



City of Sonoma

Agenda Item Summary

Meeting: City Council - 1 Mar 2021

Department

Planning

Staff Contact

Kristina Tierney, Associate Planner

Agenda Item Title

Adopt a Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Execute a Contract with Rincon Consultants Inc. to Prepare an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the MacArthur Place Hotel and Spa Guest Room Expansion Project.

Summary

The City requires an environmental consultant to perform review required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the Mac Arthur Place Hotel and Spa Guest Room Expansion Project. The proposed project would amend the existing Use Permit to add 11 new guestrooms to be located in five new buildings within the existing hotel property. MacArthur Place Hotel is an existing 64 guest room hotel, meeting venue, restaurant and spa located on a 5.08-acre project site. The property is bounded on the north by East MacArthur Street, on the west by Broadway Street, to the east by Nathanson Creek and to the south by Sonoma Valley High School. The property includes approximately 20 buildings distributed across a garden setting with three primary parking lots providing 131 off street parking spaces. The renovation and refurbishment of all 64 Guestrooms and the remodel and expansion of the Barn and Coach House was completed in 2019.

City staff successfully worked with Rincon Consultants, Inc on the prior CEQA document for Mac Arthur Place, which was permitted in 2020. Consultant work on the project would be paid by the applicant and has been paid in advance in full. Under this contract, Rincon Consultants Inc,. would prepare an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the MacArthur Place Hotel and Spa Guest Room Additions Project. The IS/MND would be circulated for public review for a minimum of 20 days prior to a public hearing before the Planning Commission.

This professional services contract is before City Council for approval as it exceeds \$25,000, in compliance with the City of Sonoma procurement policy.

Recommended Council Action

Adopt a Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Execute a Contract with Rincon Consultants Inc. for Environmental Review Services for the Mac Arthur Place Hotel and Spa Guest Room Expansion Project.

Alternative Actions

- 1) Request proposals and execute contracts with other environmental consulting firms; delay work.
 - 2) Council discretion.
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Financial Impact

Consultant costs shall be paid by the applicant (developer).

Environmental Review

- ☐ Environmental Impact Report
- ☐ Negative Declaration
- ☒ Exempt
- ☐ Not Applicable

Status

- ☐ Approved/Certified
- ☐ No Action Required
- ☐ Action Requested

Alignment with Council Goals:

Not Applicable

Compliance with Climate Action 2020 Target Goals:

NA

CC:

n/a



PUBLIC COMMENT TO THE CITY COUNCIL OR ONE OF THE CITY'S COMMISSIONS

Any Public Correspondence Received by the City
Regarding an Item that Will be Considered at
a Public Meeting by the City Council or One of Its
Commissions Can be Found on the City's
CivicWeb Portal at the Following Link.
It is Updated as New Correspondence is Received.

<https://sonomacity.civicweb.net/filepro/documents>

STAFF CONTACTS:

City Council	City Clerk	(707) 933-2216
Planning, DRHP, CSEC	Planning	(707) 933-2204

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SONOMA

AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH RINCON CONSULTANTS, INC FOR THE PREPARATION OF AN INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION PURSUANT TO THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) FOR THE MAC ARTHUR PLACE HOTEL AND SPA GUEST ROOM EXPANSION PROJECT

WHEREAS, the Mac Arthur Place Hotel and Spa submitted an application for a Use Permit and Design Review for to amend the existing Use Permit to add 11 new guestrooms in five new buildings within the existing hotel property; and

WHEREAS, the application was deemed complete on February 4, 2021 and staff proceeded to review the application pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); and

WHEREAS, the City needs to hire an environmental consultant to prepare an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) to satisfy CEQA; and

WHEREAS, City staff has successfully worked with Rincon Consultants, Inc on the prior CEQA document for Mac Arthur Place for the Spa Expansion Project, which was permitted in 2020. Consultant work on the project would be paid by the applicant; and

WHEREAS, Rincon Consultants, Inc has demonstrated satisfactory performance under prior contracts performing CEQA review; and

WHEREAS, the entire contract would be paid by the applicant and on February 10, 2021 the applicant submitted a check for the cost of the contract, including 15 percent overhead for the City's management of the contract. There will be no costs to the City of Sonoma; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Sonoma does hereby authorize the City Manager to execute a contract with Rincon Consultants, Inc. Under this contract, Rincon Consultants Inc., would prepare an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the MacArthur Place Hotel and Spa Guest Room Additions Project as outlined in the proposal attached (Exhibit A); and

PASSED AND ADOPTED this _____ day of _____ 2021 by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

Logan Harvey, Mayor

ATTEST:

Rebekah Barr, MMC, City Clerk



Rincon Consultants, Inc.

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www.rinconconsultants.com

January 25, 2021
Project No: 21-10917

City of Sonoma
Kristina Tierney
#1 The Plaza
Sonoma, California 95476-6618
Via email: ktierney@sonomacity.org

Subject: Proposal to Prepare an Initial Study – Mitigated Negative Declaration for the MacArthur Place Hotel and Spa Guest Room Additions Project

Dear Ms. Tierney:

Rincon Consultants, Inc. is pleased to submit this proposal to prepare an Initial Study-Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS-MND) for the proposed MacArthur Place Hotel and Spa Guest Room Additions Project. We are very enthusiastic about the opportunity to work with the City and have assembled a team of highly skilled environmental science and planning professionals who combine extensive technical qualifications and knowledge of CEQA with many years of experience working on similar hotel development projects.

We are proud of our team's ability to work effectively with City staff, decision-makers, and community groups to develop and implement innovative approaches and solutions to planning and environmental issues. Our team of CEQA practitioners and environmental planners and scientists has completed numerous CEQA documents for similar projects, and we have substantial experience in the City of Sonoma, Sonoma County and throughout the North Bay Area. We believe that our statewide experience with CEQA, our experience in the area, particularly our work on MacArthur Place Hotel & Spa Improvements Project IS-MND in 2020 and local and regional knowledge give us a unique understanding of existing conditions at the project site and sensitivity to the broad range of issues that will be important to the success of this project.

Leading the team will be **Abe Leider, AICP CEP**. He has 22 years of experience directing urban planning projects, including planning and policy document preparation and CEQA analyses. Mr. Leider will be serving as Principal-in-Charge and contract administrator. **Lucy Sundelson** will serve as Project Manager in charge of day-to-day oversight and will serve as the City's primary contact. She has six years of experience in planning, CEQA analysis, and project management, including recent work with the City of Sonoma.

This proposal includes: (1) our understanding of the project; (2) our proposed work scope; (3) a schedule for completion of the work program; (4) our cost estimate to complete the proposed work program; (5) brief company qualifications; and (6) our proposed lead and support personnel for this project.

Project Understanding

The project site encompasses 5.08 acres (221,416 square feet) on one parcel at 29 East MacArthur Street (Assessor's Parcel Number 128-091-008) in the City of Sonoma. The site is bordered by East



MacArthur Street to the north, Broadway (State Route 12) to the west, the Nathanson Creek Preserve to the east, and Sonoma Valley High School to the south. The site is located within the Mixed Use (MX) zoning district and designated as Mixed Use (MX) by the City of Sonoma 2020 General Plan.

The project site is developed with the MacArthur Place Hotel and Spa, which currently includes 64 guest rooms, a restaurant and bar, meeting rooms, and a spa. The buildings are distributed in 20 separate buildings across the project site, surrounding an outdoor pool in the center of the site. The proposed project would involve construction of five new buildings with 11 new hotel guest rooms. The new buildings would include a total of 5,485 square feet of floor area and would be distributed between the existing buildings near the center of the project site. All other existing buildings and uses within the project site would remain unchanged.

The City of Sonoma is seeking a consultant to complete CEQA documentation for the proposed project.

Scope of Work

Our scope of work and cost estimate anticipate preparation of an Initial Study – Mitigated Negative Declaration. However, in the event that our analysis indicates that a significant and unavoidable impact may occur, Rincon will notify the City immediately to discuss the appropriate course of action, which could include additional costs for preparation of a focused EIR.

Task 1: Data and Peer Review

This task will include visiting the project site and surroundings to observe and photodocument environmental and land use conditions; reviewing the details of the proposed project; reviewing the regulatory setting for the project (including relevant ordinances and zoning provisions, City of Sonoma 2020 General Plan context, etc.); and reviewing existing background studies and technical information to identify what materials are available for use to inform the IS-MND and if any additional information, studies or reports are required to prepare the Initial Study. We understand that the following information is available for review:

- Project Narrative
- Architectural Plans
- Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Analysis
- Traffic Study
- Noise Study
- Arborist Report
- Biological Resources Assessment (BRA)
- Historic Resource Evaluation (HRE)

Upon completion of the data review, we will provide a memorandum summarizing available reports and studies and identifying potential deficiencies, and a list of data needed to complete the IS-MND.

This task also includes peer reviews of the applicant-prepared air quality, greenhouse gas, and noise technical reports. The review will focus on the adequacy of the analysis and soundness of the conclusions including: 1) evaluation of the adequacy and appropriateness of the models employed in forecasting future conditions; 2) review of the assumptions used in the modeling to assure that they



appropriately reflect the proposed project; 3) assessment of the accuracy of the calculations and review the supporting data used in the modeling process, and 4) evaluation the thresholds, impact conclusions, and mitigation measures provided as appropriate. Rincon will submit a memorandum to the City outlining any concerns and recommending revisions to resolve identified concerns. This task does not include a peer review of the BRA and HRE; we understand that both have been reviewed and approved by the City and were used to prepare the MacArthur Place Hotel & Spa Improvements Project in 2020.

Task 2: Project Description

Rincon will prepare a draft Project Description based on the project information and applicable regulatory requirements and will provide an electronic copy (Microsoft Word and PDF format) for review by staff. As a basis for the environmental analysis to follow, a clear and thorough description of the project and its required approvals is a critical first step in the CEQA process. Textual, tabular, and graphic presentation (maps, plans, renderings, or diagrams) will be included as necessary to facilitate a thorough understanding of the project.

Rincon will address comments on the draft Project Description to prepare a final Project Description which will be used as a basis for the analysis in the Initial Study.

Task 3: Administrative Draft IS-MND

Rincon will prepare an internal review (Administrative) Draft IS-MND. All environmental checklist findings will be supported by data and analysis. Where applicable, impacts will be quantified and compared to quantitative significance thresholds. Rincon will submit electronic copies of the Administrative Draft IS-MND in both PDF and Word format. The air quality, biological resources, greenhouse gas emissions, noise, and traffic sections of the Initial Study will be based on technical reports provided by the applicant and on any additional information requested through the data review task. Additional technical reports in these areas can be prepared by Rincon on request for an additional cost.

Subtask 3.1 Cultural Resources Technical Study

Rincon understands that the project site contains one historical resource, the Burris House. We also understand that the applicant-prepared HRE evaluates the Burris House's eligibility for listing as a historical resources but does not evaluate indirect impacts of the proposed project on the Burris House. To consider impacts to this resource and archaeological resources, our scope of work for the Initial Study also includes a focused cultural resources technical study. Methods include a California Historical Resources Information System records search of the project site as well as a 0.5-mile radius around the project site. Rincon will also contact the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) for a review of their Sacred Lands File and confirm if any NAHC-listed Native American sacred lands are located within or adjacent to the project site. (This task does not constitute consultation under Assembly Bill (AB) 52 of 2014, which Rincon can assist with under a scope amendment if needed.) A Rincon cultural resources specialist will subsequently complete a site visit to assess the existing conditions of the Burris House and confirm the presence of observable archaeological resources. We assume no archaeological or historical resources beyond the Burris House will be identified and that no resources will require recordation or updating. Following the site visit, Rincon will prepare a cultural resources technical memorandum to summarize the findings and address potential impacts to historical



and archaeological resources. The historical resources impacts discussion will rely on the applicant-prepared HRE, which Rincon assumes will include sufficient background for our team to evaluate potential indirect impacts to the Burris House. Rincon will assess impacts using the CEQA Guidelines and Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Should Rincon determine impacts to the Burris House are significant and unavoidable, Rincon will notify the City immediately to determine the appropriate course for CEQA compliance.

Task 4: Public Review Draft IS-MND

Rincon will respond to City comments on the Administrative Draft IS-MND and format the document as a Public Review Draft IS-MND to be distributed for the required CEQA public review period. One electronic copy of the Public Review Draft IS-MND and up to 10 bound paper copies will be provided. If necessary, we will provide a screencheck version of the Public Review Draft IS-MND prior to publication. Rincon will prepare a Notice of Intent to Adopt a Negative Declaration and transmit the required forms and copies of the IS-MND to the State Clearinghouse (if necessary) and County Clerk. We have assumed that the City will be responsible for mailing copies and notices to responsible agencies, if any, as well as other noticing required under CEQA or the City's procedures, including posting at the site, sending to neighboring or nearby property owners or residents, newspaper noticing, and/or sending to interested parties. However, Rincon can assist with these tasks on request and can support the City with compiling the distribution list and protocol.

Task 5: Final IS-MND/Response to Comments

Upon receipt of public comments on the Public Review Draft IS-MND, Rincon will prepare draft responses for City review. If City staff determines that preparation of a Final IS-MND is necessary, upon receipt of City comments on the draft responses to comments, we will incorporate changes (if any) and prepare the Final IS-MND. Otherwise, the Responses to Comments document will be provided as a standalone document to accompany the Draft IS-MND. This scope of work assumes that up to five comment letters will be received, including one lengthy (over five pages) and/or substantive letter, that can be adequately responded to in a maximum of 23 professional staff hours. The actual level of effort required to respond will depend on the length, detail, and sophistication of the comments, in addition to the number of letters received. We reserve the right to reevaluate the effort level and request a scope amendment upon close of the public comment period.

This task also includes the preparation of the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP), if required, formulated as a table listing all mitigation measures and indicating what monitoring actions are required, which department(s) will be responsible for monitoring, and when monitoring is to occur. After City screencheck review of the Final IS-MND and Responses to Comments, we will provide one electronic copy and up to 10 bound paper copies. If the project is approved, Rincon will prepare a Notice of Determination (NOD) for the City or applicant to file with the County Clerk. The City or applicant will be responsible for payment of County Clerk and California Department of Fish & Wildlife CEQA fees.

Task 6: Public Hearings

Rincon will attend up to two public hearings on the project. At the City's request, we will also prepare and deliver a presentation that summarizes the CEQA process and the findings of our analysis. We are happy to attend additional hearings as needed for an additional cost.



Schedule

Rincon Consultants has an excellent reputation for adhering to schedules and meeting milestones. Based on our understanding of the project and the analysis required, Rincon proposes to adhere to a schedule that allows for completion of the environmental review process in approximately four to five months depending on timing of our receipt of necessary background and project information and City review times.

- **Data and Peer Review.** Rincon will conduct the data review within two to three weeks of Notice to Proceed. We will also schedule and hold the kickoff meeting or call during this time.
- **Project Description.** Rincon will submit the draft Project Description in electronic form within two weeks of completed data review and receipt of all necessary background and project information from the City.
- **Administrative Draft IS-MND.** Rincon will submit the Administrative Draft Initial Study in electronic form within approximately five to six weeks of City approval of the Project Description and receipt of requested data and, if necessary, revised applicant-prepared technical studies.
- **Public Review Draft IS-MND.** The Public Review Draft IS-MND will be completed within one to two weeks of receipt of City comments on the Administrative Draft Initial Study.
- **Final IS-MND/Response to Comments.** The Administrative Draft Final IS-MND/Response to Comments Document will be completed within two to four weeks after receipt of all written comments received during the review period, depending on the number and complexity of comments received. We will submit the Final IS-MND/Responses to Comments, including the MMRP, within one week of receipt of City comments on the draft responses and Administrative Draft Final IS-MND.

Cost

Rincon can complete the proposed work program for a cost not to exceed \$39,910. The table on the following page provides a breakdown of the proposed budget by major work item.



RINCON CONSULTANTS, INC.
MacArthur Place Hotel and Spa Guest Room Additions IS-MND

Cost Estimate

	Rincon Labor Classification →		Principal I	Supervisor I	Professional IV	Professional II	Professional I	Production Specialist	Senior GIS Specialist	Clerical
Tasks	Labor Cost	Hours								
Task 1: Data and Peer Review	\$4,114	26	2	4	16	4				
Task 2: Project Description	\$3,133	23	2		4	12		1	4	
Task 3: Administrative Draft IS-MND	\$14,154	102	8	6	26	52		6	4	
Task 3.1 Cultural Resources Technical Study	\$5,576	40	2	4	14		18		2	
Task 4: Public Review Draft IS-MND	\$2,854	21	2		6	10		2	1	
Task 5: Final IS-MND/Response to Comments	\$3,371	23	4		8	10		1		
Task 6: Public Hearings	\$1,398	10	2			8				
Project Management	\$2,860	20	4		10					6
Subtotal Cost	\$ 37,460	265	26	14	84	96	18	10	11	6

Direct Cost Detail

Vehicle Costs	\$ 300
Printing	\$ 1,400
CHRIS Search	\$ 750
Subtotal Additional Costs	\$ 2,450

Summary

Professional Fees Subtotal	\$37,460
Direct Costs Subtotal	\$2,450
Total Project Budget	\$ 39,910

Professional Services - are based on Rincon's standard fee schedule and labor classifications. The above is provided as an estimate of Rincon's effort per task. Rincon may reallocate budget between staff and tasks, as long as the total contract price is not exceeded.

Annual Escalation – Standard rates subject to 3% escalation annually

Updated: 01.01.21

Company Qualifications

Rincon is a multi-disciplinary environmental sciences, planning, and engineering consulting firm that provides quality professional services to government and industry. Founded in 1994, Rincon has grown to a firm of over 270 professionals located in 13 California offices (Oakland, Monterey, Sacramento, Fresno, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura, Los Angeles, Redlands, San Diego, Riverside, and Carlsbad). Our professionals are experienced in urban, land use, and environmental planning; regulatory compliance; biological resource evaluation and habitat enhancement; cultural resources evaluation and planning; soil evaluation and remediation; and related studies including problem-solving services in geology, hydrology, and waste management. Our approach is focused on well-designed solutions that respond to our clients' specific needs in a cost-effective manner.

Rincon has been preparing CEQA required documentation for clients since 1994. This experience has provided us a unique perspective on the CEQA process and we are able to apply that knowledge and experience to every project we undertake. We are capable of meeting all of the City's needs for this project and will be able to offer these services on-budget and within specified time frames.

With extensive public sector experience, knowledge of the City's processes and requirements, depth of resources and first-hand knowledge of the City's environmental conditions, Rincon can provide a high-quality work product and responsive service. Rincon maintains the highest commitment to client satisfaction and understands that good communication is the keystone to a successful client partnership and ultimately providing excellent service.



Lead Support and Personnel

Our team of highly qualified professionals includes a talented management team with extensive experience managing and preparing environmental documentation as well as key technical experts with a high level of experience managing and executing projects within the greater Bay Area and throughout California.

[Abe Leider, AICP CEP](#), will serve as Principal in Charge. Abe is a Principal in Rincon's Environmental Sciences and Planning group and oversees Rincon's Oakland office. He is responsible for management and preparation of planning and environmental documents and specialized technical studies. Abe has over 22 years of experience in the planning field and has managed or primarily authored successful planning and environmental documents on subjects ranging from regional resource management and land use regulation to complex public and private development projects.

[Lucy Sundelson](#), Associate Planner, will be the Project Manager under this contract and the main project contact. Lucy holds a degree in Urban Studies from the University of California, Berkeley. Prior to joining Rincon, she worked as a Planning Specialist at the University of California Office of the President and as an Assistant Planner at the City of Berkeley, where she managed new Use Permit and Design Review applications. At Rincon, Lucy specializes in project management, CEQA analysis, and contract planning services, including projects with extensive community involvement, technical resource analyses, and multiple public meetings. Lucy's recent project management work includes two projects in the City of Sonoma, the MacArthur Place Hotel and Spa Improvements Project IS-MND, and the 20455 5th Street East Annexation and Pre-Zoning Project Initial Study.

[David Daitch, PhD](#), Program Manager/Senior Biologist, will lead the biological resources analysis. Dr. Daitch is a Senior Biologist and Program Manager at Rincon. He has worked for over 20 years in the biological and paleontological sciences as a field investigator, laboratory and museum technician, and teacher. As a biologist and paleontologist, Dr. Daitch has over 15 years of environmental consulting experience managing projects, coordinating and conducting field surveys, consulting with federal, state and local agencies, and producing and editing technical scientific documents for private industry, regulatory agencies, and publication. Dr. Daitch prepares, and oversees the preparation of technical reports, permit applications, CEQA and NEPA documents, and compliance reports, ensuring proper QA/QC of all environmental documents.

[Debi Howell-Ardila](#), Senior Architectural Historian, will serve as lead architectural historian. Ms. Howell-Ardila holds a Bachelor's Degree from the University of California, Berkeley, and a Master's Degree in Historic Preservation from the University of Southern California. Drawing on over 16 years of experience, Ms. Howell-Ardila has completed numerous historic resource evaluations throughout California. From 2012 through 2018, she served on the South Pasadena Cultural Heritage Commission, where her responsibilities included project-level review of architectural plans and drawings for compliance with CEQA, the *Secretary's Standards*, and local design guidelines. Debi meets and exceeds the *Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for History and Architectural History*.





This proposal is valid for a period of 60 days and is fully negotiable to meet your needs. We can proceed with our proposed work program upon receipt of written authorization.

We appreciate the opportunity to assist with this project. Please let me know if you have any questions about this proposal or need additional information.

Sincerely,
RINCON CONSULTANTS, INC.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lucy Sundelson".

Lucy Sundelson
Project Manager
(510) 836-8799

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Abe Leider".

Abe Leider, AICP CEP
Principal
(510) 671-0175