over 110 communities province-wide, creating new opportunities for children and youth, people with disabilities, seniors, Aboriginal youth, and girls and women. (LegaciesNow, 2012, para 2-3)

This summary provides a general statement of and perspective on the impacts of a LegaciesNow program but does not speak specifically to the effects of the program as experienced at the community level. The language used in the documents produced by LegaciesNow is in keeping with many current sport policy documents. Terms such as 'sport delivery', 'community reach' and 'integration' are frequently used in these policy documents. For example, the BC Sport Policy (2006) talks about the sport delivery system as one that will be "integrated, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, to maximize efficiency and ensure harmonized policies, programs, and services for participants" (BC's Policy on Sport and Physical Activity, 2006, 11). Policy documents, and in this case the documents prepared by LegaciesNow in the lead up to the Games, often present strategies intended to influence community sport organizations. Yet as the section in this paper relating to community sport in Canada will demonstrate, community sport in Canada is not homogeneous nor as integrated with or influenced by governing organizations and policy as is sometimes stated or implied in policy documents.

A detailed analysis of the LegaciesNow program is beyond the scope of this paper; however, this research project does include questions that aim to better understand Game's impacts for CSOs with respect to participation and funding – areas that were targeted by LegaciesNow programs. The quote from John Furlong that opened this section and the provision of some government resources to community sport development begs the question: what effects, if any, were expected for community sport organizations in the wake of Vancouver's Olympic Games?

## **1.2. Research Question**

The intent of this exploratory research is to better understand the relationship between hosting the Games and the actual impacts experienced by community sport organizations in Vancouver's Lower Mainland during and immediately following the Games. Accordingly, the following question will be addressed: How have leaders in Vancouver's local sport community experienced and assessed the promised legacy of increased opportunities for participation in and delivery of community sport programming following the staging of the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games?

The existing literature on this topic supports the notion that the legacies of the Olympic Games are not well understood and, in particular, that the social legacies haven't been sufficiently studied. The literature (to be reviewed below) also helps to identify a number of possible lines of inquiry for study: Did community sport organizations develop any new network and knowledge based opportunities as a result of the Games? What were the impacts of the Games on program funding, participant reach and facility access for provincial and community sport organizations? Did volunteers for these organizations learn new skills or did the organizations find any new methods to attract or train organizational volunteers? Were there any unexpected impacts or were there expected impacts that did not materialize? Did organizations that both deliberately developed and pursued Games-related development strategies and sought out new networks report more benefits than their counterparts who did not pursue these strategies? Are any of the reported impacts expected to continue in the future? Were there notable differences reported between the experiences of community sport organizations versus provincial sport organizations? And, given the 'hype'



surrounding the Games, does tying community sport development initiatives to Olympic expectations, aspirations and 'positive messaging' actually lead to desired impacts?

### **1.3. Qualitative Methodology**

A qualitative methodology was selected for this inquiry for a number of reasons, the primary one being the difficulty of readily quantifying and, thereby, summarizing the operations of CSOs within Vancouver's Lower Mainland. There are a wide variety of organizations that provide sport programming within British Columbia's Lower Mainland and these organizations vary dramatically in the nature of their activities, their size, participant characteristics, facility requirements, funding requirements, their need for or reliance upon volunteers and more. Dyck & Wildi (1993) conducted a survey of community sport organizations within the 'tri-cities' area of British Columbia's Lower Mainland (three cities located within the region) and encountered a number of challenges. Notably, they found it was difficult to fit the complex and varying sport programs and clubs into standardized categories. They also found inconsistency in how clubs assigned measurements to a given category. As an example, they found clubs differed in their conceptions of what constituted volunteer activity. Additionally, they found overlap between organizations; the same participants often participated in programs delivered by multiple organizations. Given the difficulties encountered in identifying the sum total of community sport organizations in British Columbia's Lower Mainland as well as the diversity between organizations, it would be extremely difficult for this research project to develop standardized indicators to measure and conduct quantitative research. Additionally, since specific, measurable impacts and benefits resulting from the Games for community sport organizations were not clearly outlined in bid and legacy documents, qualitative research allows for an exploration of various types of potential impacts.

An example of how exploratory, qualitative research can be applied to a situation where many complex, unique temporal and locational circumstances exist is a study by Long and Sanderson, who embarked on an undertaking "to assess whether there is in fact any evidence of the social benefits that accrue from sport and leisure initiatives in pursuit of 'community development' (or indeed any conviction that they exist)" (Long and

Sanderson, 2001, 187). They conducted a small-scale survey of Directors and Leisure Service professionals as well as in-depth interviews with people active in the field. They noted that although the research was based on informed opinions of practitioners in the field that this type of local case study plays an important role in evaluation.

We recognise that this exercise, based as it is upon the informed opinion and judgement of experienced practitioners, addresses only part of the task of evaluating the impact of sport and leisure initiatives although we would argue that local case study material of this kind can play an important role in such evaluation. Undoubtedly there will be calls for a comprehensive and 'rigorous' approach to derive quantitative measures of impact. However, it is likely that the difficulty of allowing for the influence of other factors in order to assess the 'net impact' attributable to initiatives will remain. ... It is easy to be dismissive of experiential evidence, after all 'they would say that wouldn't they'. However, some of the propaganda can be guarded against by the natural cynicism of the worker. Continuing the initiative we are embarked upon here will help to lay bare the interstices of the complex processes involved and the potential benefits for particular client groups in particular circumstances." (Long and Sanderson, 2001, 188)

They go on to speak about the benefits of this methodology when complex circumstances, such as those found in community sport situations, exist.

The need for exploratory research in the area of mega-event impacts is also a common theme in the academic literature. According to Gratton and Preuss (2008), even the meaning of the term legacy can vary greatly according to one's perspective. Given that Olympic Games Organizers and bid committees tend to focus on positive legacies, it is important for research to take account of "both planned and unplanned, positive and negative, intangible and tangible structures created through a sport event that remain after the event" (Gratton and Preuss, 2008, 1924). Leonardsen (2007) also cautions that profits for some groups that may arrive in the wake of a boom, or a mega event, will almost always come at a cost to others (Leonardson, 2007, 19).

Gratton and Preuss (2008), Waitt (2003), Barghchi et al. (2009), and Leonardsen (2007) all argue that there has been insufficient research conducted that focuses on the social impacts of the Games, for most studies focus on the value of sport facilities and economic impacts following the Games. Gratton and Preuss (2008) additionally claim

that existing studies, including the IOC-mandated study, do not provide a complete picture of social impacts.

The IOC-mandated impact study, to be conducted following each Games, was originally titled the Olympic Games Global Impact Assessment (OGGI). The name was modified in 2007 to the Olympic Games Impact (OGI). The IOC is aware of the importance of promoting the likelihood of event-related legacies in order to ensure continued civic support for hosting the Games as well as the need for the Games to reflect changing global values to warrant its continued status as a global institution (Holden et al, 2008, 1). Thus, it has become an IOC requirement that Games organizers must identify, at the bid stage of the event, potential positive and negative legacies for the host city and region. However, there are a number of limitations to the OGI, which utilizes predetermined, standardized indicators that may limit the ability of the research to explore unique Games experiences or unexpected outcomes. Additionally, the OGI completes its findings two years after the event is staged which, according to Gratton and Preuss (2008,1933), is too soon to measure the legacy of an event. Mangan (2008) echoes this opinion and further explains:

One major problem for any Olympic legacy is that the Organising Committee of an Olympic Games (OCOG) disbands within two years of the Games' conclusion. In consequence, the IOC's Olympic Games Global Impact (OGGI) evaluation process is failing to provide a full and adequate, both positive and negative, assessment of the legacies of each of the Games. Evaluation after two years does not allow this. While the IOC's OGGI project can provide helpful immediate evidence of the extent of implementation, it has been argued that: it will take fifteen to twenty years to measure the true legacy of an event such as the Olympic Games and the OGGI project finishes two years after the event has been held. So far nobody has been prepared to commit the research resources required to carry out scientific study of net legacy benefits. (Mangan, 2008, 1871)

Additional research supports the notion that the timing of mega-event legacy measurement matters. Preuss (2007) argues that the terms 'legacy' and 'impact' need to be distinguished because they differ in their nature and temporal reference. He contends impacts may be caused by a short-term 'shock' to the economy as a direct result of the event, such as consumption of the event by visitors, while the measurement of legacy has to consider all changes caused by a mega event over time. He continues:

Most often, the economic impact is measured because it is tangible and needed for political justification of investing scarce public resources in an event. Although economic mega event impacts are strong, they are short-term and therefore not a legacy. The economic legacy, however, is all additional economic activity based on greater productivity due to changes in the host cities' location factors (e.g. post-event tourism due to increased interest in the event city). Long-term economic growth requires a constant influx of autonomous money. This can only be reached if the mega event has changed the host city's structure. (Preuss, 2007, 213)

In the instance above Preuss is referring specifically to economic impacts and legacies; however, Kidd (2011) provides a broad based argument for considering long-term legacies. He raises two important points: first, some legacies only become apparent in the very long-term and, next, a variety of situational and cultural variables continue to influence the development of legacies. Kidd argues that despite the many negative impacts of the Montreal Olympics - including facility deficits, a refusal to hold a plebiscite to assess pre-bid support for the Games, construction deaths and delays - in the long-term the Montreal Games may be partially credited with transforming Montreal into "one of the most advanced and accomplished Olympic sports communities in Canada." (Kidd, 2011, p 2) He continues to argue that the entrepreneurial skills, base of volunteers and international branding gained as a result of the Games coupled with investments in transportation and technology as well as a series of social-democratic governments that brought about political and cultural change to the city enabled this very long-term transformation. Kidd continues:

In almost every games I have witnessed, there have been significant benefits alongside white elephants and abuses, and rarely have the benefits and costs been shared equally. No single sentence or report grade can do justice to the complexity—it has to be a multi-factor calculation. Secondly, we must realize that Olympic benefits can be significantly affected—enhanced or constrained--by the changing social, economic and political context. Thirdly, we must be sensitive to the maturation of Olympic legacies over long periods of time. (Kidd, 2011, 3)

Exploratory research might, therefore, help to identify outcomes and understand situational variables that may not be included in the OGI and other standardized Games impact assessments. According to Leonardsen (2007) it is difficult to know prior to undertaking exploratory research which variables will prove relevant, what the causal

relationships are and what duration is required for study. Because few previous studies have looked at the impacts of mega-events on community sport, exploratory research can assist in identifying potential impacts and indicators for future research. Leonardsen (2007,18) also contends that narratives and interviews provide the most effective means of providing initial understanding of these impacts. Dyck (2012) further expands on the exploratory advantages of qualitative research methods:

Anthropological research involves interacting, observing, and talking with people to gain detailed accounts of their personal experience of social life, their shared and individual ways of relating these, and their understandings of the manner in which their lives are shaped by various agencies and factors. This method of inquiry does not typically seek to obtain statistically representative findings of the type survey research, when properly conducted, is capable of producing. Instead, it aims both to obtain detailed understandings of the workings of social processes as well as to examine critically the starting assumptions, questions, and analytical categories that the anthropologist brings with him/ her into the research project. (Dyck, 2012, 9)

As previously noted, community sport organizations are not a homogenous group of entities and as a result different organizations may have experienced different outcomes, or even no impacts at all, as a result of the Games. The choice to focus on interviews with local members of the sport community is also supported by Girginov and Hills (2008) who, in their analysis of the capacity of the Olympic Games to promote sport participation, state:

It [sport development] also places local actors centre stage, as any meaningful vision of change in individuals, communities and organizations produced by sports has to be derived from local symbols, knowledge and behaviours (Girginov and Hills, 2008, 2094).

This research project entails both a qualitative survey and semi-structured ethnographic<sup>1</sup> interviews. Community sport leaders were approached via an email survey that featured open-ended questions. At the end of the survey respondents were asked if they would be willing to participate in a semi-structured interview.

Three sections follow this introduction. The literature review outlines the evolving nature of community sport in Canada and scholarly work on the relevant impacts and expectations of a mega-event. The data section follows, presenting qualitative survey results and interview findings, followed by an analysis section. The paper will conclude with a summary as well as recommendations for future research.

<sup>1</sup> Ethnographic interviews were employed given the exploratory nature of this project. Scholars such as Hostein and Gubrium (1995) forward that interviews are social interactions. Respondents are narrators or storytellers and ethnographers also play a role in constructing the story. The interview process is collaborative, allowing for new directions of exploration as the interview unfolds. This type of interview is not designed to be systematic or standardized.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Sport and Urban Life**

Sport participation has been linked to a range of individual and social benefits – such as improved health, urban crime reduction, economic regeneration, and building of social capital – to be discussed later in this section. While there may be merit to some of these claims, particularly those related to health benefits, nevertheless, according to Long and Sanderson (2001), Allison and Coalter (1996), and others, further research is needed before many of these claims can be fully supported. Some of the sport development literature (e.g., Fraser-Thomas et al, 2005) and especially the policy documents (e.g. Mullolland, 2008) needs to be approached with some caution. Sport policy documents are often intended to secure funding for an organization or program(s). Yet what is clear – based on the sheer prevalence of sport facilities, sports fields and other sport amenities as well as the number of sport participants and volunteers at the local level in addition to the pervasiveness of community sport organizations – is that sport is an integral part of the fabric of an urban community.

This section will briefly consider community sport participation as well as some of the claimed impacts sport may have on an urban community. It will be followed by an overview of how community sport operates in Canada.

Research by Ifedi (2008), examining sport participation rates in Canada based on the General Social Survey (GSS) conducted in 2005, has concluded that the participation rates among adults (aged 15 and older) are generally decreasing. In 1992 9.6 million Canadians (or 45.1 percent of the population aged 15 and older) participated in sport. By 2005 the number of Canadians participating in sport was 7.3 million or 28 percent of the population. The definition used to identify sport participation is “an activity that involves two or more participants engaging for the purpose of competition; involves formal rules and procedures; requires tactics and strategies, specialized neuromuscular

skills and a high degree of difficulty and effort” (Statistics Canada, 2005, 1). Bloom et al. (2005) note that this definition is flawed because it excludes activities such as cycling for transportation, aerobics, hiking, jogging and others. Despite this limitation, Thibault and Kikulus (2011) note that this decrease in participation is a disturbing trend among the adult population, especially given the aging population and the potentially increased health care costs associated with a sedentary lifestyle. Participation among children aged 5 – 14 has also seen a demonstrated decrease in participation rates according to Clark (2008). Clark reports that in 2005 51 percent of children aged 5 to 14 had regularly taken part in sports during the previous year (56 per cent of boys and 44 percent of girls). This is a decrease from the 1992 rates of 66 percent for boys and 49 percent of girls. Clark also cites a number of indicators that influence sport involvement. Higher educational attainment on the part of parents correlates with a higher likelihood of child participation in sport as does a higher parental income level. Additionally, immigrant participation is lower than participation by Canadian-born residents, and participation varies by region, with higher participation in smaller cities and rural areas.

When considering community sport participation levels it is also necessary to consider rates of volunteerism. Volunteering provides, among other things, a potential means for individuals to connect with others within an urban community. Moreover most community sport organizations could not exist without volunteers as they are required to assist in varying ways to make possible activities and programs. Ifedi (2008) notes that the aggregate numbers of volunteers in community and amateur sport in Canada has increased between 1998 and 2005. More than two million Canadians volunteered as amateur sport administrators or helpers in 2005, up by 18 percent from 1998.

The data relating to decreasing sport participation in Canada is disturbing because positive health outcomes (both physical and mental health) are a well-documented outcome of sport participation (Bailey, 2005). Physical inactivity is considered a modifiable risk factor for a number of health problems including cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis, obesity, high blood pressure, and depression (Warburton et al., 2006). Health is also a strong motivator for sport participation among adults. Ifedi’s 2008 research reports that in 2005 66 percent of sport participants described their health as “very good” to “excellent” in contrast to only 49 percent of non-participants.



Beyond these individual health benefits, sport has also been discursively connected, especially as part of a broader community development plan, to a number of mooted community benefits such as urban crime reduction, economic regeneration, and building of social capital (e.g., Fraser-Thomas, 2005; Coalter, 2008). Sport has further been reported to help shape our national and cultural identities (Bloom, Grant & Watt, 2005). As mentioned in the opening of this paper, some of these claims have influenced public policy. However, Coalter (2008), Bailey (2005) and others find that the actual contribution sport can make to social inclusion and a broader agenda, including social and economic regeneration as well as crime reduction, is inconclusive. They argue that more research is required to better understand the contributions sport might actually make to these community development strategies: "As far as the urban context is concerned, much of this empirical research still needs to be done. ... The benefits of sport for economic and social regeneration in cities therefore remains a theoretical proposition that still requires testing" (Henry and Gratton, 2001, 309).

Henry and Gratton (2001) extend their argument and speak to the complexity of measuring many of the claimed benefits of sport:

Our criticisms of poorly expressed sports policy, lack of adequate monitoring and evaluation of such policies, and lack of evidence of successful outcomes does not mean that sport does not have the potential to deliver such benefits. There is a need to target and solve the problem of output measurement and improve the level of monitoring of sports programmes whether aimed at economic or social regeneration, or both (Henry and Gratton, 2001, 314).

Henry and Gratton (2001) argue that any social and economic benefits accrued as a result of urban sport policy are inextricably linked to the situational and policy context as well as other influences. As an example, individual health benefits may result as an outcome of sport participation and these may potentially result in lower health care costs for the community. However, in a case such as that of an individual benefiting from new social contacts as a result of their participation in sport that also translates into a vehicle for greater civic participation, an oft discussed claim, it is very difficult to measure or attribute the circumstances under which this may translation may occur. The connection between 'social capital' and urban sport participation provides an interesting

example for further discussion of how claimed sport related benefits, even though not thoroughly documented, have influenced public policy.

Putnam (2000) was the first to apply social capital theory to sport: “To build bridging social capital<sup>2</sup> requires that we transcend our social and political and professional identities to connect with people unlike ourselves. That is why team sports provide good venues for social capital creation” (Putnam, 2000, 411). The sport and social capital literature is primarily based on the concept that the more connections individuals make within their communities the better off they will be emotionally, socially, physically and economically (Nicholson and Hoye, 2008). This argument suggests that sport can act as a vehicle for making connections, thus facilitating social integration and civic participation. This theory has translated into a variety of community-based, public policy approaches based on the assumption that sport can have a real impact on a variety of economic and social problems. An example of a social sports policy is an effort to increase social inclusion of women, people of low-income or immigrants through sport programming.

Swyer (2010) – in her book that explores how people create and maintain the experience of community – questions the relevance of using social capital as a model for evaluating the strength of a community. She argues that Putnam’s statistics relied on a baseline measure of civic engagement that emerged during the early cold war period. She asserts that “community is an emotional and often irrational experience” (Swyer, 2010, 6) and that “American culture supports an array of models of social connectivity that operate in different combinations to meet the demands of a different era.” (Swyer, 2010, 5) Swyer also questions the notion of ‘capital’ implicit in Putnam’s definitions of social capital: “If the purpose of being in a community is the ability to get what one wants more easily, community becomes something instrumental.” (Swyer, 2010, 6). As

<sup>2</sup> Putnam (2000) describes bridging social capital as outward looking and inclusive (working or making friends with people who are different from you, such as a different ethnicity). This is contrasted, by Putnam, with bonding social capital – described as inward looking and exclusive.

an alternative, Swyer suggests, “Qualitative measures allow for exploration of the conditions of possibility for community and the practices required to make the possibility of community a reality.” (Swyer, 2010, 6)

The ability of sport to generate economic benefits is equally unproven. The ability of policy initiatives such as sport tourism strategies or the public subsidization of professional sport teams to deliver economic benefits is debatable. Schimmel (2001) writes:

First, there is no city-as-a-whole that benefits uniformly from sport-related economic initiatives. Urban development strategies produce winner and loser social groups. The fact that urban policy connected to sport ‘motivates people to rally round’ ... is cause for concern, not celebration. Second, our analyses of sport events, or stadium development impact, or sport as ‘wise investment’, must include an examination of the broader urban context in which sport is located. In other words, while micro-analyses might be useful in separating economic myth from reality; [sic] they are usually studies of projects, not the urban policies that legitimate them. Policies are not made by ‘cities’, they are made by people who have various material interests in and differing understandings of the decisions that are made (Stone, 1987). In addition to the fact that sport matters, is the fact that politics matters. (Schimmel, 2001, 259)

It is worth noting that claims about the social and economic impacts of sport development may often be linked, though neither is well understood. Kasimati (2003) and Crabbe (2008) argue that sport development programs may be most effective as one part of a larger development agenda and caution that the simple existence of sport opportunities does not guarantee the generation of social capital. Henry and Gratton (2001) summarize:

The strength of the theoretical arguments, with a range of indicative and associative information and anecdotal evidence, have led most commentators to agree that sports activities have a positive role to play as ingredients in wider ranging initiatives to address issues of health promotion, diversion from crime, education and employment initiatives and community development and social inclusion. However, there is a clear need for an improvement in the systems for monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of sports-centred initiatives. (Henry and Gratton, 2001, 313)

Thus, it seems clear there is a need for further research related to the potential impacts of sport policy as part of a public policy plan to better identify where and when sport policy and investment in sport strategies can make a positive impact.

## **2.2. Mega-Event Literature**

The previous section provides a general perspective on the role of sport in the city and some potential policy implications. This section will explore some of the circumstances that may arise for cities and sport organizations with the hosting of a mega-event.

Hall (1992) provides the following definition of mega-events: “Mega-events, otherwise referred to as hallmark or special events, are major fairs, festivals, expositions, cultural and sporting events which are held on either a regular or a one-off basis” (Hall, 1992, 263). Mega-events have come to play a role in urban tourism and economic development strategies. As cities increasingly compete with other cities on a global scale for tourism, international business investment and skilled workers, mega-events play a role in place marketing. Makusen (1996) refers to this type of place marketing, or marketing based on the promotion of a city to attract and retain mobile capital and people, as becoming ‘sticky’. Mega-events are often said to enhance the image of a city because they can draw international attention and may provide social, economic and physical legacies.

Again, while the range of claimed impacts of mega-events is vast, the current discussion will focus on those claims that most directly relate to community sport organizations. Gratton and Preuss (2008) argue that the host population gains knowledge and skills from staging a mega-sport event. Areas of skill and knowledge development may include those pertaining to event organization, human resource management, provision of security, hospitality and other services. Misener and Mason (2008) further contend that one of the non-economic benefits to a city of event hosting includes the development of new community and social networks.

The literature concerning the ability of sport development initiatives and mega-events to foster social networks, as with the literature concerning sport and social

capital, is substantial in quantity but mixed in terms of its capacity to demonstrate quantifiable outcomes. Gratton and Preuss (2008) argue that hosting the Games requires the successful cooperation of sport organizations, media, government agencies and more. This type of interaction clearly creates networks. Poynter and MacRury (2009), in an article relating to Games legacies, contend that a network of institutional relationships (national, local, public and private) develops around the Games organizing committee. They further explain that these 'institutional relationships' may interact directly with the community (possibly in partnership with public or private entities) to achieve mutually agreed goals. The 'community' in this case is defined as the area, group, or place targeted for a Games renewal or legacy strategy. They caution that the level of community involvement can be "confined to tokenistic forms of consultation". (Poynter & MacRury, 2009, 308) Poynter and MacRury also note that the type of governance structure in place in the Games host city matters. Given the number of 'stakeholders' involved in staging the Games, Poynter and MacRury argue that the legacy initiatives that receive the most attention may be influenced by the type of local governance in place in the Games host region. For example; these 'institutional relationships' may be largely state-centered (such was the case in Games host city Beijing, 2008); a structure dominated by private or corporate interests (Atlanta Games, 1996); a multi-level partnership between federal, state and local authorities (Sydney Games, 2000) or another of the many additional governance models that exist. In their brief review of governance structures Poynter and MacRury (2009) claim that "the mode of partnership working – between the state, market and wider society- is critical to the success or otherwise of the Games achieved between the 'public good' and 'commercial' legacies or outcomes that result from hosting the event." (Poynter and MacRury, 2009, 310)

In a case study related to governance and Vancouver's Games, VanWynsberghe et al. (2012) provide insight related to the interaction of neoliberal local governance and social inclusion policies:

Our evidence suggests that Games planning processes have become even more powerful instruments for the promotion of liberal philosophies through neoliberal local governance regimes; social inclusion is promised through the proliferation of ever more institutionally diffused public-private partnerships. With the neoliberal shift from public service provision to

private sector entrepreneurialism, individual employability becomes the primary goal of, and normative justification for, social inclusion policies. Heavily circumscribed VANOC efforts at specific types of social inclusion have met with limited success, but it appears clear that the fusion of transnationally mobile mega-events and prevailing doctrines of neoliberal entrepreneurialism has become a significant new framework for local urban social policy. (Vanwynsberghe et al., 2012,1)

The authors of this study focused on a specific case of linked VANOC initiatives; (ICICS)<sup>3</sup> commitments made by VANOC to social inclusion during the planning phase of the Games and a specific inner-city program (BOB)<sup>4</sup> that developed to support these commitments. This research is especially interesting for the current discussion given that the authors conduct their analysis in the current Vancouver political climate involving “centre-left traditions in urban politics, and more recent (mega-event-driven) predilections for market solutions over redistributive state-driven measures.” (Vanwynsberghe et al., 2012, 2) The authors demonstrate that this climate “accelerates certain kinds of local policies dealing with issues of ‘social inclusion” (Vanwynsberghe et al., 2012, 2) and, in fact, the Games may come to serve “as an instrument of neoliberal urban entrepreneurialism.” (Vanwynsberghe et al., 2012,7) Specifically, the authors assert:

Social inclusion is a quasi-concept (Bernard, 2000) used to describe the process of negotiating a shared culture in order to realize people’s capacities to act as citizen (Mitchell and Shillington, 2002; Shakir, 2004). By asserting that social inclusion is a quasi-concept, we are highlighting its use as a neoliberal tactic for seeking consensus on the idea of broad-

<sup>3</sup> The Inner-City Inclusivity Commitment Statement (ICICS), a policy document specifying a total of 37 promises, divided into 14 categories (Employment and Training, Housing, Civil Liberties, etc.) intended to ensure the wide distribution of Games benefits while protecting vulnerable people and communities from negative impacts. Particular emphasis was placed on protecting vulnerable residents in Vancouver's poorest neighbourhood, the Downtown Eastside (DTES). (Vanwynsberghe et al., 2012,3)

<sup>4</sup> Building Opportunities with Business Inner-City Society (BOB)’s explicit mandate is to support new small businesses and local procurement opportunities for entrepreneurs and residents of the Downtown Eastside. BOB’s efforts became intertwined with Games-related objectives of social inclusion after the codification of a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) for the building of the Olympic Village in Southeast False Creek. (Vanwynsberghe et al., 2012,10)

based engagement. Consensus is forged through legitimating the concept of social inclusion through expert opinion, ties to social values, and an active discounting of evidence suggesting systematic inequality and marginalization. The neoliberal problem, the real problem to which labour participation is the answer, is unemployability (Mitchell and Shillington, 2002) and the idea is that participation in the labour force is a panacea for all social ills. In terms of 2010 Games planning, then, we assert that part of social inclusion's attractiveness is that it masks a reality of selective engagement with community capacity opportunities (VanWynsberghe et al., 2011) and it does so under the guise of mega-event planning, expertise and social science. (Vanwynsberghe et al., 2012, 8)

The authors in this case found limited capacity for Games related social-inclusion policy to effect the core issues they were ostensibly trying to address. Specifically, chronic issues endemic to Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, including homelessness and injection drug use, were not addressed by the employment-related policies that were developed by VANOC. The authors cite a number of additional potential intervening factors to VANOC's successful implementation of ICIS commitments such as a lack of expertise in employment initiatives among BOB board members and tight timelines associated with Games planning; however, their primary argument is that these types of social-inclusion policies may be too limited to address complex societal issues and may result in selective community engagement. Thus, they argue, more rigorous measures of these initiatives should be conducted.

It is not a far stretch to consider whether a type of social-inclusion policy was also employed by VANOC in its efforts to encourage community sport development in the region. As will be noted in the interview section of this document, a number of new sport development initiatives that received Games funding focused on opportunity provision for marginalized populations. But it is unclear if these initiatives were the ones most required or desired by the community. VanWynsberghe et al. (2012) conclude their article by noting that "The 2012 Games in London, for example, are forecast to reveal unprecedented levels of government leveraging of the sport mega-event to physical activity and performance across the United Kingdom." (VanWynsberghe et al., 2012, 17) Likewise, it remains to be seen if sport development initiatives in Vancouver were able to make an impact on the broad, societal issues of increasing obesity and declining physical activity.

Girginov and Hills (2008) identify another condition surrounding the ability of mega-events to effect social change. They caution that sport development requires ongoing vision and long-term commitment. The appeal of an Olympic related sport development strategy, according to Girginov and Hills (2008), relates to the connection of Olympic aspirations and social progress. They argue that development requires a long-term commitment, beyond the relatively short time period required to stage the Games, as well as the ability to address program access needs of different communities as well Olympic and non-Olympic sports. Poynter and MacRury (2009) further contribute to this argument:

One approach to evaluating advantage may arise from a longitudinal study of the host city encompassing the pre-event, event and post-event phases. Such a study may provide insights into the relationship between the published objectives of the host city, contained in the initial tender document or 'bid-book' presented to the IOC, and the actual outcomes achieved at the end of a period of, say, three to five years after the Games has taken place (Poynter and MacRury, 2009, 306)

The timing of event assessment is an important matter to consider when evaluating event legacy. MacAloon (2008) also comments on another source of influence for Games social and legacy impact planning. MacAloon speaks to the influence of the discourse surrounding the Games on the legacy planning of Games organizers. He writes: "patterns of organizational discourse are sensitive indicators of changing institutional arrangements and shifting power relations among stakeholders. As a very broad scholarly literature has long since demonstrated, organizational discursive routines are powerful modes of social control as well (MacAloon, 2008, 2061). MacAloon argues that many bid cities understand that legacy planning is an essential component of the bid document for a host candidate to gain the favour of the IOC. A benefit of this, according to MacAloon, is a better understanding by bid cities that legacy planning should involve social benefits as well as planning for economic benefits and facility legacies:

OCOGs are furthermore showing themselves innovative in this direction. Vancouver 2010 is credited with having introduced the slogan and a concerted programme of 'Legacy Now' (though this programme derives largely from the Toronto 2008 bid ..., meant to mark and encourage the delivery of lasting community benefits at each stage of an Olympic



project, not just when the games are concluded. The 'legacy now' concept and expression have spread very quickly through younger Olympic bodies, such as the 2016 applicant cities. This is an exceptionally important development, in my opinion, because it encourages communities not to focus so exclusively on longer-term bricks and mortar projects and cost/benefit projections that they lose sight of the real pay-off in new social and political capital that can be created in early stages of a bid, as normally segregated urban status segments and class fractions are very nearly forced into communication with one another. (MacAloon, 2008, 2065)

However, MacAloon argues that many Games organizers and bid cities understand how to use the language of legacy planning to further a specific cause (such as a successful bid to host the Games) but these organizers do not understand the historical context necessary for effective legacy planning:

Today's Olympic 'legacy managers' betray their hidden relationship with the Olympic 'brand managers' here, and not just in their common origins in business culture. Far too aware of the antagonism created by brand-speak among 'Olympic movement types', they and their international consultant allies have adopted the seemingly more encompassing and innocent language of legacy... For them, Olympic heritage – the sum total of accumulated Olympic cultural, historical, political, moral, and symbolic capital – is merely one part, indeed an instrumental background factor in the creation of future Olympic legacies. The actual fact of the matter is the reverse: future legacies are added to or subtracted from the existing heritage accumulation, without whose capital no further legacy projects (much less any legacy management) would be possible at all. (MacAloon 2008, 2068)

MacAloon's point may be taken as a caution that much of the language used by Games organizers, particularly concerning legacies, may involve rhetoric with a specific purpose.

Finally, Toohey (2008) provides some insight related specifically to the Games and their sport related impacts. Writing about the Sydney Games as a warning to future host cities, Toohey advises that previous Games hosts have not always succeeded in increasing community sport participation post-event:

As the Olympic Games is a sports contest, it is not unreasonable to expect that a sports legacy should be one of the more robust outcomes for an Olympic host nation, not necessarily in terms of medals won during

the games and any prestige which ensues from this, but, more importantly, in terms of increased participation in sport after the event. In terms of the Sydney 2000 sports legacy, the NSW Department of Sport and Recreation planned a policy for the post-Olympic use of sports facilities. Yet, as will be made clear later, it remains doubtful whether Australians have become more physically active as a result of the Sydney Olympics. (Toohey, 2008, 1954)

Toohey also provides an interesting note related to the dichotomous objectives of elite and community sport as it relates to the Olympic legacy in Sydney:

From a sporting perspective, elite sport in Australia has profited at the expense of sport for all. The sporting infrastructure legacy is improving, but at continued ongoing cost to the New South Wales' taxpayer. Any social impacts that were claimed as a result of the Games appear to have dissipated. (Toohey, 2008, 1953)

Finally, Toohey (2011) provides a strong statement relating to the importance of positive sport development legacies: "To be truly sustainable in sport each Olympic Games should ensure that the practice of sport for the host community, especially recreational sport, is improved and measured." (Toohey, 2011, 1)

This section has raised a number of important matters that provide context for this research project when considering the influence of a mega-event. The next section will provide context specific to the Canadian sport situation.

### **2.3. Sport Development in Canada**

Sport in Canada involves a complex series of networks and organizations. The "core" sport system, as termed by the Canadian Sport Policy (CSP, 2002), involves a hierarchical structure which is depicted as reaching from the local club level, to the provincial level represented by provincial sport organizations (PSOs) to the national level represented by national sport organizations (NSOs) through to the international level. At the international level the International Federation (IF) for a given sport sets international administrative guidelines and, in the case of Olympic sports, communicates with the IOC. PSOs and NSOs develop and deliver specific sport programs and services such as the promotion of sport participation and coach and skill development that target

provincial or national audiences respectively (CSRP, 2012). It is important to highlight, as noted in the introductory discussion of CSOs, that the vast majority of community programming at the local club level is funded independently of federal and provincial government support. Funding at the local community level is most often generated through participant fees and fundraising, with most club services provided by volunteers. Local governments generally do not fund CSOs directly but they are important supporters of community sport as they are often the only provider of recreation facilities and sports fields (Thibault and Kikulus, 2011).

Dyck (2012) describes some characteristics of youth community sport in Canada that helps frame this section:

In the case of community sports in Canada, transgenerational relationships are a hallmark of activities designed and controlled by adult coaches and officials but played by child and youth athletes. Community sports also tend to be underpinned by concerns with child rearing that preoccupy parents as well as public agencies, governments and businesses. At one level community sports are overwhelmingly volunteer, unpaid, and amateur activities that require goodwill and cooperation on the part of coaches, organizers, parents, and athletes. Yet in recent years an ostensibly auxiliary but manifestly powerful set of sport advocacy and governance agencies has been erected above the local level, and these entities do furnish livelihoods for a growing number of sports experts and planners. (Dyck, 2012, 12)

A 2008 study of governance and accountability in the Alberta sport system found that responsibility for implementation of sport programs almost always falls to community organizations (Reid & Edwards, 2008, 4). Reid & Edwards also provide further detail regarding the complexity of accountability at the PSO level:

PSOs are not governed by, and have no direct structural link to, the provincial government. On this basis, they would not be required to report or be accountable to the provincial government. The PSOs are self governed, restricted only by their status as non-profit organizations and therefore must function according to their own by-laws. ... It must also be noted that the structural relationship between PSOs and other organizations may result in multiple accountees for the PSO. ... PSOs are governed by their membership, and are certainly accountable to them, and it is possible the PSO may even have accountee/accountor relationships with sponsors. PSOs may also, in cases where they provide

monetary assistance to clubs or other organizations, be in the role of accountee. (Reid & Edwards, 2008,17)

This quote speaks to the oft-played role of PSOs as liaisons. PSOs frequently liaise with NSOs or other higher-level organizations in the development of 'sport plans' or provincial/ national 'strategic sport mandates'. Yet, PSOs are generally beholden to CSOs to implement elements of these mandates. As previously mentioned, because CSOs generally function independently of PSOs in their daily operations, they may not have a direct incentive to deliver elements of broad sport plans developed at higher levels. Generally, PSOs attract and maintain member CSOs because PSOs provide insurance coverage for their members. In most cases every member of a CSO must also pay an annual fee to become a member of the associated PSO to be covered by insurance while participating in an activity as a member of the CSO.

A wide variety of organizations not affiliated with sport governing bodies, such as municipalities, schools, non-profit organizations, clubs and others, also deliver sport programs at the community level. Although these organizations play a role in community sport delivery, the focus of this project will be limited to community sport organizations because they are the predominant community sport providers. In the case of most community sport organizations, their purpose is the delivery of clearly specified sport programs and their main funding source is participant fees. Conversely, in the case of many of the other sport-related program providers mentioned above, the organizations often provide a variety of programs, unrelated to sport, in addition to sport programs and may be subject to changing political or funding mandates. According to Bailey (2005) sport differs from 'Physical Education,' an area of the school curriculum designed to improve student competence [referring to student physical or athletic competence] and ability to perform a variety of activities. A more comprehensive definition of sport than the one used in the 2005 Canadian General Social Survey (outlined above) is provided by the Council of Europe's European Sport Charter. Sport development is defined as: "all forms of physical activity which, through casual or organized participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental well-being, forming relationships or obtaining results in competitions at all levels (Council of Europe's European Sports Charter, 2001).

The sport system in Canada has been in a continual state of evolution during the past half century. Macintosh and Whitson (1990) argue that the framework for Canada's sport system began to emerge in 1968 following an election promise by Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau that sport could serve as a powerful force for national unity. The Trudeau government subsequently established a Task Force on Sport, and in 1969 a report from this Task Force criticized NSOs in Canada for their 'kitchen table' approach to operations, characterized, in the view of the report, by management by part-time volunteers and unequal regional representation. The Task Force promoted a 'professionalization' of NSOs (Macintosh and Whitson, 1990). Between 1969 and 2005 many larger sport organizations became more bureaucratically structured while other smaller or newer organizations remained volunteer driven. However, beginning around 1990 Thibault and Babiuk (2006) describe the next phase of sport system development. This shift followed the Ben Johnson drug scandal. Johnson was the winner of the men's 100 m sprint at the 1988 Olympics but subsequently had his medal removed for testing positive for banned steroids.<sup>5</sup> Following the Johnson scandal, Justice Charles L. Dubin, who was appointed to conduct an inquiry into this issue, concluded that the Federal Government's role in the administration of sport had reached a level that was never intended and was not appropriate for the sport system. Following the publication of Dubin's report the Canadian sport system began to focus on what has been termed an "athlete-centred" approach. This approach prioritized the development of high performance athletes and promoted a shift from administrative funding towards direct investment in high performance athletes. This athlete-centered approach virtually ignored CSOs in Canadian sport policy, though CSOs continued to operate and provide programming as in the past. In fact, policy changes at this level have had far less impact on CSOs than PSOs and NSOs due to their relative independence from government funding. Thibault and Babiuk (2006) found that change within the sport system, even at provincial and higher levels, is slow and complex. The multitude of stakeholders and organizations - all with different values, interests, and objectives - do not adopt change as a cohesive unit. Thibault and Babiuk (2006) found, in general, that by 2005 some

<sup>5</sup> For more information see Dubin (1990)].

high-performance athletes and sport organizations were continuing to call for more investment in high-performance sport while other sport organizations were calling for a renewed focus on sport participation. During this time sport funding also faced increased competition from areas such as health care, education and other social program fields also facing financial shortfalls. Thus, criticisms of the over-emphasis on high-performance sport, as well as competition for funding from other sectors, began to spur another new phase in Canadian sport development.

Around 2005 the next phase for Canada's sport system began to evolve with the emergence of the Long Term Athlete Development Model (LTAD). LTAD is a seven-stage framework designed to inform the practices of sport organizations at all levels. The model is meant to encourage more Canadians to remain active for life as well as to help Canadians win more medals at international events by encouraging appropriate sport experiences at every stage of participation and development (Canadian Sport for Life, 2012). The LTAD framework was endorsed by all Canadian provincial and territorial Ministers for Sport. However, at this early stage in the lifecycle of this model it is not yet possible to determine how this broad framework may apply at the community level.

The Canadian Sport Policy (CSP) is another document that intends to direct the development of sport in Canada. This policy was initially developed in 2002 and was designed to extend to 2012 (CSP, 2002). The policy is currently undergoing a renewal process. In the latter part of 2011 the policy renewal process generated a discussion paper titled *Towards a Renewed Canadian Sport Policy* and a national gathering, involving hundreds of sport representatives from across the country, was convened to provide feedback on the proposed vision. Representatives at this national gathering included national level coaches, national, provincial and professional sport organizations, recreation professionals, provincial government sport representatives, academics, aboriginal sport organizations representatives and other agencies. These representatives were primarily professionals in their fields; indeed, there were few, if any, representatives from CSOs. The discussions did hear an argument that the current policy does not capture the increased focus that needs to be placed on community level sport. Specifically, related to community sport, the consultations highlighted:

The existence of a vibrant field of sport practice self-sustaining at the community level...This field is often organized and funded independently of the 'core' sport system, and is often intentionally motivated by the achievement of community-building outcomes (as opposed to the achievement of 'sport for sport'). (CSP Discussion paper, 2012,18)

The consultation identified a need for a more accurate and comprehensive depiction of how sport is practiced in Canada at the community level as well as greater engagement between members of the "core" sport system and those in community sport. Representatives felt this engagement at the community level is necessary due to "differences between the motivations, objectives, contexts and other variables characterizing community-based programs and those characterizing more traditional athlete development programs delivered by national and provincial/territorial sport organizations" (CSP Discussion paper, 2012, 20).

In recent years a new type of professional sport organization has also emerged. These new organizations are dedicated to expanding sport capacity in one or another specific area and often act as 'advisory' bodies. "Own the Podium" is one such professional sport organization, formed in 2005 to help Canada's athletes win the most number of medals of any nation at the 2010 Olympic Games (Own the Podium, 2012). Funded by the Canadian federal government, this initiative was, and remains, controversial for the amount of government investment received and the ambitious, results-oriented objectives (Coyne, 2010). This organization, needless to say, is highly focused on elite level sport.

Own the Podium (OTP) is a partnership between the major national funding partners for high performance sport in Canada: Sport Canada, the Canadian Olympic Committee (COC) and the Canadian Paralympic Committee (CPC). OTP supports Canada's National Sport Organizations (NSOs) in their goal to increase medal counts by Canadian athletes at Olympic and Paralympic Summer and Winter Games. ... OTP represents a new way of achieving high performance sport objectives. Pooled resources, expert based decision making, and targeted sport funding are just a few of the defining characteristics of OTP that will help Canada achieve its international performance objectives. (Canadian Heritage, Own the Podium, 2011, para 1)

The BC Sport Agency is another new 'advisory' organization currently in its early stages of development. The mission of the BC Sport Agency is: "To lead a united sport sector in a culture of achievement to make sport and physical activity relevant for all British Columbians of every skill level at all ages – providing opportunity and access to play, train, compete, succeed and live an active, healthy life" (BC Sport Agency, 2012, para 1) It remains to be seen if this organization will extend greater influence or coordination at the community level and, if so, what type of influence.

## **2.4. Challenges Facing Community Sport in Canada**

The Canadian Sport Policy renewal document cites some of the larger of the perceived challenges affecting organizations' ability to achieve their objectives:

While still fundamentally dependent on volunteers, the decline in volunteer participation and the increasing need for salaried positions to ensure quality programming pose special challenges. In addition, a number of fundamental elements need to be strengthened: coaching and instruction, officiating, facilities and equipment, interscholastic sport and organizational capacity. Equally important is stronger alignment between the various elements of the system to improve efficiencies and effectiveness, from the community to provincial/territorial and national levels of sport. And finally, governments and sport organizations need to continue their efforts to partner with the private sector in pursuit of common objectives. (Canadian Sport Policy 2.0, 2012a, 14)

The academic literature on sport does not always identify the same challenges as those put forward by the Canadian Sport Policy renewal document. While the quotation above mentions a decline in volunteers, Ifedi (2008) found an increase in the number of volunteers acting as coaches and sport administrators. However, Hoye et al (2009) argue that many of the volunteer positions do require specialized knowledge, training and skills and, as a result, community sport organizations need to continue to attract, train and maintain volunteers with the necessary skill set to run their programs effectively.

According to Hoye et al (2009), one of the most significant challenges facing many sport organizations is the increasing cost of program provision. These costs are often passed along to participants resulting in a barrier for participation among lower-



and even middle-income families. Another issue facing sport organizations is that of attracting participants. Hoye et al (2009) note a trend away from traditional sport participation to more casual engagement because fewer people are willing or able to commit to a full season with a sport organization. Many families, and especially single parent families and families with two working parents, cannot commit to the time demands of more demanding forms of sport participation. Next, many sport organizations are unable to meet program demands because they have insufficient access to the required facilities to run their programs. On this point, the academic literature and the Canadian Sport Policy renewal document agree. Auld (2008) argues that a common failing in sport development initiatives is the inability of governments and funding agencies to clearly specify which types of programs they are trying to encourage.

## **3. Methodology**

### **3.1. Population studied**

The participants studied in this project include leaders of local community sport organizations within British Columbia's Lower Mainland as well as PSO and agency sport leaders. The study involves both a survey and semi-structured interviews. Community sport leaders were approached via an email survey comprised of open-ended questions, located in Appendix A. At the end of the survey respondents were asked if they would be willing to participate in a semi-structured interview. Email addresses were obtained through publicly available websites, including Sport BC and the websites of the individual organizations. As per the protocol approved by the SFU Office of Research Ethics, survey respondents were provided an explanation of the research purpose and the voluntary nature of the survey and interviews. Surveys were sent to representatives of summer and winter sport organizations as well as representatives of both provincial sport organizations and local sport organizations. As outlined in that part of the literature review section of this paper related to community sport organizations, sport leaders may be either paid staff members or volunteers. The important factor for selecting respondents was that they must be eligible to speak or more simply, to answer questions about their experience on behalf of their organizations by virtue of holding a position on the Board of Directors or as an administrator for the organization. Again, as noted in the community sport section of the literature review, active leaders in the sport community are appropriate subjects for research because they are the driving force behind the implementation of most community sport initiatives. They are familiar with daily operations, and, given their direct involvement at the local level their views often reflect experience with successful and unsuccessful programs. Representatives of provincial sport organizations are also included in this project. PSO representatives were included because they have a mandate to work with organizations

at the community levels. Moreover a PSO's perspective as a governing body offers an interesting perspective for comparison.

The organizations and respondents contacted for this project will not be named in this paper, in accordance with the approved SFU Office of Ethics Research protocol, with one exception. An additional interview was sought and obtained with a representative of LegaciesNow, the organization with primary responsibility for overseeing Olympic legacy program implementation for the local sport community (and other targeted legacy initiatives). The interview was conducted with the Chief Executive Officer of LegaciesNow who was speaking in his official capacity as a public figure.

Both the survey and the semi-structured interviews were qualitative in nature and, although perspectives were sought from a range of organizations and leadership positions, the methodology is not intended to be statistically significant or representative. A key component of the study is the importance placed on gathering the highly particular and varied perceptions and experiences of respondents related to changes or impacts surrounding the Games. The open-ended nature of the questions was designed to allow people to freely offer their interpretation of impacts (or lack of impacts) upon their particular sports and organizations precisely because the research question is exploratory in nature. This approach allows for surprising or otherwise unconsidered Games impacts to be discovered. It is hoped that discoveries from this research could help begin to inform direction for a further, more comprehensive research project that would test the impacts and experiences uncovered through this project. Additionally, as previously noted, the local sport community is not a community with well-defined parameters for measurement, and there is a tremendous degree of variation between organizational needs and operations.

## **3.2. Qualitative Survey Overview**

There were several objectives attached to the qualitative survey. First the survey was designed to provide an initial test of the research question, to ensure that respondents understood the intent of the research and saw value in this purpose. Next, responses from the survey were useful in helping to inform questions for the semi-

structured interviews. Finally, the survey was used as a platform to recruit interview candidates. A total of sixty (60) survey requests were sent via email. Thirty (30) survey requests were sent to representatives of Provincial Sport Associations (PSOs) and thirty (30) survey requests were sent to representatives of community sport clubs. One follow-up request was sent to everyone who received the survey request if they had not already completed the survey. Given that the survey was sent to busy professionals and volunteers via email, a format easy to dismiss or move down the priority list of the recipient, I was aware the survey size would need to be relatively large compared to the number of desired interviews to ensure sufficient participation and a cross section of winter and summer sport representatives as well as PSO and club representatives and Olympic and non-Olympic sports. Community sport organizations frequently operate with limited resources, and although organizational representatives may identify themselves as 'busy', it was hoped they would support this research project because it was designed to help understand and identify capacity building opportunities. Additionally, I hoped the voluntary nature of community sport, that often results in deep personal connections and motivations, would encourage participation.

A total of 17 survey responses were received; ten responses from PSO representatives (seven summer and three winter sports) and seven from club representatives (four winter and three summer sports). Fourteen of the respondents represented Olympic sports and three represented non-Olympic sports.

Though there were many questions that could have been included in the survey, the questions were limited to four, plus the question about potential interview participation, to help encourage participation from busy potential respondents.

### **3.3. Qualitative Survey Analysis**

The survey results highlighted a number of potential paths of inquiry for the semi-structured interviews. They also showcased that both the expected and experienced impacts of the Games varied greatly between organizations, even between organizations within the same sport.

### **3.3.1. Survey Question 1 – Participation Impacts**

The first survey question - Has your organization experienced any changes related to volunteer or participant (i.e., athlete or player) recruitment as a result of the Games? Please describe briefly.- asked respondents if they had experienced any changes in program participation as a result of the Games. Most respondents saw little or no impact on their participation numbers that could be attributed directly to the Games. One organization, a winter Olympic sport (PSO), did note a dramatic increase in participant registration in their entry-level programs in the season following the Games. Two additional winter sport clubs also noted slight increases in participation in the season following the Games. Two organizations noted a marked decrease in participation during the Olympic year due to a decrease in facility access. One of these organizations (a club) was a winter Olympic sport that utilizes training facilities that were taken off-line for upgrades and Olympic athlete training for much of the Olympic year. Another club was not able to access its training facility for part of the Olympic year because this training facility was located within the security zone of an Olympic host venue.

### **3.3.2. Survey Question 2 – Funding Impacts**

This question - Has your organization experienced any changes in access to funding or grant opportunities as a result of the Games? - elicited some of the most impassioned responses, possibly because some of the organizations held pre-conceived expectations related to funding prior to the Games given the legacy promises made by Games organizers in the lead-up to the event. The responses related to funding were fairly evenly divided. Eight organizations indicated they did not experience any funding increases or access to new funding opportunities. Two of these organizations indicated a decrease in funding access. However, there was a split in funding responses between PSOs and the clubs. Most of the PSOs (with three exceptions) indicated an increase in access to funding and grant opportunities while none of the clubs indicated an increase in access to funding or grant resources. I noted this trend again when comparing the response to this question from a PSO of a winter non-Olympic sport to the response of a CSO from the same sport. The PSO noted a significant increase in access to new grant opportunities; however, the local club did not. This disparity supported a path of inquiry

for the semi-structured interviews; did PSOs (often a more structured, managerial type of organization with closer direct ties to Sport BC and other governing bodies) tend to see more opportunities to access new funding as a result of the Games than local clubs?

Although none of the clubs indicated an increase in access to direct government or other funding sources, two of the clubs did note the Games provided them access to other opportunities that have assisted them financially. In one instance, a club that owns its facility was able to secure rental income from visiting international Olympic delegations, but they secured this on their own initiative. Another club gained access to expensive technical equipment that they no longer have to rent annually, thereby saving them a significant portion of their annual operating costs to host events.

### **3.3.3. Survey Question 3 – New Networks**

Given the emphasis in the literature on the potential for mega-events to increase networking opportunities, this question - Have the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympic Games provided your organization with increased opportunities to network with other organizations? - is an important question. Interestingly, the results were fairly evenly split. Some CSOs and some PSOs, some winter and some summer sports, indicated an increase in networking opportunities directly attributable to the Games. This leads to the inevitable question, why did some organizations experience new networking opportunities while others did not. It is interesting to note that three of the respondents who did not indicate an increase in networking opportunities, provided very similar responses to the question:

- “Not really...we know the organizations already that have the influence we need.”
- “Not really. We already work with many diverse organizations”
- “No. As a Sport BC partner, the same level of communication/networking exist[s] now as it did in the past.”

Conversely, those organizations that expressed most affirmatively the benefits of increased network opportunities provided the following responses:

- “Yes, [our sports] are [now] much better known and have become part of the culture of BC.”

- “Yes. Mainly through meetings with various sector agencies as a result of Games related functions that spawned relationships we have nurtured into business partnerships.”
- “Definitely-with [other clubs] with regards to training and equipment as well as [another organization] who appreciated our efforts to share [facility] space with them when theirs was ...[unavailable] due to the Olympics.”

These responses seem to indicate that although some organizations did not experience an increase in networking opportunities as a result of the Games, the respondents didn't feel new connections were necessary for their organization. The PSOs which responded that they didn't make, nor did they require, new connections were all large sports in terms of levels of participation. Those PSOs which indicated that they did make new connections were, for the most part, smaller or “younger” (more recently established) sports. This leads to another potential path of inquiry: are some organizations more likely to benefit from new networks, and thus look for and take advantage of the new connections, and did the organizations that experienced new connections actively seek out these opportunities?

#### **3.3.4. *Survey Question 4 – Significant differences for your organization as a result of the Games***

This question - What would be the most significant differences for your organization today if the Games had not been staged in Vancouver? - provided an interesting variety of responses and suggests that since sport organizations are not homogeneous, the range of impacts experienced by different organizations may be quite wide. The representatives of three organizations indicated absolutely no impact at all as a result of the Games. One organization spoke to the importance of the Richmond Olympic Oval (the indoor training facility) for its programming while two organizations indicated they would like to have access to the converted Olympic Oval but that they have difficulty accessing the facility. One of these organizations cites cost of rental as the reason they are not able to utilize the converted Oval for its programming. Two organizations noted they now have more partners and resources as a result of the Games. Some of the other notable responses to this question include:

- “The industry might not be as united.” [This response is in reference to the respondent’s opinion that sport organizations in BC have become more coordinated and cohesive following the Games.]
- “Our funding 2007-1010 would have been less and our programs would be smaller and less provincial” [Note: another organization provided a very similar response.]
- “Full participation of classes over the period of the Games.” [Meaning there was low participation in usual programs during the Games period.]
- “We would not have had such a financial loss last year if the Games had not been staged in Vancouver, due to the closure [of their usual facilities]. On the other hand, our athletes would not have had the chance to experience the excitement of being in an Olympic city.”
- “The focus of sport from participation to performance is now highlighted. The lack of facilities, the lack of school opportunities, the disconnect between municipal recreation and local sport groups have all been highlighted.”
- “The games helped focus on long term planning for results in sport, which has benefited organizations who are able to develop well thought out plans. There is also a better understanding of what excellence in sports is.”

### **3.3.5. Survey Summary**

The survey highlights that different organizations experienced the Games in different ways with impacts ranging from ‘significant’ to ‘none at all.’ The survey also points to a distinction between the type of impacts reported by PSOs compared to CSOs, with the latter generally reporting many fewer impacts. It will be interesting for the interviews to identify how and why organizations that reported positive benefits were able to access opportunities as well as to continue to examine differences between CSO and PSO reports.

A number of responses to the survey also included information related to facility access. For example, a winter sport club respondent noted: “I had hoped there would be increased facilities for our participants.” Given the importance of facility access for CSOs to provide programs at a cost that is accessible for participants, impacts to facility access is a path of inquiry included in the interviews.

Some additional points of interest that arose in the survey included the notion that experiencing the excitement of the Games assisted athlete motivation in a non-tangible way. The notion of enhancing longer-term planning opportunities following the Games will also be further explored through the interviews.



### **3.4. Semi-structured interviews**

The purpose of the semi-structured interviews with community and provincial sport organization representatives was to provide an opportunity for leaders in community sport to reflect, in their own words, on Games related impacts that may or may not have been previously identified. These impacts, whether viewed as opportunities or as constraints, might be related to capacity building, organizational learning and networking, or other long-term legacies. An interview with a representative from 2010 LegaciesNow was also conducted to better understand the legacy related initiatives targeted for community sport organizations as well as the LegaciesNow view of the success of these initiatives and its continued long-term plans to capitalize on any momentum from the Games.

Interview participants were provided with an Information Sheet for Participants as well as an Informed Consent by Subject to Participate in a Research Interview form (Samples of these forms can be found in Appendix B). Most interviews were audio taped with the permission of the interviewee. The names and organizational affiliation of all interview candidates will remain confidential, except, as previously mentioned, in the case of LegaciesNow, where the CEO was speaking as a public figure. All other names have been replaced with pseudonyms to maintain confidentiality,

Initial interview questions focused on seeking contextual information about the interviewee's role in their organization and the length of time they have been involved in it. This context was important for understanding the perspective of the interviewee. All interviewees were also informed, at the start of the interview, that the questions were designed as guidelines but I was most interested in hearing about the experiences or information they felt was most important, even if it wasn't included in the questions. A copy of the semi-structured interview questions, used as a general guideline for the interview, is found in Appendix C.

Given the diversity of interviews, each interview has been summarized individually below. Summaries of the interviews with CSO representatives precede the PSO representative interviews. An analysis of the interviews follows.

### **3.4.1. Interview - General Manager of a summer multi-sport club (CSO comprised of four sports): three Olympic sports, one non-Olympic sport**

Kevin is the General Manager of an amateur athletic, non-profit club facility responsible for four sport clubs housed within the facility. Each sport operates independently, with its own bylaws, board and executive. The club management assists with the activities of the four individual sports on joint activities such as membership dues.

This community club was able to capitalize on a unique Olympic experience due to a facility rental. The club facility was rented by an international Olympic affiliated organization and became an Official Olympic House (hosting centre). The facility was used for tourist promotion by the renting organization. Flat screen televisions (playing Olympic coverage), musical entertainment, barbecues and other entertainment features were brought into the club to prepare it for opening to the public.

The club benefited financially from the rental, and the money was used to create legacy scholarship funds for its junior athletes. All four sports within the club will benefit from this legacy funding, targeted towards junior programs. Each of the four sports also had an injection of one time funding following the Games as a result of the fees accrued from the facility rental during the Games.

The experience of opening the club facility to the public had some limited local promotional benefits for the club. The majority of visitors were tourists but there were also locals who came to the club for the first time. The club also received some media coverage, both locally and in the home country of the renting group. One section of the club remained closed for the use of regular club members and was not included in the rental.

Overall, Kevin rates the experience as having been a positive one. The club learned about the hosting capacity of the facility, and the timing for the rental was good in that February, the time of the Games, is the slowest time of year for all four of the club sports normally housed in the facility. There was no additional impact on any of their

programs and they had “buy-in” from their members to rent the facility, given the legacy funding to be accrued and the minimal level of disruption to club operations.

Kevin doesn't feel the club developed any new networks or volunteer capacity. However, he was quick to point out that he does have a long-standing pre-existing personal connection with John Furlong (CEO, VANOC) and he feels he was fortunate to have had an understanding of VANOC operations and the potential benefits and limitations of what their club could realize from the Games. He feels that navigating these opportunities may have been more intimidating for smaller organizations that didn't understand the VANOC organization and where potential benefits might exist.

The number of people who visited the club facility during the Games surpassed Kevin's expectations and those of the Olympic House organizers who rented it. There was no charge to enter the club but there was often a three-hour line-up. As a result of the increased visitation, the club received some limited promotion for private rentals and had a few members of the public inquire about their entry-level sport programs.

#### **3.4.2. *Interview - Club President of a winter sport (CSO): Olympic sport***

Leslie has been President of this non-profit, volunteer run community youth sport club for the past three years. All board members are parents of current club participants and Leslie has two children in the club. There are more than 400 members, most are participants in the 'learn-to' program, as opposed to the competitive stream. The coaches are paid, part-time employees.

When asked about her personal experience during the Games, Leslie indicates she was able to get tickets to watch some of the practice sessions for her sport but tickets to the actual event were too expensive. Leslie didn't volunteer for the Games and didn't otherwise have any new contact with any other CSO officials or other organizations. A few club members did volunteer for the games, though she can't speak to their experience. A message was also received, possibly from VANOC, asking if any of the youth club members would like to volunteer at the venue, but no one from her club was selected to participate.

The club rents facility space from the Vancouver Parks Board. It must share the facility with many community groups. The club receives its facility time allocation based on the number of club members. According to Leslie, the Parks Board prioritizes user groups as follows: The first priority is for public usage and recreational lessons followed by minor sport groups. A priority is also put on youth, since adult members of the club are not included in the membership count used by the Parks Board to allocate facility time. The club is a community organization, and athletes start with the club but move on to a higher level club when they reach a certain level of competition. The club is not able to meet the full demand for its programming because it does not have enough facility access. They were hoping the Games would provide them with increased facility access but this remained unchanged in the year following the event. In Leslie's words: "There were no legacies for this club, but we were luckier than some. Some clubs had their [facility] closed down and were orphaned in the lead-up." The club did experience increased challenges in the lead-up to the Games because many facilities were taken off-line for renovation and Olympic use. She notes that although there were renovations made to some facilities, there were no new facilities added in Vancouver and the same issues surrounding lack of facility access remain for her club. She had hoped that the renovations would allow some of the upgraded facilities to extend their operational seasons, but there were not sufficient operational budget allocations to allow this.

She did, however, note one highlight: members of the club were able to access one of the public entertainment venues built to showcase her sport at no cost. During one of these fun sessions a previous Canadian Olympic Gold Medalist interacted with the club members. She feels these sessions were a positive, spirit building activity for youth club members, Nevertheless, in her opinion, the club didn't receive any tangible promotion to attract new participants as a result of the session.

When asked what she would do differently if the Games were hosted in Vancouver again, Leslie responded: "we would be more aware that the hype doesn't live up to reality."

### **3.4.3. Interview –Director & Club Founder of a winter sport (CSO): Olympic Sport**

Ethan started this for-profit club in 2004. He was involved extensively in the Games as he helped design and construct the competition venue for his sport. Additionally, he also coached an athlete who was an alternate for the Olympic team while a number of his club's other athletes were able to train on the competition venue with the Olympic athletes.

He found his athletes had a mixed reaction to the hosting of the Games in their backyard. Some athletes loved the experience; others realized the required commitment wasn't for them.

The Games did have an influence on training for Ethan's athletes: "Both my assistant coach and I were busy with the venue and the Games were in the way [of] a bit of training. Whistler was empty in the lead up to the Games, that was unexpected, and we didn't take advantage of it."

The venue for his sport was located in the Lower Mainland and he feels that "the [venue] was a horrible place to host, there was no legacy." He continues by explaining that the venue was removed following the Games. He feels Whistler may have been a better host location because there may have been more space to leave the venue in place for training. His club did, however, benefit from acquiring an important piece of equipment that was donated to them after the Games.

Attracting new athletes is important for Ethan's sport, a relatively recently developed one. He indicates that the Olympic year was their worst year ever for registration. At the time of the interview, registration for the year following the Games year had not yet taken place. Ethan hopes that the television exposure that resulted from the Games may have helped to drive interest: "It is a young sport, the TV exposure may be helpful because kids drive interest [in this sport] not parents."

When asked about any funding changes as a result of the Games, Ethan indicates that as a for-profit club they are not eligible for many grants. However, he feels that much of the funding was targeted at the provincial level, not the club level. In his view, some of

the funding was targeted inappropriately. As an example, he indicates that money was provided for the Canadian Development Team, but because there are so few athletes in his sport who are able to compete at a high level all the top athletes in the province were taken away from their clubs and this was detrimental to many of the clubs as well as some of the athletes who weren't yet ready for this experience. As a result, some of the top athletes, who weren't ready to train at a higher level, left the sport. Additionally the clubs didn't have any experienced athletes to mentor younger athletes. He feels the development team funding would have been more effective if the development team athletes had maintained ties to their home clubs. This would have allowed the clubs to contribute more to building a stronger base for the sport.

#### **3.4.4. Interview – President of a winter sport (CSO): Olympic sport**

Evelyn is the President of a local (Lower Mainland) club for a winter, Olympic sport. She works full time, in addition to this volunteer position, and has two kids involved in the club.

Evelyn began the interview eager to speak about two positive impacts for her club as a result of the Games. One was a new training centre established in Whistler, where young athletes can train for \$5.00 per day. Another was a piece of equipment (a communications cable for timing) that was donated to her club following the Olympics.

The training centre is important because the costs charged for use of facilities in her sport are extremely high. Their club is able to access this facility once per month. Athletes also occasionally have access to top coaches while at the facility. The donation of the communications cable has had a significant impact on her club's ability to host an annual competition event. The club would otherwise have had to pay to rent this cable, potentially making the cost of hosting an event prohibitive.

As the interview progressed she also reflected on additional impacts for her club. She indicated there were few training disruptions for her club as a result of the Games; however, another local club in the same sport did experience training disruptions. Her club partnered with the other local club to share training time and jointly they were able to get a better rate on facility access costs. They will continue this partnership into the

future. She also feels the opportunity for kids in her club to watch the Olympic events live increased club spirit. Club members made banners that were placed at Canada House in Whistler.

When asked about funding, Evelyn indicated her club is now able to apply annually for a hosting grant for their club event. She also indicated that she understands that some of the sponsors of the provincial organization for her sport have discontinued their funding support after the Games. However, there has been better communication between her club and some of the provincial association sponsors post-Games. This increased communication has assisted the club in obtaining sponsorship funding for hosted club events.

Overall she felt that many of her club's members were ambivalent towards the Games in the lead up to the event, but that the experience surpassed their expectations. She also notes some of the legacy impacts continue to evolve. "One year ago I wouldn't have had as much to say. It has taken some time to see the impact."

#### **3.4.5. Interview –Executive Director of a summer sport (PSO): not included on the Olympic program**

Nicholas is the Executive Director of a provincial summer sport with approximately 330 clubs and facilities throughout the province. He reports to a volunteer board and has a full-time staff of 13 people. This is a relatively large provincial sport organization with a much larger contingent of paid professional staff than most PSOs.

The managerial perspective and language that Nicholas used was striking from the outset of the interview. When asked about any lessons learned from the Games, Nicholas responded: *"It focused attention, our attention, on how sport could achieve a long term return on investment of exposure the province [British Columbia] was going to be getting around the world. In terms of building [the sport]."*

Nicholas proceeded to explain that the organization did not have a strategy relating to Return on Investment (ROI) prior to the start of the bid process to host the Games. During the bid process Nicholas was approached by representatives of the Government Sport Branch and Tourism BC and asked if his organization could help the

province realize some of their Olympic objectives related to economic growth through sport tourism.

I asked him why he felt he was approached to become a part of the planning process and he indicated that an economic impact assessment created by the organization may have been a contributing factor:

One of the first things that happened was, as we were going through the bid process, it became apparent that we probably ought to have a good understanding of what the sport's value was to the province's economy as a starting point. So back around 2000 we started to talk about the need to develop an economic impact study as to what [the sport] represented to the provincial economy and to measure that type of thing. And that report was done and was completed in 2004. ... Anecdotally we knew we were a big industry. We didn't actually know how big we were until we went ahead and measured it. To give you an example, we are a 1.5 billion dollar industry, we employ 40 some thousand people and we have a huge impact in communities across the province.

Nicholas also spoke at length about the value of the networks created through these new government relationships. These networks, he said, have been maintained to date. This organization, with more than 330 facilities across the province, stood to benefit from international tourism marketing. Few sport organizations have such facilities to market. It is important to note that the new contacts were in this case not sport related, but government and tourism related. When asked about sport related and logistical impacts, Nicholas responded that there were no other logistical, volunteer or participation changes directly related to the Games. Finally, when asked if he had any advice for sport organizations in future Olympic host cities, Nicholas again cited the benefits of creating an economic impact study for the sport, a task that may be difficult for many sport organizations and clubs as well as resting outside their primary mandate of program delivery, and for organizations to "take a broad macro perspective and to really use it to sell the benefits of the area that you are in."

#### **3.4.6. Interview –CEO of a summer sport (PSO): Olympic sport**

Cliff is the CEO of a well-established (86 year old) provincial sport organization with approximately 20 "formal" and 500 "informal" clubs throughout the province. The formal clubs are members of the PSO. There are five paid staff members working for the



organization. Cliff was involved at the bid stage of the Games as a paid employee, prior to accepting his current position with the PSO, and as a result he feels he has an extensive personal network of people involved with the Games. He also volunteered during the Games and had the opportunity to meet a number of athletes, IOC officials and other delegates. He was speaking, in part, from his experience as a sport professional but also as the CEO of his organization.

Cliff spoke passionately about the need for an increased focus on sport within the greater community. He feels that more members of the Vancouver community saw the [positive] impact of sport as a result of the Games and feels that in the past several years there has been a greater focus placed on childhood activity. According to Cliff, this has been in part due to the Olympics and in part due to the adoption of the 2005 Long Term Athlete Development Model by provincial and territorial ministers for sport. He feels this increased focus on sport is necessary because, in his opinion, fewer kids have access to organized sport today than 30 years ago. He attributes this reduced access to a number of factors including: a change in emphasis in schools from traditional organized sport to less competitive activities; fewer physical education specialists in the school system; fewer families with access to community sport due to reduced facility availability, and the increased cost of accessing organized sport.

Related to this, Cliff feels that, “the Olympics helped highlight a lack of coordination in the club and sport system.” Specifically, he feels the work of LegaciesNow involved some duplication of the work of other non-profit organizations, but as LegaciesNow begins to wind down it will be replaced by a new sport agency. This new sport agency, he feels, has the potential to become a positive outcome of the Olympics as he feels the distribution of provincial government funding for PSOs can become more coordinated when brought under this agency. Previously, in his opinion, much of the funding went to high performance sport and only a small amount to PSOs. He hopes this new agency will continue funding smaller PSOs, something that would be contrary to what, in his opinion, has happened in many other jurisdictions. Cliff provided the following explanation of his opinion:

After an Olympics, in most jurisdictions in the world and in previous Canadian host cities, funding has dropped. This was visible in Canada after '88 – there wasn't even a minister for sport after '88. I don't know

what the future will hold with the new sport agency. There are senior VANOC people involved and they have the respect of the government. Long term we need to watch the impact of the new agency on sport organization funding.

Nevertheless, he feels, each organization [PSO] needs to envision itself as being financially independent instead of relying on government funding sources. He feels this financial self-sufficiency will make sport organizations more attractive for investment or sponsorship by external groups.

Cliff also thinks that the Olympics provided a bit of a cushion from the economic downturn for sport organizations. "Sport has lost 30% of gaming funding. We [sport organizations] were lucky we didn't get hit in the pre-Olympic phase due to the economic downturn because there was a three year commitment to funding levels."

Cliff also spoke at length about facilities. It was a disappointment to his organization that the Oval didn't provide any new facilities for the sport. An opportunity was missed, in his opinion, because there is a great demand for more facilities for his sport.

Finally, when asked about recommendations for organizations in future host cities, Cliff says, "Support the Games, get involved. Be open to embracing the Games. Use the Games to build spirit among your members and raise the profile of your sport to encourage participation. Individual sport organizations need to make these opportunities happen, you can't count on the opportunities coming to you."

#### **3.4.7. *Interview – Executive Director of a winter sport (PSO): not on the Olympic program***

Robert is Executive Director of a PSO for a non-Olympic winter sport with approximately 2,200 athletes, 3,000 total members including volunteers, coaches, and executive members. Participants are primarily aged 18 and under and the membership base is fairly stable. The organization is comprised of an Executive Director (ED) and two full time staff (including a Technical Coordinator), Robert has been the ED for six years.

When asked about any new learning associated with the Games, Robert responded: “For us the biggest learning outcome was to plan for the unexpected. For us, and I think for other sports, the challenge we had was in the ramp-up to the Games. An increase in funding quickly followed by the economic collapse and a decrease in funding.” Robert went on to explain that public or government funding is often unreliable. At one point the organization was concerned that their core “keep the lights on” government funding might not materialize. The funding did come through, but not until 6 months into the fiscal year. As a result the organization took it upon itself to restructure its funding model for future sustainability and to plan for the unreliability of public funding. They now use government funding as an enhancement to core programs and government funds are not used for things like staff salaries. He summarizes: “While this does give us a sense of security, we are now always planning to do the minimum. It doesn’t really lend itself to strategic planning.”

In the long term, Robert notes, the organization is looking towards fundraising and philanthropy as funding sources. This may include initiatives such as programs for low income, aboriginal, special needs and women’s programming. They have found that the more the organization diversifies, the more funding streams that can be tapped. The organization uses its strategic plan to ensure it remains within its goals while looking for new sources of public funding. This change in funding focus came from both the Olympics and the economic downturn. The Games, according to Robert, have caused the government to compartmentalize and redirect funding into low income, special needs and other priorities.

Robert was able to learn about new grant opportunities, available through LegaciesNow, because he attended sessions hosted by LegaciesNow. At one of these sessions he was also introduced to representatives from an advocacy organization called More Sports. The More Sports mission statement indicates that its organizational purpose is the development of youth-oriented, neighbourhood-based sport programs “targeting people who typically do not participate in sports such as girls, children from diverse ethnic groups, and those who simply face barriers to participation in sports such as cost” (More Sports, 2012, ‘About Us’, 1). Robert’s organization now partners with More Sports to deliver new, jointly developed programs. They were able to access

grants through LegaciesNow for the start-up costs of these programs and Robert's organization now funds some of the ongoing costs.

This type of initiative provides an opportunity for Robert's organization to increase the reach of programming and participation as well as to access new funding. He feels there is also social value in the initiative – it is not a money-making initiative for although member numbers are increased, there are no associated member fees. Robert continued to explain: “There are also leadership opportunities for kids involved with [sport] to work with some of the low income groups or blind kids playing [sport]. This helps make [sport] a desirable organization to be involved in.”

Robert notes that an additional benefit of partnering with other organizations is they may already have an ‘in’ with access to facilities such as community centres. This assists with the ongoing issue of lack of facility access. Robert spoke further about facilities indicating that, “In the lead up to the Games having facilities off-line created issues. There was an improvement in that aging facilities were renovated, but it wasn't nearly enough. The facility issues are profound for many local organizations. They can't bring in new kids because they can't access more [facility] time. ... There hasn't been much change in facility access post-Olympics.”

When asked about any changes in volunteer recruitment, Robert noted that the organization has just registered for volweb (a LegaciesNow volunteer database) in the past six months and feels it is too soon to tell if the volunteer benefits will be tangible. However, he likes the idea that volweb provides “the ability to tap into volunteers not affiliated directly with his sport and the idea of a mix of perspectives and new perspectives.” He feels it will likely take 3 – 5 years to determine if there is a [volunteer] benefit.

Robert summarizes his thoughts on the Games experience as follows:

There isn't much I would do differently. We did benefit from the Games. I may recognize sooner that money in the ramp-up to the Games wasn't sustainable. There were partnerships in sport, health and education but not what was expected. I would be more realistic [about the types of partnerships]. As a non-Olympic sport we didn't have the massive expectations and knew that many opportunities would only be one time ... Relationship building and partnership development is probably under-

rated as a legacy. Because of the excitement around the Games there were seminars, meetings and sessions. We had the opportunity to know new people and open more doors. The Games did bring organizers together. As a smaller sport we were able to get ourselves at new tables – but we sought out these opportunities. If a message came out looking for volunteers to sit on committees, we often volunteered so we were able to sit at tables with major players. And we were heard in that context. We were also allowed [through these committees] to lobby for strategies that didn't just benefit the medium and large sports. All of the small sports add up.

The perspective Robert offers on the importance of relationship development is interesting because as the organizational representative of a relatively small and non-Olympic sport, he feels important new avenues of communication were opened as a result of Games related activities.

#### **3.4.8. *Interview - Board President and CEO (PSO): Summer Olympic Sport***

Two participants were present in this interview. James has been president of this PSO since 1999. He is a former elite athlete in his home country. Kyle has been CEO of this organization for the past 5 years. This PSO has existed for more than 50 years and is a single body that looks after a number of related Olympic sports. The organization has traditionally focused on youth programming but is also starting to sanction more mass participation events, organized by for-profit event organizers, that appeal to adults for revenue purposes. There are six staff members and a number of additional full and part-time paid coaches. James and Kyle provided some interesting thoughts related to the culture of sport in Canada and the Games. They feel the culture of sport in Canada is less vibrant than in other countries such as the UK. Kyle provides his thoughts on this topic:

Considering there was a referendum, a plebiscite<sup>6</sup>, I was surprised to see that once it was awarded it wasn't 'okay we're done now'... The level of inactivity between the award[ing of the 2010 Games] by the IOC and the lack of vibrancy within the sport community itself in between then and when the Olympics started, is quite sad, really. So that is a disappointment I have. I think the Olympics became viable during the Games because the fan culture and the environment downtown and the dual locations, up at Whistler, maybe worked as well.

James added to Kyle's summary:

The unfortunate thing was the absolute focus on the hockey. I'm probably coloured because I'm not the biggest hockey fan, but I find the focus was so much on the hockey and there were so many other great performances out there. And yet when you watch the closing ceremonies, how many of the hockey players participated in it? I don't believe any – I may be wrong there. ... You know there isn't this ongoing culture. ... The Olympics is different because it has a different focus on it. But I don't think that carries over to local sport. The frustration I get is that as a sport like ours that relies very heavily on policing services – if we were to run an event downtown we would pay. Where is the investment in local sport from the local community?

Continuing to speak about the challenge of engaging the local community in amateur sport, Kyle noted that the media coverage of amateur sport is insufficient to develop an interest in following athletes and sports except those leading to professional sports careers:

One of the things that could have been a legacy of the Games was the media, but you just can't get coverage for sport in Canada, Canadian broadcasters only broadcast sport that makes them money, professional sport. ... When the government and prime minister get behind sport, this helps build culture. The Games missed an opportunity to create this culture. The focus was on healthy living but it is also necessary to showcase heroes and role models and to tell the stories in amateur sport through the media.

<sup>6</sup> On December 10, 2002 City Council decided to hold a vote on Vancouver's participation in hosting the 2010 Olympic Winter Games and Paralympic Winter Games. The "Olympic Vote" took place on February 22, 2003. The results were 64% in favour of the Olympic Bid (voter turn-out was 50%). (City of Vancouver, 2012)

When asked about funding, James notes that funding was a positive outcome of the Games for his organization. He cites the maintenance of funding through the economic downturn as a positive, as well as the sustained funding accessibility for both winter and summer sports through LegaciesNow. However, Kyle notes that there may be a perception in the larger community that the government has already made a significant investment in sport and there may be reluctance to support hosting other [amateur] sport events in the city. This reluctance would not apply to hosting professional sport events such as the NHL's Stanley Cup playoffs or the CFL's Grey Cup.

Kyle and James feel the consultation between VANOC and the sport organizations was insufficient, particularly as related to facilities. They note that it would have been helpful to have a VANOC staff member assigned to liaise with sport organizations. This liaison could have helped with ongoing engagement and the development of local community support for local sport as well as for the provision into facility development, such as the Oval.

In summary, James feels: "There wasn't a drive to create participation level in sport at the community level. It became a quest for medals, but the secondary aspect of bringing more people into sport was missed."

#### **3.4.9. *Interview: CEO 2010 LegaciesNow (LIFT Philanthropy Partners)***

Bruce Dewar began his term as the CEO of LegaciesNow in 2006, and he now remains at the helm of the organization as it transitions to its post-Games form as LIFT Philanthropy Partners (LIFT). LIFT is a venture philanthropy organization that will invest funding and business knowledge in chosen not-for-profit organizations to allow them to expand their programming and reach.

As previously mentioned, LegaciesNow had a mandate to develop legacy programming in a number of areas including sports, arts and literacy. For the purposes of this research Bruce was asked to focus his comments on those legacy objectives related to sport. When asked to describe the legacy objectives related to sport, Bruce explains:

The principle in the beginning, was to make sure we would strengthen the BC Sport system. In our discussions within the system we pulled a variety of tables together to really hear what the system was telling us. So it wasn't just us deciding what needed to be done, we really listened to the system. And the three themes that came up were; around participation, how do we increase participation at all levels and not just getting those who are already participating to participate more. But especially getting those who are inactive to be active. The other one was around how do we build capacity in the system. So they have the ability to deliver on that piece but also be stronger and better at what they do. The third part was, how do we excel in performance. We have great role models across Canada... and they really did motivate people to look at sport differently and see how sport builds community.

Bruce continued to explain that, an initial objective of LegaciesNow was to build a long-term foundation for the 'sport system' in BC that would address the three areas he described above. To achieve this he explains: "We really played a facilitation/ leadership and convening role to allow a lot of the collaboration to happen."

Bruce discussed funding for sport organizations and indicated that LegaciesNow would put out a call for submissions in areas where it was felt the biggest impacts could be made, and they would make investments based on these proposals. PSOs were involved in the identification of key areas for investment. Annual meetings with the PSOs started in 2000, and Sport BC was also involved in these meetings. He states: "The sport sector is quite small so it was quite easy to reach out and talk to and gather the information." Bruce also notes the importance of monitoring these investments. Reporting included the number of participants that were being engaged; the number of coaches that were being trained; the number of communities that were being touched; and the diversity of participation, especially to that ensure women and girls, aboriginal peoples, inner city youths, and other populations were included.

When asked about the program review undertaken by LegaciesNow to obtain feedback from sport organizations on the BC Sport Participation program, Bruce notes:

It really did make a difference. We heard it would be nice if the funding was increased, it would be nice if they knew earlier what the funding would be. Especially for ongoing programming it would be nice to know earlier. Amongst themselves they shared some of the learnings [sic] of how to engage communities and the benefits of reaching out to communities that weren't traditionally engaged.



On another note related to funding, Bruce mentions that the provincial government remained relatively stable with its funding for sport, other than a loss of some gaming funding a couple of years ago. Gaming funding refers to BC Government gaming grants.<sup>7</sup> Sport organizations can apply for grants to support their programs and services. Organizations must meet specific eligibility requirements to apply and receive funding (Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, 2011). But, he states, “overall their commitment to sport, which they increased in the lead-up to the Games, has stayed at the same level and is breaking the trend of other jurisdictions. When other sectors were being cut, we didn’t get cut and I think it was because we were staying together on a plan.” He also notes that it is important that the government has committed to legacy funding which gives the sport sector the opportunity to show their value in perpetuity after the Games have concluded.

When speaking about measurement, Bruce mentions that LegaciesNow has created a variety of “technical tools” that sport organizations can use to track information for reporting. He stressed the importance of these measurement tools for telling the story of the impact of sport. He noted they also tracked participation using Canada census returns to identify where programs were needed. Bruce also noted, as an example of reporting, that University of British Columbia (UBC) researchers were engaged to report on the health indicators associated with the Action Schools BC initiative. ActionSchools! BC is a LegaciesNow program that was designed to provide a framework to support and encourage teachers to incorporate more physical activity and

<sup>7</sup> “Gaming grants were established in 1998 when the BC Lottery Corporation’s mandate was expanded to include the operation of casinos. The grants replaced revenue charitable groups earned from running charitable casinos. Later, direct access and bingo affiliation grant programs were consolidated into the Community Gaming Grant program. Over the years, grant-eligibility with new “sectors” being added or removed. ... In 2008, the world experienced a financial crisis. Governments, both foreign and domestic, were not immune. In British Columbia, the government made difficult and uncomfortable decisions aimed at using its diminished financial resources more effectively for maximum public benefit. These decisions included the reallocation of gaming revenue in 2009. The reallocation reduced the funding available for community gaming grants to not-for-profit community groups. Subsequent cuts to community gaming grants made operations difficult for organizations and led to the elimination or reduction of vital community services and staff lay-offs” (Government of BC, Community Gaming Grant Review, 2011, 4).

healthy eating initiatives in their schools. (LegaciesNow, 2012, ActionSchools! BC, 1) A November 2004 Pilot Study Report, led by a researcher from UBC, did find:

Not surprisingly, a strong association between physical activity and child health across a range of health outcomes. ... The ActionSchools! BC model was effectively delivered by the generalist teacher in the classroom, the gymnasium and as part of extracurricular activities. It was not possible to discern the benefit of the ActionSchools! BC model on healthy weight and it is likely that the relatively short intervention time frame was not sufficient to allow this. (ActionSchools! BC, 2004, p 60)

The findings from this 2004 Pilot Report are the most recent available. Current information, following the full implementation of the initiative from 2005 – 2010, is not available on the LegaciesNow or ActionSchools! BC websites.

Bruce also noted the importance of a development continuum that ties in with the Long Term Athlete Development model:

So we had ActionSchools BC, and we could link that to SportFit. SportFit was a program designed to help kids identify what [sports] they are best at or what they may be successful in. I remember one time we did it at the PNE [Pacific National Exposition] and one kid walked away and turned to his dad and said, 'dad I'm really good at this 'and his dad said 'we'll have to look at that sport'.

When asked about volunteers, Bruce notes the critical role they play in the sport system. He also indicates:

Volunteers are giving their time differently now. There are volunteers who are involved while their child is participating, they are engaged, often at the club level. Then there are those that stay on after and give back either at the grassroots level or more at the provincial sport organization Board level. But people want to give back where their passion is and where they feel they can make the biggest difference. We set up a thing called volweb.ca which is an event based tool, so if you have an event be it sport, arts – you can go in there and say we need volunteers for this event, you can define what the roles are and what the dates are. The reason most people don't volunteer is because they don't get asked.

LegaciesNow has now transitioned volweb.ca to the BC Games (a large, multi-sport youth games held in BC (BC Games, 2012)) in partnership with Volunteer BC, a

volunteer advocacy organization (Volunteer BC, 2012)). The ongoing maintenance and provision of volweb.ca is outside the new mandate for LIFT Philanthropy Partners, and the organization felt Volunteer BC could help ensure volweb.ca is used by more groups than event organizers.

When asked about the most important lesson learned by LegaciesNow, Bruce responded:

I don't think you can start early enough. ... It makes you get your community more engaged, it is a benefit to the community along the way and it will help you in your bid. I think the other thing is to have a big vision or dream, high expectations of where you want to go, but make sure along the way you can celebrate your successes and showcase them. ... And you need to have a plan to get you there. The other thing is to make sure you really do collaborate, reach out and get as many people as you can engaged in the initiative. And really trust the community. The community have a lot of the answers, you just need to ask the right questions and get them engaged.

Bruce also spoke about the future for LegaciesNow. "About a year prior to the Games our Board asked us, if we weren't around would anyone care? So we went out and started talking to a variety of our partners, stakeholders, etc to find out what we do that is of value." According to Bruce, they discovered that LegaciesNow does more than just fund initiatives. They provide three-year investments that allow the community to develop and implement a plan without worrying about funding in years two and three. Bruce also mentions they received feedback indicating LegaciesNow was good at setting the table for collaboration or discussion. As a result, the new model they have developed for LegaciesNow is venture philanthropy. They have started transitioning some programs to their partners or retiring Games specific programs to focus on venture philanthropy – the new organization is called LIFT Philanthropy Partners (LIFT).

LegaciesNow also looked at the sport system and formed the BC Sport Alliance comprised of Sport BC, LegaciesNow/LIFT, Canadian Sport Centre Pacific, and BC Games. According to Bruce, these organizations have taken the lessons from the last 10 years in sport and are developing the BC Sport Agency. Bruce notes that Sport BC really represents the provincial sport organizations, not the entire sport system. LegaciesNow sometimes heard at the club level that they didn't really understand what a

PSO did for them. The purpose of this agency is to serve the sport sector in BC, to determine the best use of resources, increase funding and bring in new partners.

If you want to be an athlete and go to the Olympics you have to go through the system and be a part of certain events to qualify. So there is a reason why we have a sport system - there is a participation side and there is a sport side and we have to make sure that everyone has the opportunity to play if they want to. ...Everyone believes they know what is best for sport, and everyone has an opinion but it is very complicated. And we need to capture that.

Bruce closed the interview by commenting: "From 2010 LegaciesNow it has been a privilege to be a custodian and I think the sector will take things to another level."

## 4. Analysis

One of the most striking features of the interviews conducted for this project is the particularity of each reported experience. Given the exploratory nature of this research as well as the distinctiveness of each report, a much larger study than was permitted by the scope of this research would be required to definitively state the summary impacts of the Games on CSOs and PSOs. However, a number of potential directions for future research can be inferred from this project and many of the reports provide interesting feedback for consideration.

As the participating organizations varied in size and organizational needs, so did the reported experiences and perspectives differ. As anticipated, based on the survey responses, there was a notable difference in the type of responses provided by CSOs as compared to PSOs. The PSO respondents tended to provide a more broad based perspective, using language that more closely matched that of policy documents and the interview with the LegaciesNow CEO. This might be expected as a result of the closer working relationships a number of PSOs had formed with LegaciesNow or other government representatives as well as their closer ties to policy frameworks in their day-to-day operations. References made to the Long Term Athlete Development Model by several PSO representatives as well as Bruce Dewar may account for this closer alignment of policy thinking that wasn't as present in the interviews with the CSO representatives. The CSO interviews, by contrast, focused very specifically on the items of greatest concern to each organization for undertaking their day-to-day operations. In some instances this related to facility access or operations; in other cases this related to event hosting, an undertaking that can severely tax an organization's volunteer and financial resources; and in yet another case the concern was with impacts upon existing athletes within the club with respect to training and development (as well as facility access) that were the foremost concerns.

One of the specific lines of inquiry, network and relationship building, revealed a number of dichotomies. Only a few of the organizations at either the PSO or CSO level reported increased opportunities to work with new organizations. What is more striking, given the prevalence of social inclusion theory in the sport and mega-event literature, is that very few organizations viewed greater networking opportunities as a priority or a benefit. The two non-Olympic sport PSOs did view new networking opportunities as a priority and were able to find opportunities to become a part of new committees or groups. One CSO reported a new partnership with another club that may prove beneficial in the future and another CSO was able to leverage a one-time partnership to their financial benefit. However, for the most part PSOs and CSOs alike did not see the development of new networks as a priority to further their program delivery, while several noted that their current working relationships were satisfactory. This suggests that future research related to the actual benefits of new networks, and what type of organizations may benefit from new networks would be valuable. Potentially organizations with specific resources to market or those that may previously have been excluded from sport sector meetings may see networking benefits. But this remains to be actually demonstrated by future research.

Funding is another area of inquiry that may point to a few generalizations. Several CSO representatives commented that funding seemed to be targeted at the provincial organizational level. Though one CSO did report obtaining access to a hosting grant, and another benefited from a facility rental, most CSOs did not report any new funding. This could provide interesting feedback for LegaciesNow/ LIFT Philanthropy partners. Bruce Dewar of LegaciesNow spoke about extensive consultation with the sport community but he also mentioned the sport community is small and easy to access. This implies that much of the LegaciesNow consultation involved PSO representatives, who are easier to access, and who represent the CSOs in theory. However, as noted, there is a potential disconnect between some PSOs and the actual sport practices taking place at the community level. A number of PSOs mentioned they were able to diversify programming to reach new populations because this was a priority target area of LegaciesNow sport development funding. It would be interesting for further research to inquire into the actual reach of new programs to provide opportunities for people who were not already participating elsewhere. Given that much of the funding

seemed to be earmarked for new programming it may not be surprising that most of the existing sport organizations interviewed didn't report an increase in funding. It would also be worth considering if some existing clubs would be better equipped to provide new programs to reach new participants as opposed to creating entirely new programs which seemed to be the strategy employed by some of the PSOs interviewed.

A concept related to the funding discussion that was referenced by Nicholas, a PSO representative, is the notion of harnessing sport organizations for larger political and economic objectives. Nicholas spoke specifically about the benefit for his organization, in his opinion, of conducting an economic impact study because it allowed them to 'sell the [economic] benefits' of his sport. This raises a number of questions: what, for whom, and by whom should these economic benefits be 'leveraged' and for what objectives? In Nicholas' example the economic impact study opened the door to partnerships with tourism promotion organizations. This raises the intriguing question of whether and, if so, how tourism promotion, or the effort involved in conducting benefit studies, would be of benefit to many CSOs? Given that most CSO service delivery is focused on program provision for direct members there is not a clear direct link. The argument that increased tourism exposure may drive new sport members is a potential benefit but, again, this argument requires more conclusive study before it can be supported.

Two additional PSO representatives referenced the benefits of leveraging alternative funding, though the methods suggested differed in all cases. Robert suggested his organization is looking towards fundraising and philanthropy as alternative funding sources. Robert noted that a potential downside of this strategy is that the organization must be careful to stay true to its mandate. Cliff noted that PSOs would benefit by working towards financial independence from government funding sources because this may make the organization more attractive for investment or sponsorship by external groups. This comment also seems to imply that local sport activities are being re-envisioned as activities that need to be made more attractive for the purpose of financial investment. Thus, it seems another potential path for further research may relate to the degree to which fundraising initiatives influence the operations of PSO and sport organizations. Do these initiatives actually detract from operations or do they enhance program provision? Has the quality of core services changed as a result of

mandates that favour financial investment of one type or another? The influence of leveraging alternative funding sources seems much greater at the PSO level than the CSO level based on the interviews conducted for this project.

An area where a number of the sport organization representatives who were interviewed reported a discrepancy between expectations and reality involved levels of access to sport facilities. Given that appropriate facility access is critical to sport programming and taking into account the expense of building, maintaining and operating facilities, it is understandable that the expectation of increased facility access would be greeted with enthusiasm by some organizations. The number of reports in this project is, however, too small to form any generalized statements related to facility legacy.

There was also disappointment expressed, at both the PSO and CSO level, relating to the lack of lasting effects of the excitement around the Games or of continued focus on sport at the community level. There was a feeling expressed by a number of organizational representatives that the focus on non-professional<sup>8</sup> sport within the local media or public view was not maintained following the Games. A number of CSOs reported a short-term 'intangible' feeling of good-will among athletes as a result of the Games but there did not seem an expectation from any of the representatives interviewed that this feeling could be harnessed into a tangible long-term benefit to increase participation.

The continued evolution of the sport system in Canada and British Columbia, especially as related to the development of the emerging BC Sport Agency, merits continued study. This project draws attention to a partial disconnect between PSOs and CSOs. These organizations may be linked in theory but in actual operational practice the

<sup>8</sup> Traditionally, newspaper coverage in Canada has been dominated by professional sports such as NHL Hockey and CFL Football. A 1994 study of Canadian national newspaper coverage of sports found: "Males received significantly more coverage than females in print, pictorial, and editorial space. Male professional sport received 41 % of the total space, significantly more than the space given to amateur athletes while Canadian amateur athletes received significantly more coverage than International and American athletes." (Crossman, Hyslop & Guthrie, 1994, p.123)



link is present in vastly varying degrees. CSOs have not yet been well integrated into the 'sport system' policy development and further research might usefully focus on how governing bodies might better meet the very diverse needs of the CSOs they are designed ostensibly, at least, in part, to support. Throughout the evolution of the so-called Canadian sport system, as outlined above, the operational structure of community sport has remained relatively unchanged. Community sport has remained driven by demand from the local community. It is primarily funded by participants from the local community and operated by volunteers from the local community. One of the impacts of the current evolution of the Canadian sport system may be an increase in oversight of community sport organizations by an increasing number of governing bodies, such as the new BC Sport Agency. It will be a necessary challenge for the BC Sport Agency to effectively consult with organizations at the community level; otherwise the identified disconnect will remain in effect. Specifically, it may be detrimental to CSOs if increased oversight and mandated agendas from new sport agencies results in volunteer frustration at the local level. Additionally, if the focus on leveraging new funding sources leads to an increased overall workload for sport organizations that results in a decreased ability for organizations to deliver their core programs effectively, then the 'sport system' could be negatively impacted.

In general, at the CSO level there were relatively few positive effects attributed to the Games. Specifically, the issues CSOs often grapple with, such as the high cost and lack of facility access, do not seem to have improved following the Games for the majority of CSOs interviewed. It also seems too early to determine with certainty some of the lasting effects, if any, of the Olympics upon sport or the host community. It remains to be seen what the reported impacts may be five or ten years after the Games and given the diversity of the organizations studied it is not surprising that the Game's impacts might not affect all organizations equally.

## 5. Conclusion

One of the common themes found throughout the literature review is the need for more in-depth, comprehensive research. There is a clearly identified need for more evaluation relating to the impacts of community sport as it applies to urban policy and sport policy. Currently much of the policy provision is made on the basis of assumed need and assumed benefit as argued by Long and Sanderson (2001). This project has attempted to draw attention to a contributing factor to the lack of research in this area - the complexity of the sport system in Canada, especially at the community level. It is noted that the community sport perspective is generally omitted from sport policy documents. This preliminary research has underscored the point that perspective is important when examining sport development impacts. The perspectives of representatives from the local community and those of the PSOs are equally significant yet often different, potentially as a result of their frame of reference, access to information and organizational focus. While provincial and higher level sport organizations may be developing closer ties to each other based on policy claims that have not been fully tested, it seems that local community organizations often remain removed from these higher level organizations in much of their actual operations. Given the complexity involved in attempting to quantify the operations of organizations at the community sport level and their supposed ties to provincial organizations it is not surprising that the community perspective is not well represented. Yet this remains a concern from a policy and funding standpoint. It is in the best interests of all sport practitioners to understand more fully what is happening at the community level and just where timely impacts might be made through policy prescriptions such as those aimed at empowering disadvantaged groups, reducing crime, urban regeneration and the other claimed impacts in order that programming and funding can be effectively implemented. The increasing prevalence of claims and integration of these claims in policy prescription will require more rigorous evaluation.

This project further finds that another vast layer of complexity is added when attempting to analyze the impacts of sport-related development initiatives with the addition of the intricacies, complex processes and rhetoric surrounding a mega-event such as the Olympic Games. Given this complexity, it is not surprising that only broad-based sport-related development objectives were stated by Games organizers and LegaciesNow at the outset of the bid process.

It is worth noting again that CSOs are not homogenous as a group – they vary in size, facility access and requirements, participant demographics, operational practices and more. The potential of a given CSO to capitalize on any benefits that may result following a mega-event, as well as the desired benefits of that organization and the circumstances under which benefits may be achieved may differ from other organizations. Thus, further qualitative research would be a valuable starting point prior to undertaking more rigorous quantitative evaluation of a number of areas of sport development and Games related policy. Specifically, there are few, if any, current research articles focusing on how various forms of community sport actually operate at the local level in Canada. Moreover, a lack of clear evidence related to the role sports can play in development initiatives needs to be addressed as a field of research. With respect to this, Coalter et al. (2000) note:

There is a general absence of systematic empirical evidence relating to the impact of sports-related projects (especially large-scale development initiatives). However, the strength of the theoretical arguments, with a range of indicative and associative information and anecdotal evidence, have led most commentators to agree that sports activities have a positive role to play as ingredients in wider ranging initiatives to address issues of health promotion, diversion from crime, education and employment initiatives and community development and social inclusion. (Coalter et al, 2000, 313)

Thus, identifying local community sport organizations and speaking to representatives to explore anecdotal evidence of where sport may play a role in development seems a logical next step in attempting to more fully understand, potentially through quantifiable measures, a role for sport, if any, in larger community development policy initiatives. Once potential for impacts in these areas are better understood, then Games related impacts may be better explored within their situational context. This project was initiated

to consider operational impacts to local sport organizations as a result of the Games but uncovered a tangled network of policy claims, largely based on assumption, not to mention a complex situational structure of organizations that makes evaluation difficult. This is a field of research desperate for further examination and analysis before further policy is developed, especially when the policy is employed to secure funding and public buy-in of an Olympic magnitude.

Looking towards evaluation of the Games in London 2012, where Games organizers have placed a priority on developing a legacy for sport in the country, it will be interesting to observe how they attempt target and measure strategies for a range of organizations with such diverse needs. The notion of linking legacy promises to actual community sport outcomes involves holding Games organizers to a new level of accountability. This increased accountability would also help address the concern raised by MacAloon and others that legacy planning must involve intention and results rather than solely act as a tool to help Games organizers secure a successful bid and citizen support. Further, better understanding of the actual potential benefits for CSOs and the situational or other circumstances under which legacy benefits may arise would be of tremendous value for future Games hosts. In depth research on the Vancouver community sport situation could help inform community sport practitioners in future host cities how to best harness the Games to achieve their desired benefits.

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## **Appendices**

## **Appendix A.**

### **Qualitative Survey Questions**

1. Has your organization experienced any changes related to volunteer or participant (i.e., athlete or player) recruitment as a result of the Games? Please describe briefly.
2. Has your organization experienced any changes in access to funding or grant opportunities as a result of the Games? Please describe briefly.
3. Have the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympic Games provided your organization with increased opportunities to network with other organizations? Please describe briefly.
4. What would be the most significant differences for your organization today if the Games had not been staged in Vancouver?
5. Would you be interested in participating in a 30 - 60 minute interview to further identify and discuss the impacts of the staging of the Olympics upon your organization? Alternatively, would you be able to recommend another representative of your organization who might be prepared to participate in such an interview? If yes, please provide your email address and phone number below.

## Appendix B.

### Interview Informed Consent Form

**Title of Project:** Community Sport Development and the Olympic and Paralympic Games – Outcomes from Vancouver 2010.

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Lisa Ogilvie, I am a graduate student in the Urban Studies Program at Simon Fraser University.

I am conducting this research as part of my Master's degree program, looking into the outcomes of the hosting of the 2010 Olympic Games on the current and future operations of community sport organizations in British Columbia's Lower Mainland. This research may aid in the understanding and identification of opportunities for community sport organizations as a result of the Games (if any) and follows an undertaking by Games organizers that local community sport would benefit as a result of staging the Games.

The participants in this study will include representatives of community sport organizations. They will be interviewed about the outcomes for their organizations as a result of the staging of the 2010 Olympic Games in Vancouver.

I would like to request your consent to be interviewed for this study and for the interview to be audio-recorded. You may still participate in this interview if you do not agree to be audio-taped. Your willingness to consider participating in this research project is much appreciated.

As a participant in the research you will enjoy the following rights:

- Your participation in this interview is entirely voluntary. You are free to decline to answer any question or to end the interview at any time.
- The audio-recording and any transcript made of this interview will be treated with complete confidentiality
- While data excerpts from this interview may be made part of the final research report, your name or that of your organization will not be used in any publications. Nor will any other information that clearly identifies you (or your organization) be revealed in any publications.

If you wish to obtain a summary of the research results, you may contact me to obtain these at [logilvie@sfu.ca](mailto:logilvie@sfu.ca). Please place a check mark on the line beside each statement below to indicate agreement, or leave the line blank if you do not agree with the statement.

\_\_\_\_\_ I agree to participate by allowing myself to be interviewed as outlined in the *Information Sheet for Participants to be Interviewed*. I understand that I may decline to answer any question or end the interview at any time.

\_\_\_\_\_ I agree that Lisa Ogilvie can audio-record this interview and that it will be used with complete confidentiality.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that while any data excerpts from this interview may be made part of the final research report, my name or the name of my organization will never be used in any publications. Nor will any information that identifies me (or my organizational affiliation) be revealed in publications.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have obtained permission from the organization I represent prior to participating in this interview.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that if I wish to obtain a copy of the research I may do so by contacting Lisa Ogilvie by email at xxxxxx.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Any concerns regarding this interview may be raised with the Director, Office of Research Ethics at Simon Fraser University, Dr. Weinberg (email: xxxxx, phone: 778-782-6593)

## Appendix C.

### Semi-structured Interview Questions

*Please Note: These questions are only designed to serve as a potential guideline. The questions and information most relevant to your experience and the experience of your organization will be discussed.*

- What would you describe as the most important learning outcome for your organization as a result of the Games?
- What, in your opinion, will be the major legacies of the Games (if any) for your organization?
- Are there any other Games related logistical impacts experienced by your organization you feel are significant?
- Were the funding outcomes you experienced expected or surprising? (i.e., positive, negative or no influence on funding/ grant opportunities for your organization)
- Did Games related activities bring you personally in contact with other members of the local sport community you would otherwise not have met?
- What advice do you have for leaders in similar community sport organizations in future Games host cities?
- If the opportunity to host the Games arose again in Vancouver what would you do differently, given your recent experience?