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In 2006 property development was heating up in La Crosse, Wisconsin, Copeland Avenue enjoyed revitalization with a variety of commercial businesses. The community thrived as developers transformed blighted, underutilized properties into productive businesses. Developer Mike Keil and his partners at NSD Hotel Associated, Inc. (NSD) saw an opportunity to develop a hotel, but faced economic and environmental challenges as the economy shifted and the recession loomed.

“The economy shifted quickly,” Keil recalls, noting the change was particularly swift for hospitality projects. “The market had been hot, and redevelopment was on the rise. But new hospitality projects were the first to feel the economic pinch.” That challenge made it even harder to overcome that the site for the new hotel was a downtown property with a past of industrial use.

That’s when Keil called SCS Engineers (SCS). “To be successful, we needed to identify a funding source and remediate the property. The project simply wasn’t going to happen without those two things working together. SCS had the right combination of experience to help NSD overcome those dual challenges.”

Keil worked with SCS staff to identify a grant program and apply for it jointly. “SCS helped us identify and prepare the grant application. They had a lot of expertise and experience helping developers apply for and win grants to fund brownfield redevelopment projects.” Through collaborative efforts, NSD won a \$330,000 grant that enabled them to keep the project moving.

“Once the financial challenge was behind us, SCS supported the remediation portion of the project,” Keil recalls. “We removed 300+ tons of contaminated soil and re-compacted other soils to environmental and engineering specifications to prepare the parking lot. SCS helped us address a variety of problem areas on the property that came from its past industrial use including leaking underground storage tanks, lead and PAH-contaminated soil, and vapor intrusion. The cleanup was a smooth process thanks to SCS’s deep experience in remediating properties with a past,” says Keil. “They had the relationships with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to help us through the remediation aspects of the project.”

“SCS’s knowledge of every step in the redevelopment process made the project smooth. I’d much rather restore an urban property with a past than develop a Greenfield,” says Keil. “Today a 92-room Candlewood Suites Hotel occupies this remediated site. That’s a win for everyone.”

—Mike Keil, Developer, NSD Hotel Associated, Inc. | La Crosse, WI