# Sample Questions for Hosting a Community Conversation about

# *The Ecology of Democracy*

Look at the cover of the book. It's a map of a community. What in this picture reminds you of us, our town/city? What would you draw differently for our town?

How valuable is the ecology metaphor when you think of our community?

How healthy is our local democracy?

What challenges do we struggle with as a community?

There are a lot of stories in this book about communities that have decided to do things a different way. They found new ways to listen, talk, and work together. How much does this sound like our community? What are we doing to address our toughest problems?

What are our biggest problems?

Was there anything in the book you'd like to try here? Some remedy that you think might work? What problems would you like to apply the book's ideas to?

Is there a story in the book that reminded you of some action you've taken or tried to take to improve things in town? What happened when you got involved?

Did you find any helpful guidance in the book directly related to your experience? How might you follow this advice in your everyday life or through working with others? What possibilities for acting differently do you see?

What are the biggest barriers or obstacles to getting involved?

The book really talks about all of us acting as citizens. What does that mean to you?

There's a section in the book that talks about a disconnect between the public and institutions. How much do you feel that here? Which institutions help the community the most? Which ones do you distrust? Can you imagine a way to build a more productive relationship between institutions and the public in our town? What might it take to “align” them?