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## Vision for Talisman Lands presented by Alliance

(by M.T. Fernandes, Local Journalism Initiative)

A report from Public City architects commissioned by the Escarpment Corridor Alliance stresses low-impact ecological use of all properties.

The Vision for the Talisman Lands concludes that large-scale development would leave the local community paying for long-term costs of infrastructure upgrades that Development Charges won't cover.

The document also mentions the context of already-existing strains on local health care providers and schools.

The Escarpment Corridor Alliance was founded in 2021 to "protect Southern Georgian Bay's Niagara Escarpment, a celebrated UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, from mega development".

The Corridor referred to would be natural trails and links from Georgian Peaks to Devil's Glen, Beaver Valley to Castle Glen.

To form an overall vision, the report focused on natural patterns of land and water rather than ownership.

It acknowledges that it's unusual to plan for a property that is in others' hands.

The only more-intense built addition included was at the former Talisman lodge and another resort building next to it on the former Inn property.

Beyond that, further accommodations proposed were an 18-unit "passive house" townhouse build and some "glamping". Other buildings included a nature centre in Lower Talisman and another off-grid building in Upper Talisman that would be tied to a

*continued on page 12*

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## Talisman vision

*continued from page 1*

sustainable teaching farm and use by chefs. The vision would prioritize connections to local businesses.

Slopes would be re-forested, wetlands restored, and recreational trails added, along with support for uses like fishing, nature-study, bird-watching and tobogganing.

The study's conclusion points toward the Escarpment Corridor Alliance working with other partners to pursue acquiring all three parcels.

In a separate point, the study's closing statement said the group would "support the re-development of Talisman Hotel" in a way that fit the vision presented, and concepts of Destination Stewardship.

The report looks to future collaboration with the Destination Stewardship group.

The firm also proposes that a master plan should be made for the Talisman lands, Kimberley and Amik. That's an idea that has been presented to Grey Highlands council in the past.

The goal would be to reduce municipal infrastructure and maintenance costs.

In its look at the lands, Public Architects took the "rigorous" approach of only considering areas that could be developed if there was no special regulatory plan oversight.

For example, if a development permit was needed from the Conservation Authority, that area was excluded.

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