



THE SHOPS OF GRAND RIVER TAKES TOP SPOT AMONG 2009 DEALS
\$127M outlets defied odds in tough retail year

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More than just another place to buy fancy frocks, The Shops of Grand River will be an economic generator in Jefferson County and St. Clair County along the I-20 growth corridor between Birmingham and Atlanta.

At developer Daniel Corp., Vice President Doug Neil expects the \$127 million project to generate 650 full-time equivalent jobs and create a net economic impact of approximately \$170 million for the city of Leeds and its Cooperative District partners over the next 25 years.

The timing is right, Neil said.

“When you look at the outlet center formula, they have done particularly well as a result of the economy. Consumers have become more savvy in terms of their shopping decisions, and one of the primary beneficiaries of that conservative approach has been the outlet format.”

Neil said The Shops of Grand River will be a destination, with such attractions as Bass Pro Shops and Barber Motorsports Park. To pull all the pieces together, Neil and his colleagues had to get early buy-in from the key tenants.

“One of the key elements was getting the commitment from major retailers to support the project,” he said.

Brooks Brothers, Banana Republic and Tommy Hilfiger were among the first to put their hats in the ring. “We were very fortunate that some of those key players believed in the site and signed on early in the project.”

With the wheels in motion, Neil said he is eager to see the area begin to reap the benefits of the new center.

“It will literally serve as a catalyst for growth and economic development along the I-20 corridor.”