“Connecting and engaging are not just personal challenges – it is up to all of us to create the community connectivity and supportive conditions that enable everyone to thrive. Let’s weave the ties that allow us to enjoy each other’s company, adapt, and lean on each other in times of need. Let’s also shape our physical, political, social, legal, economic and cultural context to support connecting and engaging.”

Dr. Vanessa Timmer, Executive Director, One Earth

“The millennial generation in the Lower Mainland is now larger than the Post War Boom generation (668,000 versus 578,000 residents), and this growing demographic represents our next generation of workers, families and community members. Ensuring both existing and new, younger and older residents have the opportunities to establish strong connections with their communities is essential to building stronger, healthier communities.”

 Andrew Ramlo, Executive Director Urban Futures, and Vice President of Market Intelligence at Rennie Group.

“I’m quite close to my neighbour on one side. I think she’s 82 years old, and she’s lived there forever. She’s very active and she drags me out swimming all the time. She sits in the ocean every day, and if she goes in, I have to go in too.”

Indigenous Focus Group Participant

“I feel like there’s almost a longing and a craving for community that you see from people…there’s just some way you have to bridge the gap of everybody longing for it, but not doing it.”

Youth Focus Group Participant

“[What makes community?]… to kind of feel safe, to feel connected, to not be judged by what you are wearing, the colour of your skin, or stuff like that. That’s very important for the community to be connected. Once people accept you the way you are, then I guess this is how a strong community starts.”

New Arrival Focus Group Participant

“Community belonging is a key factor explaining differences among Canadian communities in their average levels of life satisfaction. It is also the key reason why lives in large cities are generally less happy than in smaller communities, where tighter connections occur more naturally. To create that sense of belonging in larger cities is possible, but it requires rethinking how spaces are designed, services delivered, and how individuals treat each other.”

Dr. John Helliwell, Professor Emeritus at the University of British Columbia’s Vancouver School of Economics and co-editor of the World Happiness Report

“We can’t solve problems if we don’t care about each other. We learn to care when we know each other, our joys and challenges. From this place we can work together to solve our most pressing local problems.”

Youth Focus Group Participant