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Work Begins on $300,000 Ski Center in Rapids Area

GRAND RAPIDS—Construction began Thursday on a new $300,000 ski center in the Sugar Lake region, 15 miles south of Grand Rapids, off Highway 169.

Plans of Sugar Hills, Inc., a development corporation founded by Grand Rapids businessmen to carry out the project after it was launched by the Grand Rapids Junior Chamber of Commerce two years ago, call for the new center to be opened at the start of this winter's ski season.

Jaycees purchased land for the big project from Itasca County, and turned the deed over to Sugar Hills, Inc. The Jaycees sparked the program as an effort to improve the region's winter economy; Sugar Hills raised $150,000 locally and obtained a $150,000 Small Business Administration loan to carry out the work.

As designed by Sel Hannah, nationally-known Franconia, N.H., ski architect, the development calls for 15 slopes and a 1½-mile downhill ski tour trail to Sugar Lake, which lies at the edge of a large roadless wilderness region.

More than five miles of runs are laid out in a circular pattern on a "ski circus" concept that will allow skiers to travel most of a day without repeating trails.

The various beginners, intermediate and expert slopes will be equipped with two T-bar tows, five rope tows and a snow tractor pick-up system. More than half of the area will be served by snow-making apparatus.

A 4,800-square-foot chalet will provide lounge, restaurant and rental facilities. Housing for weekend or holiday skiers will be available in Grand Rapids.

A 3½-mile all-weather road is being constructed from Highway 169 into the ski center.

Expert slopes will have grades of up to 55 per cent; one region will contain space for the only official-size slalom course in the Upper Midwest.

Officers of Sugar Hils are William King, president; Ted Blonski, treasurer, and Charles Skinner, secretary-manager.

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89c

KING LEO'S DRIVE-IN

436 South First Avenue East

Near Canal Park—Sparkling Clean—Ample Parking

LOCALLY OWNED

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