Defining Community

Geography
A community by GEOGRAPHY is defined by place. It is made up of the people attached to a given location: a city, a district, a neighborhood, a country. The simplest version of this community is the place where you live. But you might also feel part of a geographic community related to the place you grew up, or a place you used to live, or a place you often visit.

Identity
A community by IDENTITY is defined by attributes. It is made up of people who end the sentence "I am ____" in the same way. Jewish. Chicano. Fifth generation. Artist. Some identities are self-ascribed (like "vegetarian") whereas others are assigned externally (like "black").

Affinity
A community by AFFINITY is defined by what we like. It is made up of people who end the sentence "I like ____" or "I do ____" in the same way. Knitters. Surfers. Punks. People who go to midnight movies. Some affinities are lifelong passions. Others are passing fancies.

*These types aren't perfectly distinct. A community of people who go to trivia night at a given bar could identify by geography (the bar), identity (nerds), or affinity (trivia).

Is the community weak or strong?

- A strong community engenders fellowship among members, supports a shared purpose or goal, and has identifiable leaders.
- Weak communities are more diffuse, with members who may not even be aware of each other.
- Members of a strong community typically feel a sense of responsibility to one another.