



Master Plan



October 2020





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section
one



Context

Westfjords

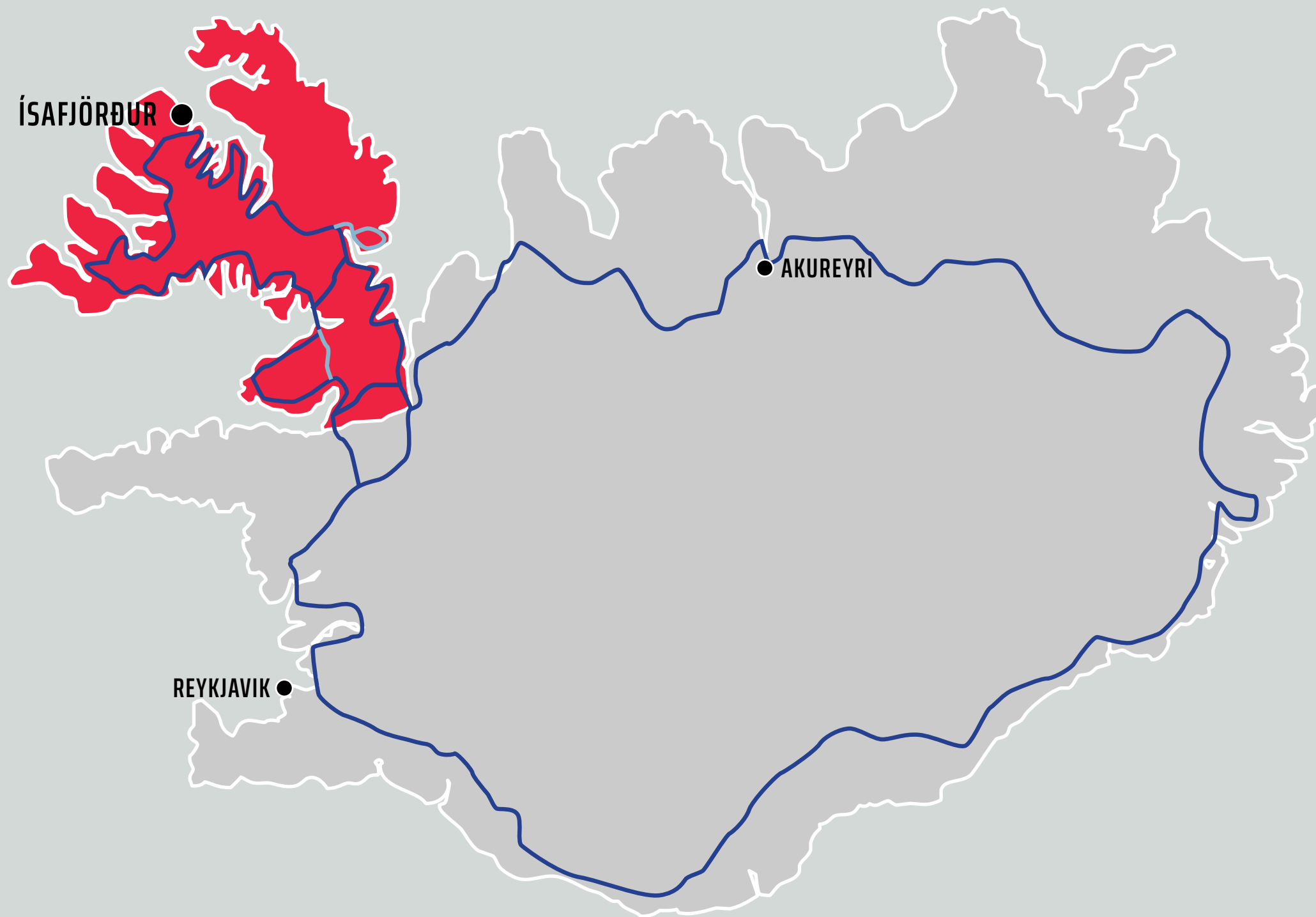
Ísafjörður and
Surrounding Area

The Ski Area



Westfjords

I. LOCATION



Mountainous.

More remote
and less
traveled.

Full of scenic
beauty!



Ring Road #2
Better access
=
Great potential
for
winter + summer
visitation.

II. ROAD UPGRADES

Iceland is currently improving existing road infrastructure to develop a “Ring Road #2” for the Westfjords. The road improvements are anticipated to have a big impact on tourism and recreation in the Westfjords region. Cruise tourists will now be able to see more in less time, and skiers from Reykjavik will now have similar trip times to ski areas (right now, skiers go to Hlíðarfjall since the drive is shorter and safer in the winter). The Ring Road #2 will better connect southfjords to eastfjords, improve community connections, and highlight regional attractions (the waterfall in Dynjandi and the proposed glass walkway near Bolungarvík). Road improvements will reduce the travel time to Reykjavik to 4.5 hours (shortened by 40km). Town leaders in Ísafjörður feel very strongly that the new road upgrades will significantly change visitation to Westfjords region in both summer and winter.

Ísafjörður and Surrounding Area

I. THE AREA

Ísafjörður is the largest town in the Westfjords peninsula, with close to 3,000 inhabitants. Ísafjörður is located on Isafardjup—one of Iceland's most deeply-indented fjords. The city center sits on a flat spit of land below the peaks of Eyrarfjall to the northwest and Naustahvilt ("Troll Seat") to the southeast. The ski area, Skíðasvæði Ísafjarðarbæjar, is southwest of the city center (5.7km to the Alpine base and 4.9km to the Nordic base)

The Ísafjörður area includes several smaller communities:

- Bolungarvík
- Flateyri
- Súðavík
- Suðureyri
- Þingeyri



II. HISTORY OF FISHING

Ísafjörður is an ancient church site and a trading post since at least the 16th century, although a real town did not form until after mid-19th century. The growth of the town was triggered by salt fish production, and the fishing industry has been vital for the community ever since. Other industries, such as tourism and the service sector, have grown in recent years and decades.





III. COMMUNITY CHARACTER AND INTERESTS

The town of Ísafjörður is centered around fishing. However, Ísafjörður also offers a diverse array of recreation, cultural, and historical attractions. There are two music schools, an art residency program, an acting club, a band festival, a golf course, a campground, sailing programs, mountain biking trails, museums, and plenty of opportunities for hiking and backpacking.

“Some say that this is because the isolation has forced the inhabitants to become culturally self-sufficient.”



IV. HORNSTRANDIR

Hornstrandir (aka Hornvík) is the country’s northernmost peninsula.

The area covers 580 km² (220 mi²) of tundra, fjord, glacier, and alpine land with rich but fragile vegetation. This area has been protected as Hornstrandir Nature Reserve since 1975 and is under some of the strictest preservation rules in Iceland.¹

This territory of the Arctic fox has been uninhabited since the 1950s. Its main attractions are three. First, the bird cliffs surrounding the bay of Hornvík are a magnet of gigantic proportions. On the eastern side of the bay the cliff reaches a height of more than 500 metres, and the birds are teeming. Second, as there is no infrastructure and the tourists few in relation to the sheer size of the area, the sense of remoteness is strong. You can hike days on end without seeing a single person. The nature is pure and the tranquillity unmatched. Third, the area is a haven for the Arctic fox (think hunting-ban and bird-packed cliffs), the chances of spotting one are high.²



V. TRANSITION TO TOURISM

Between 2013 and 2017, tourism in Iceland grew between 24–40%.³

In 2017, 2.2 million tourists visited Iceland and around 4.5% of the visitors were cruise passengers that docked in Ísafjörður.⁴ According to the Port of Ísafjörður, during the 2018 cruise season (May through September) 111 cruise ships docked, bringing 106,857 passengers and 34,929 crew members to Ísafjörður.³ In 2019, cruise visitation grew, with 129 cruise ships bringing a total of 126,400 passengers and 41,683 crew members to Ísafjörður. Between 92–99% of passengers came ashore and spent an average of 4.3 hours. 45% of respondents spent 5+ hours ashore.

1. Wikipedia

2. <https://www.westfjords.is/>

3. Tourism Growth In Iceland Slowing, Americans Still Top Tourists. January, 2019

4. Number of Tourists To Iceland Surpasses 2 Million In 2017. January, 2018

The Ski Area

The ski area, which features both Alpine and Nordic facilities, is just west of the town of Ísafjörður. The Alpine base area (elevation 100 m) is located on the Vestfjarðavegur road (#60) just before the tunnel leading to Suðureyri and Flateyri. The Nordic base area, completely disconnected from the Alpine base area, is located on the Seljalandsdalsvegur road (#637).

Originally, the Alpine ski area was also located on the Seljalandsdalsvegur road and was more closely connected to the Nordic terrain. The original lift at the Alpine ski area was destroyed in an avalanche; therefore, the Alpine ski area was moved to its current location, which is removed from known avalanche paths to avoid future events.

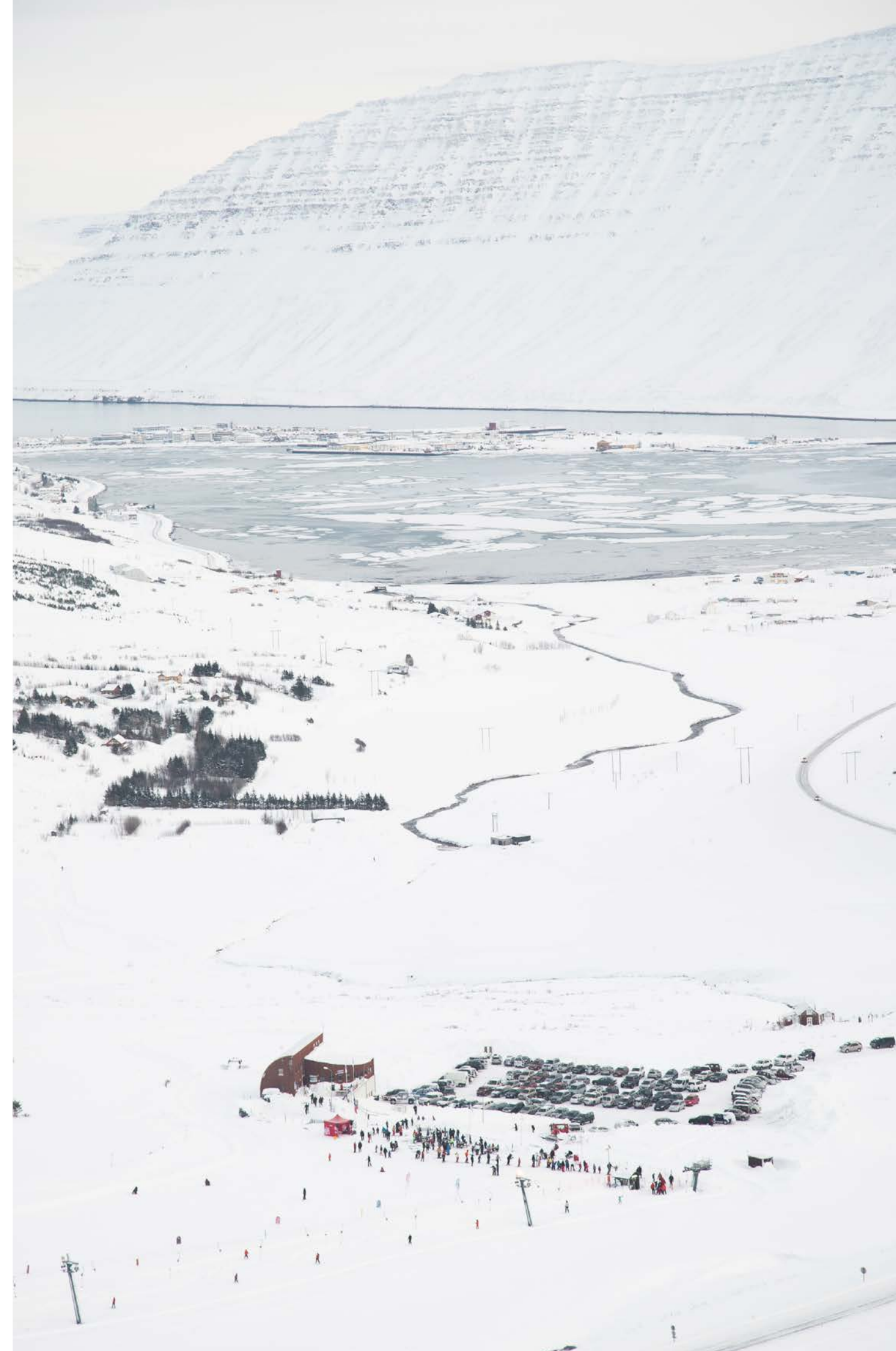
The ski area is owned and operated by the town of Ísafjörður and is a much-valued community recreation asset. Many community members ski there (Alpine, Nordic or both) in the winter months; in the summer, it is a popular destination for walkers, hikers, and mountain bikers.

The Alpine ski club offers children's lessons and race training, and hosts several regional races every winter.

The Nordic area hosts the internationally-known Fossavatnsgangan every year in April—attracting over 2,000 participants from around the world. A local hotel run by Nordic skiing enthusiasts offers Nordic ski camps which attract over 400 participants every winter and establishes Ísafjörður as a Nordic skiing destination for Icelanders.

In the summer months, the Alpine base area is a popular destination as it offers one of the best views in Ísafjörður. Many cruise ship excursions, bus tours, and visitors touring by car stop at the base area to enjoy the panoramic view of the fjord, the town, and the harbor.

Everyone loves the view!





History.
Culture.
Nature.
Recreation.

section two



Existing Conditions

Operations

Alpine

Nordic

Summer



SKÍÐASVÆÐI
ÍSAFJÖRÐARBÆJAR

EXISTING CONDITIONS PLAN

Legend

- Ski Lift
- Ski Trail
- Road
- Tunnel Road
- Nordic Ski Trail
- Hiking Trail
- Building

Búrfell Summit
Elev. 745m

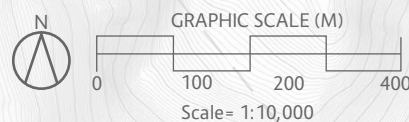
Miðfell Summit
Elev. 607m

Miðfell Lift Top
Elev. 487m

Sandfell Lift Top
Elev. 413m

Nordic Base Area
Elev. 280m

Base Area
Skíðaskáli
Elev. 100m



Prepared by:

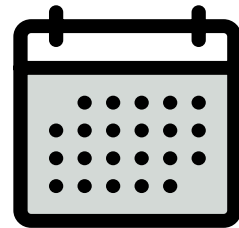
SE GROUP

Operations

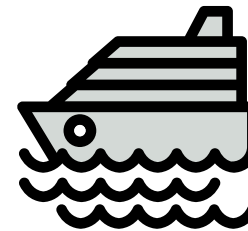
I. SEASON LENGTH

AVERAGE SKI SEASON:
November through April
(120 days)

- 85 days for Alpine
- 120 for Nordic



CRUISE/TOURISM SEASON:
June through August
(90 days)



II. VISITATION

ANNUAL VISITATION: Total Average Year = 53,500 (Easter = 10,500)

- Alpine average year = 35,000
- High season (Easter) average = 7,500



- Nordic average = 16,000
- High season (Easter) = 3,000



STRONG LOCAL VISITATION!

- Alpine participation (especially with local families) strong on weekends
- Nordic terrain used heavily during the week and is part of many community member's daily fitness routine
- Popular for summer walking - ski area access and work roads Growing local population of mountain bikers who are building and using trails at the ski area

EVENTS:

**Annual Nordic Race, Alpine Racing,
Ski Camps offered by local hotelier**

- Fossavatn ski marathon (World Loppet) averages 1,200 participants—one of the biggest ski competitions in Iceland
- Alpine races (part of race circuit which includes Reykjavik, Akureyri, Dalvík and Ísafjörður)
- Winter ski camps run through local hotelier

Challenges

Separation of Nordic and Alpine
“base areas”

Snowline is at approximately
200 m (above the bottom terminal
of the Sandfell and above the
entire Barnalyften lift)

Lack of snowmaking infrastructure
to offset poor snow conditions

Lack of beginner terrain and
poor learning progression:
beginner – novice – intermediate

Limited to one season (winter)
business/revenue





Surface Lifts

Surface lifts have many benefits over aerial lifts (better wind performance, easier to evacuate, low capital costs, simpler installation). There are also significant drawbacks that lead to operational inefficiency and which make the user experience substandard:

- Surface lifts are difficult to ride especially for beginner skiers (tiring and uncomfortable)
- May delay or prevent the area from opening:
 1. Lack of snow along the lift track
 2. Time and effort required to groom track prior to opening
 3. Maintenance/grooming on track may be required during the day

Alpine

I. LIFTS

3 T-BAR SURFACE LIFTS:

1. Sandfell
 - Provides access to most of the area's advanced terrain
 - Very steep and narrow uphill track (i.e., difficult to ride)
 - Bottom terminal below the 200 m snow line
2. Midfell
 - Provides access to most of the area's novice and intermediate terrain
 - Only accessed via the Sandfell lift, which is difficult to ride, especially by novice/intermediate skiers
3. Barnalyftan
 - Provides access to the area's beginner terrain
 - Below the 200 m snow line

II. TRAILS

24.9 HA TOTAL TERRAIN:

1. Sandfell
 - Steep and difficult
 - Inconsistent grades: steep at the top, very flat in the middle, very steep at the bottom
 - Includes two FIS race slopes
 - Also accesses backcountry terrain
2. Midfell
 - Best terrain for most skiers
 - Good intermediate terrain with consistent grades from top to bottom
3. Barnalyftan
 - Good beginner terrain but too steep for first time skiers
 - Lack of consistent snow conditions (below the 200 m snow line)

The ski terrain is constrained by the unpredictable and limited snowfall below the 200 m elevation line. In warmer years, early season, and late season, there is often no snow below this elevation. Since the base lodge, the bottom terminal of the Sandfell lift, and all the beginner terrain off of Barnalyftn are below this elevation, access to much of the mountain is frequently impeded.

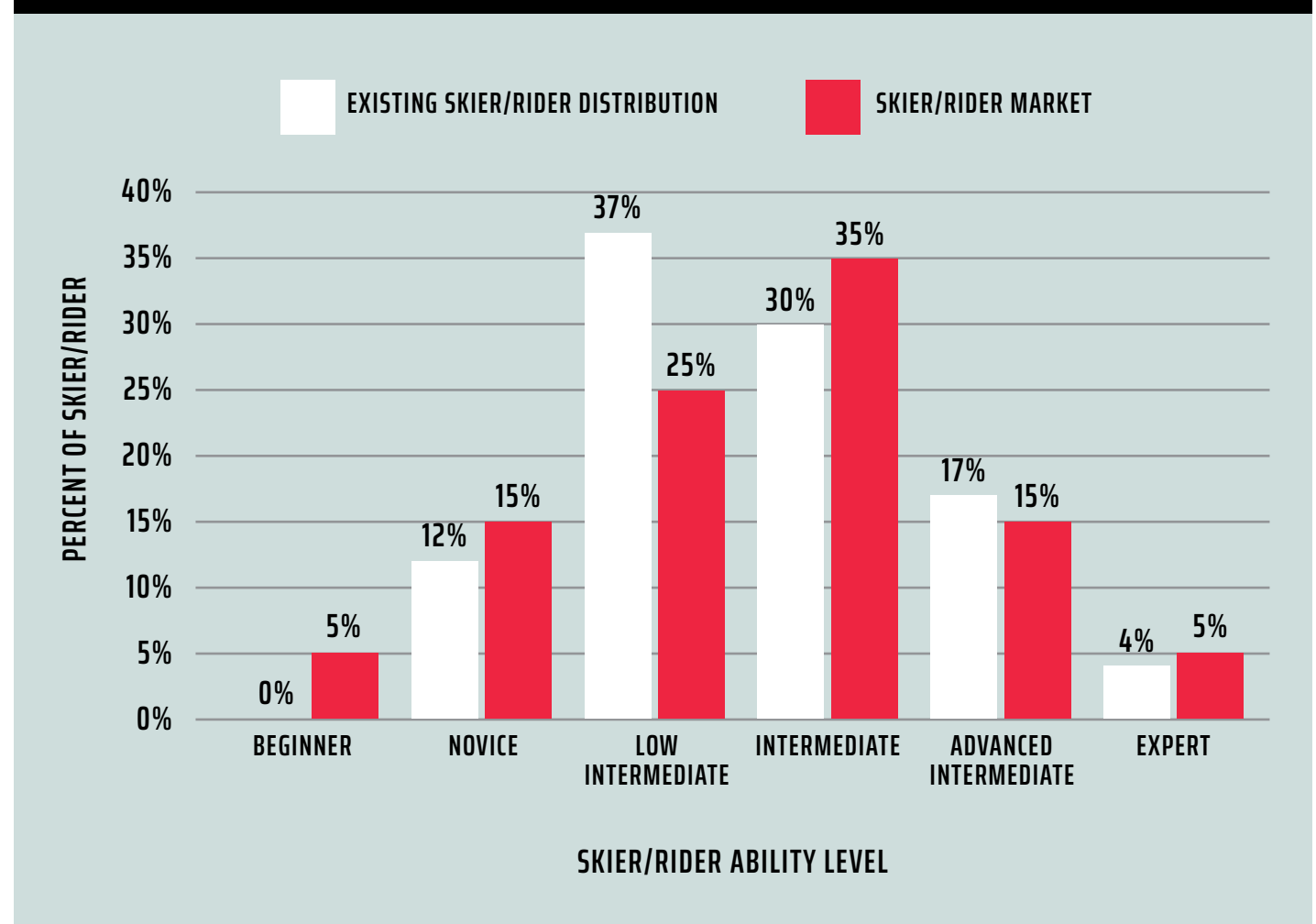
The average trail density is approximately one quarter of target.

- None of the trails are typically over-crowded (a desirable ski experience)
- The trails associated with the two primary lifts are significantly below target densities
- Lift capacity may be increased without creating additional terrain

There is a good mix of ability levels and terrain variety, with the exception of true beginner terrain. There is also a shortage of intermediate terrain compared to market demand.

- The lack of beginner terrain makes teaching new skiers difficult
- The only novice terrain is adjacent to Barnalyftn; there is enough terrain to support the market, but the lack of variety limits the novice skier's experience
- The shortage of Intermediate terrain is an issue since intermediate skiers are the largest market segment
- There is a lack of expert terrain, limiting the appeal of the area to destination skiers

ILLUSTRATION 1. SKIER DISTRIBUTION BY ABILITY LEVELS – EXISTING CONDITIONS



III. SNOWMAKING

Snowfall below the 200 m elevation line is unpredictable and limited, particularly during low snow years, early season, and late season. As a result, snowmaking is critical in this lower mountain area, below the bottom terminal of Midfell.

The existing snowmaking system consists of a single fan gun, which is not effective at making enough snow to make a meaningful impact on the ski operations. The fan gun is attached to a pump that is drawing water from the adjacent stream. The water source is unreliable because the hose can get dislodged or blocked, resulting in the fan gun not receiving any water. Since the fan gun requires power its positioning, and usefulness in terrain coverage, is limited by the location of the only available power source at the bottom terminal of the Sandfell lift.

IV. GUEST SERVICES

There is 315 m² of guest services space located in the ski club building in the Alpine base area.

The recommended range of guest services space given the Alpine area capacity is 559 m² to 671 m².

Space deficits in key guest service functions include:

- Ski equipment rentals
- Retail
- Bar/lounge
- Restaurant seating
- Kitchen

There is also a shortage of restaurant seats:

- 50 existing seats
- 202 recommended seats, based on the Alpine area capacity
- The existing turnover rate (number of sittings over the lunch period) is quite low, reflecting the type of food service provided.



V. PARKING

There are 170 spaces in the Alpine base area parking lots.

The recommended number of spaces for the Alpine area capacity is approximately 240 spaces, which means there is a shortage of 68 spaces.

Additional cars can park along the road to the base area and up to the tunnel entrance, which can offset the existing shortage of parking spaces on busy days.

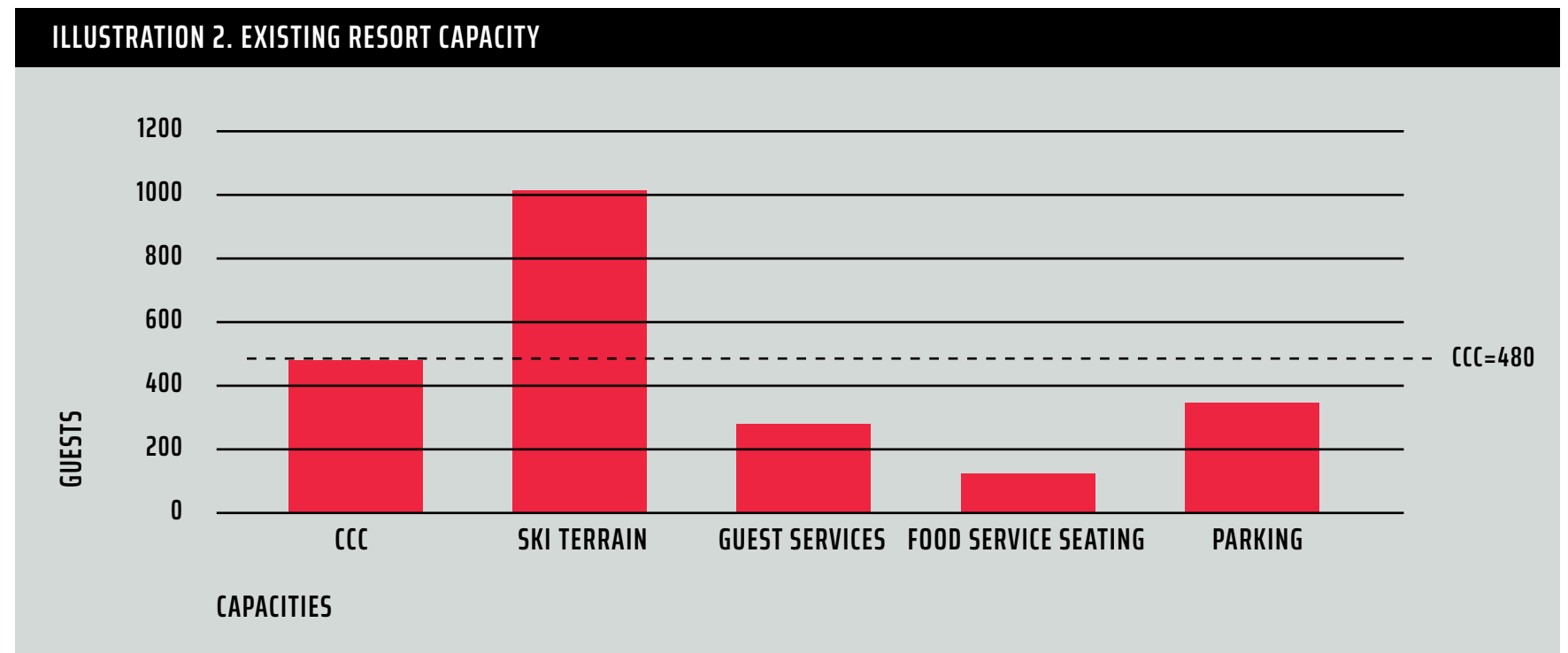


VI. COMFORTABLE CARRYING CAPACITY (CCC) AND BALANCE

The current CCC = 480

The Alpine area is not balanced!

- There is a surplus of ski trails:
 - » desirable as it provides an uncrowded ski experience with a variety of terrain
 - » challenging as it requires significant trail maintenance (and operational expense!)
- There are shortages of guest service space, seating and parking—creating a negative guest experience!



Comfortable Carrying Capacity

Comfortable Carrying Capacity (CCC) is defined as an optimal level of utilization for the ski area (the number of visitors that can be accommodated at any given time) which guarantees a pleasant recreational experience, while at the same time preserving the quality of the environment. The accurate estimation of the CCC of a mountain is a complex issue and is the single most important planning criterion for the resort. Given proper identification of the mountain's true capacity, all other related skier service facilities can be planned, such as base lodge seating, mountain restaurant requirements, sanitary facilities, parking, and other skier services. The CCC figure is based on a comparison of the uphill hourly capacity of the lift system to the downhill capacity of the trail system, taking into account the typical amount of vertical terrain desired by skiers of varying ability levels. It would not be uncommon for ski areas to experience peak days during which skier visitation exceeds the CCC by as much as 25%. However, it would not be recommended to consistently exceed the CCC due to the resulting decrease in the quality of the recreational experience.

Nordic

The Nordic area is a popular destination for locals, many of whom use the area as part of their daily fitness routines. Local skiing families often have one or more family member who chooses to Nordic ski while the rest of the family goes Alpine skiing.

The different locations of the base areas for Nordic and Alpine make this family coordination difficult.

Additionally, the Nordic area attracts destination skiers who come to participate in the week-long Nordic training camps that are hosted by a local hotel or race in the annual Fossavatnsgangan event.

While the trail network has been designed to serve all audiences, there are challenges:

- The lodge and parking area are small; they do not easily accommodate the race day crowds
- The race stadium is small and undersized given the participants of the larger event
- There is a limited amount of beginner terrain adjacent to the lodge, but the more extensive area of flatter terrain is separated by steeper slopes



Summer

The Ísafjörður community is very active! In addition to skiing in the winter, the ski area is a destination for hikers and mountain bikers during the summer months.

The new community trails linking the town with the ski area will greatly improve the hiking and mountain biking experience for both residents and visitors of Ísafjörður.

I. MOUNTAIN BIKING

MOUNTAIN BIKING IS A GROWING SPORT IN ICELAND! There is growing interest in Ísafjörður:

- There is a new mountain biking club which has been building trails at the ski area and beyond
- There is a new pump track and skills area in town
- Ísafjörður has hosted a cyclocross and Enduro races

II. HIKING

PEOPLE LOVE TO GO FOR A HIKE! The Nordic trails are used by hikers and walkers in the summer. Even the road up to the Nordic base area is a popular walking route.

There are longer distance trails that start at and continue beyond the ski area for more advanced hikers to enjoy.

III. THE VIEW

EVERYONE LOVES THE VIEW! One of the best views of the harbor is from the ski area Alpine base. Many regional excursions include a stop at the base area, to allow visitors to enjoy this view and often to capture a “selfie” of themselves with their cruise ship in the background.



section
three



Market Opportunities

Winter

Summer



Winter

I. SKIING IN ICELAND

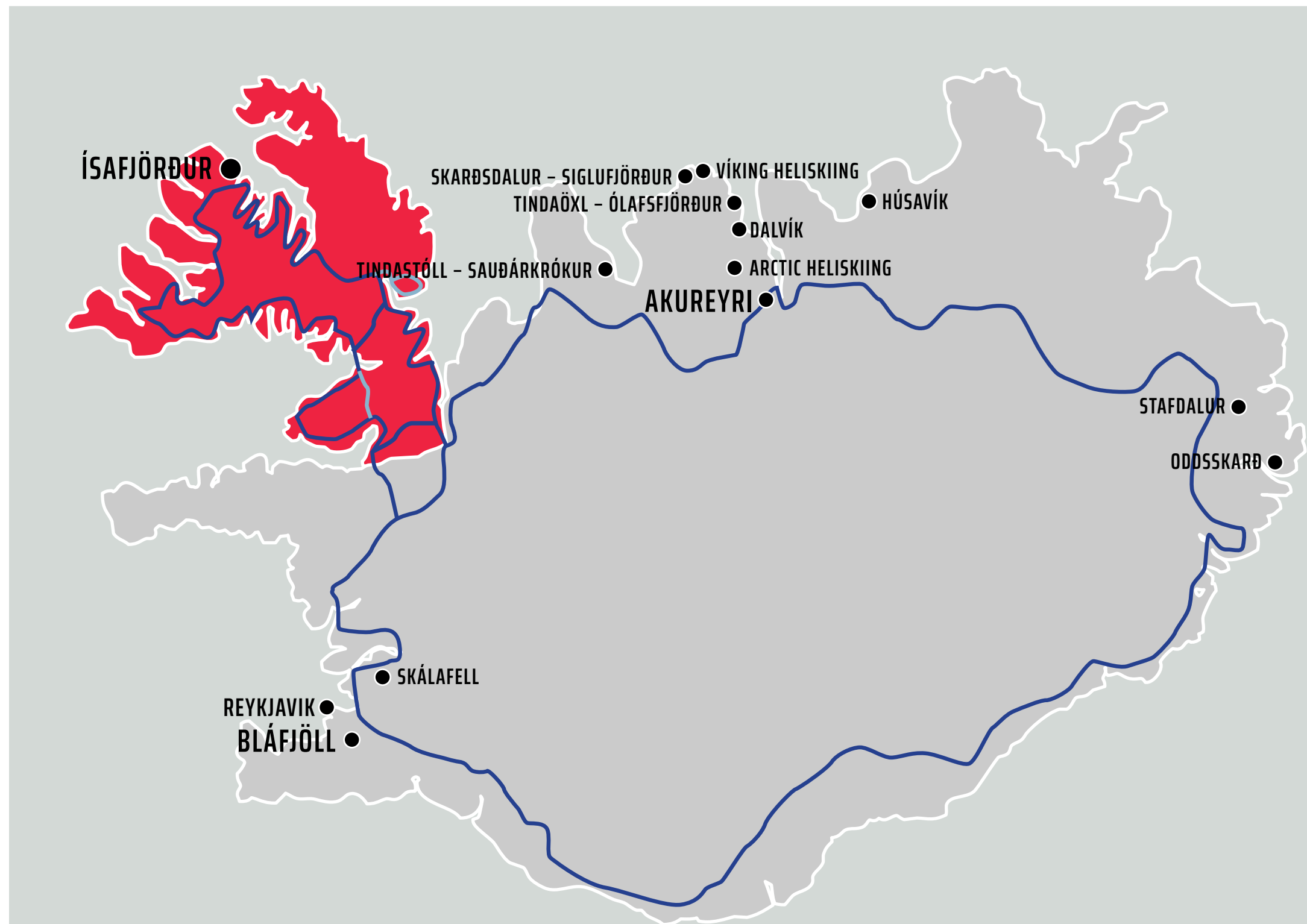
13 SKI RESORTS

They range in size from resorts that have a single T-bar to resorts that have a combined total of 15 lifts, T-bars, and rope tows.

Only two areas have more than 5 lifts:

- Bláfjöll, 30 minutes away from the capital
- Akureyri, on Mount Hlíðarfjall

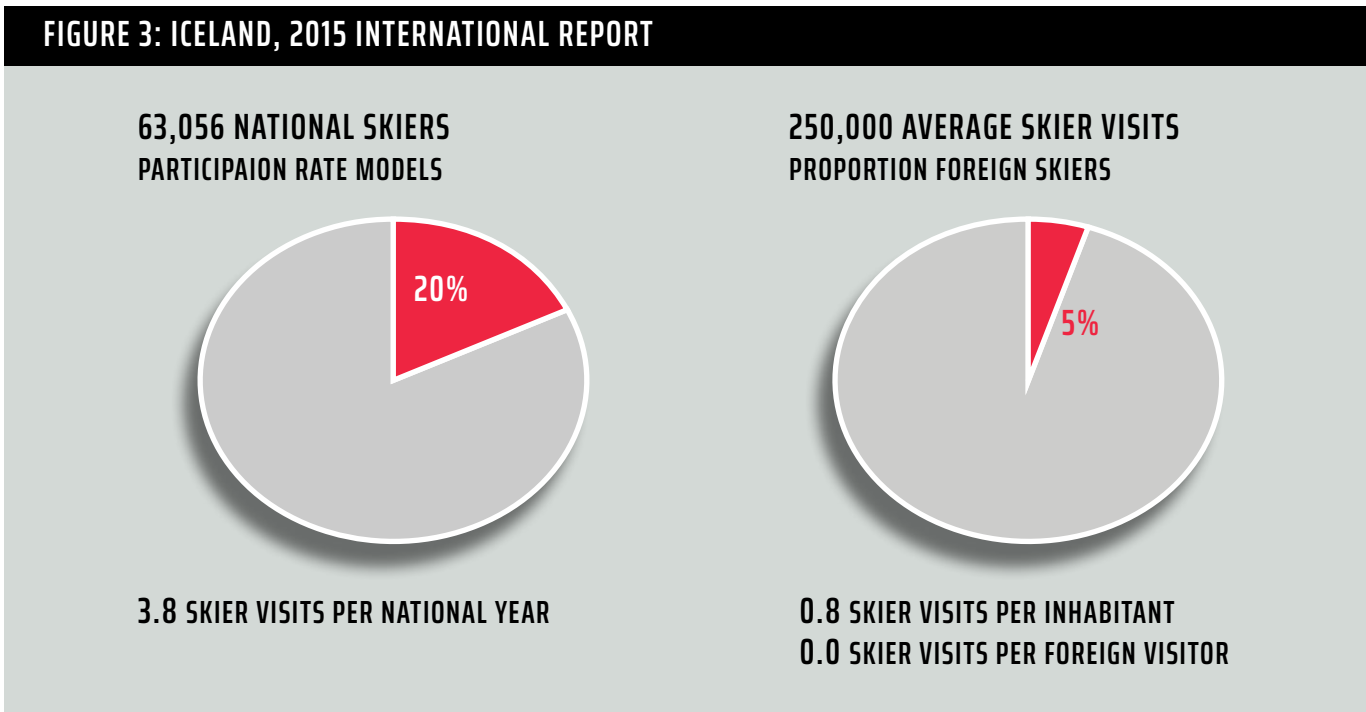
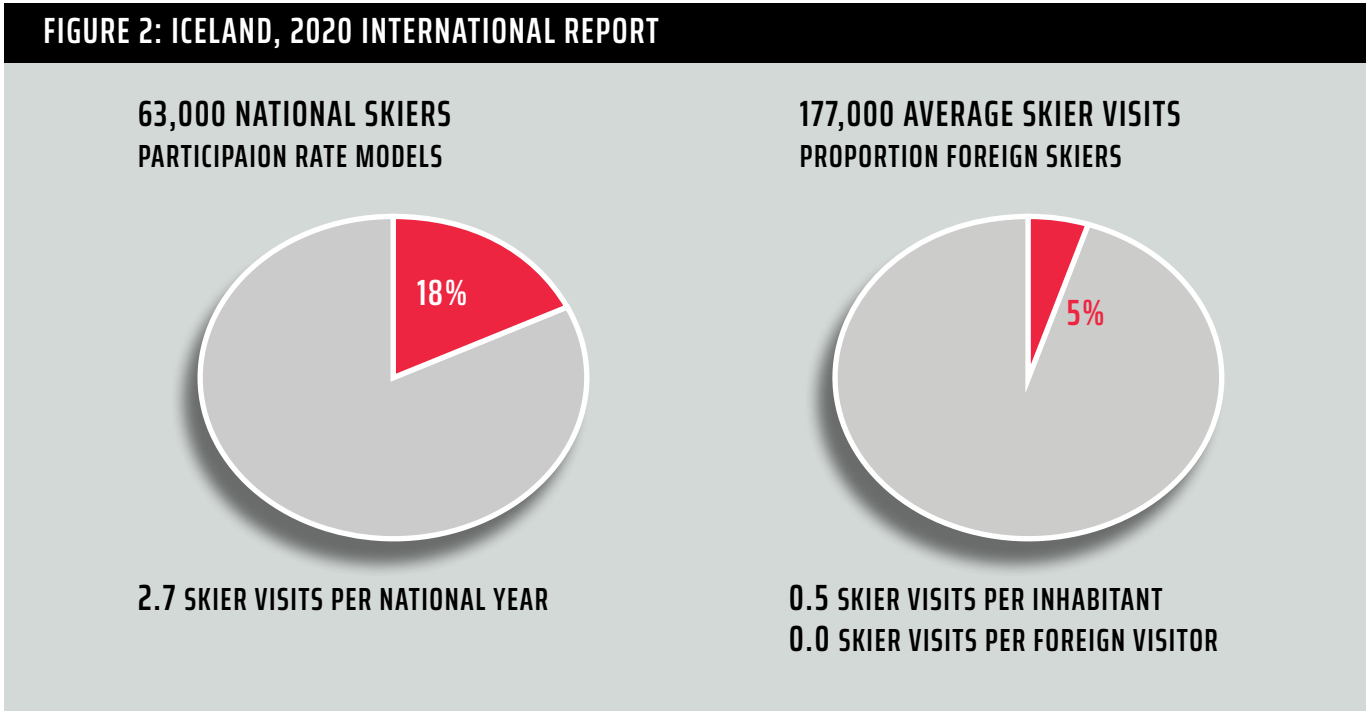
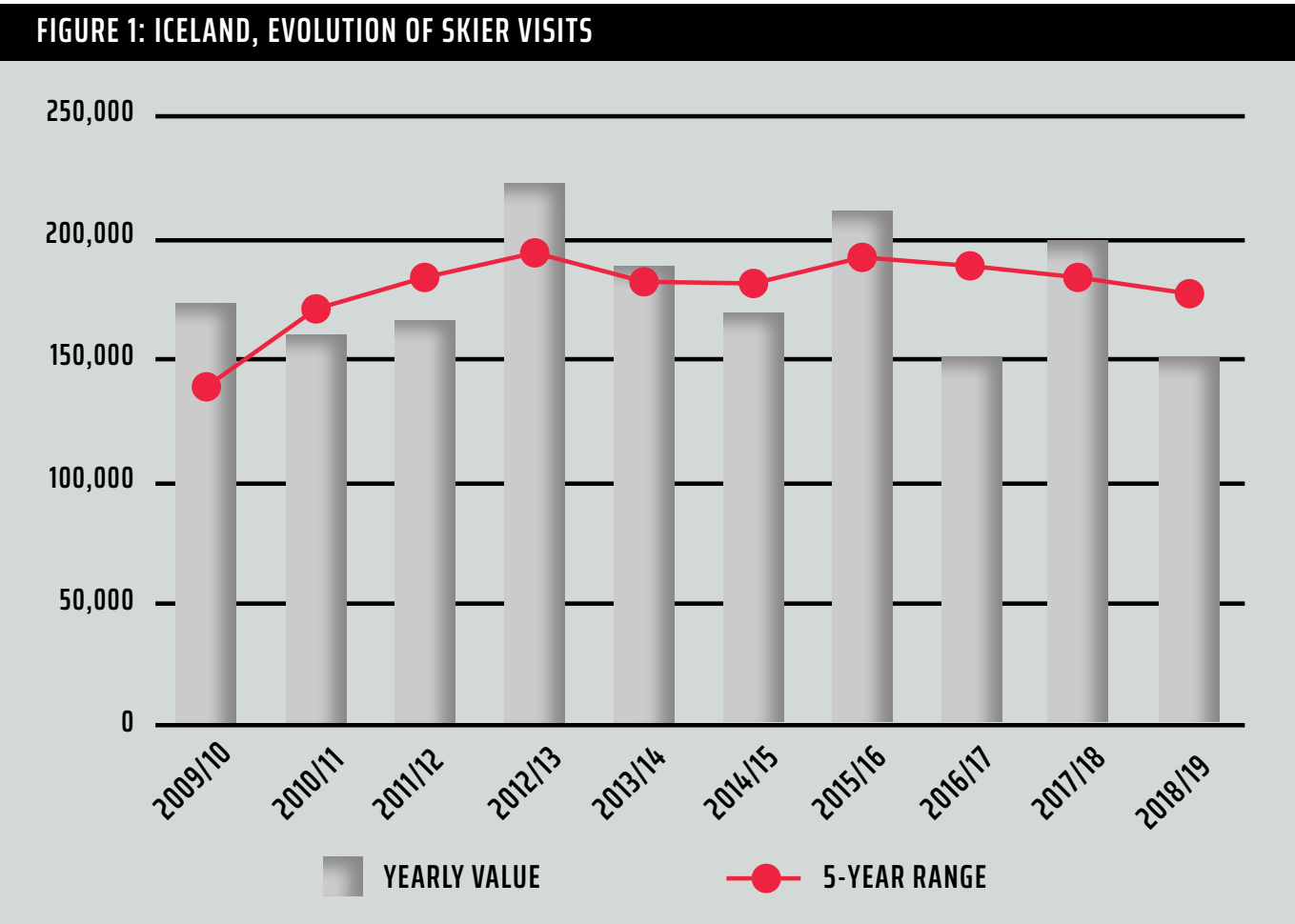
3 HELI SKI OPERATORS



II. SKIER VISITS

Icelanders love to ski!

As is typical with ski destinations, visitation fluctuates with snow conditions (2016/17 and 2018/19 were low snow years)



III. COMPETITIVE MARKETPLACE

Competition for Reykjavik skiers:

BLÁFJÖLL

THE LARGEST SKIRESORT IN ICELAND

- 11 lifts (2 chairlifts and 9 surface lifts)
- Total hourly capacity of over 8,000 people
- 16 runs for all levels, but only a small portion is for advanced skiers
- The area ranges between 480–700 m altitude, offering limited vertical drop
- Glacier skiing is possible during the summer
- Accommodations are limited, with only 100 beds available
- Snow conditions are unpredictable at Bláfjöll due to the warmer temperatures in southern Iceland

AKUREYRI

THE MOST POPULAR AND MOST COMPREHENSIVE SKI DESTINATION IN ICELAND

- 7 lifts (2 chairlifts and 1 carpet)
- Total hourly capacity of ...
- 24 runs cater primarily to beginner and intermediate skiers
- With an altitude ranging between 500–950 m above sea level, the area is equipped with a snowmaking system
- In addition to skiing, the town of Akureyri offers a skating rink, a snowpark, a swimming pool heated by geothermal activity, and a fitness center
- Accommodations at the ski area only amount to 100 beds, but other options are available in the town of Akureyri, 7 kilometres from the resort



The Opportunity: Winter

Road improvements will better position Ísafjörður to compete for Reykjavik skiers.

There is significant expansion potential for Alpine terrain.

The Nordic facilities offer an alternative for winter visitors.

Ísafjörður has existing tourism infrastructure to accommodate destination skiers (bed base, restaurants, shops, cultural attractions, and events).

Summer

I. CURRENT VISITOR COMPLEXION

Local

There exists a very active community that uses the mountain in both the winter and summer.



Walking/Hiking
Mountain Biking

Cruise

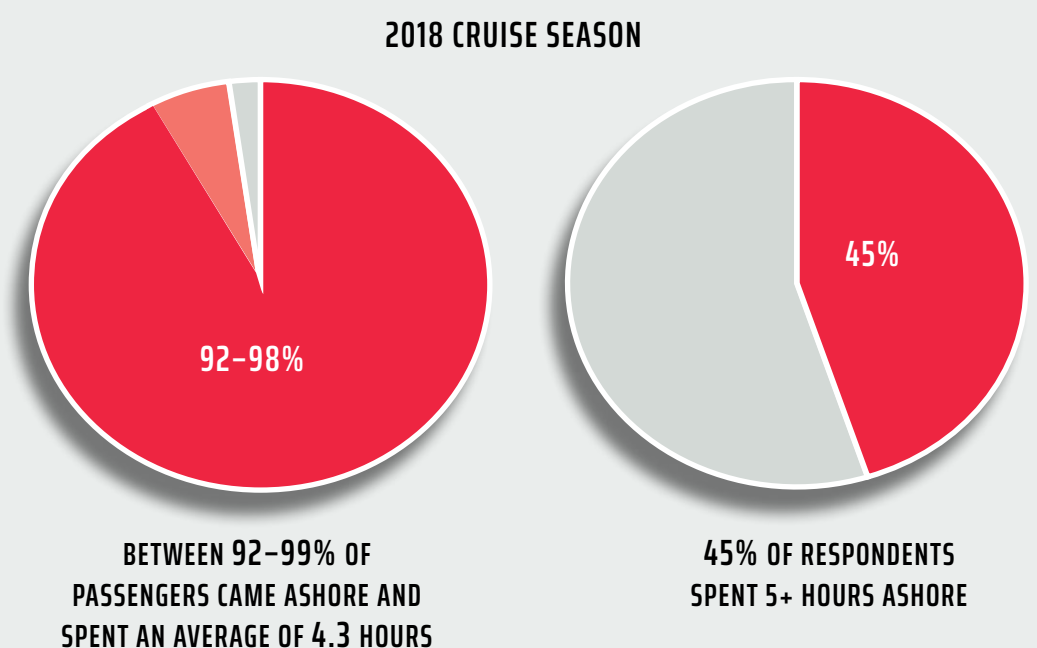
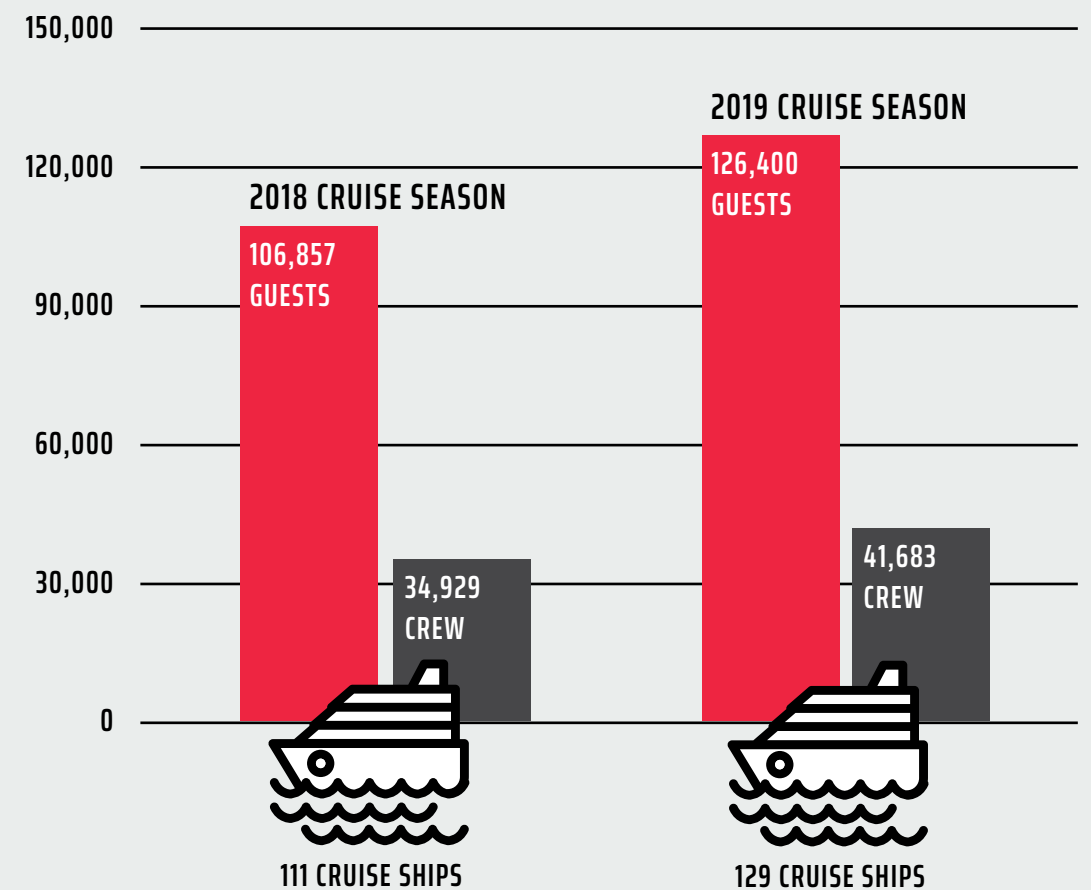
When cruise passengers and tourists come to Ísafjörður, they typically have pre-booked (and expensive) tours. Tourists visiting Ísafjörður are looking to experience an “authentic” version of Iceland that includes nature, recreation, and scenic vistas. The views around Ísafjörður of the fjord and harbor are very important; tours will often go directly to those sites, including the ski area base.

According to the Port of Ísafjörður, during the 2018 cruise season (May–September) 111 cruise ships docked, bringing 106,857 passengers and 34,929 crew members to Ísafjörður.⁵ In 2019, cruise visitation grew, with 129 cruise ships bringing a total of 126,400 passengers and 41,683 crew members to Ísafjörður.

Between 92–99% of passengers came ashore and spent an average of 4.3 hours. Of respondents, 45% spent 5+ hours ashore (see Figure 4).

5. <http://port.isafjorður.is/>

FIGURE 4: 2018 AND 2019 CRUISE SEASON STATISTICS



Car/Bus

In addition to cruise passengers, a number of tourists come to Ísafjörður by car or tour bus. Arriving from Reykjavik or Akureyri, Ísafjörður works as a great home base for day or half-day excursions.

Destination Visitors

The Port of Ísafjörður published a tourist booklet specifically for cruise ship passengers coming ashore, giving ideas about a variety of activities they can do while visiting Iceland: hikes, walking tours, biking trips, museums, and other regional destinations. The walking tours listed highlight destinations around Ísafjörður and range from 1.5 km to 4 km in distance. The hiking tours listed are more extensive and time-consuming, ranging in distance from 5–14 km. While the hiking trips originate from the port, the longer hikes may be prohibitive for slower hikers or people who are hoping to do a variety of activities while in the area.

(continued on following page)



II. REGIONAL MARKETPLACE



BOLUNGARVÍK

- 13 km, 15-minute drive
- Natural History Museum
- Maritime Museum
- Óshólaviti lighthouse



FLATEYRI

- 22 km, 21-minute drive
- The Old Bookstore bookshop and museum
- Exhibition dedicated to dry fish
- Avalanche wall with good views



SÚÐAVÍK

- 22 km, 20-minute drive)
- Arctic Fox Centre
- Family park & playground
- Great hiking routes

Many of the tours and advertised destinations take tourists outside of Ísafjörður, either on bike or in a car/bus. As it stands now, trips outside of Ísafjörður take up most, if not all, of the time cruise passengers have before their boat leaves. A stop at the base of the ski area to enjoy the view of the fjord (and get the cruise ship selfie!) before heading into the tunnel is common. Car/bus tourists can set a more leisurely pace and explore the area more extensively. Regardless, the stop at the base of the ski area (and the view selfie) is still on the itinerary!





SUÐUREYRI

- 23 km, 22-minute drive
- Popular destination
- Fisherman Seafood Trail tour
- Geothermal swimming pool



BOLAFJALL

- Mountain located in Bolungarvík
- 23 km, 23-minute drive
- Good views and road up to the top
- Road may be closed/uncertainty
- Plans for a suspended glass walkway



ÞINGEYRI

- 49 km, 41-minute drive
- Skríður botanical garden
- Old Blacksmith's Workshop
- Viking Center (advanced booking required))
- Café and restaurant
- Mountain bike rentals
- Horse riding tour
- Golf course
- Viewpoints
- Cultural attractions





HVITANES

- 70 km, 1 hour 12-minute drive
- Beautiful drive around four fjords
- Seal watching spot
- Litlibær museum
- Coffee and waffles



DYNJANDI

- 87 km, 1 hour 23-minute drive
- Scenic drive
- Waterfall
- 39 km of drive on a gravel road
- Jón Sigurðsson Memorial Museum



Museums

Westfjords Maritime and Heritage Museum

Ísafjörður Culture House/Old Hospital

Hversdagssafn – Museum of everyday life

The Old Blacksmith's Workshop, Þingeyri

Skálinn Viking Centre, Þingeyri

Old Bookshop/Merchant's House, Flateyri

International Doll Museum, Flateyri

Ósvör Museum, Bolungarvík

Jón Sigurðsson Memorial Museum, Dynjandi

Arnarfjörður

Westfjords Natural History Museum

Bolungarvík

Arctic Fox Centre, Súðavík

Litlibær Farm, Mjóifjörð



The Opportunity: Summer

Visitors are interested in outdoor activity and appreciating the natural environment.

Ísafjörður's recreation strategy supports outdoor activity and will enhance the hiking/biking (and Nordic skiing in winter) experience between the town and the ski area.

The ski area has the ability to offer a “mountain” experience (easily accessible or more challenging).

Regional tourism initiatives (i.e., the proposed glass walkway near Bolungarvík) will deepen the attraction of the area.

The view is already popular, but there are no support facilities (place to have a coffee or lunch) or anything else to do other than pull into the parking lot.

The first local brewery in the Westfjords, Dokkan brugghús opened in Ísafjörður in June. Travellers can now visit the brewery, have a tour around and try some of the local beer. You can either have a taste of all four beers on tap or if you have already found your favorite just have a large one and enjoy.



section four



Positioning

THE SKI AREA SERVES THREE MASTERS:

1. The ski facility is first and foremost a **COMMUNITY** resource;
2. With the future road upgrades, it has the potential to grow as a **SKI DESTINATION** for Reykjavik skiers and competitions/events; and
3. It also plays an important role as part of the summer **TOURISM** destination of the community and the region.

COMMUNITY 1



Members of the Community

Enjoy both Nordic and Alpine skiing, and the “something for everyone” family appeal.

- They frequent the Nordic facilities during the week as part of their daily fitness regimen
- They participate in Alpine skiing predominantly on the weekend
- They would like the two facilities to be more conveniently located relative to each other

Enjoy the community feel/family friendliness, proximity, and affordability of the facility.

Would like improvements to the winter operations, including snowmaking, novice terrain, and racing terrain.

Enjoy the trail network for hiking and biking in the summer.





A VALUED COMMUNITY RESOURCE.

SKI DESTINATION 2



Destination Skiers

Will be looking for a ski experience that warrants the trip (i.e., is on-par or better than Hlidarfjall).

Will result in increased visitation at the area, putting more demand on the facilities (lifts, terrain, guest service facilities), in turn increasing revenue for the area.

As a competition/event venue both Nordic and Alpine facilities will have to manage “event day” conditions (additional parking, press, spectators, participants).

Increased destination visitation also benefits the town in terms of economic impact.





SKIING THAT'S WORTH THE TRIP.

TOURISM 3



Summer Visitors

Include a broad demographics of nature enthusiasts and adventure seekers.

Cruise ship passengers have a limited amount of time on shore and want to maximize their experience of the Ísafjörður area.

Regional tourists (i.e., in car or on bus tours) have more time, and a variety of cultural attractions and nature-based tours/activities to choose from.





EVERYONE LOVES THE VIEW!



In addition to responding to market conditions, Ísafjörður must be a sustainable business.





“Weatherproof” against the variability of winter conditions.

Manage operational costs through efficiency and sustainability best practices.

Explore opportunities for increased revenue generation.



Considering these
market + financial
conditions, future
operations will seek to...



1. Maintain and enhance the community use of the facility, in winter and summer.

2. Optimize use of the facility as a summer tourism destination by providing unique “on-mountain” experiences.



3. Focus capital improvements toward improving the business enterprise:

- » reducing operational expenses
- » stabilizing operational conditions
- » increasing visitation and/or revenue



4. Balance community use and additional tourism visitation that will provide the necessary revenue for continued financial viability of the operation.



AND OWN THE VIEW!

section five



Upgrade Plan

Winter

Alpine

Nordic

Summer

Winter

The ski area is a valued community resource for winter recreation. Future investment in the ski area must be responsive to community needs and protect the future viability of operation. In addition, future investment should consider that opportunities to expand the ski area will contribute to the viability of the operation. Improvements to Ring Road #2 increase the market appeal as Isfjordur as a ski destination—if the ski experience is worth the trip!

ONE BASE FOR EVERYONE. A new Mid-mountain Base Area provides a starting point for both Alpine and Nordic skiers, improved guest service facilities, and a better beginner experience.

IMPROVED MOUNTAIN ACCESS. A new high-speed chairlift to the Sandfell summit, with a mid-station at the new Mid-mountain Base Area, will provide fast, comfortable access between the most important parts of the Alpine ski area.

PERFECT PROGRESSION. New lifts will provide more efficient access to the existing Alpine trails, as well as expanded beginner/novice terrain, teaching terrain, expert terrain off Midfell Summit, and ski-racing runs. The new Mid-mountain Base Area provides more direct access to the beginner Nordic terrain.

EVERYTHING IN BALANCE. The new lifts, terrain and base area facilities address the existing deficits, and provide an improved Alpine ski experience.

WORTH THE TRIP. The new Alpine lifts and trails, the new Nordic trails and stadium, and combined base area facilities create a destination ski experience that would be attractive to a broader marketplace.





Key Achievements for Winter

Combines Nordic and Alpine into centralized facilities/community hub

Improves Nordic experience for beginners

Improves Alpine experience for beginners and expand novice terrain

Improves Nordic facilities (including the stadium) for events/races

Improves Alpine racing terrain

Provides continued use of existing base area, maintenance facilities, and parking—convenient access

Provides for operating upper portion of the mountain during low snow years—for both Alpine and Nordic

Provides flexibility in phasing to implement the master plan



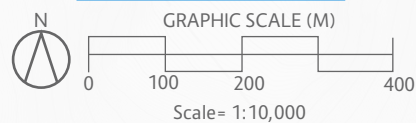


SKÍÐASVÆÐI
ÍSAFJARDARBÆJAR

MASTER PLAN

Legend

- Proposed New Ski Lift
- Ski Lift to be Removed
- Existing Ski Trail
- Nordic Ski Trail
- Proposed Nordic Ski Trail
- Proposed New Ski Trail
- Proposed Snowmaking
- Proposed New Ski Race Trail
- Proposed New Building
- Proposed New Road



Prepared by:

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SANDFELL SUMMIT

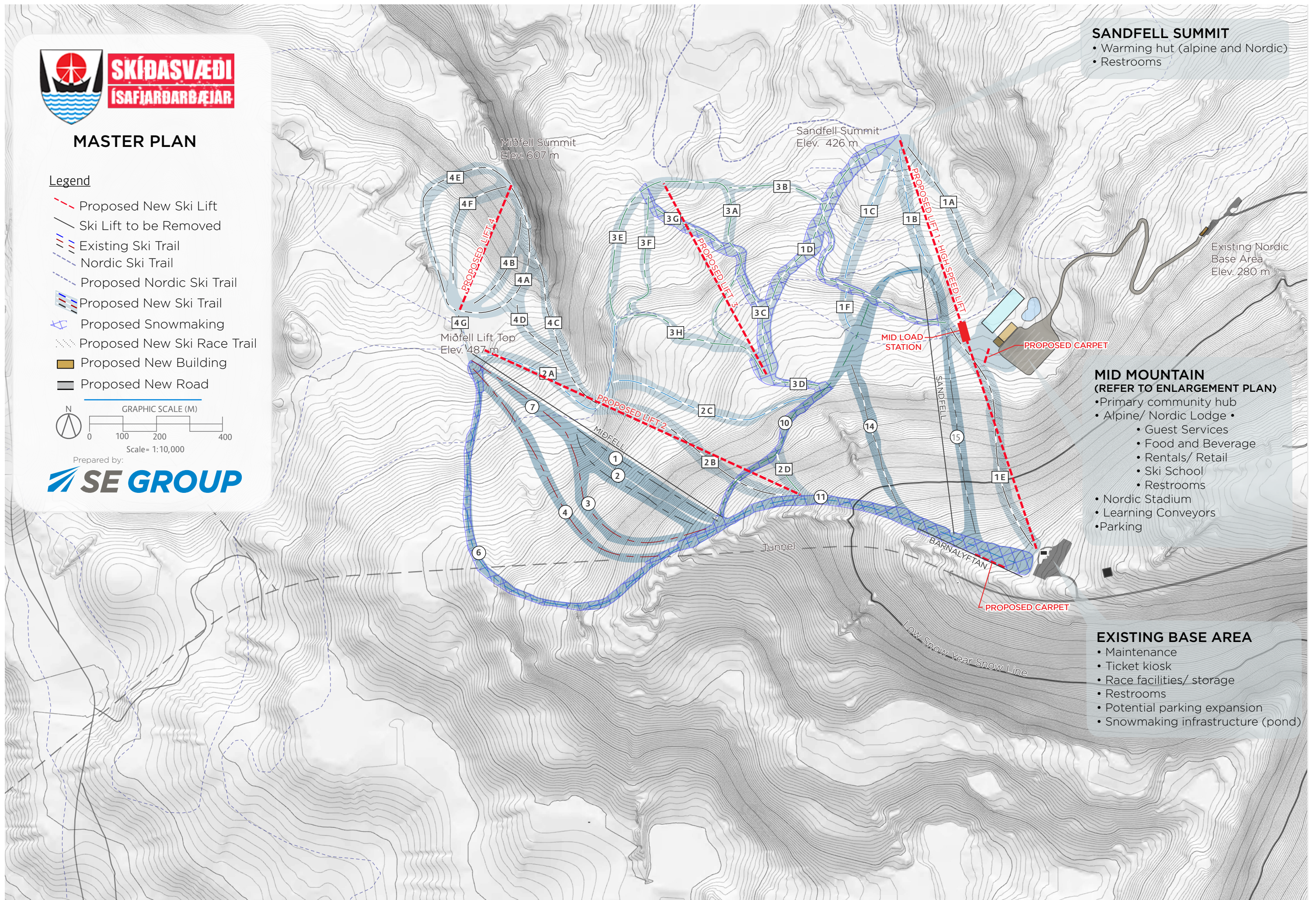
- Warming hut (alpine and Nordic)
- Restrooms

MID MOUNTAIN (REFER TO ENLARGEMENT PLAN)

- Primary community hub
- Alpine/ Nordic Lodge
- Guest Services
- Food and Beverage
- Rentals/ Retail
- Ski School
- Restrooms
- Nordic Stadium
- Learning Conveyors
- Parking

EXISTING BASE AREA

- Maintenance
- Ticket kiosk
- Race facilities/ storage
- Restrooms
- Potential parking expansion
- Snowmaking infrastructure (pond)



Future expansion of the ski area will provide a better ski experience for local participants, as well as create an attractive winter alternative for destination guests from Reykjavik.

The best community ski area. An attractive destination.

The Winter Plan

3 new chairlifts, 1 new (or re-purposed) surface lift, and 3 new teaching conveyors.

71.3 ha of Alpine trails—46.4 additional hectares!

A new Nordic stadium and beginner area adjacent to the Mid-mountain facilities, and connector trails accessing the existing Nordic trail system.

A new Mid-mountain Base Area with between 2,690–3,410 m² of guest service facilities serving both Alpine and Nordic skiers.



Alpine

I. CCC AND BALANCE

The upgrade CCC = 2,830

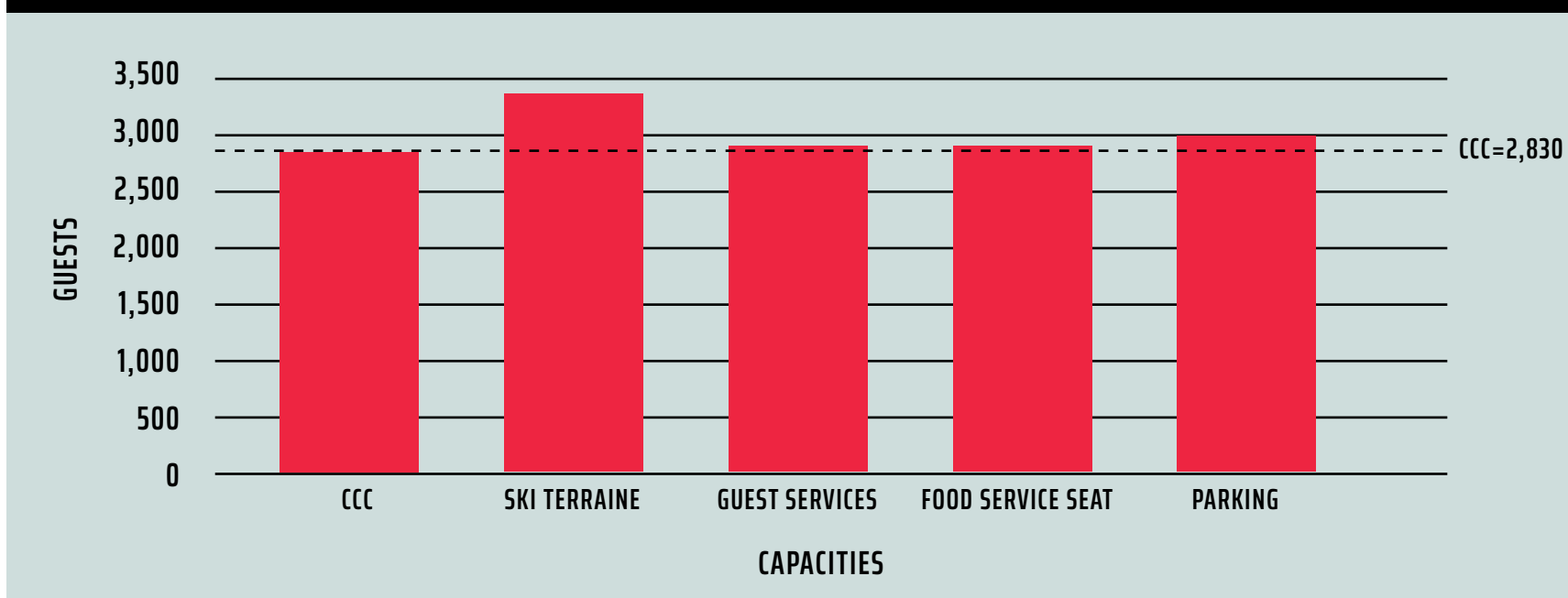
There is a surplus of ski terrain:

- Desirable as it provides an uncrowded ski experience with a variety of terrain that will be attractive to multi-day destination guests (more to explore!)
- Not a significant surplus—better aligned with resort capacity and operational expectations

Balanced capacities for guest service space, seating, and parking—a positive guest experience!



ILLUSTRATION 4. UPGRADE PLAN RESORT CAPACITY



II. LIFTS

LIFT #1 – HIGH-SPEED DETACHABLE QUAD CHAIRLIFT

- Replacing the existing Sandfell chairlift
- An “out-of-base” lift for the existing and new Mid-mountain base areas—providing fast, comfortable access to the mountain for all ability levels
- Access to the new ski racing trail from the Sandfell summit
- The lift may operate from the mid-station to provide access to the upper part of the mountain during periods of low snow on the lower sections
- This lift may also operate during the summer to provide scenic lift rides and access to the summit and mid-mountain activity areas

LIFT 2 – A FIXED-GRIP TRIPLE CHAIRLIFT

- Replacing the existing Midfell lift
- A more reliable lift than the existing surface lift
- Faster, easier, and more comfortable access to the most popular trails on the mountain
- A lower base terminal to access to significantly more ski trails and create better skier circulation
- Removing the T-Bar allows the existing track to then be skied, creating an additional ski trail

LIFT 3 – A FIXED-GRIP TRIPLE CHAIRLIFT

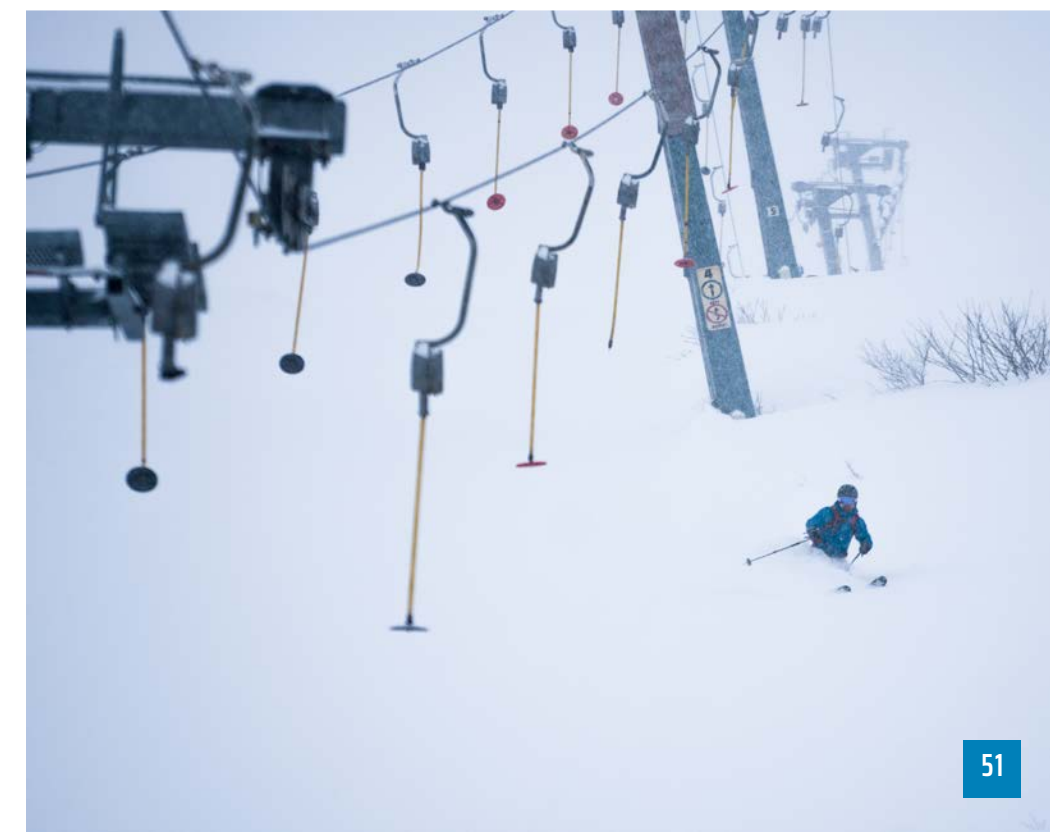
- Provides access to the new beginner and novice skiing trails
- Creates a much-needed Alpine learning area
- Located near the new Mid-mountain Lodge for the convenience of families who may have both Nordic and Alpine skiers

LIFT 4 – A SURFACE LIFT

- Provides access to the top of Midfell summit
- Allows advanced and expert skiers to access the steep trails in that area

CONVEYORS 1, 2, AND 3

- Creating ideal beginner experience in the existing base area and the new Mid-mountain Base Area
- Carpet conveyors are state-of-the-art lifts for beginner skiers, especially children



III. TRAILS

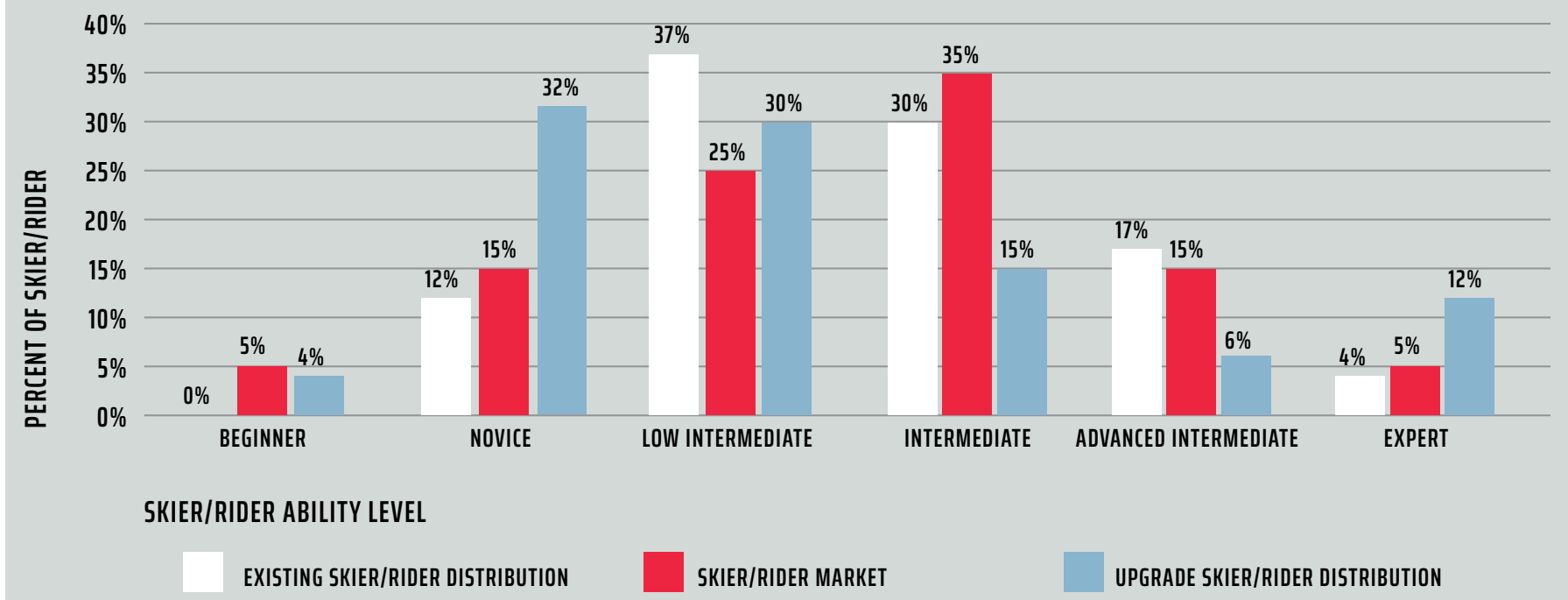
71.3 HA TOTAL TRAILS (24.9 HA EXISTING)

The upgrade would provide a good mix of ability levels and trails variety.

New Alpine ski trails:

- Responds to increases in lift capacity (more lifts = more trails!)
- Addresses identified shortages (novice and expert)
- New ski trails for the new lift areas
 - LIFT 1** – new trails from the summit of Sandfell
 - LIFT 2** – an additional racing trail for training and events
 - LIFT 3** – novice trails expanding the novice experience
 - LIFT 4** – expert trails providing challenging and interesting skiing for expert skiers

FIGURE 6. SKIER DISTRIBUTION BY ABILITY LEVELS – UPGRADE PLAN



IV. SNOWMAKING

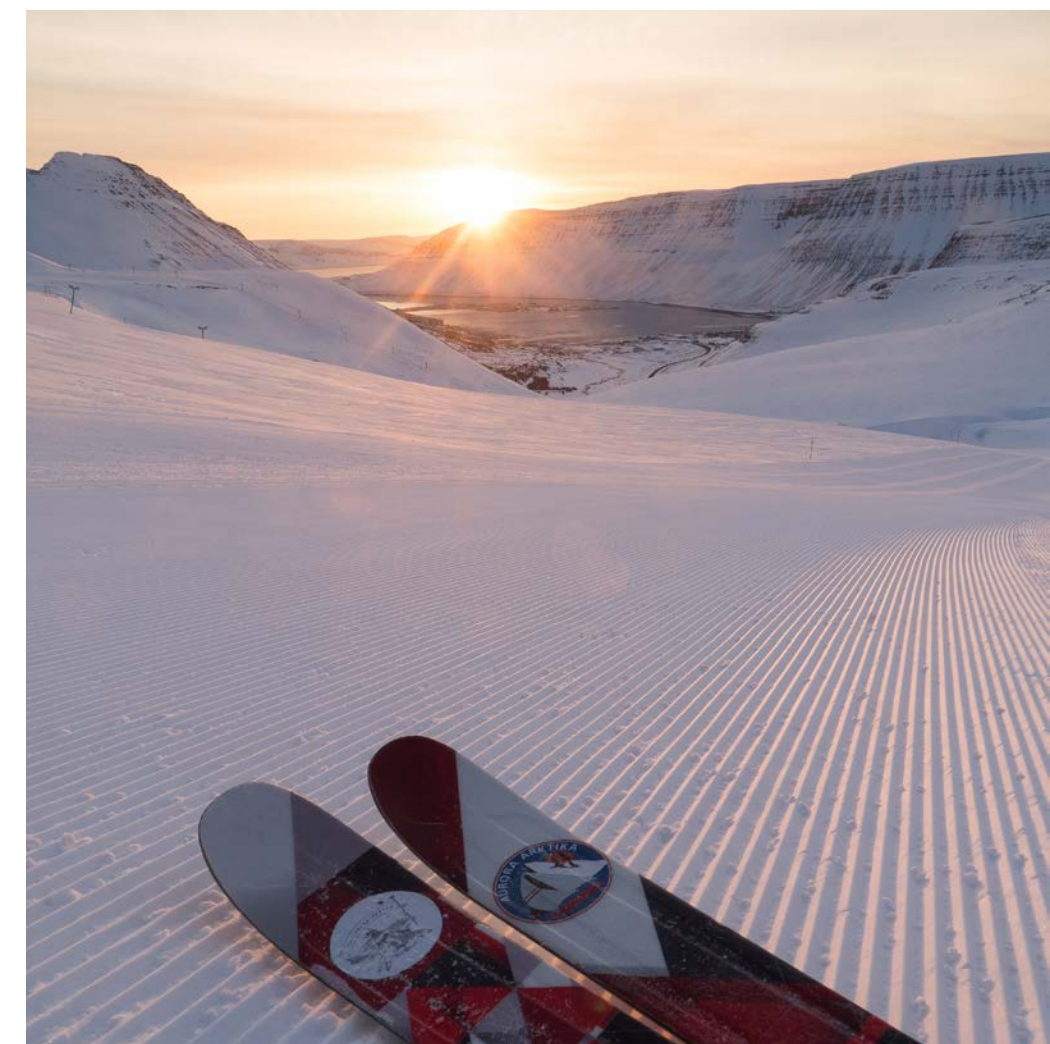
15.2 HA OF SNOWMAKING COVERAGE

Allows the ski area to open and operate reliably during low snow years, warm periods, and early and late season.

- coverage below 200 m in elevation terrain
- coverage on key ski runs and circulation routes that will ensure the ski area can operate all primary lifts, top-to-bottom

Water and power to fan guns will be supplied through a network of buried water pipes and power lines.

Water will be supplied by the stream, with an off-stream holding pond increasing capacity beyond the stream flow.



V. GUEST SERVICES

A range of 3,198–4,020 m² of guest services space given the upgrade capacity of the Alpine area (2,830).

- A range of 2,690–3,410 m² to be provided in the new Mid-mountain Base Lodge
- 315 m² located in the ski club building in the existing Alpine Base Area
- The warming hut at the summit of Sandfell will provide shelter but not food service

Adequate space will be provided for all key guest service functions:

- Ticketing/guest services
- Lockers
- Rentals
- Retail
- Ski school
- Bar/lounge
- Restaurant seating
- Kitchen
- Rest rooms

Space will also be provided for all key operations functions:

- Ski patrol
- Administration
- Employee lockers
- Storage

At full buildout, the new Mid-mountain Base Lodge will provide an additional 550 seats to accommodate the increased Alpine capacity, as well as Nordic skiers. The existing Nordic lodge may remain as a warming hut and starting point for those who prefer this location.



VI. PARKING

At full buildout, 1,152 parking spaces will be required to accommodate the increased Alpine capacity.

- 450 spaces in the main Mid-mountain parking lots, with a future expansion potential of an additional 300 spaces to be located between the new Mid-mountain base area and the old Nordic base area
- 170 existing spaces in the lower Alpine base area parking lots, with a future expansion potential of an additional 200 spaces.
- It is anticipated that 20% of all guests will arrive at the ski area via a town shuttle bus; at full buildout this number may need to be increased to offset any remaining deficit in parking at the ski area

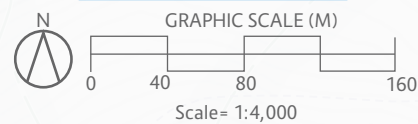




MID MOUNTAIN ENLARGEMENT

Legend

- Proposed New Ski Lift
- Ski Lift to be Removed
- Existing Ski Trail
- Nordic Ski Trail
- Proposed Nordic Ski Trail
- Proposed New Ski Trail
- Proposed New Building
- Proposed New Road

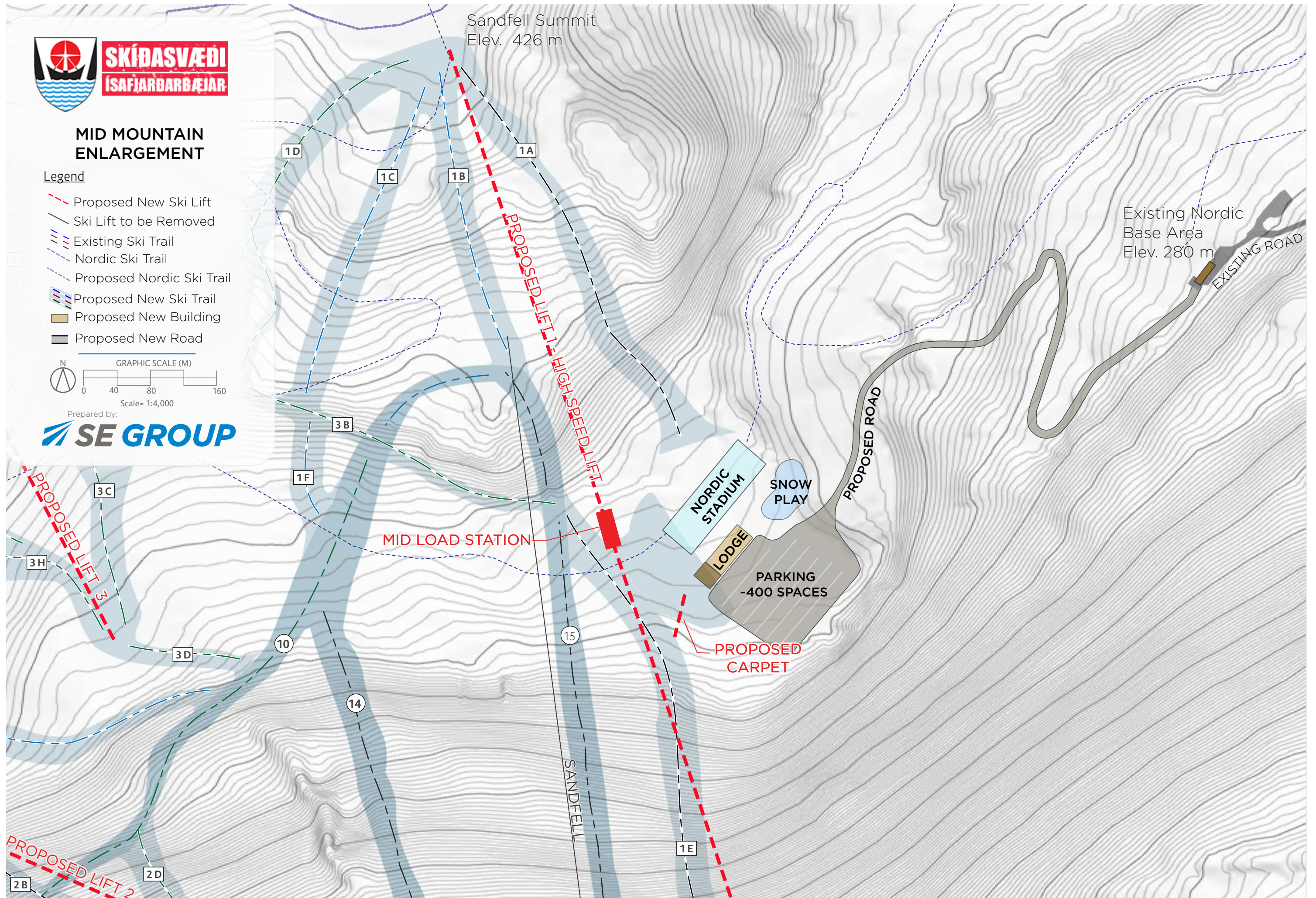


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Sandfell Summit
Elev. 426 m

Existing Nordic
Base Area
Elev. 280 m



Nordic

The new Mid-mountain Base Area elevates the Nordic experience in several ways:

- Improved guest service facilities and parking
- Expanded stadium area
- Expanded beginner area adjacent to the Mid-mountain Lodge
- Easier access to the existing beginner trails
- The Sandfell lift may be used to access the upper mountain trail

These improvements address community concerns and positions the ski area to be a true destination, for both Alpine and Nordic skiers.





SKÍÐASVÆÐI
ÍSAFJARDARBÆJAR

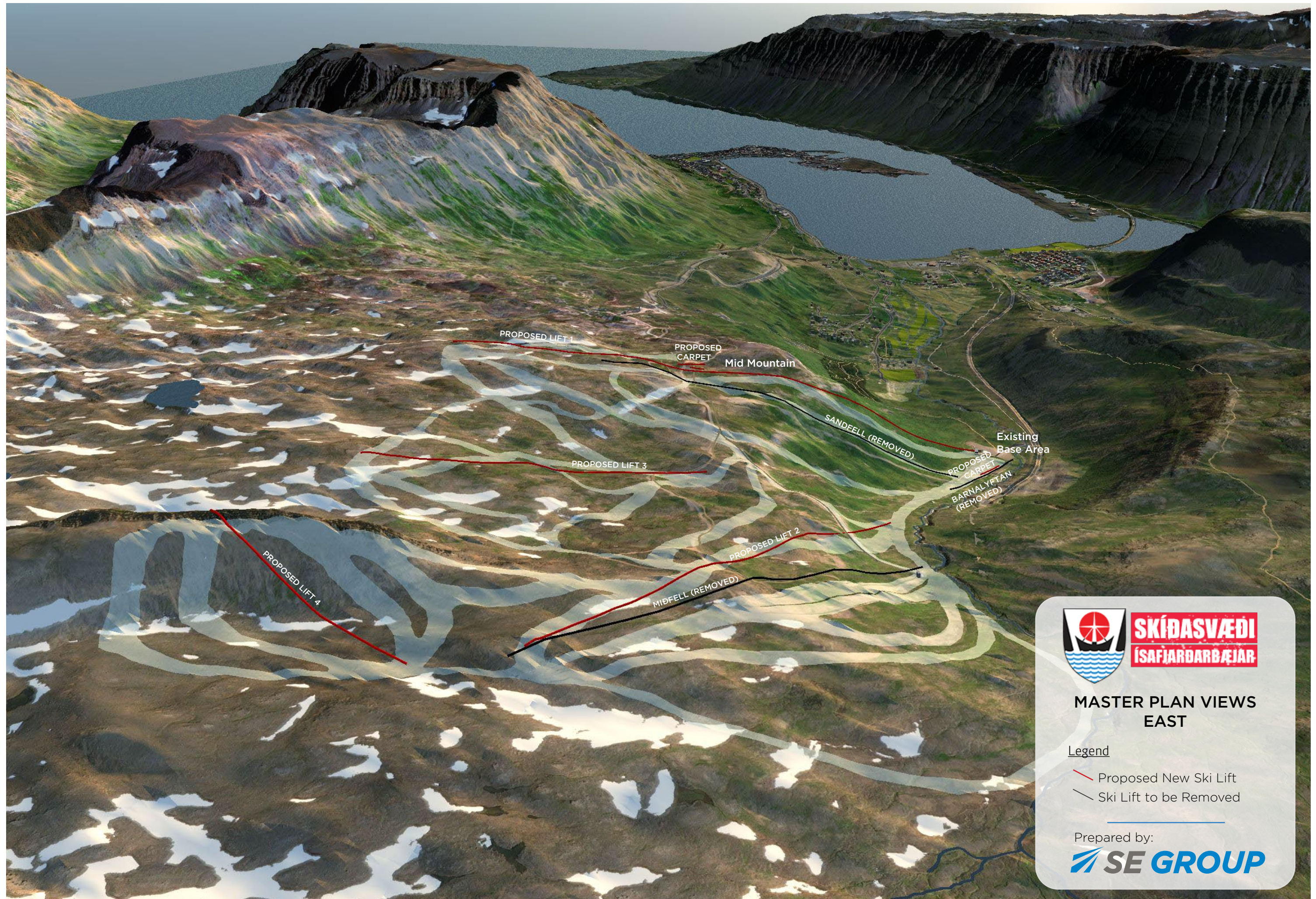
MASTER PLAN VIEWS WEST

Legend

- Proposed New Ski Lift
- Ski Lift to be Removed

Prepared by:

SE GROUP



SKÍÐASVÆÐI
ÍSAFJARÐARBÆJAR

MASTER PLAN VIEWS EAST

Legend

- Proposed New Ski Lift
- Ski Lift to be Removed

Prepared by:

SE GROUP

Summer

Summer recreation and tourism are key factors to the sustainability of Ísafjörður.

The ski area has a unique opportunity to provide mountain-oriented recreation activities, food and beverage offerings, and the ability to enjoy the panoramic views of the mountain landscape and fjord.

THE LOCAL MOUNTAIN PARK. Connecting with the town recreation paths, the expanded trail networks provide additional walking and biking routes.

THE PERFECT MOUNTAIN EXCURSION. The new activities and amenities can accommodate larger organized cruise passenger or bus groups and be packaged together into a part- or full-day visit to the mountain.

MORE TO EXPLORE. For those spending more time in Ísafjörður, the new activities and amenities provide diverse options for mountain recreation. Something for everyone!



Key Achievements for Summer

Supports community-based recreation and connects to the lower valley trail system

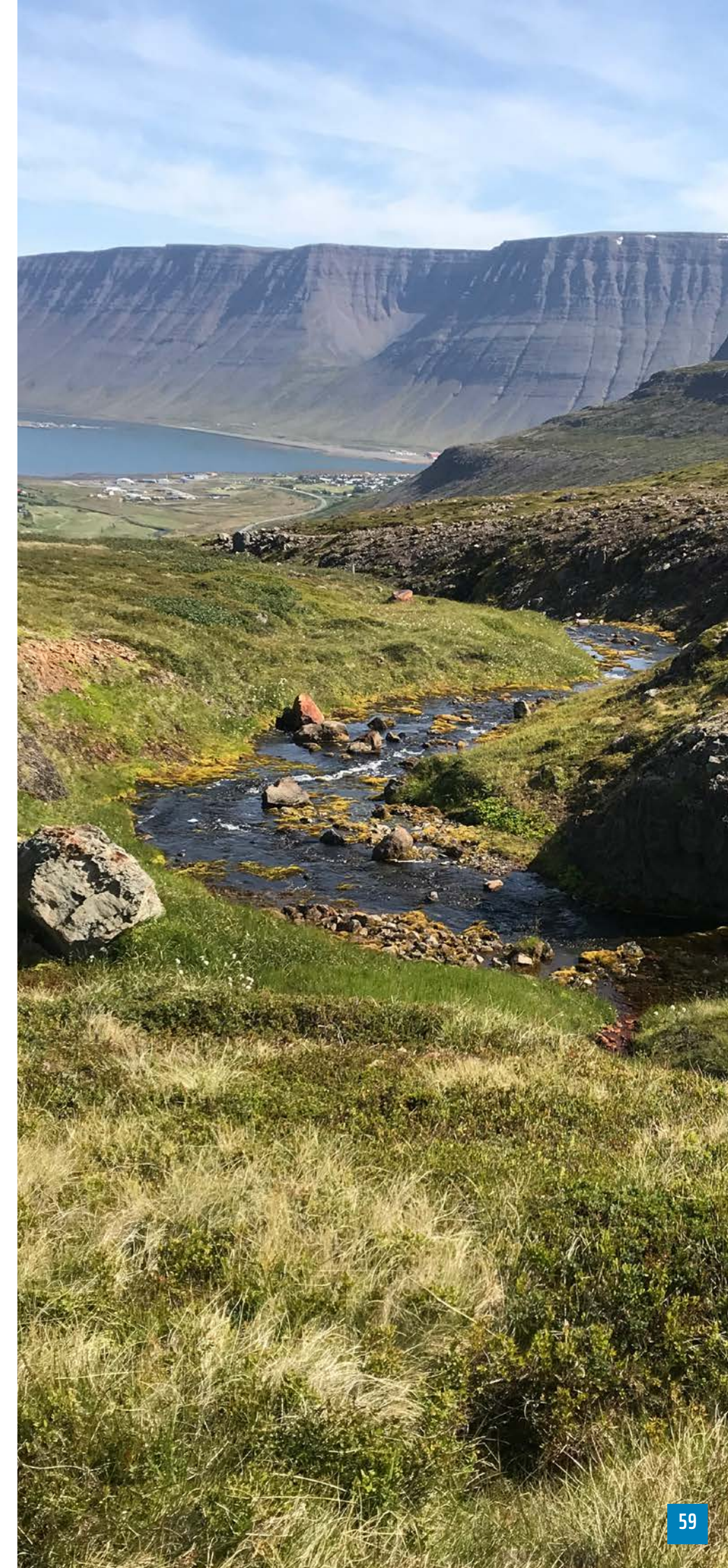
Supports tourism-based recreation—cruise ships and other destination guests

Captures tourism route via Vestfjardavegur/Tunnel—convenient access

Captures views of the landscape, town, and port through activities and mountain destinations

Provides flexibility in operations for groups / events / individuals

Provides flexibility in phasing to implement the master plan



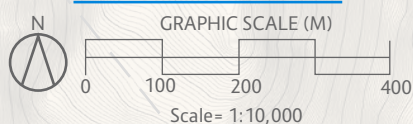


SKÍÐASVÆÐI
ÍSAFJARDARBÆJAR

SUMMER PLAN

Legend

- Proposed New Ski Lift Summer Use
- Proposed New Ski Lift Winter Use
- Ski Lift to be Removed
- Existing Mountain Bike Trail
- Proposed Mountain Bike Area/ Trails
- Proposed Hiking Trail
- Proposed Zip line
- Proposed New Building
- Proposed New Road



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HIKING

- Trail developed in high alpine zone
- Connection to Hnífsdalvík.

LIFT RIDES

Access to mid Mountain / top of mountain

SANDFELL SUMMIT

- Views of Town and Port
- Catered F & B
- Restrooms

MOUNTAIN BIKING

- Lift Served
- Flow trails for all ability levels
- E bikes

MID MOUNTAIN

- Tickets
- Lift Access
- F&B Events (larger groups)
- Restrooms

VIEW OPPORTUNITY

- Viewing Platform
- Interpretive Trail

EXISTING BASE AREA

- Tickets
- Lift access
- Restrooms

HIKING

Trails to experience different landscape and end at prominent view areas

MOUNTAIN BIKING

- Trail connections to east network
- Return trail to base area

PROPOSED COMMUNITY TRAIL

System connect to the ski area

ZIP TOURS

2 Spans, could be more depending on capacity/ demand

The Summer Plan

Food and Beverage venues at the new Mid-mountain Base Lodge and the new Sandfell summit cabin.

Scenic Chairlift Rides with options to explore the Mid-mountain area and the Sandfell summit.

Trails that expand upon the existing hiking and biking trails to provide options for all ages and ability levels.

A two-span Zip Tour, providing a unique regional attraction that will put Ísafjörður on the map, and a “must do” activity for all adventurous visitors!

Combined, these experiences will complement the existing offerings within the Ísafjörður region and allow the ski area to generate revenue year-round.

Something for everyone!



II. TRAILS

The community-wide trail network will connect the town to the ski area (a 5.7 km distance). This network allows residents and visitors to access to the ski area and/or return to town via human powered activities such as walking, hiking, running, and/or biking.

An expanded trail network at the ski area expands the Ísafjörður area trail experience. The trail network provides something for everyone: short easy walks to longer mountain treks. And never-ending views!

Hiking/Interpretive Trails

Whether guests are starting from the base area or mid-station lodge, the hiking trail network affords opportunities to experience the unique mountain landscape. The mossy stream valley is a lush contrast to the surrounding landscape of dry stone, and the views of the fjord and port are spectacular!

The hiking trail network provides several loops of differing lengths for all ability levels of walkers and hikers.

A short interpretive trail loops around the mid-station lodge area and offers several stations that provide interpretive information about the ski area, village, and surrounding landscape—and one of the best views of the port!





Mountain Biking/E-bikes

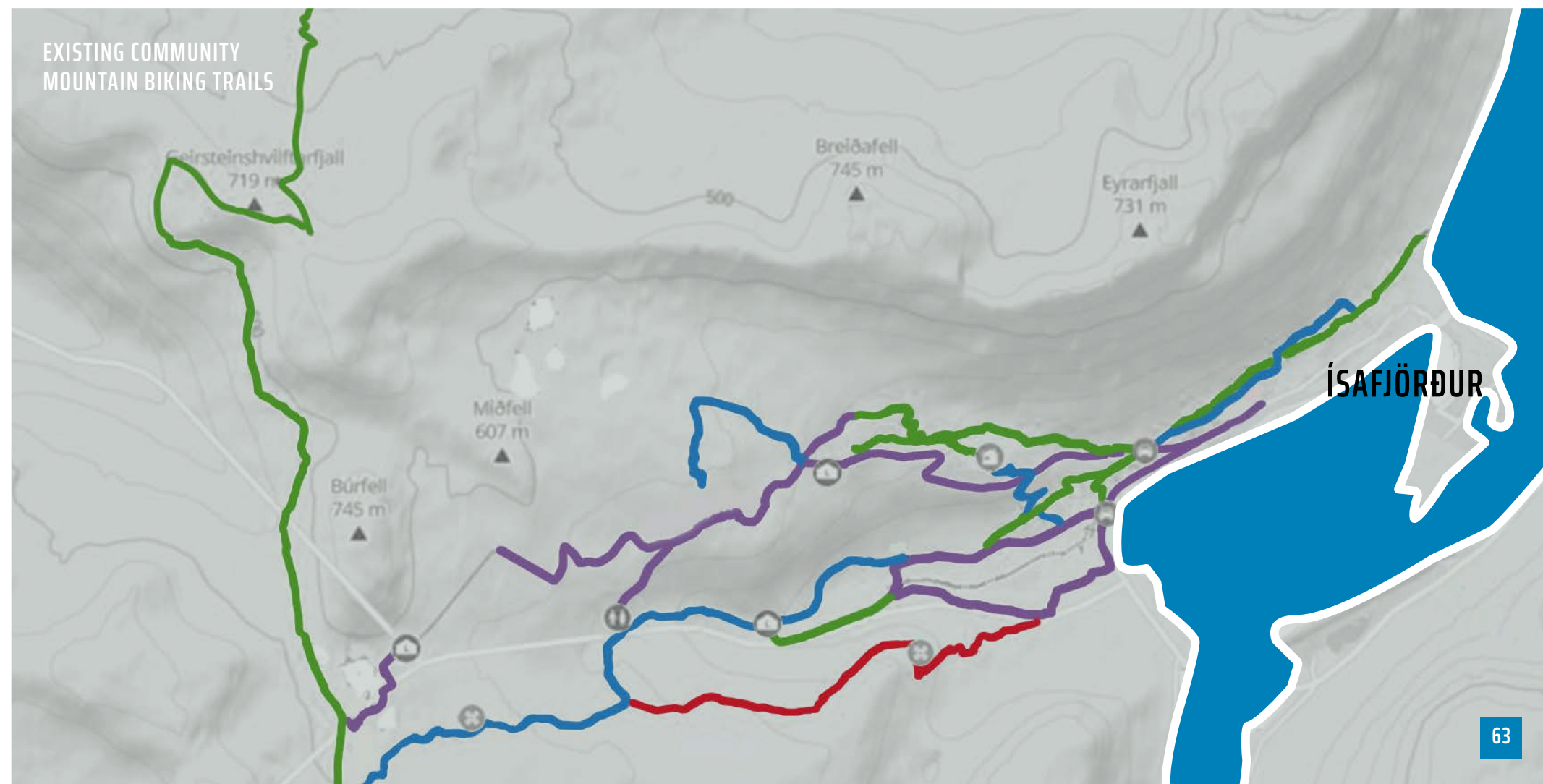
The expanded mountain biking trail network integrates with the existing trails built by the community. The trails may be used by traditional mountain bikes as well as E-bikes.

The trail network would be built with a “flow” trail typology rather than with downhill/extreme characteristics, providing opportunities for all skill ability levels.

The mountain biking trails would be serviced by the chair lift, creating a “downhill” riding experience (do not have to pedal uphill to enjoy the descent!).

The trail network would provide options for riders; either round tripping the upper mountain (returning to the mid-station of the chairlift) or lengthening the ride to cover terrain from “top to bottom” and returning to the bottom terminal of the chairlift.

The mountain biking trail network would be independent of hiking trails to eliminate conflicts.



Viewing Decks

From the mountain peaks and surrounding meadows, to the port and fjord below, a visit to the ski area is all about the view! Capturing this view is an important part of the experience.

- Both food and beverage venues are located to maximize enjoyment of the surrounding scenery and long-distance views and include view decks/ platforms with interpretive signs
- Designated viewpoints and interpretive signage will also be incorporated into each recreational activity

Wayfinding

Signs and wayfinding are critical to the visitor experience.

- Kiosks with overall resort maps and general information will be stationed at key arrival points, to tell visitors all that is available at the ski area
- Directional signage will help visitors find their way around the mountain
- Interpretive signage will be incorporated at key locations to point out unique features of the mountain environment

Activity and trail signs should be stationed throughout the network to inform guests of where they are, where they can go, and distances.

III. SCENIC CHAIRLIFT RIDES

The new chairlift will provide scenic rides (the lift will be designed to allow for loading and unloading of pedestrians in the summer).

The ride will take visitors to the top of the mountain and offer views of the fjord and the port. A picture is worth a thousand words. The BEST selfie vantage point!

Visitors may also get off the chair lift at the mid-station, walk the interpretive trail, and enjoy a coffee/snack at the lodge.

For many, the act of riding a chair lift is a novel activity and coupling this with the tremendous view of the fjord and port will create a key attraction.



IV. ZIP TOUR

Taking advantage of the natural gravity of the mountain, two zip lines are proposed for the ski area. Staged from the mid-mountain lodge, the first segment spans the valley and lands at the bluff above the waterfall. The second segment spans back across and returns to the base area. Additional zip lines could be added pending capacity and demand.

This recreational activity diversifies the offering and experience with an adventure/thrill-based activity and will be a unique regional attraction.

This activity could be owned and operated by a third-party entity, working with the town through a public/private partnership.



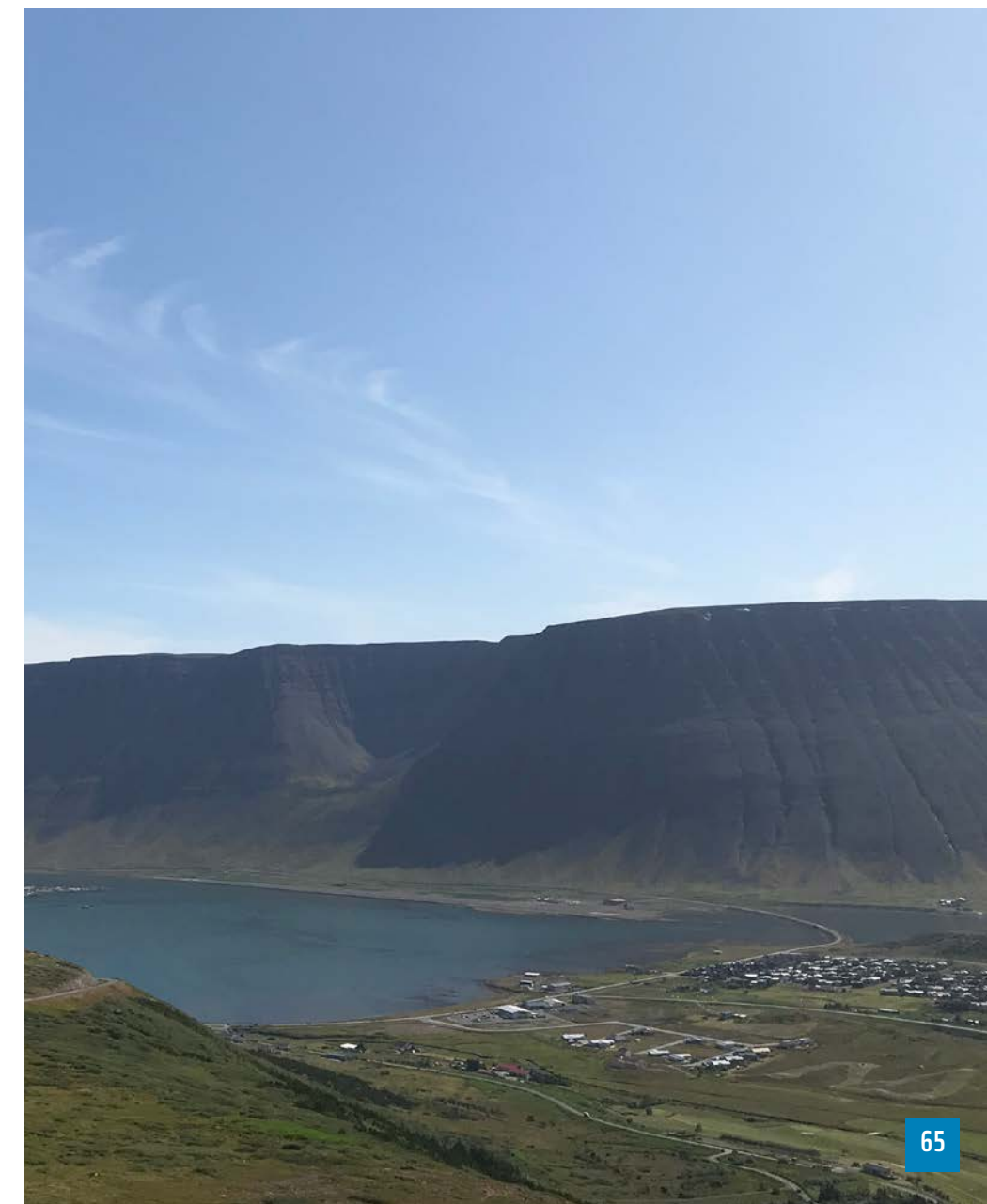
V. FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Providing food and beverage offerings for visitors will be key to a successful summer operation:

- It will provide a refreshment break for visitors using the hiking and biking trails
- It will serve as an activity for less-active visitors, who can come up to the ski area for morning coffee, lunch, or afternoon tea, and take in the mountain scenery and beautiful views while they enjoy their refreshments
- The buildings can provide shelter during inclement weather

The plan includes two food and beverage venues:

- The mid-station lodge provides a venue for larger groups and will offer drinks, snacks and simple lunch options
- The top of the mountain hut is a smaller, more intimate venue for smaller groups, and will have a limited menu of drinks and pre-prepared snacks



section six



Implementation Strategy

The upgrades to the ski area outlined in this Master Plan may be implemented in phases. The Implementation Strategy proposes four phases, focusing first on addressing existing operational challenges, the needs of the community, and the opportunities for summer tourism business.

The Master Plan presents a number of projects that may be implemented through public/private partnerships. For example, a private operator may be interested in building and operating the Zip Tour, under a collaborative tenant/landlord agreement with the town of Ísafjörður. This may also provide an opportunity for some of the ski area guest services, where a private operator may be interested in establishing the restaurant business at the new Mid-mountain Lodge or operating the rental or retail shops. Likewise, there may be opportunities for continued community collaboration in the planning and building of the summer trail network, as is already happening with the mountain biking trails at the area. If such opportunities arise, the phasing may be adjusted to allow the partnership opportunity to advance.

Phase 1

ÍSAFJÖRÐUR 2020

Bring ski area up to modern standards. Respond to community needs and tourism opportunities. Address existing challenges: separate base areas, lower elevation snow conditions, lack of beginner terrain and poor learning progression, and lack of summer offerings. Achieve capacity balance throughout the area, and increase overall capacity in anticipation of visitation growth.

WINTER

LIFTS

- Lift 1 (Sandfell replacement) – detachable quad chairlift
- Relocate Barnalyften to Lift 3
- 2 mid-mountain carpet conveyors
- 1 existing base area carpet conveyor

TERRAIN

- 58.6 ha total
- 3.7 ha total of snowmaking

CCC

- CCC = 1,520

GUEST SERVICES

- Establish the Mid-mountain Lodge (225 seats)
- Establish new parking (450 spaces)
- Establish new access road (900 m beyond existing)

NORDIC

- Build new nordic stadium at Mid-mountain Lodge location
- Connect new stadium and lodge to existing network

SUMMER

LIFTS

- Scenic chairlift rides to Mid-mountain and Sandfell summit

F&B

- F&B offering at Mid-mountain Lodge

TRAILS

- Mid-mountain interpretive trail and viewing platform
- Sandfell summit viewing platform
- Hiking trail from mid-mountain to base area
- Lift-serviced biking trail from Sandfell (mid-station + summit)

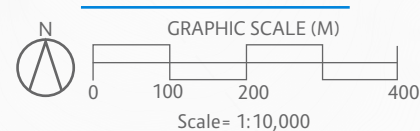


**SKÍÐASVÆÐI
ÍSAFJARDARBÆJAR**

MASTER PLAN PHASE 1

Legend

- Existing Ski Lift
- Proposed New Ski Lift
- Ski Lift to be Removed
- Existing Ski Trail
- Nordic Ski Trail
- Proposed Nordic Ski Trail
- Proposed New Ski Trail
- Proposed Snowmaking
- Proposed New Ski Race Trail
- Proposed New Building
- Proposed New Road



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SANDFELL SUMMIT

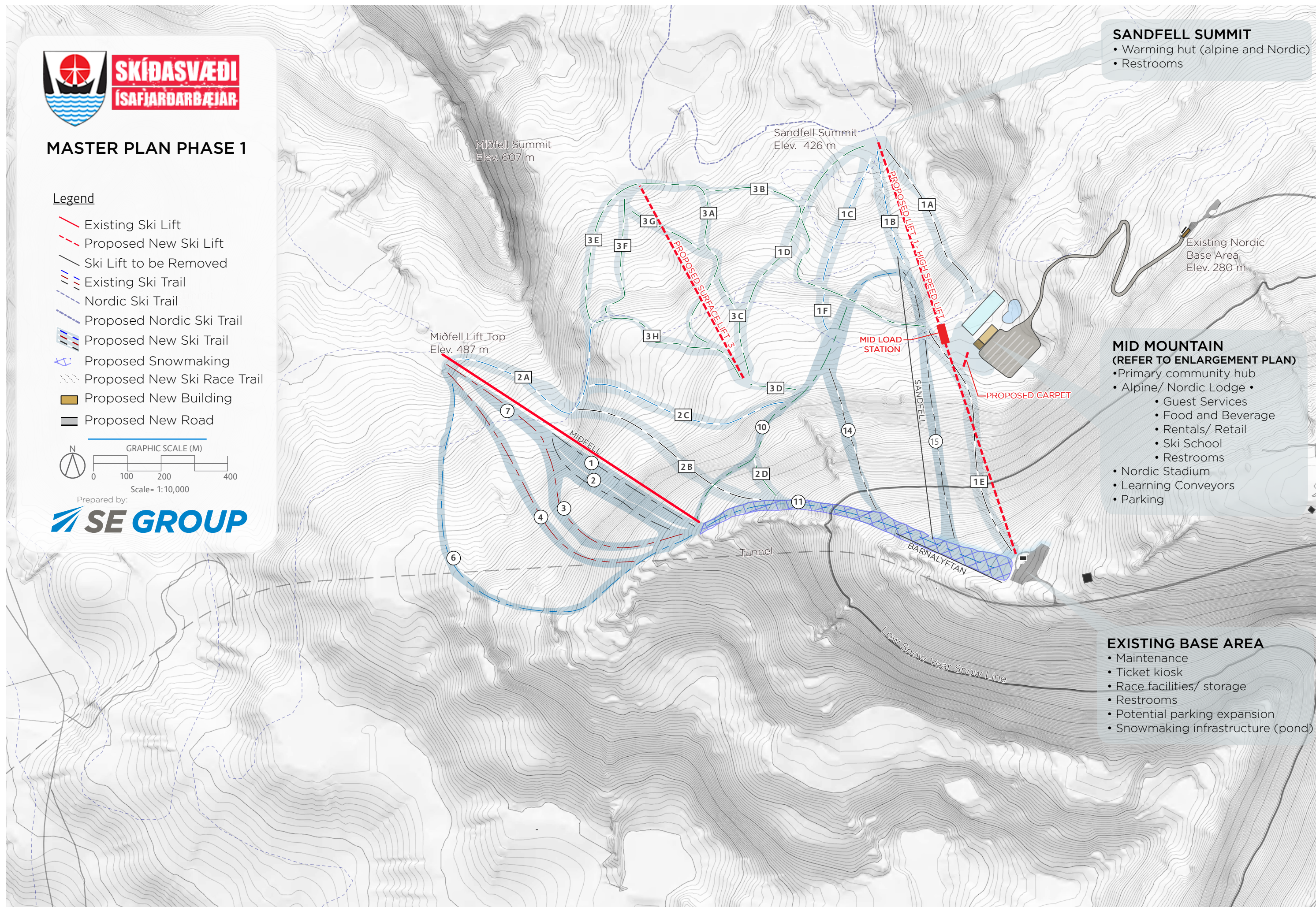
- Warming hut (alpine and Nordic)
- Restrooms

MID MOUNTAIN (REFER TO ENLARGEMENT PLAN)

- Primary community hub
- Alpine/ Nordic Lodge •
 - Guest Services
 - Food and Beverage
 - Rentals/ Retail
 - Ski School
 - Restrooms
- Nordic Stadium
- Learning Conveyors
- Parking

EXISTING BASE AREA

- Maintenance
- Ticket kiosk
- Race facilities/ storage
- Restrooms
- Potential parking expansion
- Snowmaking infrastructure (pond)



Subsequent phases focus on continuing the build on the four-season experience and attractiveness to the market, and on increasing the overall capacity of the ski area as visitation grows. Each phase may be implemented over a number of years.

Phase 2

BUILDING ON THE EXPERIENCE

Continue to expand the four-season offering to grow market appeal. Continue to upgrade lifts. Increase overall capacity in response to increased visitation.

WINTER

LIFTS

- Lift 2 (Midfell replacement) – triple chairlift

TERRAIN

- 58.6 ha total

GUEST SERVICES

- Sandfell summit Warming Hut

SUMMER

F&B

- F&B offering at Sandfell Warming Hut

TRAILS

- High alpine trails – connection to Hnifsoalvik
- Trail connection to east network
- Expand lift-served biking trails

ACTIVITIES

- Zip Tour

Phase 3

CONTINUED GROWTH

Continue to build upon the trail network in response to market demand. Continue to upgrade lifts. Increase overall capacity in response to increased visitation.

WINTER

LIFTS

- Lift 3 – triple chairlift
- Lift 4 – T-bar

TERRAIN

- 71.3 ha total

GUEST SERVICES

- Expand Mid-mountain Lodge (450 seats total)

SUMMER

F&B

- Expanded F&B at Mid-mountain Lodge

TRAILS

- Continued expansion of hiking and biking trails

Phase 4

FUTURE EXPANSION

An additional four-season lift that expands the terrain area and summer offering in response to increased visitation.

WINTER

LIFTS

- Expansion Area Lift

TERRAIN

- Approximately 15 ha of additional developed terrain
- A total of approximately 200 ha of total skiable area, providing a significant “side-country” skiing experience

SUMMER

LIFTS

- Scenic chairlift rides

F&B

- Small mountain-top cafe

TRAILS

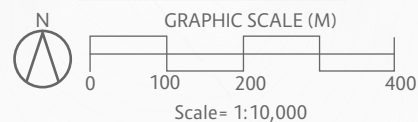
- Connect to mountain network



FUTURE EXPANSION OPPORTUNITY

Legend

- Proposed New Ski Lift
- Ski Lift to be Removed
- Existing Ski Trail
- Nordic Ski Trail
- Proposed Nordic Ski Trail
- Proposed New Ski Trail
- Proposed New Ski Race Trail
- Proposed New Building
- Proposed New Road



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POTENTIAL EXPANSION AREA

- Mountain top cafe
- Nordic and Alpine Trails
- Developed and undeveloped trails

Miðfell Summit
Elev. 607 m

Miðfell Lift Top
Elev. 487m

Sandfell Summit
Elev. 426 m

SANDFELL SUMMIT

- Warming hut (alpine and Nordic)
- Restrooms

Existing Nordic
Base Area
Elev. 280 m

MID MOUNTAIN (REFER TO ENLARGEMENT PLAN)

- Primary community hub
- Alpine/ Nordic Lodge
 - Guest Services
 - Food and Beverage
 - Rentals/ Retail
 - Ski School
 - Restrooms
- Nordic Stadium
- Learning Conveyors
- Parking

EXISTING BASE AREA

- Maintenance
- Ticket kiosk
- Race facilities/ storage
- Restrooms
- Potential parking expansion
- Snowmaking infrastructure (pond)

Mountain Recreation.
By the Sea.
All Year.
For Everyone.



SKÍÐASVÆÐI
ÍSAFJARÐARBÆJAR