

## LOCAL NEWS

### Don't Forget to Consider Brownfields

BY BRAD JOHNSTON FOR SCS ENGINEERS

**Brownfields** may not be the first locations that come to mind when considering your next project. **SCS Engineers**, an environmental consulting firm with 40 years of experience in Arizona, offers tips when considering whether Brownfields sites can work for your project.

#### Funding Sources

The **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency** and **Arizona Department of Environmental Quality** have grant programs that can pay for assessment and cleanup of brownfields. These programs are typically only available to governmental and non-profit organizations, but a private entity may be able to

team with these eligible parties. Local governments or other entities may have low-interest loan programs that are available to private sector businesses and developers.

**"Insurance archaeology"** can try to find old insurance policies that may have coverage for "pollution conditions." There are a number of firms, including SCS, that do this type of work, sometimes on a contingency fee basis.

#### End Use and Assessment/ Cleanup Strategies

It is possible to develop a brownfield for any kind of use, including residential. Arizona has

numerous examples of developed brownfields including former landfills, railroad facilities, gas stations, crop dusting strips, automobile test facilities, and many more.

Brownfields are normally evaluated by first performing a **Phase I Environmental Site Assessment**, which is a study of existing site information. If potential issues (known as **Recognized Environmental Conditions**) are identified by the Phase I ESA, then a Phase II study is performed, including collection and analysis of samples to confirm the issue and to estimate the extent of environmental impact.

It's also important to know that environmental impact does not always have to be cleaned up. In some cases, it can remain on the site if the risk can be managed during construction and your planned end use.

#### Know the Risk

Brownfields can be excellent investment opportunities if you perform thorough due diligence and understand the specific risks as they relate to your proposed end use. In some cases, the risk may be more perceived than actual, or previous cleanup estimates may have been overly conservative or even incorrect. ([Source](#))

SCS has overseen many Brownfields projects in Arizona, including work at Chase Field. (Credit: Derrick Neill, Dreamstime.com)

