Collaborative Advantage and Collaborative Inertia in a Micro Level Study of Interorganizational Relationships (IORs) Between Canadian Sport and Recreation Organizations

by

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ABSTRACT

In 2002, the Canadian government released a new Sport Policy that has included ‘enhanced interaction’ as one of its four goals for sport organizations (Canadian Heritage, 2002). Research on interorganizational relationships (IORs) specific to the Canadian sport context has suggested that while broad potential benefits exist for organizations seeking to build linkages (Thibault & Harvey, 1997), organizations need to be aware of the challenges that are involved in managing IORs (Thibault, Frisby & Kikulis, 1999; Thibault, Kikulis, & Frisby, in press; Frisby, Thibault, & Kikulis, in press).

The purpose of the study was to examine collaborative advantage and collaborative inertia in IORs between a sport organization and recreation organizations using Huxham and Vangen’s (2000a) conceptual framework. Studying the IORs of a provincial sport organization (PSO) involves a stakeholder group that has not been the object of previous IOR research in Canadian sport, despite the suggestion that a more comprehensive understanding of different stakeholder perspectives was needed (Thibault & Harvey, 1997). Huxham and MacDonald’s research found that both collaborative advantage (achieving a result that each individual organization could not achieve alone) and collaborative inertia (where IORs do not move forward, leading to frustration) are possible outcomes of relationships (1992). Huxham and Vangen’s (2000a) seven factors causing collaborative inertia were used to understand the extent to which inertia was present in the cases studied, and how inertia in the IORs was being managed.

In this qualitative study, data gathered from document analysis, information meetings and observations, and semi-structured interviews revealed that collaborative advantage was achieved in the two relationships between a PSO (Tennis BC) and two
municipal recreation departments (Lake City and River City). The findings also suggest that the factors leading to collaborative inertia existed in different amounts in these IORs. The inertia present existed in two different forms. The first was related to Huxham and Vangen's factors that described collaborative inertia emerging from organizational sources, and the second was related to individual sources, such as difficulties in communicating, negotiating power and trust, and negotiating autonomy. Another significant finding suggested that divergent expectations that emerged at the end of the first year of the IOR present a threat for increased collaborative inertia in the future of these IORs if not adequately managed.

The role of IORs is increasingly important to sport organizations in Canada (cf. Babiak, 2003; Glover, 1999a; 1999b; Thibault et al., 1999; in press; Frisby et al., in press). Researchers have overlooked understanding the challenges of managing these relationships until recently (Frisby, et al., in press). Findings from this study support the notion that factors emerge during collaborative actions between organizations that pose a threat to realizing the advantages identified during the formation of IORs. Continued research on the process of managing IORs is needed to better understand how inertia can be limited to ensure Canadian sport organizations maximize advantage through these relationships.
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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my two nemeses. General Apathy and Major Boredom keep me thinking about the world in different ways.

More seriously, I have received a great deal of help in completing this research. I would like to thank the Faculty members and staff of the Leisure and Sport Management unit of the School of Human Kinetics at UBC, specifically my committee members, who have given me a great deal of valuable advice during the process. I would also like to recognize the important support I have received from other graduate students in the Leisure and Sport Management unit who have been incredibly generous with their advice, support, and kindness.

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Thank you.
Chapter 1 – Introduction

Current Directions in Canadian Sport

For the past twenty years, the Canadian government has introduced a number of changes to improve its sport system (cf. Macintosh, 1996; Macintosh, Bedecki, & Franks, 1987; Macintosh & Whitson, 1990; Semotiuk, 1994). In their quest to improve sport at all levels, Canadian Heritage, the ministry responsible for amateur sport, undertook, in 2000, a process of regional consultation designed to update the Canadian Sport Policy. In one document prepared for the consultation process, government leaders affirmed, “the current system’s chronic weakness stems from a lack of cohesion at all levels, governmental as well as political and athletic” (Canadian Heritage, 2000, p. 14). This statement acknowledges that sport organizations operate in different jurisdictions at multiple levels and departments of government, as well as in different areas of the private sector (Thibault & Harvey, 1997). While the organizational diversity in Canadian sport is not necessarily a negative characteristic, historically sport initiatives have been undertaken in isolation from another closely related activity, recreation. The separation of sport and recreation into ‘silos’ has resulted in organizational gaps in the continuum between mass participation and high performance sport opportunities for Canadians (Parliament of Canada, 1998; Searle & Brayley, 1999). While distinguishing between sport and recreation is somewhat counterproductive to the goal of this research, for the purposes of this study sport will be used to refer to organizations and programs that are designed for the purpose of encouraging excellence, while recreation will be used to describe programs that are designed to foster participation and inclusion.
The process of creating a new national policy to address the current problems in the Canadian sport and recreation system involved the Secretary of State (Amateur Sport), Denis Coderre, overseeing a series of six regional conferences held over a 20-month period that included over 600 selected participants. At the conclusion of the conferences, the Canadian Sport Policy was developed and released in May of 2002, in which the desired directions and input from key stakeholders were condensed into four goals (i.e., enhanced excellence, enhanced participation, enhanced capacity, and enhanced interaction). In the enhanced excellence area of the policy, directions have been suggested to increase the support for elite athletes in Canada to help them succeed in reaching the podium at international competitions. The enhanced participation section is focused on increasing the activity level of Canadians by providing and encouraging access to recreational physical activity. The enhanced capacity area of the policy is centred on providing support services (i.e., coaching development, ethics advocacy, and advising) and developing facilities to ensure that there is a sport infrastructure legacy to support the excellence and participation initiatives. Finally, the enhanced interaction area is centred on improving the relationships between stakeholder organizations to provide a more integrated support system for high performance, sport development, and recreation activities. These four areas will be reflected in the vision and policy of sport for the next decade (Canadian Heritage, 2001b; 2002).

In concert with the federal initiative to evaluate the current sport system and develop a new sport policy, the Sport and Community Development Branch of the Government of British Columbia undertook a similar initiative that culminated in the BC Summit on Sport and Physical Activity (Government of British Columbia, 2001) in
Richmond, British Columbia in June 2001. Not surprisingly, the goals addressed in this consultation process were similar in scope to the national plan.

As organizations are being encouraged to enhance the extent to which they interact with other organizations, there is an increased need to understand how relationships between organizations are managed in the Canadian sport context. This study is centred on improving our understanding of the interorganizational relationship (IOR) process. Specifically, the purpose of this research is to investigate the process of managing IORs between a Canadian provincial sport organization (PSO) and two municipal recreation departments. As such, one of the goals of this study is to contribute to the knowledge of both practitioners and researchers about the management of IORs at the micro-level.

The Potential and Challenges of Interorganizational Relationships

A growing body of research has examined the role of interorganizational relationships as a strategy to deal with the uncertainty that exists in the Canadian sport system (cf. Glover, 1999a; Thibault, Frisby, & Kikulis, 1999; Thibault & Harvey, 1997; Vail, 1992; 1994). Thibault and Harvey (1997) wrote in their macro-level assessment of interorganizational linkages in Canadian sport that acquiring ownership, developing contracts and formal joint ventures, co-opting, and recruiting executives exist as possible strategies for sport organizations seeking to foster IORs. Their study included an overview of different types of relationships that exist within what they defined as the nonprofit, state, and private sectors of the Canadian sport system (1997, p.49). Thibault and Harvey concluded that while generally there "is no doubt that the development of
additional interorganizational relationships or linkages will be increasingly important to organizational survival” (p. 61), they cautioned stakeholders on the need to form IORs with pertinent organizations. In their recommendations for continued research in the area of IORs in the Canadian sport context, the authors suggested more research was needed at the macro and micro-levels. More specifically, they asked, “how will nonprofit sport organizations cope with increasing environmental instability” (Thibault & Harvey, 1997, p. 62)?

Environmental pressures and their impact on interorganizational relationships was the focus of subsequent research in Canada that focused on the IORs of municipal recreation departments. Thibault, Frisby, and Kikulis (1999) identified increased economic, political, and social pressures that have led three Canadian cities to become more reliant on IORs to fulfill their mandates. The pressure to maintain the level of service to citizens with fewer resources has remained constant for Canadian sport organizations in recent years. Despite the investments being made by governments to develop a new sport policy, the era of shrinking government funding for sport and recreation has continued, and ongoing spending reduction remains a target for governments (Parkinson, 2002). Thibault, Frisby, and Kikulis’ (1999) study supported previous work suggesting that changing economic, political, and social pressures on governments have led municipalities away from direct service provision and towards IORs to deliver programs (Balmer, 1995; Balmer & Reid, 1986). They also recommended that further research be dedicated to understanding how these new relationships are being managed by recreation departments.
A growing number of studies on IORs in the Canadian sport and recreation context have included the process of managing the relationship as an area of focus in building an understanding of the factors that contribute to IOR success. This is to a large extent in response to Kanter’s (1989) work which found that managers spend up to 50% of their time initiating IORs, 23% of their time developing strategic plans, and only 8% of their time to managing existing relationships. In his study of intermunicipal IORs, Glover (1999) found that three elements of IOR development warrant discussion. Selecting a partner, preparing a compatible agreement, and maintaining a satisfactory arrangement were identified as relevant for IORs in the intermunicipal context. A willingness to share limited resources, ensuring support of constituent groups (i.e., citizens), and development of trust were described as being central factors in maintaining a satisfactory arrangement between municipalities.

Babiak (2003) conducted research on the IORs of a Canadian National Sport Centre, a multi-sport organization dedicated to supporting high performance athletes. Her work focused on both the formation and process conditions of IORs, supporting the need for organizations to develop trust and clear communication processes to negotiate the multiple meanings that can occur in IORs.

Frisby, Thibault, and Kikulis (in press) provided a framework that went further in developing the need for understanding the process of managing relationships, detailing some of the negative consequences that exist when organizations "under-manage" their IORs. By initiating IORs without strategic planning and without dedicating the necessary resources to achieving the intended advantage, organizations could be entering a situation where they face "an inability to deliver safe, quality programs to the public, staff"
dissatisfaction and burnout, a loss of credibility, negative media exposure, and difficulties in retaining and attracting partners" (Frisby et al., in press, p. 8-9). The results of their study of municipal recreation organizations confirmed that inadequate managerial structures (i.e., lack of policy, unclear roles, and insufficient human resources) and inadequate managerial processes (i.e., insufficient training, insufficient time dedicated, difficulties negotiating competing values, lack of communication) existed in the municipal recreation IORs studied. Furthermore, they concluded that these deficiencies in IOR management could lead to negative outcomes for local governments, stakeholder organizations, and the general public.

This study builds on the understanding of the process of managing IORs in the Canadian sport context by filling two gaps in the literature. While most of the research on IORs in the Canadian sport context has focused on municipal recreation departments (cf. Frisby et al., in press; Glover, 1999; Thibault et al., 1999; Vail, 1992), this study is centred on a provincial sport organization. Examining the reality for a single-sport nonprofit organization was important because the investigation of IORs involving these organizations has not been studied empirically in Canada. In addition, provincial sport organizations have relationships with many different stakeholders in the sport system, making them an excellent research site for a study on IORs as they that can deliver on one of the sport policy objectives of:

increase[d] collaboration, communication, and cooperation amongst the partners in the sport community, government and the private sector, which, in turn, will lead to a more effective Canadian sport system (Canadian Heritage, 2002, p. 19).

Tennis BC, the focal organization in this research, is a member of Tennis Canada, a national sport organization that receives funding from Sport Canada (Sport Canada,
Tennis BC also receives funding from the provincial government of British Columbia. Additionally, it has a membership that includes individual players and public and private tennis clubs. Tennis BC and its relationships with diverse organizations provide a rich environment to learn about how sport and recreation organizations from different sectors (the state, nonprofit and for-profit) interact (Thibault & Harvey, 1997). Tennis BC’s two mandates, to grow the sport of tennis at the recreation and competitive levels, is conducive to the development of IORs with multiple organizations in the Canadian sport system. This study specifically examines the first year of IORs with two municipal governments’ recreation departments surrounding the shared provision of an introductory tennis lesson program.

Collaborative Advantage and Collaborative Inertia

The other contribution of this research is the application of a theoretical framework about IORs to the Canadian sport context. I have been influenced by “the practice-oriented theory” that was generated by a series of action research projects undertaken in Scotland (cf. Huxham & MacDonald, 1992; Huxham & Vangen, 1996; 2000a; 2000b; 2001; Vangen & Huxham, 2002). Over a ten-year span of action research involving managers of mixed organizational backgrounds and mixed nationalities, Huxham, MacDonald, and Vangen have identified two conceptual spaces for IORs to exist: collaborative advantage and collaborative inertia. In a state of collaborative advantage, positive outcomes of a collaborative activity are realized by all stakeholders. Collaborative advantage is different from competitive advantage, and can be understood as “managing the balance between the pitfalls that may occur through an organization
acting individualistically and those which may occur through the very act of collaborating (Huxham & MacDonald, 1992, p. 51).

Collaborative inertia is the term that Vangen and Huxham (2002) have used to describe the pitfalls of collaborating, where the IOR makes "only hard fought or negligible progress" (p. 1). In managing an interorganizational relationship, managers are in constant need to be mindful of what might cause the partnership to reside in a state of inertia as opposed to a state of advantage. Huxham and Vangen identified seven factors that can cause inertia. These factors are: difficulties in negotiating joint purpose, in communicating, in developing joint modes of operation, in managing power imbalances, in managing accountability, in maintaining autonomy, and in managing logistics (Huxham & Vangen, 2000a). These factors will be described more thoroughly in the literature review due to their central importance to this research.

In order to contribute to developing knowledge around the extent to which collaborative advantage and/or collaborative inertia, and the related potential to improve the level of connection and communication amongst stakeholders of the Canadian sport context, this research aims to answer the following questions:

1. How did the stakeholders see the interorganizational relationship (IOR) leading to collaborative advantage?

2. To what extent are Huxham and Vangen's (2000) seven factors leading to collaborative inertia evident in IORs between sport and recreation stakeholders?

3. Are there additional factors in the sport and recreation context under study that contribute to different degrees of collaborative inertia in their IOR?

4. How do stakeholders manage collaborative inertia in their relationships?
In answering these questions, the goal of the study is to build on previous research to better understand the potential and risks of IORs. This is especially relevant for sport organizations because they have been encouraged to develop relationships despite shrinking resources, a factor that has been linked to under-managed IORs (Frisby et al., in press).

Before discussing my research strategies to answer these four questions, I will present a review of the relevant literature on IORs. This review will provide more information on the Canadian sport context, and will include a comprehensive examination of collaborative advantage, collaborative inertia, and how inertia is managed in IORs.
Chapter 2 - Review of Literature

This chapter elaborates on the interorganizational relationship literature as it relates to the research questions. For this reason, sections of this chapter have been organized to reflect the four research questions of this study. The first section reviews the literature on how collaborative advantage has been defined as the intended outcome for organizations that pursue IORs. The second section describes how Huxham and Vangen's (2000a) seven factors leading to collaborative inertia can impede the realization of advantage by IOR stakeholders. The third section focuses on understanding the current Canadian sport and recreation context, and how inertia might present itself differently in this setting compared to the contexts studied in the literature. The final section expands on the literature that examines how managers might deal with inertia in their relationships.

Collaborative Advantage

Interorganizational relationships (IORs) are pursued because they are believed to lead organizations to gaining an advantage. Researchers have identified different types of relationships that entail different levels of stakeholder involvement and have the potential to yield different advantages (cf. Kanter, 1989; 1994; Oliver, 1990; Thibault & Harvey, 1997; Wood & Gray, 1991). The possible benefits that IORs offer organizations include accessing complementary skills or resources; balancing funding streams in volatile environments; and increasing an agency's efficiency by changing bureaucratic structures into more responsive models (cf. Glover, 1999a; Huxham & Vangen, 1996; Mintzberg, 1996).
Regardless of the duration or the objectives of IORs, Kanter (1994) suggested that becoming involved in different kinds of relationships serves as a key asset for organizations in the emerging global economy. She wrote that IORs offer organizations the opportunity to gain a collaborative advantage, "a significant competitive leg up" (1994, p. 96). In contrast, Huxham and MacDonald (1992) defined collaborative advantage as being different from competitive advantage. They found that the improved position of organizations that participated in IORs did not need to relate to an improved position with respect to another organization, as Kanter's (1994) suggests, rather it could improve the likelihood that the multiple organizations involved would reach their collective goal. Furthermore, in their research in the Scottish public sector, Huxham and MacDonald (1992) found that collaborative advantage was a powerful term that could drive the IOR process because of the explicit way it addressed the common aims of the individual stakeholders.

In the general field of interorganizational relationships, differing definitions of IORs have presented a problem for both researcher and practitioners. James (1999) found that recreation organizations had difficulty in their IORs because one organization thought the relationship was a partnership based on a defined exchange of resources, while the other saw their relationship as a collaboration that would involve a continual investment in learning about how the organizations could benefit from each other. The proliferation of terms used to describe interorganizational relationships (e.g., alliances, collaborations, sponsorships, joint ventures, linkages, partnerships) has been seen by some researchers as a fragmentation of the literature, and prompted Oliver (1990) to
suggest that "we no longer know what we know about the formation of interorganizational relationships" (p. 241).

In the case of collaborative advantage, there are multiple definitions, one for the private sector that is closely related to competitive advantage, while in the public sector researchers have identified the potential for collaborative advantage as a method for solving social problems (cf. Clegg & Hardy, 1996; Huxham & MacDonald, 1992; Kanter, 1994; Selsky, 1991). For the purposes of this research, collaborative advantage is defined as "the outcome of collaborative activity (i.e., an IOR) in which an objective is achieved that could not have been achieved by any organization acting alone, and achieving the objectives of each collaborating organization better than it could alone" (Huxham & MacDonald, 1992, p. 51, italics in original). This definition was used because it differentiates relationships that involve simple exchanges between organizations, and ones where the IOR involves organizations working together over time to reach a collectively determined goal. There is a difference between divorcing involvement in a program by outsourcing its delivery to another organization, and working to combine resources to deliver that program better by working together. This distinction is important and relevant in the Canadian sport and recreation context where,

"[IORs] with the private and voluntary sectors are likely to be absolutely necessary in order to deliver a complete service package to local residents. This redefines community recreation as a holistic system made up of agencies, departments, and enterprises, rather than looking at it from a single-agency perspective" (Smale & Reid, 2002, p. 183).

By defining collaborative advantage as a goal that requires all stakeholders to work in a manner that can benefit all of the organizations in a more holistic system, this perspective of IORs offers potential for the larger goal of enhanced interaction identified
in the Canadian sport policy (Canadian Heritage, 2002). While this study focuses on the micro aspects of managing collaborative advantage and inertia, it is important to explicitly recognize the distinction in terms between IORs that are achieving collaborative advantage together, and those that are exchanging resources.

There is a need for clarity in defining collaborative advantage because of the differences that are present in previous research in this area (cf. Crompton, 1998; Thibault & Harvey, 1997; Vail, 1992, 1994). One group of researchers has advocated the pursuit of collaborative advantage through IORs between municipal recreation departments and commercial sector organizations (cf. Crompton, 1998; Uhlik, 1995). Crompton (1998) suggested that municipalities need to consider shifting "from being sellers of services to being facilitators or buyers of services" (p. 88-89). Other researchers have suggested a more tempered enthusiasm for commercial-sector relationships because of the risk for recreation departments to become involved with organizations that have inherently different values and goals (cf. Glover, 1999a; James, 1999; Thibault et al., in press). Glover (1999) noted that IORs in the municipal recreation sector need to be based on explicitly defined, shared values before entering these relationships, which might be difficult to negotiate between public and commercial sectors. There is certainly room for organizations to interact in other, more explicitly defined ways, such as contract relationships or outsourcing of identified services. Huxham and Vangen (1996, p. 5) referred to these IORs as being pursued for more "mundane though nevertheless valuable reasons". However, for the purposes of this research that involves organizations seeking collaborative advantage related to the delivery of a program, an important distinction is
that stakeholders see collaborative advantage as a goal for which the organizations involved are striving towards together.

In further elaborations of their definition, Huxham and MacDonald described collaborative advantage as managing the "pitfalls that may occur through an organization acting individualistically and those which may occur through the very act of collaborating" (1992, p. 51). While the decision for an organization to consider the pitfalls of individual action versus collaborative action would presumably occur before an IOR began, the authors elaborated on some important considerations for organizations considering these relationships.

Huxham and MacDonald (1992) identified four pitfalls of individualism: repetition, omission, divergence, and counterproduction. Repetition occurs when two or more organizations complete a task that only needs to be completed by one. Omission occurs when tasks are not completed by any of the multiple organizations that have determined a particular task to be important, sometimes because it is assumed that another organization will complete it. Divergence occurs when several organizations with common goals identify different areas to focus time and resources, spreading resources thinly over a large area rather than combining resources to address their goals. Finally, counterproduction happens when organizations acting on their own develop actions that explicitly contradict, or cancel out the efforts of another organization in the same community. Huxham and MacDonald (1992) explained the four pitfalls of individualism as factors that do not necessarily need to be eradicated by organizations by forming IORs. There are situations where repetition, for example, offers an organization security by providing a backup for information. However, the authors encouraged organizations to
develop their awareness of the risks of individualism because haphazard repetition, omission, divergence, and counterproduction "are likely to be problematic" (1992, p. 52).

When organizations decide to become proactive in finding ways to limit the negative effects of their individualistic action, they become involved in collaborative action. Huxham and MacDonald (1992) also explored the pitfalls of collaboration, and identified loss of control, loss of flexibility, loss of glory, and additional direct resource costs as broad risks to entering interorganizational relationships. While the loss of control, flexibility, and glory are quite evident occurrences when considering a shift towards collaborative action, the pitfall of direct resource costs addresses the increased financial costs of travel, meetings, and increased communications that are a product of working closely with people outside of one's own organization (Huxham & MacDonald, 1992). Huxham and MacDonald's work (1992) that described IORs as involving management of both the pitfalls of participating in IORs and those related to not participating has inspired several research projects that provided more insights into understanding the delicate balance of managing collaborative relationships (cf. Eden & Huxham, 2001; Huxham & Vangen, 1996; 2000a; 2000b; 2001; Vangen & Huxham, 2002).

Huxham and Vangen (1996) acknowledged several broad themes involved in the management of IORs. Managing the aims of the different organizations; the ability to compromise; the heightened demands on the process of communication; the difficulties in maintaining democracy and equality; power and trust; determination, commitment, and stamina; were all identified by practitioners and participants in action research projects examining IORs between organizations in the public and nonprofit sectors.
Collaborative Inertia

In continuing the research on the process of managing IORs, Huxham and Vangen (2000a) developed a more detailed conceptual understanding of the challenges that face practitioners who are attempting to make IORs happen. They identified seven factors leading to collaborative inertia. A state of collaborative inertia exists when “the rate of work output is much slower than might be expected” (Huxham & Vangen, 2000a, p. 772). Stakeholders become frustrated when the IOR in which they have invested progresses more slowly than was originally expected. When this occurs, the pitfalls of collaboration begin to outweigh the pitfalls of individual action, leading managers to terminate their IOR for the security of a more insular operational approach. Huxham and Vangen developed a set of factors that tend to cause inertia as determined through a decade of consultation with stakeholders involved in IORs:

1. difficulties in negotiating joint purpose because of the diversity of organizational and individual aims which those involved bring to the relationship,

2. difficulties in communicating because of differences in professional (and sometimes natural) languages and organizational (and sometimes ethnic) cultures,

3. difficulties in developing joint modes of operating given that the stakeholder organizations inevitably operate quite different internal procedure from each other,

4. difficulties in managing the perceived power imbalances between stakeholders and the associated problem of building trust,

5. difficulties in managing the accountability of the venture to each of the stakeholder organizations and to other constituencies while...

6. maintaining a sufficient degree of autonomy to allow the work to proceed, and

7. difficulties with the sheer logistics of working with others who are based in physically remote locations. (Huxham & Vangen, 2000a, p. 773)
By relying on Huxham and Vangen's (2000a) seven factors that may lead IORs to a state of inertia, this research will investigate how these factors exist in relation to achieving collaborative advantage through IORs. The presence of one, some, or all of these factors might provide insight into how and why advantage or inertia becomes the outcome of a particular IOR.

Huxham and Vangen's (2000a) factors leading to collaborative inertia have combined different factors that have been identified in the IOR literature to provide a tool for researchers and practitioners to carefully examine the process involved in managing relationships. For example, research on IORs has identified the need to develop a joint purpose (Crompton, 1998; Uhlik, 1995), and has acknowledged the possibility for individuals involved in IORs to act in a manner that reveals their self-interests (Clegg & Hardy, 1996). At the culmination of a decade of action research with practitioners involved in IORs, Huxham and Vangen (2000a) have suggested that defining joint purpose is often a complex or difficult process because the individuals involved in the relationships are negotiating their individual versus collective goals during the process of defining a joint purpose. This is a logical fit considering this task is likely occurring in the early stages of the relationship.

The next factor the authors identified as causing inertia involved experiences where stakeholders noted communication difficulties. Different language and cultural differences are a possibility in IORs, and communication across new channels involving new people can be difficult. Kanter (1994) addressed communication problems in her research when she advocated developing strong interpersonal relationships. An informant in her study suggested "there really is no good system for working out problems except
through good personal relationships (p. 106). These relationships may certainly be more
difficult to build across organizations where high turnover rate exist, different
organizational cultures and possibly different educational backgrounds and perspectives
might exist (Frisby et al, in press).

A third example of how Huxham and Vangen's (2000a) factors leading to inertia
build on different contributions within organizational theory is the fourth factor in their
list, which addresses power differences and the related issue/problem of developing trust.
Hardy and Phillips (1998), in their critical analysis of an IOR built on Blumer's (1971)
work that suggested that social problems are "named", and are therefore influenced by the
interests and actions of different players with different stakes in the problem" (Hardy &
Phillips, 1998, p. 219). If power differences are prevalent in these relationships, then
conflict and a lack of trust would likely be a significant difficulty for the IOR
stakeholders.

Huxham and Vangen's (2000a) factors leading to collaborative inertia provide a
starting point to understand the management of IORs. Their seven factors leading to
collaborative inertia were developed during work with practitioners involved in IORs
over an extended period of time. The factors have combined many of the findings from
previous IOR research into groups that conceptually fit with practitioner descriptions of
IORs they have studied. The result is a conceptual framework that reflects the
practitioners' reality related to IOR management. Determining whether or not the
practitioner perspectives, in the Scottish context, relate to IORs in the Canadian sport and
recreation context is one of the challenges of this research.
Potential for Collaborative Inertia in Canadian Sport and Recreation Sector

The Canadian sport and recreation system has been involved in a policy development process over a two-year period. One of the major goals of the policy is to encourage organizations to become more involved in IORs to achieve advantage at all levels. The goals of this initiative for sport organizations were identified as “to increase participation, recruit new participants, and reduce drop-out rates in their sports in collaboration with actual and potential partners such as municipalities, scholastic institutions, sport centres” (Canadian Heritage, 2001b, p. 17). In order for organizations to reach this goal, stakeholders need to recognize two significant barriers. The first barrier is that while governmental stakeholders have suggested that increasing the significance of sport, recreation, and physical activity in the minds of Canadians is important, there is an increasing body of work that has suggested that funding to these sectors is decreasing (cf. Glover, 1999a; 1999b; Thibault et al., 1999; Thibault et al., in press). These coinciding trends have fostered a commonly held belief that the reality for sport and recreation organizations is that they need to do more with less (Thibault et al., 1999). Increased systemic pressures present an additional challenge for practitioners managing inertia in IORs.

The second barrier is that despite investments that have been made in the sport policy development process, recreation stakeholders continue to feel alienated by the sport community (CPRA, 2002). The rift between sport and recreation that has existed in Canada over time presents a considerable challenge when sport and recreation organizations are expected to seek collaborative advantage together.
The sport and recreation community has positioned itself as being willing and able to offer a solution for many problems that face the general population of Canada. For example, a document circulated during the National Summit on Sport, the culmination of the national consultation process discussed earlier, identified social and personal development, health and well being, culture, education, economic development, and entertainment and leisure as areas where sport makes a contribution to improving the lives of Canadians (Canadian Heritage, 2001a). While sport has been connected to positive outcomes in these areas, the troubling reality for managers is that participation in sport has decreased in recent years with only 54% of Canadians aged five to 14 involved in sport, and participation rates have been shown to decrease dramatically as we age (Sport Canada, 2000). Sport and recreation organizations need to address the discrepancy between the potential benefits sport can offer, and the declining sector of the population who is participating.

The contradiction for those involved in the sport system is that on the one hand governments have realized the potential benefits that sport organizations provide to society, such as a solution to the fact that physical inactivity costs the Canadian health care system at least $2.1 billion annually in direct health care costs (Health Canada, 2001). While, on the other hand, governments, in their attempt to download services and reduce spending, have delivered funding cuts that have forced organizations to examine different ways of delivering services (Burton & Glover, 1998). Thibault et al., (in press) have described the New Public Management approach to governing, where deficit reduction and spending cuts serve as key elements of policy, in several instances from national and provincial to municipal budgets.
What has resulted from the “pro-business” policies that have emerged from the New Public Management philosophy is a proliferation of programs (sometimes involving IORs) that can generate revenue for government units responsible for sport and recreation. These programs are valued more highly than others that break even, or lose money, despite the potential for these programs to deliver social benefits. There are certainly concerns regarding the extent to which government programs developed from the revenue generation mindset can deliver the broad health care benefits to Canadians when they ignore marginalized groups of the population (Frisby & Millar, 2002). Additionally, there are concerns about the relationships that are being developed under the New Public Management ideology. While the initiation of different types of relationships may have emerged as a result of decreased operating budgets (Glover, 1999; Thibault et al., 1999), there is an emerging concern that, by not investing in staff training and coordination, communications and other factors, sport and recreation IORs are being under-managed (Frisby et al., in press).

The New Public Management environment is similar to the context in which Huxham and Vangen conducted their research and identified factors leading to collaborative inertia. This study will begin to understand the extent to which inertia (in similar and/or different ways to Huxham and Vangen’s factors) exist for managers of IORs in sport and recreation organizations.

**The Sport/Recreation Disconnect**

Another challenge for sport and recreation organizations considering developing IORs is the fact that historically these organizations have not valued each other’s
contributions. Furthermore, there has been some friction between these two groups, who see their contributions to society as being fundamentally different. Searle and Brayley (1999) noted that “the fact that community recreation leaders are interested in the recreational, mass-participation aspects of sport, and sport governing bodies at provincial and national levels direct much of their attention to high-performance and elite athlete development has caused conflict between the two groups” (p. 94).

Considering the lengthy consultative process in developing a new Canadian sport policy, it might be assumed that these conflicts have been addressed, especially when the policy contains the goal of enhanced interaction. Unfortunately, this does not seem to be true. In fact, the members of the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA) were concerned enough about recreation’s lack of inclusion in the development of the Canadian sport policy that they developed a letter writing campaign from provincial associations to their members of parliament to ensure their voices were heard (CPRA, 2002a). The letter focused on their concerns that the role and impact of recreation would not be recognized nor fully supported in the new Canadian sport policy.

Additionally, executive members of the CPRA have directly argued that their members’ voices had not been included in the policy development process. The CPRA released a position paper in February, 2002 suggesting a discord between the direction agreed upon by stakeholders at the National Summit on Sport (held in April, 2001) and the draft policy document (Canadian Heritage, 2001b, CPRA, 2002b). The discord was specifically directed toward the conclusion of the sport policy draft that suggested that leadership needed to come from all stakeholders, which they felt did not occur (Canadian Heritage, 2001b). Also, the position paper suggested that the Canadian sport system is not
really a system at all, and that it “doesn’t involve stakeholders in planning, has
disconnects between and within sports and is far from a seamless ‘playground to podium’
journey, even for elite athletes” (2002b, p. 7).

The disagreement between the language and goals of the sport policy
development process, and the reality for managers of organizations in the sport sector is
not new. Sport and recreation organizations in Canada have been described as operating
in “silos”, referring to their propensity to communicate and interact in micro communities
(e.g., recreation, high performance sport, and physical education) and to overlook the
concerns of other organizations operating in related communities involved in the system
(Searle & Brayley, 1999).

The new sport policy has suggested that in order to achieve the broad benefit that
sport can have in Canada, the elimination of silos is required. Policy-makers have
suggested that through “more collaboration among sports and agencies at all levels; and
increased collaboration and partnership between the federal and provincial/territorial
governments, and enhanced partnership within the sport community” this goal can be
realized (Canadian Heritage, 2001a, p. 7). Research that has been completed on IORs in
Canadian sport have suggested that several potential pitfalls exist for organizations
seeking to develop relationships, and several factors have been identified as being
important when becoming involved in these relationships (cf. Glover, 1999a; 1999b;
Thibault et al., 1999; Thibault & Harvey, 1997; Vail, 1992; 1994).

The purpose of this research is to examine how collaborative inertia is present in
IORs once they have begun. With Huxham and Vangen’s (2000a) conceptual framework
to guide the research, the goal is to develop the depth of knowledge related to how
managers in sport and recreation organizations understand these relationships. Huxham and Vangen (2000a) have suggested that their factors leading to collaborative inertia might exist across different IOR domains, and the one goal of this research is to measure the extent to which their seven factors prove to be relevant in Canadian sport and recreation organizations. Additionally, there are some intricacies to the Canadian sport and recreation context related to funding and historical/political perspectives that might elicit different factors leading IORs to inertia (Searle & Brayley, 1999). These factors need to be accounted for considering the broad endorsement for IORs that has emerged in the new Canadian sport policy.

Managing Within the Collaborative Advantage/Collaborative Inertia Context

An additional contribution of this study is an examination of how stakeholders manage collaborative inertia in their IORs. Vangen and Huxham discussed some individual management of inertia, suggesting that individuals actions are “the mechanisms that make things happen in a collaboration” (2002, p. 2, italics in original). The focus of this research will not be specifically centred on leadership, but more generally on understanding how managers act to recognize and handle instances where collaborative inertia is present in their IOR. Little research has focused on how managers cope with the inadequate managerial structures and/or inadequate managerial processes that have been identified as existing in IORs in Canadian sport and recreation (Frisby et al., in press).

This chapter has focused on the IOR literature related to the research questions posited in this research. The study will examine how collaborative advantage and
collaborative inertia are understood during the first year of an IOR between Canadian sport and recreation stakeholders. Huxham and Vangen's (2000a) factors leading to collaborative inertia will serve as a guide to understanding inertia in this case, however, considering some of the different historical and political realities within and between Canadian sport and recreation organizations, an attempt will be made to recognize and analyze other manifestations of inertia. Finally, the study will identify how managers make IORs happen despite the challenge of avoiding collaborative inertia. The next chapter will focus on the research method utilized to answer these questions.
Chapter 3 – Research Method

In the previous chapter, I described how the existing IOR literature has informed my understanding of interorganizational relationships, and how this study addresses some gaps in this area of research. In this chapter, the research method used in this study is presented. In essence, the ethnographic techniques employed to answer the research questions are explained. The chapter is organized into five sections that describe the research site, the data collection process (including how document analysis, information meetings and meeting observations, and interviews were utilized), data preparation and analysis, developing codes and themes, and writing.

Research Site

The site of my research was the Building Tennis Communities (BTC) program, specifically the IORs developed between Tennis BC, a provincial sport organization, and two municipal recreation departments in the Greater Vancouver Area of British Columbia. The decision to include two municipalities was made to provide some opportunity to understand how advantage and inertia might emerge in unique ways, and be interpreted differently in separate communities. As well, Tennis BC initiated relationships with these two municipalities at the same time, which provides a distinct opportunity to concurrently examine the first year of IORs in two locations. For the purposes of this study, the municipalities will be referred to as Lake City and River City.
I became aware of Tennis BC's interest in developing relationships with recreation departments during a two-year period when I was employed as communication manager in the organization. In 1999, Tennis BC developed a strategy to foster relationships with municipal recreation departments in British Columbia. My involvement in the development of, and in consulting on, the strategy piqued my interest in the general field of IORs in the sport context, especially those IORs that target increased sport and recreation participation. Concurrently, the national consultation process to update the Canadian sport policy was occurring, and as I began my graduate studies, I had the opportunity to work as an administrator on a multi-stakeholder committee that was exploring collaborations to improve the position of sport in British Columbia. As a result of my involvement on that committee, I attended the British Columbia Summit on Sport and Physical Activity in June, 2001. At that time, I was involved in many discussions with sport stakeholders surrounding the policy development process. I became concerned about the discussions on how the benefits of 'enhanced interaction' would improve the sport and recreation system when no discussions were taking place about how these interactions or relationships would be managed.

This concern is raised in Kanter’s (1989) work on IORs as she argued that the majority of time that managers of organizations spend on IORs goes into their creation, with only eight percent of the resources devoted to managing them. For this study, the goal is to examine the extent to which collaborative advantage and collaborative inertia exist in two IOR cases in the Canadian sport context in which inertia is a possible outcome. This inquiry builds on the concern identified by researchers of Canadian
recreation organizations that have suggested that the process of managing IORs continues to be undervalued component of IORs when compared to IOR creation strategies (Frisby, Thibault, & Kikulis, in press; Thibault et al., 1999; in press).

In 2002, I approached Tennis BC to inquire about becoming involved in a research capacity within their BTC program with municipal recreation departments. Tennis BC’s Participation Development Director approached the stakeholders from Lake City and River City who were happy to participate in the research. Lake City and River City were beginning the first year of their IORs with Tennis BC, which offered me the best opportunity to understand how these relationships were being developed, how organizations perceived advantages emerging from these relationships, how factors that could lead to inertia were managed, to assist the organizations involved in understanding emerging tensions, and to observe and learn about the process that managers undertook to manage inertia in these relationships.

Tennis BC is a large provincial sport organization in British Columbia in terms of membership and budget size (Sport BC, 2000). In the year 2000, Tennis BC had over 14,000 members registered as individuals or as a member one of 69 affiliated tennis clubs (Tennis BC, 2000). Additionally, 19 municipal recreation departments registered as member organizations of Tennis BC. The annual budget of Tennis BC is approximately one million dollars (Tennis BC, 2000). Tennis BC serves as the voice for tennis in British Columbia. It is also in a position of privilege compared to other sport organizations in that Tennis BC is affiliated to two national sport federations, Tennis Canada and the United States Tennis Association (USTA) (because of their geographical position...
between the states of Alaska and Washington). Tennis BC’s mission statement reads as follows:

Tennis BC, the provincial sport governing body, is committed to the advancement of tennis in British Columbia by stimulating participation and excellence in the sport in all regions of British Columbia. Tennis BC is therefore dedicated to providing encouragement, support, leadership and example to organizations who seek to enhance the enjoyment, quality, and image of tennis (www.tennisbc.org).

In the late 1990s, when I was employed with Tennis BC, the Participation Development Director worked on a strategy with the financial assistance of Tennis Canada and the United States Tennis Association (USTA), to foster more formal relationships with municipal recreation departments. This strategy recognized that “in many cities and municipalities the parks programming has led to a vibrant tennis community, with excellent instruction, programming, and facilities” (Tennis BC, 1999, p. 1). The purpose of developing relationships with recreation stakeholders was to encourage the maintenance and improvement of programs that municipalities deliver for the sport of tennis, to increase participation rates, volunteerism, and accessibility to tennis in general. As well, this direction would allow Tennis BC to link their schools’ instruction programs with municipal recreation programs to foster the formation of community clubs and eventually, year-round facilities (Tennis BC, 1999). In the first three years, this endeavour has introduced “tennis to well over 2000 people … and helped improve the quality of facilities and the awareness of tennis” in one municipality (Tennis BC, 2000, p. 22).

There are pitfalls and shortcomings with selecting any site to do research. In choosing to study IORs with Tennis BC, one could argue that I have undertaken research
in a privileged organization, one that does not represent the average provincial sport organization (PSO) in Canada. One could also raise the possibility for bias because I worked primarily for a sport organization and not a recreation organization, and so my understanding of sport is far greater than my understanding of recreation. As well, since I have worked with Tennis BC, there is the possibility that stakeholders will expect preferential treatment within the study, for example, expecting me to defend “their” or “our” position in discussing conflict rather than taking sides with recreation stakeholders. One could also contend that I have a-priori knowledge of the IOR environment in general within Tennis BC that might deter stakeholders from sharing their opinions during an interview because of the assumption that I already know their opinions on specific IOR issues. This would obviously limit the extent to which meaningful discussion could take place in relation to the way stakeholders interpreted different situations.

There are a number of benefits with choosing the BTC as a research site. My involvement with Tennis BC (and other organizations and committees in sport and recreation) has provided me with knowledge of the professional languages used in the sport and recreation context (identified by Huxham & Vangen (2000a) as a possible barrier to IOR collaborative advantage). Furthermore, the fact that Tennis BC had already documented in a strategy their desire to understand each partnership and each municipality as a new and distinct opportunity (Tennis BC, 1999) offered an ideal opportunity to conduct research on the process of managing advantage and inertia in IORs. Research on Canadian sport has demonstrated that sport organizations may not all be in a position to develop strategies to form IORs with other organizations (Thibault, Slack, & Hinings, 1993). For this reason, Tennis BC’s strategy for developing IORs with
recreation stakeholders could serve as a learning tool for other organizations or municipalities that choose a similar path for their future.

Data Collection

In undertaking the research, I collected three sources of data; i) documents; ii) initial information meetings and meeting observations; iii) and semi-structured interviews. These three sources of data allowed me to develop an understanding of the IOR process in a way that answered my research questions and acknowledged that the process involved in managing the multiple factors that can cause collaborative inertia in a relationship are more complex than one singular depiction can capture (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995; van Manen, 1997). In addition, by conducting semi-structured interviews that follow up questions to clear up ambiguities, the research was able to maintain a firm sense of validity, which Bray, Lee, Smith, and Yorks defined as answering the question “How do we know what we think we know” (2000, p. 104).

The process of pursuing clarity of emerging concepts that practitioners identified during interviews led to some of the interviews extending beyond the agreed upon maximum times, as the concepts and ideas were probed until a level of certainty was reached. Cultivating openness during the interview process combined with more traditional validation techniques such as triangulation between different participants and different sources of data, developed confirmability within the study. While triangulation has been included as a method to test the validity of the results, it is important to realize that one of the central goals of the research is to develop an understanding for what is happening during the process of managing the IORs under study. The extent to which the
messages conveyed in strategy documents (primarily outlining the advantage of pursuing IORs) are evident in the initial year of developing an IOR does not necessarily serve as an indicator of the validity of whether or not factors leading to inertia were present. For that reason, triangulation will be used where applicable to confirm similarity and/or difference across the relationships, but will not serve as an exclusionary factor for findings that are present in one source of data and not in others.

This research is dedicated to developing an understanding of how collaborative advantage and collaborative inertia exist in IORs between a sport organization and two municipal recreation departments. The goal is to recognize that a combination of factors are involved in achieving collaborative advantage through IORs and to explore how managers approach instances where the barriers to advantage (leading to inertia) are present. Because of the scope of this research (a case study) and the personal nature of the process of recognizing and managing inertia, this research does not claim to offer organizations in the Canadian sport and recreation a reliable or testable instrument for achieving collaborative advantage over collaborative inertia. It does intend to provide a tool for developing the need for sport and recreation organizations to plan for, and invest in, the process of managing IORs.

i) Document Analysis

A document analysis was undertaken to learn about the context of the BTC strategy that served as the basis for the IOR between Tennis BC and the two municipal recreation departments (Lake City and River City). The documents (Table 3.1) allowed the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of what the program offered both to the provincial tennis association and to the municipalities. These documents gave an
indication as to what the IOR stakeholders might have identified as the advantages of pursuing the relationship. They also provided some perspective on the national/provincial dynamics within the organizations (i.e., the relationship between Tennis Canada and Tennis BC). The documents varied in type from informal (*MatchPoint Magazine* articles communicating recent news to the Tennis BC membership) to formal sources (strategic planning documents, meeting minutes, funding strategy documents, provincial funding results).

The variety of informal and formal sources helped create a series of sensitizing concepts (which are precursors to codes), suggesting how different stakeholders in the environment organize priorities and importance (Blumer, 1969; Hammersley & Atkinson, 1994). Table 3.1 provides a list of all the documents that were examined for the study.

### Table 3.1 – Table of Documents Analyzed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Document Title</th>
<th>Author/Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998/99</td>
<td>Community Participation Development Plan</td>
<td>Tennis BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March, 2000</td>
<td>Tennis BC Annual Report</td>
<td>Tennis BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 4, 2000</td>
<td>Play Tennis Collective Growth Strategy – Developing Parks and Recreation Partnerships</td>
<td>Tennis Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November, 2000</td>
<td>Record of Proceedings, Provincial/National Meetings, Québec City, QC</td>
<td>Tennis Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September, 2001</td>
<td>Vision 2000 Provincial Sport Organization Results</td>
<td>Sport BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September, 2001</td>
<td>Building Tennis Communities – 2002 Financial Support Application Form</td>
<td>Tennis Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April, 2002</td>
<td>Building Tennis Communities Funding Guidelines</td>
<td>Tennis Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2002</td>
<td>Building Tennis Communities Backgrounder</td>
<td>Tennis Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 3, 2003</td>
<td>An Evaluation of Tennis Canada's Building Tennis Communities Strategy</td>
<td>Tennis Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Community Development - Community</td>
<td>Tennis BC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Through the analysis of minutes from an annual general meeting, provincial and national planning documents, funding applications, and promotional materials, as well as the placement and profile of participation development versus high performance sport programs in their membership magazine, I became more knowledgeable about the context of the IORs. There were some questions that arose during the document analysis phase surrounding how tennis stakeholders approached IORs, such as why do Tennis Canada’s and Tennis BC’s community growth strategies appear to be different? How relationships vary with different municipal recreation departments? How do Tennis BC’s member clubs influence the ways that IORs with municipal recreation departments are pursued in different cities? To develop a deeper understanding of tennis stakeholder perspectives, a second data collection strategy involving information meetings and meeting observation was utilized.

ii) Information Meetings and Meeting Observations

The second phase of data collection involved attending and observing meetings, and setting up information meetings with stakeholders to understand the different approaches that stakeholders undertook prior to the first season in which the shared instruction program was implemented. The goal of these meetings was to develop a more in-depth knowledge of the IOR context to inform the interviews, as well as to clarify questions that arose through the document analysis stage of the data collection. For example, in one meeting I was able to ask the Tennis BC’s Participation Development
Director about the relationship between Tennis BC and Tennis Canada related to the Building Tennis Communities Program. This meeting helped me understand how these two organizations have different plans and aspirations for developing participation. It also helped me understand how Tennis Canada makes decisions about providing support funding for provincial participation development programs. In two other meetings, I was able to develop my understanding of who would be involved in managing the relationships in each of the municipalities, what the responsibilities of these people were, and what the overall position of their recreation departments was with respect to pursuing IORs with nonprofit and for-profit organizations.

There were five meetings that were attended during this stage (Table 3.2). The first meeting was a briefing of the Tennis Canada representative responsible for participation development in Western Canada. The meeting involved the Tennis BC Participation Development Director explaining the relationships that Tennis BC would be entering into in 2002 (which included relationships with Lake City and River City). The participants agreed to fieldnotes being taken during this meeting and both participants answered some general questions that I had at that time surrounding the IORs. The fieldnotes were entered into a MS Word file. The second meeting included the same Tennis BC and Tennis Canada staff people, but involved a ride-along scenario where I accompanied them to meetings in four communities to discuss different participation development strategies with community tennis club representatives. These meeting were not directly related to the IORs in Lake City and River City, however they offered more insights into different participation development strategies that Tennis BC and Tennis Canada were promoting. Fieldnotes were taken during and after the meetings to ensure
that the different perspectives of community club stakeholders could be included in the community tennis context. This information was used to provide a context for how Lake City and River City IORs were developed with respect to the relationships between Tennis BC and member clubs involved in participation development.

Following the meetings with Tennis BC and Tennis Canada staff, the third and fourth meetings were information-gathering sessions organized with the managers of recreation programming for Lake City and River City. These meetings were used as an opportunity to increase the comfort and awareness levels between researcher and practitioner, and to develop an understanding of the realities in the recreation context. The two stakeholders agreed to have the meetings audiotaped and were provided with the appropriate ethical information surrounding their rights as participants. The interviews were transcribed into MS Word files for review. While participants in these information meetings did not review the transcripts of these meetings, they were contacted by electronic mail or telephone (their preference) to confirm the intent or meaning of some of their comments when the transcripts were unclear.

The final information meeting was with a Tennis Canada national coordinator for the Building Tennis Communities program. This meeting involved a general overview of the program in Canada and how tennis programs in British Columbia compared with other provinces in the country. Fieldnotes were taken after this meeting, and were entered into a MS Word file for analysis. The following table (Table 3.2) provides an overview of these five data collection meetings.
Table 3.2 – Table of Information Meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Meeting Description</th>
<th>Stakeholders Involved (#’s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 25, 2002</td>
<td>Briefing meeting between Tennis BC and Tennis Canada Representatives about 2002 programs (observed)</td>
<td>Tennis BC (1) / Tennis Canada (1) staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March, 2002</td>
<td>Meetings (4) between Tennis BC, Tennis Canada Representatives and Community Clubs</td>
<td>Tennis BC (1), Tennis Canada (1), and Community Clubs (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 7, 2002</td>
<td>Information Meeting with Lake City Recreation Representative</td>
<td>Lake City Recreation (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 10, 2002</td>
<td>Information Meeting with River City Recreation Representative</td>
<td>River City Recreation (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 8, 2002</td>
<td>Meeting with Tennis Canada National Coordinator to discuss contextual elements of the study</td>
<td>Tennis Canada (1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### iii) Interviews

After the document analyses and information meetings were completed, an interview protocol (Appendix 1) was created. This protocol was designed to serve as a guide for semi-structured interviews with the stakeholders involved in the IORs between Tennis BC-Lake City and between Tennis BC-River City. Semi-structured interviews were used to provide a guide to the interview that addressed the specific questions of the research (such as how each of the factors leading to inertia were present), but encouraged participants to discuss their own relevant lived experiences in the context of the IOR (van Manen, 1997). Five interviews were conducted: 1) one with the Tennis BC Participation Development Director; 2) one with the Community Champion/Tennis Coordinator for Lake City and River City, a part-time IOR manager between Tennis BC and the two municipalities; 3) one with the Recreation Manager for River City; 4) one with the Recreation Manager for Lake City; and 5) one with the Site Manager in Lake City (Table 3.3). Prospective participants were contacted with an initial letter (Appendix 2). Lake
City divided the responsibility for providing tennis instruction differently to include a Site Manager involved in the actual delivery of the tennis programs as well as a supervisor responsible for general programming issues while River City had one staff person fulfilling these duties. All of the interview participants were selected because of their intimate, working knowledge of the IORs being studied.

Participants were asked to partake in a semi-structured interview about their role in the IOR. The interviews were scheduled to last for approximately 1.5 hours. All participants were asked for written consent to the interview (Appendix 3) and were presented a letter indicating their rights in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the University of British Columbia's Behavioural Science Committee for Research and Other Studies Involving Human Subjects (Appendix 4).

Table 3.3 – Table of Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Interview Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 16, 2002</td>
<td>River City Recreation Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 17, 2002</td>
<td>Tennis BC Participation Development Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 8, 2002</td>
<td>Lake City Recreation Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 9, 2002</td>
<td>Tennis BC Community Champion (Lake City/River City)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 9, 2002</td>
<td>Lake City Site Manager</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Data Preparation and Analysis**

Once interviews were completed, the data were transcribed and saved into a compatible format (i.e., MS Word files) to be analyzed with a qualitative analysis software package. Atlas.ti provides a system through which researchers can systematically code and organize data. The software provides the opportunity to attach memos and codes to sections of data to facilitate the understanding of phenomena, and allows the researcher to note emerging concepts and write those thoughts to collected
data to facilitate a comparative analysis across the data set. The coding process facilitates the creation of themes, which are central to describing and analyzing the data.

*Developing Codes and Themes*

A coding list was created to analyze the data as it related to the research questions of the study (Table 3.4). For the first research questions surrounding inertia and advantage, previous research by Huxham and Vangen (2000) served as a source to develop initial codes. The factors that were found to cause inertia in their research were each given their own code to provide a picture of how the factors were presented in this research context. In addition to the preset codes outlining the factors as described in the literature, open coding was used to identify instances in the data where stakeholders spoke of inertia or advantage being affected by other factors than those identified in Huxham and Vangen's (2000) conceptual framework. The goal of the open coding was to allow for other factors affecting inertia in the context under study to emerge.

For the other research question, dedicated to uncovering how stakeholders manage inertia in their relationships, the coding process involved repeated readings of transcripts to find the differences and similarities that stakeholders identified within their relationships. This section of the research involved trying to describe how the stakeholders made sense of their relationships which was deemed important considering IORs are relatively a new phenomenon for these organizations and possibly for the stakeholders as individuals. The work of van Manen (1997) was helpful in conceptualizing how themes could emerge from the data and how those themes could be understood in the research. van Manen (1997, p. 90) argued that themes "are like knots in
the webs of our experiences, around which certain lived experiences are spun and thus
lived through as meaningful wholes.” In this research, the development of themes around
how stakeholders manage and make sense of inertia in their IORs is intended to offer
some insight into the complexity that exists in these relationships.

Table 3.4 – Table of Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Code Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 – Advantage</td>
<td>RQ #1 – How did stakeholders see IOR leading to advantage?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 – Inertia</td>
<td>RQ #1 – Did stakeholders see IOR leading to inertia?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 – 1 Joint Purpose</td>
<td>RQ #2 – Related to Huxham &amp; Vangen’s inertia factor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 – 2 Communication</td>
<td>RQ #2 – Related to Huxham &amp; Vangen’s inertia factor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 – 3 Procedural</td>
<td>RQ #2 – Related to Huxham &amp; Vangen’s inertia factor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 – 4 Power/Trust</td>
<td>RQ #2 – Related to Huxham &amp; Vangen’s inertia factor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 – 5 Accountability to Constituents</td>
<td>RQ #2 – Related to Huxham &amp; Vangen’s inertia factor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 – 6 Autonomy</td>
<td>RQ #2 – Related to Huxham &amp; Vangen’s inertia factor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 – 7 Logistics</td>
<td>RQ #2 – Related to Huxham &amp; Vangen’s inertia factor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 – Others</td>
<td>RQ #3 – Related to the presence of other factors causing inertia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4- Relationship Managing</td>
<td>RQ #4 – Incidents that reflected the process in which stakeholders managed their relationships in the IORs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deviance</td>
<td>Emergent theme of deviance related to RQ #4.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Writing

After a coding list was created and the transcripts were coded, the process of
analyzing the results began. For the first section of the research, making sense of the data
involved examining how the stakeholders spoke about the different factors affecting
inertia and advantage, and what importance was given to the factors. In addition to
developing a mental picture of how the factors existed in relation to one another and how
important they were in the IORs, sections that were coded as a new perspective or new
factor were reviewed to understand how Huxham and Vangen’s (2000) work might be
modified to include additional factors in this context.

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For the second part of the research, the writing process involved a heightened level of reflection to acknowledge the process of construction in the writing of others’ experiences (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). In describing how some relationships evolved differently, possibly more positively in terms of advantage than others, the goal was to be true to the stakeholders’ accounts and to accurately explain the IORs that stimulated debate and to increase awareness surrounding the personal aspects of IOR management.
Chapter 4 – Results and Discussion

This chapter focuses on the results of the study. The findings are presented in four sections. The first section deals with contextual information about how the IORs were developed between Tennis BC- Lake City and Tennis BC-River City and how additional stakeholders were involved with these organizations. The second and third sections centre on the extent to which collaborative advantage and collaborative inertia were present in the IORs. The final section describes how the stakeholders managed inertia in their relationships.

Background

The primary organization under study in this research is Tennis BC, more specifically the IORs developed by this organization with the municipal Recreation departments of Lake City and River City. Early in the process of understanding how the IORs were operating in Lake City and River City, it became clear that Tennis Canada had a more direct stake in these relationships (as part of their Building Tennis Communities (BTC) strategy) than had originally been anticipated in the Tennis BC strategy. Since 2001, Tennis Canada has been providing funds to provincial associations (including Tennis BC) through their BTC strategy in order to respond to decreasing participation in the sport nationwide over the past decade (Tennis Canada, 2002a). The IORs with Lake City and River City were funded through the BTC strategy, with support funds being directed to Tennis BC, where decision-makers could use those funds to foster IORs with municipalities. As a result, even if the focus of this study is on the IORs between Tennis BC, Lake City and River City, the relationship between Tennis BC and Tennis Canada is
addressed as background information in the analysis of the results because of the funds exchanged between Tennis Canada and Tennis BC. As well, the relationships with tennis instructors as a group and tennis clubs are addressed as they were identified as important by the individuals interviewed for the research. Figure 4.1 graphically represents all groups involved in the IORs.

Figure 4.1 – Organizational Stakeholders of the study

The initial reason for addressing the relationship between Tennis Canada and Tennis BC in a study on how the IORs with municipal Recreation departments are managed came as a result of some differences that emerged between Tennis BC and Tennis Canada BTC strategy documents. The different approaches undertaken by the provincial and national organizations as to how these relationships might evolve were significant because they provided the opportunity to comprehend how different
perspectives came together to create the space for these relationships to begin at this time. Tennis Canada’s ‘Play Tennis Collective Growth Strategy’ (2001) identified the current sport context as an opportunity to engage in relationships with Parks and Recreation leaders, who are ready to seek relationships “due primarily to economic cutbacks and the changing role of staff” (Tennis Canada, 2000a, p. 1). The Tennis Canada strategy indicated six requirements for IORs: 1) to develop a partnering agreement, 2) to define common goals/objectives, 3) to ensure support of top management, 4) to monitor and evaluate progress, 5) to emphasize team building … to develop trust and improve communication, and 6) to see a win-win situation (Tennis Canada, 2000a). Tennis Canada’s strategy went further to suggest a formula for building tennis communities that is centred on developing a tennis pathway (a progression of instruction programs), tennis partners, and community champions (Figure 4.2).

**Figure 4.2 – How Do We Build a Tennis Community**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Develop Pathway</th>
<th>Develop Partners</th>
<th>Develop Community Champions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programs</td>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>Club Coach / Instructor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certified Instructors</td>
<td>Parks and Recreation</td>
<td>Passionate Volunteer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities</td>
<td>Clubs</td>
<td>Entrepreneur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Politicians</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Service Clubs</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**HEALTHY TENNIS COMMUNITIES**

Tennis Canada. (2000a) Record of proceedings from staff meeting Saturday, November 4, 2000, p.2.
The pathway development section (focused on developing tennis content to implement with stakeholders in IORs) and partner development section of the strategy (focused on developing IORs with stakeholders) are straightforward in the way they define existing organizations and programs on which the IORs will be centred. However, the community champion element of the strategy is somewhat unique to Tennis Canada’s approach. They defined a community champion as:

An individual who resides within the targeted community and is prepared to commit him/herself to growing the game of tennis in that community. Specifically, champions will be the primary contact person with the [provincial tennis associations] and ensure that all partners are communicating regularly and implementing pathway activities that attract and sustain new players (Tennis Canada, 2002b, p. 3).

In contrast to Tennis Canada’s BTC strategy that has a clear role for a community resident to participate in the community partnership, the Tennis BC participation development strategy document proposes a more loosely defined approach to IORs. In attempting to improve the extent to which the provincial tennis association interacts with Parks and Recreation departments, Tennis BC allowed for different roles for their organization in IORs as facilitator, consultant, or partner, to achieve participation development goals (Tennis BC, 1999). Tennis BC’s strategy includes instructions for a needs assessment component, to better understand the type of IOR that is needed in a given community. Tennis BC also recommends hiring a paid, seasonal Tennis Coordinator to oversee the implementation of the IOR strategy. Additionally, the formation of a community tennis association is suggested, in order to fulfill a similar role to the community champion role defined by Tennis Canada however, unlike Tennis Canada’s strategy, the Tennis BC model involves a group or committee of stakeholders.
The different strategies identified by Tennis Canada and Tennis BC are an important consideration in this research because the extent to which Tennis BC can achieve their collaboratively defined goal (and therefore experience collaborative advantage) might be compromised by the fact that their BTC funding partner has a differently defined set of goals for the IOR.

Tennis Canada’s and Tennis BC’s strategic plans for becoming more involved in participation development are somewhat different (in fact, throughout the two IORs, Tennis BC referred to their Tennis Coordinator as a Community Champion in discussions with Tennis Canada staff). In Lake City and River City, the implementation of the IORs was a hybrid of the two strategies, but for simplicity the relationships will be described using the goals identified as Tennis Canada’s strategy (Figure 4.2).

*Developing the Pathway*

In the two municipalities, the pathway section of the Tennis Canada strategy involved the shared implementation of an introductory tennis lesson program. Ironically, the program was sponsored by the United States Tennis Association, using marketing and branding materials given to Tennis BC as part of their membership benefits in the USTA. Therefore, in Lake City and River City, the instruction program that was implemented was the USA Tennis 1-2-3 program. The program offered membership to Tennis BC and the USTA, a racquet (through a sponsorship deal with a racquet manufacturer), and tennis instruction from a certified tennis instructor for a set price (an amount suggested by Tennis BC and municipal Recreation staff) at a municipal Parks’ facility.
Developing Community Partners

The community partner section of the strategy included members of the Lake City and River City Parks and Recreation departments, as well as members of community tennis clubs who participated in discussions about the pathway leading to membership in their clubs. The IORs deviated from Tennis Canada’s strategy in the community champion section. Tennis BC hired a part-time Tennis Coordinator to manage the logistics of the IORs over the course of the tennis season including hiring instructors, planning schedules, completing racquet inventory, carrying out day to day administration and contingency planning. The Tennis Coordinator worked with Tennis BC’s Participation Development Director to manage the tennis side of the program instead of a community champion as defined by Tennis Canada. The Tennis Coordinator also worked with two primary staff people in Lake City, and one in River City to manage the IORs. The different numbers of municipal stakeholders was a function of the way duties are delegated in each municipality. In Lake City, the Recreation Manager was responsible for all of the recreation programs offered at facilities in the city, and his responsibility in the tennis IOR was supervisory. The Site Manager was responsible for the logistics involved in the tennis program for Lake City. He was responsible for advertising the new programs in the municipal publications, booking courts for the program, hiring instructors, managing payroll, and dealing with other issues that arose. In River City one person, who was also managing other recreation programs, handled all of these responsibilities.
Developing Community Champions

Personnel from Lake City and River City were in agreement with the way their IORs were developed with Tennis BC where Tennis BC provided some expertise and program packaging resources and the municipalities provided the infrastructure to run the tennis instruction programs. When Tennis BC began discussions with the municipal Recreation departments in Lake City and River City, stakeholders from Tennis BC suggested different approaches for IORs where Tennis BC could improve the way that tennis was being taught, and marketed to the public. The municipal Recreation staff members were pleased with the approach that Tennis BC conveyed at these meetings because the USA Tennis 1-2-3 program offered something new and improved to their citizens (Table 4.1). In addition to the attractive package that Tennis BC offered the municipality, in River City the shared stake in the program allowed their participation despite reluctance to “contract out” program delivery (Table 4.1, quotation #3).

Table 4.1 – Representative Quotations From Stakeholders Revealing Potential for Advantage Recognized in Initial Meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>River City Recreation Manager</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The problem is when you do the same thing every year and you have a certain amount of success, you tend to do the same things over again and I thought that our programs were maybe getting a little bit stale. I thought that we needed something to, I guess, liven things up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. But the main thing was I just wanted to change the nature of our programs and maybe see if we could add a bit more credibility to them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. In River City, it's not necessarily a mandate, but we as a general rule to not contract out. We just don't do it. So if we are going to run fitness classes, we are going to hire the instructors, we are going to develop the programs, we are going to run the show. If we are doing gymnastics, it would be the same thing, swimming lessons, the same thing. So there are very, very few cases where we actually contract somebody out to do a program. We might contract somebody out to do maintenance or something else, but programs, specific program delivery as a general rule, we don't contract out. So with this Tennis BC arrangement, I wouldn't say we're contracting out as I would call it partnership. Because we are actually still hiring the instructors, we are paying the instructors. I still feel responsibility for the quality of that program, although I am in part relying on the credibility of Tennis BC to come up to give me good coaches right?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lake City Recreation Manager

4. I think that for a lot of years Lake City has offered tennis. Particularly in my area – outdoor tennis – but we also have an indoor facility over at [region of Lake City]. We have been doing tennis lessons and camps for kids and those kinds of things for many years. And I think that one of the things that we found in the outdoor tennis area is that we – the people who are involved in coordinating it and supervising it aren't necessarily the tennis people. We don't have the resources to have a tennis person involved with the City.

5. So when we were approached by Tennis BC it seemed as though it would be a good route to go because they've got – and just stepping back to our experience in the past – one of our problems has been finding instructors that have the qualifications and experience and reliability and all of those things that we need to put on a good program. So we saw a good opportunity with Tennis BC that they've got a resource and they've got some backing to help us out with it. Also the program that they're running with the USA Tennis 1-2-3 program, we kind of looked at it and went 'why wouldn't we do this'. It looked like a really good program from a standpoint of giving an added bonus to the whole program.

Tennis BC Participation Development Director

6. Generally [our strategy] is one of partnerships. It is a close working relationship to make it happen, and it differs between communities. And it would mean a close link to a tennis facility that is in operation. So they'll have to have all of those people on board, willing partners basically.

The IORs in Lake City and River City were initiated largely because the pathway development and community partner sections of the program were seen as attractive to the municipalities. The community champion development section of the BTC strategy was not revealed in discussion with the stakeholders. An interesting result of the lack of a community champion component in the IORs occurred when a Tennis Canada staff person evaluated the communities near the end of the first year. During the BTC evaluation process, a Tennis Canada representative met with provincial staff and community champions in the municipalities implementing the Tennis Canada strategy.

The intent of Tennis Canada’s BTC strategy is to involve stakeholders to create a group of people who “own tennis” in a particular municipality. The idea of the community champion is centred on having a person involved who is participating with the goal of benefiting their community. The community champion is a person with
passion for the place in which they live who can approach different stakeholders to mobilize a group of people who are able to achieve community goals through tennis. What happened in Lake City and in River City was the stakeholders had a more immediate goal of working together to improve the existing municipal Recreation programs (and they achieved that goal in many different ways), but the changes in the sport/recreation relationship involved paid staff. Therefore, while the IORs in these communities had the potential to offer improved programming, and to increase the number of people who participated in tennis lessons through the municipal Parks and Recreation department programs, the first year of these IORs did not change the role that tennis played in the community.

In Lake City and River City, the municipal staff did not have any experience with the community champion concept, as their relationship with Tennis BC had been developed in alignment with the Tennis BC strategy. In the Tennis Canada evaluation meeting, the River City Recreation manager was presented as a community champion, which led to a situation where the collaborative advantage perceived by the two stakeholders (i.e., Tennis BC and River City) directly involved in the program was potentially understood as collaborative inertia by a third (funding) stakeholder (i.e., Tennis Canada):

And when I met with [Tennis Canada representative], it’s like you are the community champion and what other kinds of things are you going to do to promote tennis in your community. I said it’s my understanding that River City has been recognized for the program, not me personally. I am just a facilitator for the program so I was really excited about River City being recognized and that was how I sort of got it from [Tennis BC staff], I am just doing my job, but I don’t think I would be a person who would be a most suitable community champion. I think you want to pick a businessperson or a community leader or someone else (River City Recreation Manager).
The difference in the way the IORs were conceptualized by Tennis BC and Tennis Canada did not really affect the way the relationship unfolded in the first year. However, inconsistencies between the Tennis Canada strategy and Tennis BC's implementation may jeopardize the future of the relationship. Tennis BC may have utilized their own strategy because they felt their approach was more acceptable for the managers in River City and Lake City. Flexibility was identified in the Tennis BC strategy as a key element in the initiation of relationships with municipalities. However, the lack of a 'real' community champion may alter the perception that leaders of Tennis Canada have about the extent to which Tennis BC, Lake City, and River City are realizing collaborative advantage. As a funding partner, Tennis Canada has the power to affect the long-term stability of these relationships by eliminating funding, regardless of whether or not the local stakeholders experience collaborative advantage as a result of their IORs.

At this point of the chapter, the focus of the results is on the IORs between Tennis BC-Lake City, and between Tennis BC-River City to determine the extent to which the relationships created around shared tennis program provision achieved collaborative advantage and/or collaborative inertia.

**Collaborative Advantage**

Collaborative advantage was one area of discussion where a great deal of consensus amongst stakeholders was evident. That is, the stakeholders believed that by working together on the tennis program, the organizations were able to deliver the program better than they would by themselves, and that would result in each organization
realizing its individual goals more easily (Huxham & Vangen, 2000a). Both the Tennis
BC staff and municipal recreation staff understood what the strengths of their own
organization were in relation to community-level tennis instruction and the benefits that
could be realized through the IORs. Before the first year of the program, the municipal
recreation leaders identified areas that could be improved by engaging in the IOR with
Tennis BC. The most commonly acknowledged advantage was increasing the credibility
and subsequently the participation in their tennis instruction programs (Table 4.2,
quotation #1). The Recreation stakeholders thought of tennis as a specialized program
that could benefit from expert involvement (quotation #2). They perceived a relationship
with the provincial tennis association as a strategy to improve the consistency and the
quality of their programming without assuming more risk or expending more resources.
Tennis BC’s ability to access local certified instructors who have experience with a
teaching method that focuses on maintaining high levels of activity while facilitating
incremental learning through interactive games (Tennis BC, 1999) was an attractive
proposition for recreation programmers who were struggling to develop a vibrant tennis
program. The Tennis BC package also had an all-inclusive component that provided
membership to the provincial tennis organization and a free racquet that appealed to
recreation practitioners who saw added value for the residents of their community
(Quotation #3). The inclusion of Tennis BC, Tennis Canada, and their sponsors in the
program added credibility that recreation staff considered unattainable on their own.

For Tennis BC, the advantages were also clear before the partnership began.
Tennis BC developed a Community Development Strategy in 1999/2000 that “recognized
the very strong contribution that Parks and Recreation make to our sport and the growth
of the game at the grassroots level” (Tennis BC, 1999, p. 1). Tennis BC recognized the investment that municipalities have made in developing tennis courts in their cities (Table 4.2, quotation #4). The Tennis BC participation development strategy was developed around the potential advantage of creating IORs with municipal Recreation departments. In that document, Tennis BC identified four advantages of IORs in their strategy:

1) to increase the tennis participation level in the community by creating a defined pathway for the general public to follow to access programs; 2) to apply the concepts of the full Tennis Canada “Play Tennis” plan; to link the Schools Program, Parks and Recreation programs to the formation of community clubs and the year-round facilities; 3) to develop and build community volunteers who will continue the various programs in their community; 4) to make tennis more accessible to the entire population by sponsoring special needs programs (Tennis BC, 2000, p. 1).

Because Tennis BC organizes and manages their own coaching certification courses, their staff is aware of who has current certification, and who may be best suited to teach in each municipal recreation environment. Tennis BC had developed partnerships in two neighbouring communities using this strategy before contacting Lake City and River City.

Table 4.2 – Representative Quotations from Stakeholders Regarding Advantage (Before Year 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Increased credibility of tennis programs.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. “tennis is looked at as something more of a – not necessarily as more competitive sport – but it is looked at as more of a sport as opposed to recreation. We’re experts in recreation but we’re not necessarily experts in sport.” (River City Recreation Manager)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Increased technical expertise in program delivery.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. they’ve got both the technical expertise and the network in the community [coaches] to provide the resources that we don’t have the time or the resources to pursue. Particularly when it is a smaller portion relatively of what we offer on a broad scale. (Lake City Recreation Manager)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Added value for the community.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. “I saw Tennis BC adding something. And because of their contact at Wilson, we couldn’t go out and start that partnership with Wilson as River City Parks &amp; Recreation. We couldn’t get that same deal, Tennis BC can.” (River City Recreation Staff)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
During the first year of the partnerships in River City and Lake City, the Recreation staff identified instances where the advantages of partnering with Tennis BC were clear (Table 4.3). The major advantages for recreation stakeholders were: the reduction in time dedicated to finding and managing coaches; the improved marketability of the programs through the IOR; and the financial success of the program that was realized. For Tennis BC, the main advantages were gaining access to the recreation infrastructure (i.e., courts and administration help) and providing a product/service that would help convince Recreation stakeholders that developing IORs with their organization offered potential for improving the success of tennis instruction delivery in their cities.

**Collaborative Advantage: Improved Time Efficiency**

In Lake City, the Site Manager described the first year of the program as a “godsend”, indicating that the advantage for him was related to increased time he had available to manage other responsibilities because Tennis BC’s Tennis Coordinator handled the logistics of the lesson programs in Lake City (Table 4.3, quotation #1). Recreation stakeholders acknowledged the advantage of an improved program that coincided with expending less managerial time than in previous years. The municipal staff suggested that the time they had invested in tennis in previous years was not proportional to the success of programs. While the Recreation Managers did note that they spent close to an equal amount of time on the tennis IORs this year, they indicated
that the program was much more successful, and that, in future years, the time they would spend on tennis would likely decrease due to familiarity with the Tennis BC staff and with the program structure.

Collaborative Advantage: Improved Credibility and Added Value Leading to Financial Returns

In River City, the Recreation Manager saw the biggest reward in being able to sell a more legitimate product (Table 4.3, quotation #4). The River City Recreation Manager explicitly linked the perceived credibility of the program that he saw improving with the USA Tennis 1-2-3 marketing image with the increased level of participation by residents. The River City Manager was very excited to have a new brand and new marketing material to engage the citizens of his community. In Lake City, the Site Manager discussed the benefits of having a package of tennis instruction for sale that had components such as a free racquet and Tennis BC membership where people could immediately see the added value of taking tennis lessons in their community. The Lake City Recreation Manager recognized the improved marketing and value leading to an increase in participation in his community (Table 4.3, quotation #3).

Collaborative advantage: A Fit With Organizational Mandates.

Both municipalities saw benefits of partnering with a nonprofit organization that had other private sector partners rather than seeking a direct relationship with a private sector organization to take over the program because a direct relationship with a commercial sector partner would be more likely interpreted as contracting out, which contradicted a goal of the municipalities (Table 4.3, quotation #5). This process referred to as
outsourcing or contracting out, was not favoured by the Recreation managers who indicated that their municipalities were reluctant to pursue those types of arrangements, although they acknowledged that relationships with commercial sector stakeholders are becoming more common in municipal recreation in general. Developing IORs with the commercial sector, specifically for program delivery, was perceived to have negative potential related to public opinion, especially in River City.

Table 4.3 – Representative Quotations from Stakeholders Regarding Advantage (After Year 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. “it’s been taking a lot of headaches off of me by not having to do that [find instructors]. By not having to follow up, I could check credentials, but not being a tennis aficionado it would be difficult for me to go out and say ‘that person is a great tennis instructor’, or ‘that person is teaching the program incorrectly’.” (Lake City Site Manager)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. “essentially to make my job easier, because I didn’t want to start spending twenty percent of my time on tennis. I don’t even have five percent of my time for tennis, so part of this whole idea of me contacting Tennis BC was to make my job easier.” (River City Recreation Manager)</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. “And I think from our perspective it worked really well for us this year. Our revenue was up quite substantially over the previous years. (Lake City Recreation Manager)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marketing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. “We really changed the look of this flyer, the flyer that we used last year was completely different. We got some nice pictures, and we put our sponsors right on the front here. Tennis Canada, Tennis BC, Wilson – right there they know that the program is different this year...we were pretty aggressive in getting this out into the community, and that was the main thing.” (River City Recreation Manager)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A Fit with Organizational Mandates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. “able to kind of sell [the partnership] to my administration based on the fact that it can enhance our program. It wasn’t like we were partnering with a private [commercial organization]– paying them money for a service. We didn’t have that intention.” (River City Recreation Manager)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualified Instructors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6. “it’s a little challenging [hiring instructors] with the kind of programs we’ve got to find instructors who could do them all, for all of the different times that we wanted. And we didn’t really have enough hours for a coach to make it worth their while.” (River City Recreation Manager)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A more connected tennis community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 7. “The benefits far outweigh the challenges right now because we have all these new people in the game and we got a bunch of new members in the club. And we’re going to have this open house at the club and hopefully all of the people that I gave a brand new
fancy racquet to from May until the end of July will come down here and take a look at the club and maybe someone will say this is a good deal – maybe I’ll play here. (Tennis BC Tennis Coordinator)

**Connecting tennis and recreation communities**

8. I think that I have a very strong footing now to say here are the results, we offered [the programs], we had a full house in all of the [programs] you offer. It makes common sense to expand on that. To me it is common sense but I don’t know what they would think. But I would think it’s common sense to expand on that. (Tennis BC Participation Development Director)

**Collaborative Advantage: Improved Relationships with Coaches**

In partnering with Tennis BC, the two municipalities had access to instructors, a challenge in previous years. In River City, the Recreation Manager described the pre-partnership environment as very difficult to recruit qualified instructors due to the fact that their tennis programs only ran for a short time of the year and consequently did not provide enough earning potential for coaches to develop interest into the recreation domain (Table 4.3, quotation #6). In the first year of the IOR, not only were the instructors able to deliver more programs in the municipalities, but the Recreation staff members did not have to search for coaches in their communities. In addition, the Recreation staff were able to secure competent and qualified coaches early in the season, which avoided hiring coaches immediately before programs began, and therefore managers did not have to deal with low quality programs that resulted from hiring inferior coaches.

**Collaborative Advantage: Beginning Relationships Between Tennis and Recreation**

For Tennis BC, the opportunity to be more closely involved with River City and Lake City fulfilled the goals of their strategy (Table 4.3, quotation #7). Even though the first year of the partnership did not yield a financial return for Tennis BC (Tennis BC did
not reach the participation targets needed to balance their budget), the Tennis BC Participation Development Director and Tennis Coordinator felt that they had succeeded in developing a collaborative advantage in the first year of the IORs. For Tennis BC, gaining access to the municipal recreation environment had been identified as a substantial barrier that they were happy to overcome through the creation of the IORs. The Tennis BC Participation Development Director felt that in the first year of the IOR, he was able to show a potential for municipalities in working with Tennis BC which could lead to more substantial collaborative advantage in the future (Table 4.3, quotation #8).

In general, the participants in the IOR from Tennis BC, Lake City, and River City felt that they were able to see the potential advantage in developing IORs, and for the most part, they achieved that advantage in the first year of the relationships. In terms of the Recreation organizations, they were able to identify advantage in different manifestations. For example they were able to acquire financial and personnel resources, improve the program quality through access to the lesson package, and a different marketing approach which Tennis BC was able to adapt to fit within the municipal Parks and Recreation departments' marketing and publication restrictions. For Tennis BC, the advantage was recognized in more general terms. Tennis BC’s strategic goals for developing relationships with municipal Parks and Recreation departments were pursued by developing these relationships and the Participation Development Director and Tennis Coordinator saw tremendous potential for future development in tennis programming in both Lake City and River City. Tennis BC did not reach its financial target for year one of the IOR, but Tennis BC’s Participation Development Director was confident that the
financial feasibility of the IOR would change in the coming years when the programs would be given more opportunity to grow in both Lake City and River City.

In the relationship studied in this research, the stakeholder groups believed that they achieved advantage through their relationship that they would not have been able to realize if acting on their own. Similarly to Huxham and MacDonald’s (1992) definition of IOR advantage, the benefits of IORs did not need to come at the expense of other organizations as with competitive advantage, the organizations were simply improving the quality of their services through their relationships. In this case, exchanging specialized tennis programming knowledge and instruction proficiency for access to registration and physical space resources, Tennis BC and the municipalities of Lake City and River City delivered introductory tennis lessons to a considerably higher number of the citizens of those communities than in years past, which all of the stakeholders in the IORs viewed as a success.

In developing these IORs and in realizing advantages in their first year, the relationships between Tennis BC-Lake City and between Tennis BC-River City have supported previous work in the Canadian sport and recreation context that suggested that IORs are becoming increasingly important to organizations in this sector (Crompton, 1998; Thibault & Harvey, 1997; Thibault et al., 1999; Vail, 1992; 1994). Additionally, the manner in which recreation stakeholders in particular discussed advantage after the first year of their IOR supports research that has suggested that a new public management rationale exists in Canadian municipal governments, and that IORs are being considered by municipal recreation departments as a strategy to cope with ongoing social, economic, and political pressures (Thibault et al., 1999).
In contrast, recreation stakeholders did not believe that IORs could be pursued in the same way with organizations in the private or commercial sector due to a perceived conflict in values and the feeling that that would constitute selling out their community. In developing an IOR with Tennis BC, a nonprofit organization within the sport system, the municipalities felt they were able to access new resources without losing control, or compromising the community-centred philosophy of their organization. The concern to avoid the commercial and/or private sector in this case contradicts one perspective in the literature that has suggested that recreation organizations could seek advantage through relationships with public and private sector stakeholders (cf. Crompton, 1998; Uhlik, 1995).

While the participants realized some of the potential advantages in their IOR, there were some difficulties and barriers in the first year that affected the level of advantage realized in the IOR, and certainly inertia has implications for the potential advantage that Tennis BC identified in their plans for growing tennis programs in the two communities. In the next section, Huxham and Vangen’s (2000a) seven factors of inertia are examined with respect to the Lake City and River City IORs to develop an understanding of how inertia exists in these relationships.

**Collaborative Inertia**

The factors leading IORs to collaborative inertia were evaluated with respect to the relationships between Tennis BC-Lake City and between Tennis BC-River City. This section will be divided into sub-sections, to describe the way in which Huxham and Vangen’s (2000a) factors were evident in the research. As well, additional sub-sections
will focus on other emergent factors, not found in Huxham and Vangen's work and the way that the factors appeared in the IOR.

*Negotiating Joint Purpose*

The difficulty in establishing a joint purpose was a factor that was successfully managed in the initial stages of the relationships in both Lake City and River City, but it presented itself as a factor that will require continual negotiation (Table 4.4). At the outset of the IOR, the Lake City Recreation Manager was skeptical about working with Tennis BC because of what he described as his preconceived idea of what Tennis BC was about. His opinion before the IOR began was that provincial sport organizations had one goal, developing high performance athletes (Table 4.4, quotation #1). In both Lake City and River City, there was a familiarization period in which the staff determined the intentions of the Tennis BC Participation Development department and made decisions about whether or not the partnership would improve the provision of tennis lessons in their city. However, this phase of the relationship was quite different between municipalities. In River City, the Recreation Manager had some clear ideas of how the joint program would fit into existing programs, and so joint purpose seemed to be closely related to how resources would be combined to achieve advantage (Table 4.4, quotations #2 & #3). In Lake City, the establishment of a joint purpose occurred in a more general, philosophical way. Lake City did not have a pre-determined plan of how IORs would be managed in their community, so the development of the IOR was started based on the confidence that the Tennis BC Participation Development Director showed during the initial meeting with Lake City staff about how Tennis BC's involvement could improve
the provision of tennis lessons in Lake City. The Lake City Recreation Manager was impressed with the ability of the Tennis BC Participation Development Director to work within the existing recreation system when more details surrounding a joint purpose and joint operation of the tennis program were required (Table 4.4, quotation #5). The more loosely defined joint approach used in Lake City did leave some details of how Tennis BC operated the BTC program open for interpretation by the recreation stakeholders. For example, Tennis BC staff indicated they operated the first year of the program with the intention of 'getting a foot in the door' with the Parks and recreation department (meeting notes, January 25, 2002).

Developing a joint purpose seemed to be a factor that had been dealt with well in this partnership during the first IOR meetings. When stakeholders discussed the initiation phase of the IOR, they were quick to identify the process they engaged in to develop a clear understanding of what the other organization could offer and how consensus around shared program provision was reached. Upon further inquiry into the IORs however, there are reasons to believe that the partners avoided dealing with developing a joint purpose in the first year of the partnership. Both of the Tennis BC people interviewed (the Participation Development Director and the Tennis Coordinator) mentioned that due to the traditional lack of cooperation between sport and recreation, they thought that it would be best to develop the first year of the IOR cautiously and then build the relationship and the programs to include more and different types of instructional and playing opportunities in future years. A one-year 'probationary' period is understandable when considering the discord that has previously been identified between sport and recreation stakeholders (cf. Searle & Brayley, 2000). In the first year of the partnership,
Tennis BC provided Lake City and River City with an example of the financial and enrolment increases to be realized through the IORs. The risk in approaching the IOR with a probationary year to begin is the need for Lake City, River City, and Tennis BC to explicitly re-evaluate the joint purpose of the IOR to account for the possibility of altered expectations based on the first year of the IOR. The risk in this scenario would be if practitioners change their expectations after the probationary year without understanding how the other stakeholders' expectations have changed over the same period. It is possible for Lake City and River City to identify a different direction for the future of the relationship, and this will be discussed further in the section on divergent expectations.

Table 4.4 – Representative Quotations from Stakeholders Regarding Joint Purpose

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quote</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. “Well, I think that if you asked me six months ago what do I think about Tennis BC, I would have been largely ignorant for one thing. But my impression would be that they are the governing body to promote the development of elite players. And that may be a misinformed opinion on my part but that’s what I would have told you six months ago. I think since we have been working a little bit with [Tennis BC staff], they are looking to change that somewhat. Although there is still that emphasis on developing players, when you go to their website on their ratings, the ranking of players and all those kinds of things. But I think there is a desire to be more accessible. And I think that one of the problems with tennis over the years, for a number of years is that people didn’t think of tennis as something they could do. (Lake City Recreation Manager)</td>
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<td>2. “they’re talking exclusively tennis. In my work here I am talking fitness and tennis, preschool, a whole range of activities for kids and adults. Tennis is just one particular activity that people can learn to do – either learn a skill to use up their recreation time, whatever. My view is maybe a little bit more global, you know” (River City Manager)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. “They’ve got the programs, but we’re the ones who have to deliver them. And, if we do our job delivering the programs well, we’re going to get more people out on the courts playing tennis. That’s the goal ultimately, to increase the level of participation. ... I think that I nailed that down pretty early on – this is what we’re going to do, this is what you are going to do. And we trusted each other on that. So, I guess that my recommendation in a partnership would be to make sure you know what your role is. If you don’t know your role, you are probably going to have problems.” (River City Manager)</td>
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<td>4. “My goal globally is to increase participation in tennis. However, in doing that, being an association with member clubs, we will be doing that, starting to have a closer working relationship with our members - which then makes the organization much stronger because if we are working with individual clubs trying to boost general participation in tennis, it makes sense that the clubs will benefit by getting increased members and then everyone is happy. (Tennis BC Participation Development Director)</td>
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Managing Difficulties in Logistics

The next inertia factor that was discussed was logistics, and it involved what stakeholders described as "the mechanics of doing business." There was definitely some inertia in the partnerships related to procedures. For the most part, the stakeholders described these difficulties as of little consequence, and that they were rectified within the early stages of the first year. However, these logistics problems (such as payroll protocols, conflict between tennis coaches, the desire on the part of one municipality to have the instructors join the public employees union, and the contrast between the bureaucracy of municipal recreation and the other environments in which tennis instructors typically work) carried substantial weight with the stakeholders given the emotion with which they spoke of these incidents (Table 4.5). In one community, coaches were required to telephone staff from the Parks and Recreation department daily in order for their hours to be properly recorded by the payroll department. The Parks and Recreation staff were frustrated when the tennis coaches did not follow the agreed protocol (Table 4.5, quotation #1). Conversely, the tennis coaches did not believe that the...
recreation payroll system was providing them with their compensation in a convenient way (Table 4.5, quotation #2).

There were some other misunderstandings over logistics, such as a clear plan for instructor response to rainouts. Also, there were some difficulties surrounding different work schedules between stakeholders and the related problem of changing program details to accommodate logistics problems (Table 4.5, quotations #3 & #4). The logistics problems and the resulting inertia were described by the IOR stakeholders as nuisances, but they also discussed them as inevitable occurrences when working across organizational boundaries (Huxham & Vangen, 2000a; Kanter, 1994) (Table 4.5, quotation #5). The logistics problems that did raise some hostile emotions among participants often included different stakeholder groups (i.e., the Tennis Coordinator, a group of instructors, and a municipal recreation employee) and so the challenges regarding the logistics of managing the IOR are related to another factor leading to inertia, managing stakeholder accountability to different constituent communities.

Table 4.5 – Representative Quotations from Stakeholders Regarding IOR Logistics

1. “All they have to do is pick up the phone and phone me. I come in the next day and bang their hours onto the timesheet and off it goes to payroll. It’s a very simple formula, I just don’t know why they couldn’t get it clear that they have to phone me every day” (Lake City Site Manager)

2. “Their system is terrible – I get one cheque worth thirty-three dollars mailed to me and then one for seventeen dollars two weeks later because I coached on the 14th and the 16th. It probably cost them ten dollars just to print up the two cheques and mail them out” (Meeting Notes, November 13, 2002)

3. Yes, and I think that largely because none of us really work, I work a little more Monday to Friday, nine to five type of hours. But [the Site Manager and the Tennis Coordinator] certainly don’t. So making sure that those two are connecting because [the Site Manager] is all over the place. His schedule is sometimes afternoons, sometimes days, sometimes weekends, sometimes not. I think it is just a matter of making sure they are linking on a regular basis. (Lake City Recreation Manager)
4. Very inflexible [municipal recreation policies]. That's because the way it is structured. I asked him, why can't things change. That's just the way it is, it takes too much to change it, too many chains. (Tennis Coordinator)

5. And I think that everybody was working without a really clear road map - everybody was kind of feeling their way in terms of how it was going to work. And so I think that those are the kinds of things I would have expected to occur. But there was nothing at any point where we came to the point of where we would say 'this isn't working, let's bail'. Everything we were able to work through it and work it out. (Tennis BC Participation Development Director)

Managing Accountability to Constituent Groups

One of the most significant sources of tension in the IORs occurred in situations where issues that were related to maintaining accountability to the constituent groups of one or both organizations (Table 4.6). Because Tennis BC arranged the hiring of tennis coaches (Table 4.6, quotation #1), attempted to include tennis club stakeholders in the program (Table 4.6, quotation #2), and was part of Tennis Canada’s BTC strategy (Table 4.6, quotation #3 & #4), they had to be aware of how the program was achieving the goals of these groups as well as their own. Conversely, the municipal recreation managers are working for the residents of their community, and needed to remain accountable to the public when developing the program (Table 4.6, quotation #5).

An example of how maintaining accountability to constituent groups can cause increased tension in the IOR involved instructors. One reason for the municipal recreation departments to become involved in the IOR was the advantage of Tennis BC selecting and hiring quality coaches for their recreation programs. In the past, Parks and Recreation staff had difficulty in securing coaches, and they felt this limited the quality and success of their programs. Recreation staff indicated that in previous years the recreation programs did not contain enough hours of instruction to develop interest from coaches. The advantage of working with Tennis BC was in their ability to find available
coaches with experience in the tennis community and to secure them for the summer recreation programs. Tennis BC did this by assuming some of the risk of making sure that coaches would receive enough hours of coaching. They were able to assure coaches of the opportunity to earn a competitive wage, and this was possible because of the credibility Tennis BC has as the certifying body for tennis coaches in British Columbia.

However, the recreation staff members were still hiring the coaches on their payroll because of the municipalities' need to be responsible to their constituents, the citizens in their city. The recreation staff needed to have the ability to evaluate and the power to terminate instructors if they did not feel the coaches were serving the interests of their citizens. So, on the one hand, the tennis instructors were being paid by the municipality and were negotiating directly with Lake City and River City, while on the other hand, the Tennis Coordinator had recruited the instructors and felt a need to be accountable to them because he had convinced them to get involved in coaching in an environment that had, in previous years, not been offering coaches “full time, or even half time” work.

In doing this, the Tennis Coordinator felt that the coaches he brought into the program were a constituent group for whom he spoke. He indicated that there were times when he felt a Recreation staff person had gone back on their word leaving him in a difficult position with the coaches. During the course of the first year of the IOR, the Recreation staff / tennis coach relationship became unsettled around the joining the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) which the coaches objected to, and an incident where some coaches had received information suggesting they would receive a certain wage for their time only to find out later the city wage would be lower. In this...
situation, the tennis coordinator did not feel as though the municipal Parks and Recreation staff person was helpful in diffusing a contentious situation. The tennis coordinator felt alienated by his recreation partner while tennis coaches were upset with what appeared to be a case where the Tennis Coordinator went against his word. When the coordinator brought this up with the Parks and Recreation staff person, he was unresponsive to the Tennis Coordinator’s concern.

In another instance in the same community, the Tennis Coordinator did not feel that he received an appropriate response to an appeal for help regarding an individual who was teaching lessons on the public courts without municipal approval. While municipal tennis courts are accessible to the public, the municipality reserved certain courts to run their lesson programs. In this particular scenario, not only were the courts occupied, they were being used by someone who was accepting money for instruction on the municipal courts which is forbidden without municipal approval. When the tennis coaches and Tennis Coordinator contacted the municipal Parks and Recreation staff person, there was little or no response except to refer the situation to another member of the municipal staff. The Tennis Coordinator did not feel that a referral to another department within the municipality was a proper response considering the IOR between Tennis BC and the municipality. When recalling this incident, the Tennis Coordinator recalled a discussion with the same municipal Parks and Recreation counterpart who generally referred to tennis coaches as “assholes” and that they had given him “nothing but trouble” in the past. The Tennis Coordinator was disappointed in this situation because the municipal Parks and Recreation staff person seemed to maintain a similar
distrust for tennis instructors as a group despite the fact that the Tennis Coordinator was an intermediary in the interactions.

The manner in which the Tennis Coordinator and the Parks and Recreation staff discussed these incidents was interesting in that initially they spoke of these incidents in a somewhat ‘flippant way’, but it became clear after a short time that there was a significant division between the Tennis Coordinator and the municipal Parks and Recreation staff person around coaches as a stakeholder group. Where the recreation staff had identified previous problems with tennis coaches as a group, it seemed in some instances that resentment was maintained toward the coaches. The Tennis Coordinator was confused by the inconsistency between the positive responses from the Parks and Recreation staff in relation to not having to deal directly with tennis instructors and the negative responses in relation to some issues that arose regarding the tennis instructors despite the Tennis Coordinator being involved.

Another constituent group that became a factor in the partnership was tennis clubs. One of the goals for Tennis BC in this partnership with the Parks and Recreation departments was to get more people learning how to play tennis in the municipal Parks and Recreation system in order to create a market for their community tennis clubs. The community clubs are smaller collectives of tennis players who offer facilities and opportunities to play tennis and socialize on a regular basis. Community clubs are often seeking more members, whereas private clubs are not as likely to be recruiting community tennis players due to their position as “exclusive” clubs. In trying to link public lessons offered by Parks and Recreation departments to their community clubs, the Tennis Coordinator responsible for managing the partnership in these communities was
also a volunteer board member of a community club. This arrangement caused some conflict in the IOR. When the Tennis Coordinator asked his municipal partner for assistance, in some instances the Recreation staff member felt he was being asked to provide service to the tennis club. While the Recreation staff person understood the goal of facilitating citizens moving 'through the pathway' from recreation instruction into the community clubs, he did not feel that he should be involved in being accountable to specific club demands. The municipal Recreation staff person questioned the coordinator on the overlapping of his roles as Tennis Coordinator, and as a member of a constituent group, the tennis club. The municipal staff was uncomfortable with the fact that he thought he was being asked to complete tasks for the community club, such as removing unqualified coaches from community access courts (mentioned as an incident in the tennis coaches’ constituent group), rather than complete tasks related to the direct provision of tennis instruction.

Another constituent group that had an impact on the way the IORs unfolded was Tennis BC’s relationship with Tennis Canada and the USTA, mentioned initially in the background section. As mentioned earlier, Tennis BC is a member association of Tennis Canada and the United States Tennis Association (USTA). Because of their affiliation to these national governing bodies, Tennis BC has used the opportunity to learn and gather resources from both organizations about developing participation in communities. In discussions with both Tennis Canada and the USTA, Tennis BC was careful to avoid possible tensions by not overtly acknowledging the other resources they were accessing. The instruction program used in the IOR, USA Tennis 1-2-3, is a hybrid, using the USTA’s marketing material and branding while fitting within Tennis Canada’s BTC
strategy in terms of how the program is delivered through municipal Parks and Recreation departments. Tennis BC described the relationships surrounding the instruction program as the USTA being the title sponsor of the program, and so the program carries their name and is marketed using their image. In this instance, the issues surrounding the USTA involvement was centred on the placement and use of logos in marketing materials for the programs. There was little or no tension related to logo placement in advertising and marketing materials despite the fact that municipal Parks and Recreation stakeholders were unable to include corporate logos in advertising materials and brochures. Tennis BC accepted the need for Recreation stakeholders to avoid corporate logos in their print materials and pursued other avenues to promote the programs. The USTA could, however, become a constituent group that presents more collaborative inertia to the IOR if they were to demand more logo visibility as part of their relationship with Tennis BC.

Tennis Canada’s involvement in the IOR as a stakeholder group did lead to some confusion and tension about the role of the municipal stakeholders in the national participation development plan. After the first year, the tension surrounding Community Champions had not been substantial, but there was misunderstanding about how the municipal/provincial relationship in Lake City and River City fits into the national program. In Tennis Canada’s strategy, Community Champions are sought to serve as catalysts to grow that game and to strive to answer the question of who owns tennis in their community in order to facilitate a feeling of togetherness amongst tennis enthusiasts of all abilities. Tennis Canada wants these Champions to seek out opportunities to gain
exposure and prominence with politicians, businesses, and citizens in selected communities.

In the two communities studied, the Community Champion role, as defined by Tennis Canada, essentially went unfilled in the first year of the IORs. Whether or not this is a result of a conscious decision on the part of Tennis BC staff, or was a misunderstanding of the intended role and involvement of a Community Champion remains undetermined. What did occur was the Tennis BC Participation Development Director told the River City Recreation Manager that he was being honoured by Tennis Canada as a community champion at the end of the first year. At the evaluation meeting with a Tennis Canada representative, when the River City Recreation Manager was asked what he could do to grow the tennis community in different and dynamic ways, he realized there was a difference between what he had accomplished in his partnership with Tennis BC and what was expected from Community Champions by Tennis Canada. The Tennis Canada representative wanted to know how the BTC strategy would move forward in the next year, for example through the inclusion of schools and business leaders in developing the tennis community. The River City Manager realized at that point that the role of the Community Champion in Tennis Canada’s strategy was greater than he could provide in the limited resources available for tennis in River City.

The Community Champion meeting was certainly a cause for concern amongst the River City Recreation manager, Tennis BC’s Participation Development Director, and the Tennis Canada BTC evaluator. What is clear is that the intended message in the role of Community Champions described in the BTC strategy was never delivered or explained to the River City Recreation Manager. The meeting could be described as a
misunderstanding between the intentions of Tennis Canada and Tennis BC with respect to the characteristics and roles of Community Champions. What appears more likely is that the Tennis BC Participation Development Director interpreted the BTC strategy in a way that would assist his IORs in Lake City and River City, and then attempted to fit the most appropriate stakeholders into the Community Champion role for the Tennis Canada evaluation (the Tennis Coordinator was named as Community Champion in Lake City).

The logic behind this possibility is plausible when we consider that the River City Recreation manager had developed an idea about what he would contribute and what Tennis BC would provide to the IOR. The IOR loosely fit into Tennis BC’s and Tennis Canada’s strategies for developing participation in tennis, and Tennis BC needed Tennis Canada’s funding to ensure that the programs would be as financially successful as possible for the Recreation stakeholders who had no previous involvement with Tennis BC in recent years. What happened in this instance between Tennis Canada and the River City Manager surrounding the role of the Community Champion clearly has implications for how Tennis Canada, as a constituent group, wishes to involve itself in the Tennis BC-River City IOR and in the Tennis BC-Lake City IOR.

The level of accountability to the Community Champion concept demanded by Tennis Canada was still not known at the conclusion of the study. One view of the situation might suggest that the inability to provide a true Community Champion during the evaluation meeting would necessitate removing BTC funding from that community. Conversely, Tennis BC succeeded in developing an IOR in River City and improved the relationship with the River City Recreation department is such a dramatic way that perhaps Tennis Canada would be compelled to understand the importance of maintaining
the delicate balance of constituent group perspectives that Tennis BC was managing in this instance and will continue to support the IORs despite the lack of a Community Champion. Certainly different perspectives of the relationships between Tennis BC and River City and between Tennis BC and Lake City are evident in this case, and Tennis BC’s position in the middle of Tennis Canada’s BTC strategy and the Parks and Recreation Departments stakeholder requires a difficult negotiation of possible divergent goals of constituent groups.

Table 4.6 – Representative Quotations from Stakeholders Regarding Accountability to Constituents

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<tr>
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<th>Quotation</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>“He says you’re not getting paid until you sign this thing. I said ‘what thing’. ‘Your rate of pay.’ I said, ‘you already told us what we were getting paid’. He said, ‘oooh no you’re not’. I said ‘what are you talking about, how can I explain to these kids now – what did you do that for?’ And he totally walked around it.” (Tennis Coordinator)</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>“He brought the position of being president of the club and started asking more and more and more things of me that I had no control over. And I think he expected me to do things at the club for him.” (Lake City Site Manager)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>[without Tennis Canada funding the IOR] could possibly run if an individual did it on a small scale. (Tennis BC Participation Development Director)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>I think the biggest difficulty is Tennis Canada, they are looking at it nationally. So, it’s easy for them to come up with these great program ideas, great blanket statements. Report in this, report on that. Then you go to Tennis BC, and it’s provincial, and so you take it down a notch. And he [Tennis BC Participation Development Director] talked about this at the very start, and this is what I liked about [him]. You guys have the courts, you guys own the courts. Tennis Canada and Tennis BC, were talking about general things – but you guys have the courts. (River City Recreation Manager)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>“if a parent doesn’t like the program, the call comes to me. I can’t be passing them on to Tennis BC, I’ve got to deal with it.” (River City Recreation Manager)</td>
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Combining Difficulties in Managing Logistics and Procedural Differences

Difficulty in identifying joint purpose, in managing procedures and logistics, and in remaining accountable to constituents were identifiable factors that stakeholders discussed in recounting events from their partnerships. The way that these factors existed
in the partnership has supported previous research that has suggested that individually or collectively they could lead the partnership into a state of inertia as opposed to advantage (Huxham & Vangen, 2000a). There was one factor difference that did not manifest itself in this case; there were no difficulties in logistics as described by Huxham and Vangen (2000a). The stakeholders used logistics as synonymous with procedural difficulties rather with problems of partnering over distances. When asked about partnering across municipalities they reported no problems. This factor has been dealt with to some extent in Tennis BC's strategy in that they hired an on-site coordinator who lives in or near the communities and is on the program delivery sites on a regular basis. For this reason, logistics and procedural differences, described in the literature as separate factors leading to inertia were grouped together in this research.

Managing Communication, Building Trust, and Maintaining Autonomy

The remaining three factors; difficulties in communication, difficulties in maintaining power while building trust, and difficulties in maintaining autonomy to complete the work of the IOR were not related to specific events as the first three factors described (Table 4.7). Where joint purpose, procedural differences, and managing other constituents were represented as barriers, the remaining factors were discussed more as descriptors of the relationships between individuals rather than the relationships between organizations. The Tennis BC, Lake City, and River City stakeholders all discussed how their organizational relationships were enhanced as a result of the personal relationships that existed in the IOR. As a result, when discussing the communication process, how trust was built in the relationship, and how autonomy was managed, the stakeholders did
not differentiate between the factors. This does not mean that the stakeholders did not attach importance to these factors, just that their experiences of how trust and autonomy existed and was managed in their IORs were tied to the way that they communicated with each other, and the stakeholders did not view trust, autonomy, and communication as discrete factors in the way that Huxham and Vangen (2000a) have depicted.

Communication difficulties and successes were the most often identified factor in relation to how individual relationships affected the IORs. Stakeholders discussed communication being important in different ways. The River City Manager, whom the Tennis BC staff regarded as a superior communicator indicated that one of the communication challenges was when a situation required that he let it be known that the program needed improvement or that he was not happy about a certain incident without damaging the long-term relationship with other members of the IOR. This situation could be understood as being about the communication process in the IOR (as it was in this case) or it could be understood as maintaining the level of trust and respect between stakeholders in the IOR.

Another way that communication difficulties were identified during the first year of the IOR consisted of the time that elapsed between receiving a call or message and placing a return call. Stakeholders’ availability and attention to returning communications were tied to perceptions of whether or not that particular stakeholder could complete tasks under a time deadline and to the level their fellow stakeholders trusted them. The Tennis BC Participation Development Director described the initial communications between stakeholders involved in the IOR as an opportunity to determine the extent to which a stakeholder had a genuine interest in improving the tennis program for the
citizens of that municipality. He felt that the communications between municipal Parks and Recreation staff in the early stages of the IOR served as an opportunity to determine the level of trust that could be developed with a particular person, the expectations of that person, and the initial level of autonomy for that stakeholder in the provision of the lesson programs.

Autonomy was for the most part discussed in terms of how much control could be released by municipal Recreation staff to Tennis BC stakeholders compared to the way the program had been managed in the past. The River City manager indicated that he did not want to release much of the control over his programs due to his self-perceived accountability to the citizens of River City (Table 4.7, quotation #1). He felt that he maintained control over the program, but the Tennis Coordinator also felt that the River City Manager allowed him to be involved in decision-making and in determining how the instruction program would operate in that municipality.

In Lake City, even though in some respects a more autonomous opportunity existed for the Tennis Coordinator and the tennis coaches, the communication barriers between the Coordinator and the Site Manager were significant enough that there were questions between stakeholders about how to accomplish the work more efficiently, and who was in charge of certain situations (Table 4.7, quotations #3, #4 & #5). Difficulties in communicating, in developing autonomous roles for each stakeholder to contribute to the IOR, and subsequently in the level of trust that existed between the Lake City Site Manager and the Tennis Coordinator were all evident in the interview data. The stakeholders had different explanations for what happened to cause inertia in their relationship, and while they did not specifically identify whether trust, autonomy, or
communication was the one factor that led to inertia, they did overlap their descriptions of these factors into general comments about the relationships between themselves and their IOR counterparts (Table 4.7, quotations #6, #7, & #8).

Table 4.7 – Representative Quotations from Stakeholders Regarding Other Factors Leading to Inertia

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<td>1.</td>
<td>My take on what I wanted to do here was I wanted some help but I still wanted to maintain my level of control over what was going on. And I think we were effective in doing that. (River City Recreation Manager)</td>
</tr>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>“I think that’s something that may be is a challenge, are the people with whom you are working on the other side?” (River City Recreation Manager)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>It’s also the person. The systems are there and in place and the systems are there to work. But then you get people who get involved, and I had a conflict right from the start with the way I wanted things done and the way he wanted things done. We just clashed. Maybe if someone else was in my position, and they come in there with a softer approach, maybe it might have worked. But I don’t work that way. (Tennis Coordinator)</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>I want the job done, I want things to get done around here. I am a results oriented person, I don’t like to sit and wait. If I see where I can do it myself, why not? Why can’t I? Why shouldn’t I be allowed to do that? (Tennis Coordinator)</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>So, I think he felt he had more latitude...So he was going to [a Lake City Community Centre] up here to talk to the clerks to get information and I’m going ‘I’ll look after that. That’s my responsibility and I’ve already spoken to them and told them about what we need.’ So he was taking it upon himself to do more than what was requested from him. (Lake City Site Manager)</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Just a level of communication and respect right. Things go wrong, right? And you have got to tell somebody that you are not happy without offending them. Basically, you are just trying to provide a service. I think that we established a pretty good level of communication in that regard. A few of the things that came up, we dealt with them professionally. (River City Recreation Manager)</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>People seem to be overloaded with work, or if not overloaded with work, people are apathetic towards work. So there’s two complete different scenarios there but I think they both apply. And I think that’s something that may be is a challenge – is the people you are working with on the other side. (Tennis BC Participation Development Director)</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Well, I think that the first thing you have to build is trust. And I think that with trust comes an open-armed type of thing where if you perceive to be generally interested in what you are doing, to help people to help the community, to better people’s health etcetera – all of those good things, I think over time you would be welcomed to go deeper and deeper and make it better and better with whoever your partner is. And that takes time, it’s not just a phone call and then things happen. That’s built over time like any relationship. Any business relationship, social relationship, whatever, that’s built over time. I would say that’s probably the single most important factor is a genuine outreach. (Tennis BC Participation Director)</td>
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Divergent Expectations

There was one additional inertia factor that became apparent and requires discussion. When speaking with Parks and Recreation stakeholders about the IORs, they consistently identified their expectations to decrease the amount of time they dedicated to the relationship in future years. At the same time, Tennis BC stakeholders were encouraged by the financial successes they were able to show Recreation departments during the first year of the IOR and, as a result had intentions of increasing the scope of the program in the future. This factor has been labelled 'divergent expectations', because I believe that the intermingling of a time efficiency goal and a growth goal in the IOR may become an important barrier in the future of the relationships between Tennis BC and the municipalities. If one organization decides it needs to achieve an increased time saving through the IOR, the risk to the relationship would be that the decrease in time dedicated to managing the relationship would alter the communication frequency between stakeholders, and this could change the level of trust and the level of autonomy that had been established.

In addition, factors leading to collaborative inertia such as managing accountability to constituent groups have proven to present themselves as dynamic factors. For example, the role of the Community Champion in the IORs was not a problem for most of the first year of the IOR, but did emerged as a factor that required attention. If an organization had addressed decreasing the time invested in the IOR, it could be expected that as factors emerge as threatening more inertia in a specific situation, the stakeholder trying to reduce the time involved would fail in either addressing the emerging problem or in saving time.
Certainly in the case of ongoing IORs there is an assumption that as the IOR progresses over time it will become more efficiently managed. In the case where program growth has been identified as a goal however, there is no assurance that the IOR will become easier. In fact, it would seem if one stakeholder identifies saving time while concurrently another identifies program growth as a major goal for the future, it might be suggested that the IOR would become more challenging.

The reason for identifying the divergent expectations of saving time and growth held by the different stakeholders as a cause for collaborative inertia is due to the fact that the individuals involved in the IORs have not publicly expressed these emerging goals. More specifically, the interviewees discussed their expectations for the future of the IOR with the researcher but they have never shared these expectations with their partners. Both goals are ideally attainable. Parks and Recreation staff may be able to improve their time efficiency in the delivery of their tennis programs provided that the same tennis personnel are involved year after year and the programs involve a limited number of unexpected events. The growth goal may be achievable when considering that the Parks and Recreation departments ran the lesson programs to capacity in many circumstances but did not offer as many additional concurrent tennis instruction sessions as Tennis BC desired. As well, Parks and Recreation departments ran their tennis instruction programs in a limited number of weeks during the summer and did not expand their tennis instruction season as Tennis BC wanted. Considering an increased number of people in the two municipalities who have been introduced to tennis through the program this year, there is an increased market for people to enrol in higher levels of technical instruction and play in future years.
The real challenge for the IORs related to diverging expectations is the reluctance for stakeholders to be candid about their long term ambitions. The question is when will the different agendas being developed by all stakeholders (i.e., Tennis BC, Lake City, and River City) become clear to the other stakeholders, and what effects will that have on the future of the relationships? Will Recreation stakeholders contribute less time in the second year, causing the tennis instruction program to suffer? Will year two be successful? In a more general way, the diverging expectations extends beyond the specifics of one situation at a given time; it is a reminder of how expectations and consequently how relationships may change over time.

The following table (Table 4.8) depicts some quotations from stakeholders about how the IOR can provide time savings for municipal Recreation staff, and conversely how Tennis BC staff have, at times felt like there has not been enough attention paid to the IOR by Recreation staff (Table 4.8, quotations #1, #2, & #3). It also demonstrates how growing the program can involve ‘rolling things over’ from year to year or it can involve re-evaluating what the program can provide and developing new potential for future years (Table 4.8, quotations #4, #5, & #6). It also suggests that the first year of and IOR, where it is possible that organizations are involved in a ‘trial period’ rationale, might not be the most suitable time to make decisions about how to change the program and/or assign new goals to the time expenditure and growth targets for future years (Table 4.8, quotation #7).

Table 4.8 – Representative Quotations from Stakeholders Regarding Time and Growth Expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time savings through the IOR</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. If it continues like this year, I don’t think there are going to be problems or areas of concern. It’s going to start to run more and more smoother. (Lake City Site Manager)</td>
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2. Next year I anticipate it will be a lot less time and labour intensive. I certainly hope we maintain our relationship with Tennis BC. Throughout the year, throughout the duration of the programs, some days [my time devoted to the program] was none. (Lake City Site Manager)

Not enough time expended on the IOR.

3. It’s not what happened in the meetings, it’s what happens after the meetings. In the meetings, it’s all gung-ho and everyone gets the picture. But then after the meeting – nothing happens. And maybe they are overburdened with work and it gets pushed to the side and it becomes an aggravation perhaps. Because it’s different and there’s more things to do. (Tennis BC Participation Development Director)

Program growth while decreasing time.

4. We’ll enter some more programs because, as I said we want to expand the level one program and maybe revamp the two and three. So it will take a little time but the hard stuff’s done now. Now it will be rolling it over from year to year to year, if we continue our partnership with Tennis BC. (Lake City Site Manager)

Program growth based on the successes of year one.

5. I think that I have a very strong footing now to say ‘there are the results, we offered [our programs], we had a full house in all of the ones that you offered’. It makes common sense to expand on that. (Tennis BC Participation Development Director)

6. The partnership with the Parks & Rec. has allowed me to access the people, but not to the finished product that I need to [achieve to be content]. (Tennis Coordinator)

7. I think our strategy for going into this year was let’s try it for a year. Our outdoor tennis has always been a bit of a struggle for reasons I have stated – finding instructors and really us having the expertise. And this just made a whole lot of sense to go forward with and give it a try for one year. And that’s when we went into it with [Tennis BC] – we went into it on a one-year trial basis and evaluate it at the end to see if we want to continue afterwards. And so that was the strategy going into this year. (Lake City Recreation Manager)

Collaborative Advantage and Inertia in IORs

The IORs between Tennis BC and Lake City, and between Tennis BC and River City realized collaborative advantage in their first year. The BTC strategy was implemented in both cities, and the municipalities were rewarded with substantial increases in program enrolment.

Despite the collaborative advantage that was realized by stakeholders involved in these IORs, the factors causing collaborative inertia identified by Huxham and Vangen (2000a) were present in different amounts in this study. While inertia was present in the
IORs, what was more evident was the way that the different factors describing inertia existed.

As previously discussed, some of the factors existed on their own while others were described in non-specific way that led them to be considered as a group of interrelated factors. To reiterate how the factors existed, difficulties in developing joint purpose, difficulties in managing different logistical and procedural issues between organizations, and difficulties in managing accountability to constituents were identified as sources of collaborative inertia in the IORs. The stakeholders also realized the potential that difficulties in communication, in maintaining autonomy, and in negotiating the power/trust relationship had in creating inertia in their relationships, however, they often spoke about two or all three of these factors at one time.

In these IORs, where at the broadest level a considerable amount of collaborative advantage was realized in the first year of the relationships, it was not the amount of inertia present in each of the IORs that was interesting as much as it was the relationships between the factors causing collaborative inertia. That being said, collaborative inertia did exist in the IORs and presents the possibility of gaining advantage more difficult to achieve in the future. Or, as Huxham and MacDonald (1992) wrote, the collaborative advantage may not be worthwhile considering the pitfalls of collaborative action.

The combination of the difficulties of communicating, in maintaining autonomy, and negotiating the power/trust relationship were often mentioned as important causes of inertia by stakeholders who identified them in their relationships. As well, the emergence of different constituent groups who had important influences on the primary stakeholders
of the IOR was a factor that had a considerable effect on the way the IOR developed, and will develop in the future.

One factor that emerged as being an important contributor to collaborative inertia in the IORs was the difficulty in managing divergent expectations. In the two IORs in this study, the Recreation stakeholders identified the goal of decreasing the amount of time expended on managing the relationship in future years. This is consistent with research on Canadian Recreation organizations that has identified an environment of heightened social, political, and economic pressures for municipal governments that has caused those organizations to conserve resources (cf. Frisby et al., in press; Thibault et al., 1999; in press). Tennis BC, on the other hand, identified the first year of their IORs as an opportunity to establish their relationships in the municipalities in order to encourage program growth in future years. This is congruent with the strategies of both Tennis BC and Tennis Canada to develop more active tennis communities, and with the Canadian sport policy where enhanced interaction is identified as one of its main goals (Canadian Heritage, 2001b; Tennis BC, 1999; Tennis Canada 2000a). Because of the discord between the long term ambitions for the IOR identified by the stakeholders, and the fact that each of their positions is supported by either previous research (i.e., Glover (1999) suggested Municipal Recreation Departments have begun to seek IORs as a strategy to reduce overhead costs) or recent policy development initiatives (i.e., the new Canadian Sport Policy encourages sport organizations to develop IORs to develop a seamless system between participation and high performance systems), the diverging expectations factor would seem to be a considerable concern for organizations in the sport and recreation context.
What would appear to be most concerning about the differences in long-term goals is that after the first year of participating in a relationship in which all of the organizations have realized advantage, different ambitions and expectations exist for the future of the IORs. For this reason, diverging expectations are related to all of the other factors because it is unknown how the different goals of saving time and increasing the growth of the program will affect the other factors. It is therefore important to encourage research to be done on IORs in the Canadian sport and recreation context over extended periods of time to determine how advantages realized during an initial trial phase and ongoing differences in expectations affect IORs in the long term.

While Huxham and Vangen (2000a) described the factors leading IORs towards collaborative inertia in a list, and suggested that is still in development, in this study the factors appeared to exist in relation to one another in a way that merits discussion. I have described the relationships between the factors causing collaborative inertia in Figure 4.2. Research has suggested that IOR domains are socially constructed (Hardy & Phillips, 1998), and that ambiguity and complexity exists in any type of relationship (Frisby & Millar, 2002; Huxham & Vangen, 2000a), but little work has attempted to describe how different factors might be understood by practitioners who are developing and managing IORs (Babiak, 2003).

Relative Positions of the Factors Affecting Inertia in IORs

In the cases between Tennis BC and the municipal Parks and Recreation departments of Lake City and River City, the factors leading to inertia fell into two categories, the organizational factors and the individual factors (Figure 4.2). The factors that were in the
organizational category were: difficulty in developing a joint purpose, difficulty in managing logistics and procedures, and difficulty in managing the interests of constituent groups. The factors that were related to individuals were: communicating across different organizations because of its perceived link to negotiating trust relationships and autonomy in IORs.

What was most significant in the way the factors emerged in the two IORs studied was their apparent effects on one another. There appeared to be an interaction between the development advantage and/or inertia in the IOR and the extent to which each factor was being managed sufficiently. This interactive process is depicted in Figure 4.2 as the line travelling between the organizational and individual factors causing inertia.

In the early stages of the IORs, stakeholders developed a sense of joint purpose that facilitated their participation in the IOR. In River City, the joint purpose was described as being more detailed than in Lake City, where there were some misconceptions about Tennis BC (Table 4.4). From this initial interaction between the organizations, the process of communication and interaction between River City and Tennis BC, appeared to evolve more easily than in Lake City. During the next stage of the IOR which involved managing difficulties in logistics and procedures, the personality clashes that were developing between Tennis BC and Lake City staff caused more inertia and frustration than it did in River City, where the stakeholders were beginning to interact in a more relaxed and efficient way. When issues of maintaining accountability to constituent groups arose in the IORs, some interactions such as the tension surrounding the Community Champion acting in the interests of the tennis club or the instruction program were occurring in one community. In the other community, Tennis BC was
including the Recreation Manager in a meeting with Tennis Canada to act as a Community Champion, to perhaps show how a great relationship with the municipal Recreation department had evolved despite not having a Community Champion (as defined by Tennis Canada) in place.

**Figure 4.3 – Relative positioning of the factors affecting inertia in IORs.**

What seems apparent in the IORs studied is that Huxham and Vangen's (2000a) factors causing collaborative inertia are present in these cases, and contribute to different extents in causing inertia to occur. Whether or not the individual factors are more vital to the IOR than the organizational factors, or whether or not the differences in the stakeholders' approach to developing a joint purpose caused the individual communication difficulties or vice versa is unclear. What is important is the idea that there is interaction between the factors causing collaborative inertia that could be quite
different across IORs and across communities. For that reason, identifying which factors leading to inertia are more important or relevant to achieving advantage seems unlikely, although the individual factors might be expected to have more relevance to the IOR process because of the interactive process of IOR growth.

The divergent expectations factor has not been discussed in relation to the relative position of factors to this point. This factor is quite broadly defined as being related to difficulties in realizing when the ambitions of the individual stakeholders are becoming counteractive to the collaborative advantage. This factor has the potential to affect all of the other factors discussed to this point. Certainly the emergence of divergent expectations would have a considerable effect on the individual factors of the IOR since this conflict in goals would alter stakeholder’s ability to communicate and foster trust. In the cases studied in this research, the expectation of saving time in the future by one set of stakeholders (Recreation practitioners) and the expectation to develop the growth of the tennis instruction programs to reach higher financial and participation targets (Tennis BC) do not seem to be congruent since developing growth in the programs might require an equal or greater time commitment from Recreation staff.

What the divergent expectations factor provides to the collaborative inertia framework is conceptual room for stakeholders involved in managing IORs to be aware of the potential for change in goals in the IORs. As results and relationships change, the initially identified goals may no longer serve the long-term interests of all stakeholders. By including divergent expectations, it allows researchers and stakeholders to realize that IORs are indeed very dynamic in nature.
Managing Collaborative Inertia

While many different instances during an IOR could be described as managing collaborative inertia, this section of the study is centred on discussing what 'made things happen' in the relationships. Certainly the hope is that this research will contribute to developing a better understanding of what is needed to manage collaborative inertia in IORs, but there were some moments in the relationships where the participants' approach was able to drive the relationship through the inertia to achieve advantage. While some researchers have identified the fact that IOR stakeholders can often address issues from multiple angles, making the collective environment confusing (Frisby & Millar, 2002; Huxham & Vangen, 2001), there were times during the IORs studied where 'good rapport equals a good IOR' seemed to hold true (Table 4.9). The rapport between the River City Recreation Manager and the Tennis Coordinator developed to the point where they each had stories to relate about how the other had gone beyond the requirements of his job to deliver exemplary service to the IOR.

Table 4.9 – Representative Quotations from Stakeholders Regarding Managing Relationships

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<td>1.</td>
<td>The person has to be the catalyst. I found a catalyst in [the River City Manager], and he and I worked well together. I was sick for a while, I had checkups and he called me – very interesting. His two daughters came for a vacation from the States, he introduced me to his daughters. We have developed a rapport there. He’s really a good guy and I like working with him. He likes the fire in my disposition, he thinks it is great. [The other community] sees it as a confrontation that I am trying to muscle or bully into whatever they have. (Tennis Coordinator)</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>[He] would call me up and say ‘I’ve talked to this person on the phone, they are this and that, they want to be in the program. We’ll bring them in here, put them over there, and [it ends up we] don’t have room for them. I’ll phone Lake City, we’ll see if that will work because it’s not far [between sites]’. Sure enough, [he’s] got people coming from River City to Lake City to fill some holes because he had overflow. (River City Recreation Manager)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>I think it can work in River City. If there was someone in the community that could liaise or bridge me with the River City Tennis Club. I have virtually no contact, I don’t know who their president is. It’s not that we’re avoiding each other, it’s just there’s not reason to have to deal with each other. But I think that could be a partnership that could</td>
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have some merit, you know. And so I’m thinking that a community champion is someone who is a respected business leader or has some pull with the media. If the whole point of it is to increase awareness of the game of tennis, that can happen on a whole bunch of different levels, then that would be the responsibility of that person. (River City Recreation Manager)

4. You know, he’s a good guy to work for, he phones you at home, he leave messages, he’s always there to answer your call. You got a problem he gets in his car and comes down to the tennis courts to tell the guy to get off. Now there’s a guy who is dedicated. (Tennis Coordinator)

5. I need to have a sense of trust with these people, that I can trust them and they can trust me. And a few times this summer [in Lake City] they let me down. And in River City, I never got let down. In fact, I’d get in my car and drive out there, all the way out there. No big deal – get in the car and go and see [the River City manager]. Go out there and talk to him. (Tennis Coordinator)

In this study, collaborative advantage was realized in the first year of the IORs studied. All of the stakeholder organizations achieved goals they would have been unable to reach alone, and they were able to improve the extent to which they achieved the goals of their individual organization. There was inertia present in their relationships, but while there were different levels of inertia present in the two IORs studied, the difference did not have an impact on the extent to which the concrete goals (i.e., number of participants, financial returns) were realized by stakeholders. In fact, in terms of how inertia was managed, the municipality that achieved more modest goals in the first year of the IOR has a better relationship with Tennis BC. As the IOR develops, and divergent expectations might cause a more serious strain on the relationships, it could be expected that the River City relationship will be more likely to negotiate the heightened risks to advantage, whereas the Lake City IOR could be more likely to realize the pitfalls of collaborative inertia.
Chapter 5 – Conclusions and Recommendations

This research has built on existing organizational theory related to IORs in the Canadian sport context by addressing two gaps in the literature. The first gap is the study of IORs at the micro level involving a provincial sport organization (PSO), and two municipal recreation departments. Studying PSOs is important to understanding the general role of IORs in the Canadian sport system because these organizations have multiple mandates to deliver both sport development and high performance sport programs (Tennis BC, 2000). The need for understanding how IORs are being managed by sport and recreation stakeholders is becoming more important as suggested in the new Canadian sport policy, sport and recreation will develop into an environment "where stakeholders' actions affirm the connections between various parts of the sport system" (Canadian Heritage, 2002, p. 19). To date, research on IORs in the sport and recreation context has not focused on relationships between sport organizations and recreation organizations. In fact, most of the research undertaken in this context has explored relationships within the recreation sector (cf. Glover, 1999a; 1999b; Frisby et al., in press; Thibault et al., 1999; in press) or within the sport sector (cf. Babiak, 2003).

The second gap addressed in this research is a greater understanding of collaborative advantage and collaborative inertia within IORs in a public-nonprofit context. Tennis BC, Lake City, and River City identified the potential for collaborative advantage that could be achieved through the development of IORs around introductory tennis lesson programs. In the first year of their relationships with Lake City and River City, Tennis BC was able to become involved in providing tennis programs in those communities, and achieved one of their broad goals of developing relationships that
improve their access to the general public, to public courts, and to the well established recreation registration infrastructure. For the municipalities of Lake City and River City, collaborative advantage was realized through accessing the specialized knowledge and program marketing experience of Tennis BC related to tennis instruction provision. The benefits that were apparent in this IOR fulfill the basic requirements of collaborative advantage as defined by Huxham and Vangen (2000a). The IOR provided the stakeholders with a collective result they could not have been achieved alone. As well, it provided each stakeholder with the opportunity to achieve goals they would have had difficulty achieving on their own. (Huxham & Vangen, 2000a). The IORs allowed all the organizations involved with a new strategy to better achieve their mandate, that is to increase participation in tennis for Tennis BC and to better service the public by offering well organized programs for the Parks and Recreation departments of Lake City and River City.

The ability for the organizations studied to achieve collaborative advantage in the first year of their programs is a considerable achievement. Searle and Brayley (1999) wrote that resentment towards sport organizations exists in recreation departments because of the number of people recreation departments serve with minimal resources compared to sport organizations that invest considerable resources to a relatively small number of high performance athletes. The perception that the voice of recreation is not heard by sport organizations and/or governments was supported during the development of the new Canadian Sport Policy when the CPRA (2002) published a position paper that outlined how their perspective for increased access and participation in recreation for all Canadians was overlooked. In contrast to the feelings of resentment between Canadian
sport and recreation, in the IORs studied, the organizations were able to define where they could come together. Despite some initial misconceptions about the roles that Tennis BC and municipal recreation departments played, the stakeholders were able to contribute certain skills and resources to collaboratively develop an improved instruction program for tennis in the two communities.

One of the key elements of the IORs that facilitated the realization of collaborative advantage was how stakeholders managed and understood inertia. Managers struggled mostly with the communication requirements of the IOR, which they determined to be inseparable from the level of trust experienced in the IOR and the extent to which a level of autonomy could be maintained that would allow the work of the IOR to move forward. Another source of collaborative inertia in these relationships was the difficulty in managing accountability to constituent groups, which emerged during the IOR as more constituent groups became involved.

An additional source of collaborative inertia that was identified during the study but has not been developed in the research literature on IORs is the notion of divergent expectations. Stakeholder organizations had set aside the first year of the IOR as a trial period, after which they would make a decision about the future of the program. The first year of the program yielded enough collaborative advantage that members of each individual organization have expressed interest and aspirations for ongoing IOR in the future. However, with divergent expectations, negative consequences could jeopardize future success of the IORs. While municipal recreation stakeholders were anticipating an investment of less time in the IORs, Tennis BC staff were considering further
development of programs (i.e., increased number of programs and more advanced instruction programs) in the two municipalities.

There are two interesting characteristics about the way that collaborative inertia existed in this case. The first point is that the stakeholders identified a considerable amount of collaborative inertia that was present in their IORs. None of these discussions around inertia affected the individual overall impressions of the first year of the program. Stakeholders were definitely pleased with the collaborative advantage that they experienced from their IORs. This raises the question, at what point does collaborative inertia detract from the IORs' ability to achieve collaborative advantage? What seems apparent is that realizing advantage in the first year of the IOR may have caused the stakeholders to overlook the impact that factors leading to collaborative inertia have had on the relationships. One of the concerns of that scenario is that the stakeholders develop expectations for the following years of the IOR without communicating them to their partners. While every stakeholder was impressed with the outcomes of IORs, they seem to be heading in different directions with respect to the future of their IORs.

The second important factor in understanding collaborative inertia emerged when it became apparent that the factors causing collaborative inertia have different relative positions in the IOR. The results suggested a conceptual model that separated developing joint purpose, managing logistics and procedures, and managing accountability to constituents as organizational factors, and communication, autonomy and power/trust as individual factors leading to inertia. The interactions between organizational factors (such as difficulties developing a joint purpose) and individual factors allow us to understand how relationships are socially constructed. Individual perceptions of different interactions
have an effect on the future of that relationship. A positive set of experiences surrounding the development of a joint purpose could theoretically, improve the perceptions that stakeholders from one organization have about the way individuals from the other organization communicate, leading to an improved relationship that helps managers understand the difficulties of managing logistics. Positive experiences during these interactions would then contribute to the level of trust between the groups, which would have an ongoing positive effect on the IOR.

What is interesting about how the factors leading to collaborative inertia relate to one another in this study is that it could help to explain the role of collaborative inertia in IORs, in general. It seems that collaborative inertia can be present in an IOR in ways that stakeholders can discuss when being asked specifically, but experiencing and discussing inertia may have little effect on the extent to which the same stakeholders believe collaborative advantage was reached. It also helps explain how an organization involved in two IORs can perceive one of them as having more potential despite the other relationship yielding equal or better financial and participation results.

To a certain extent, the answers to some of the emerging questions about how inertia impacts IOR development and success are answered by the ways stakeholders manage inertia. In managing inertia, stakeholders do not eliminate it (because inertia was found in different forms in both relationships) but they frame the inertia as a factor that needs to be considered, but can be accounted for or overcome through the adoption of certain behaviours. To some extent in this study, it appeared as though good rapport equaled a good IOR. Continued research to learn about the effects that individual relationships have on IORs is needed. In this case, one major threat to the IORs was
identified as the emergence of divergent expectations for future of the relationships. When stakeholders do not perceive the collaborative inertia in their relationships as a threat to collaborative advantage, they increase their expectations for advantage in the future of the IOR. This in itself is described as a factor that could lead to collaborative inertia, especially when the stakeholders have different aspirations about how collaborative advantage could be improved. Research on IORs over the long term needs to be undertaken to understand how different levels of inertia emerge over time and how that inertia is or is not managed. As well, how collaborative inertia is viewed in relation to collaborative advantage is important to consider for the future of IORs.

These results contribute to an emerging literature on IORs in the Canadian sport context. The study of the IORs of a provincial sport organization provides a piece to an emerging puzzle of how IORs exist in Canadian sport and recreation (cf. Babiak, 2003; Frisby et al., in press; Frisby & Millar, 2002; Glover, 1999a; 1999b; Thibault et al., 1999; in press; Vail, 1992; 1994). In addition, it provides another perspective about our understanding of how IORs are managed, using a conceptual framework that has not previously been used in this context (Huxham & Vangen, 1992; 2000a). This area of inquiry continues to be important as enhanced interaction has been identified in the Canadian Sport Policy as one of four goals to be achieved by 2012 (Canadian Heritage, 2002), especially due to the fact that IORs involve dynamic factors (advantage and inertia) that could prove difficult to negotiate for all organizations.

It is important for researchers to pursue a deeper understanding of the process of managing IORs to build knowledge that can assist practitioners who are already involved in IORs. This research has attempted to add to this knowledge by positioning the
advantages of IORs against the inertia that is also caused. Researchers and practitioners need to continue to be mindful of what is considered a difficult process for organizations to deal with the pitfalls of solitary action and the pitfalls of collaborative work when undertaking IOR strategies. This is increasingly important in an era where the new Canadian Sport Policy does not acknowledge the risks of collaboration in its enhanced interaction goal.

By using Huxham and Vangen’s (2000a) framework to learn how collaborative advantage and collaborative inertia are perceived in this context, this research has attempted uncover aspects of advantage and inertia in IORs to allow for both positive and negative outcomes of IORs to be understood as existing simultaneously. The goal of understanding IORs in this way is to realize that they require a constant investment of time and resources to avoid the consequences of partnership under-management (Frisby et al., in press; Kanter, 1989; 1994).

More research in this area is needed to better understand the realities for organizations developing IORs in the Canadian sport context. Future research on IORs in the Canadian sport and recreation context should continue to focus on the process that practitioners follow to negotiate the formation and the management of IORs. Despite its emergence in the literature, there is a great deal to learn about the processes involved in IORs.
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APPENDICES - Appendix #1 – Interview Protocol

1. Why was the partnership created?
2. When was the partnership created?
3. How was the partnership created?
4. When did the partnership become functional/operational?
5. What does/did it entail – does it allow you to do something you could not do alone?
6. What is your strategy for managing your relationship with _______?
7. How does it work?
8. What have been the benefits of the partnership?
9. What have been the challenges?
   a. How similarly do your organizations operate? In what ways were/are your philosophies or understandings different than those of your partners?
   b. How did the process of communication work between you and the other organizations?
      i. Did you exchange documents before beginning?
      ii. Did you research their involvement?
      iii. How else?
   c. Were there instances during the partnership where:
      i. different professional languages became an obstacle?
      ii. Different understandings of facilities / goals?
   d. What was different/similar in the way that tennis programs worked this year from years past? What was the response from participants?
   e. What resources did each of you and your partners contribute?
   f. How were they managed?
   g. Were there any issues involving travel / distance / logistics that came up?
   h. Describe the process of fitting your operating procedures with those of your partners? Why or why not did it happen that way?
      i. Did you feel as though you could adapt the program to run within your way or operating?
      j. How much power or control did you have over the program(s)? Would you like more or less involvement? Were your concerns about the program met by your partners? How so?
10. At this point in time, do you think that your partnership required more or less of your time than other years?
11. Are you continuing this relationship – and if so, do you expect the amount of time that you invest in these relationships to decrease in coming years? Why or why not?
12. At the end of the year – how did you make it happen – or what would you do differently to make it happen?
13. What is your level of awareness of this program?
   a. Is it national - Tennis Canada?
   b. Provincial?
14. Has being involved in the research of your partnership influenced the management of the partnership in any way?