

# My View: Deadline looms for EPA Brownfields development grants

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Funding for Environmental Protection Agency Brownfields grants is historically high right now at \$170 million.

Local and state governments, regional councils, tribes and nonprofit organizations are eligible to apply for the funding. The grants help create opportunities for applicants to benefit the community by transforming a potentially unusable site into a usable site. Some of the funding could be available in Opportunity Zones.



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The Salt River (Rio Salado) river bed in Phoenix

In the Phoenix area, former gas stations, salvage yards, landfills, industrial sites, dump sites, rail yards and abandoned buildings are examples that may have been overlooked due to environmental concerns but that might be a diamond in the rough.

SCS Engineers helped redevelop environmentally impaired real estate more than 25 years before the term “Brownfield” was used.

In Arizona, SCS Engineers is currently providing Phase I and Phase II Brownfield services for the Rio Reimagined Project, which is reconnecting the community with the Salt River, and to the Northern Arizona Council of Governments, which is promoting economic and workforce development, fostering effective transportation systems, and enhancing and protecting the environment.

Brownfield grants are a financial boon to organizations that receive them. During the course of the program, Brownfield projects have leveraged \$20.43 per EPA dollar expended, according to the agency.

In addition, the EPA's Brownfields Program can increase residential property values near Brownfield sites by 5% to 15.2% when cleanup is completed and can increase local tax revenue, according to agency data. According to the agency, the program has helped to create more than 183,817 jobs nationwide.

But don't delay. The EPA application deadline this year is Nov. 22. If you have been eyeing a challenging project but environmental concerns made you reconsider, now could be the time to apply. Read more about the program on the EPA website.

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