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LAKE-SIDE ANCHOR: A 120,000-square-foot Bass Pro Shops store, upper right, will anchor the Harbor Point development on the shores of Lake Ray Hubbard.

BASS PRO SHOPS

AT HARBOR POINT

\$52 million entertainment complex will be major economic driver for Garland and the entire Metroplex

Bass Pro Shops at Harbor Point

THE DEAL: \$52 million, 28-acre entertainment complex on the shores of Lake Ray Hubbard, anchored by a 120,000-square-foot Bass Pro Shops store.

CHALLENGE: Getting owners of six adjacent property tracts to agree to sell; passing a \$24 million bond program to support development of the project; convincing Bass Pro Shops to open two stores in the same market.

KEY PLAYERS: David English and Greg Pierce, Colliers International; Eliot Barnett, Tod Ruble, Blaine Lee and Bob Baker, Harvest Partners; Jim Hagale and Johnny Morris, Bass Pro Shops; Mayor Bob Day, city of Garland; Greg Sims and Paul Mayer, Garland Chamber of Commerce; Dan Easley, Washington Mutual; Preston McAfee, Rogers O'Brien; Greater Dallas Chamber of Commerce



BY CHRISTINE PEREZ | STAFF WRITER

Of all the big retail projects that got under way in North Texas in 2005, Bass Pro Shops at Harbor Point stands out for the many hurdles that had to be overcome, the tenacity of the players involved, and for the impact the project is poised to have on the Metroplex.

The \$52 million entertainment complex along the shores of Lake Ray Hubbard, anchored by a 120,000-square-foot Bass Pro Shops store, creates a new gateway for the city of Garland, said Greg Sims, vice president of economic development at the Garland Chamber of Commerce.

"Harbor Point is going to be a huge entrance feature for the southern part of the city," he said. "And with the lake being so close to Dallas, it's going to be a key tourism driver for the entire region."

Putting the deal together was far from easy, Sims said.

"There were multiple property owners, a citywide bond election and many other intricate details," he said. "You name it, we had it on this project. It surpasses anything and everything we've ever done, in terms of a public-private partnership."

It all began in the late 1990s, when Colliers International broker David English scouted the lakeside property on horseback. Inspired by the breathtaking views and by the vision of what could be de-

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veloped on the land, he began convincing the longtime owners of six adjacent parcels to sell — a test of wills that ultimately took more than five years to accomplish.

Once assembled, the 28-acre tract caught the interest of Dallas-based Harvest Partners. Led by Eliot Barnett, Tod Ruble and Blaine Lee, the company had undertaken numerous retail developments over the years, including waterfront projects in California and Florida.

The initial concept was to build high-end apartments and retail on the site. But when Sims got wind of the plans, he told Harvest and English they needed to think bigger — something along the lines of the well-known Kemah Boardwalk off the Houston Ship Channel.

With revised plans in hand, the trio headed to Springfield, Mo., to talk to their dream tenant, Bass Pro Shops. The Garland group knew it was a stretch — Bass Pro already had a massive store in Grapevine — but it turned out a second Metroplex location

was already on the retailer's mind. The idea of building a store on a freshwater lake was an added bonus.

The next step was getting Garland voters to approve a \$24 million bond package to fund infrastructure development — which happened with relative ease in May 2004. Getting design approvals and all of the property owners to agree to financial terms took a little longer. But by February 2005, the deal was sealed.

Bass Pro is scheduled to open its new Harbor Point store and an Islamorada Fish Co. restaurant in November. Other outlying restaurants, including Texas Land & Cattle and The County Line, are due to open this summer. Harvest Partners is in negotiations with other restaurants and retailers, and the city of Garland plans to issue a request for proposals, likely in the fall, for a hotel on the site.