

The image shows a street scene in Glens Falls, New York, with historic brick buildings and storefronts. The text 'City of Glens Falls' is overlaid in a large, dark blue serif font. Below it, 'Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan' is written in a smaller, dark blue sans-serif font.

# City of Glens Falls

Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan

## **Recreation & the Environment Focus Group Roundtable Discussion**

**Christine L. McDonald Room at Crandall Public Library  
December 19, 2024**

### **Discussion Summary**

#### **1. Youth-Centric Focus**

- Emphasis on recreation as a tool for youth development and social engagement.

#### **2. Affordability and Accessibility**

- Affordability and accessibility of the Glens Falls Recreation Department recognized as a vital aspect of the program's success. Year-round, day and evening programs.
- Diverse local resources and programs serve a large number and variety of users, supported by dedicated staff and volunteers. Recreational tourism is growing. Need to invest in and maintain these assets.

#### **3. Bicycle Infrastructure**

- There is strong public demand for biking connections that prioritize safety and logical routes, with a 25-year history of advocacy.
- Biking is transportation, seen as essential not only for recreation but also for public safety, health, and workforce development.
- The shift away from car dependency, especially among younger generations, supports increased biking infrastructure.

#### **4. Inclusivity**

- Importance of designing programs and spaces to serve all demographics, including older residents.

## 5. Natural and Recreational Assets

- **Hudson River and Feeder Canal** - Highlighted as incredible assets with opportunities for better utilization and coordination.
- **Disc Golf** - Thriving activity with measurable usage data.
- **Coles Woods Ski Trail** - Popular for cross-country skiing. Opportunities to expand offerings.
- **Green Belt Trail** - Seen as a potential driver for real estate values and economic growth, leveraging city-owned land in Queensbury.
- **Branding and Outreach** - Clarify branding and promotion of recreation opportunities to reduce confusion between Glens Falls, Queensbury, and Warren County offerings.
- **Connections** - Expand and improve biking and pedestrian connections.
- **Emerging issues** - Need to address new challenges like e-bike regulations and encampments.
- **East Field** - Invest in upgrades to East Field and other facilities to support multi-use activities.

## 6. Reliance on Non-Profits

- The recreation landscape heavily depends on non-profits, which have become critical to filling gaps left by limited public resources. Important to maintain balance between non-profits and government leverage.

## 7. Sustainability

- Efforts like forestry management and leveraging grants highlight a focus on maintaining and improving recreational spaces sustainably.
- Green infrastructure can be implemented more.

## 8. Community-Driven Development

- A sense of place and progress is deeply rooted in grassroots initiatives and community involvement, underscoring the value of local engagement.