

Town of Rico Memorandum

Date: January 27, 2026

TO: Town of Rico Board of Trustees

FROM: Chauncey McCarthy, Rico Town Manager

SUBJECT: Packet Addendum – EMTS Letter of Support and Rezoning Hearing Materials

This memorandum and the attached materials serve as a packet addendum to provide materials received after the original agenda packet was distributed.

The following items are included with this addendum:

Additional Agenda Item – Consideration of a Letter of Support for the Rico Fire Protection District EMS & Trauma Services (EMTS) Grant Request

Included is a draft letter of support for Board consideration related to the Rico Fire Protection District's application to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment EMS & Trauma Services (EMTS) Grant Program. The requested funding would support emergency communications equipment for EMS response vehicles and personnel.

Recommended motion: I move to approve the Letter of Support for the Rico Fire Protection District EMS & Trauma Services (EMTS) Grant Request and authorize the Mayor to sign the letter on behalf of the Town.

Consideration of a Zone Amendment, Atlantic Cable Headframe parcel, Endless Possibilities LLC applicant – Applicant memo and public comment letter

Included is a memo submitted by the applicant providing justification in support of the requested zone amendment and addressing the applicable Land Use Code review criteria

Also included is a letter of public comment received in advance of the rezoning hearing. This correspondence is provided to the Board as part of the public record for the hearing.



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1/28/2026

To the EMTS Grant Review Committee,

On behalf of the Town of Rico Board of Trustees, I am writing to express our full support for the Rico Fire Protection District's application to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's EMS & Trauma Grant (EMTS) Funding Program. The Rico Fire Protection District serves as the primary emergency medical and fire response agency for the Town of Rico and a large, remote area of southwestern Colorado. The district responds to emergencies along a rugged mountain corridor of Colorado Highway 145, which experiences significant traffic volumes from residents, tourists, and outdoor recreationists. Due to Rico's remote location, mutual aid resources are often more than an hour away, making reliable, interoperable communication equipment essential to effective emergency response.

The requested funding would be used to purchase one to two mobile radios to properly outfit a new emergency response vehicle and upgrade communications in an existing apparatus. These upgrades are critical to ensuring clear, consistent communication between responders, dispatch, and mutual aid partners during medical emergencies, vehicle accidents, and rescue operations.

Investment in modern radio communications will:

- Improve responder safety by ensuring dependable communication in challenging terrain and severe weather conditions.
- Enhance coordination during EMS and trauma incidents, particularly when multiple agencies are involved.
- Reduce response delays and operational risk in a community where emergency incidents frequently occur far from advanced medical facilities.

- Strengthen the District's ability to provide high-quality EMS services to residents and visitors alike.

The Town of Rico Board of Trustees strongly supports this funding request, as it directly advances public safety, emergency preparedness, and the resilience of our rural emergency response system. We appreciate CDPHE's continued commitment to supporting EMS providers serving Colorado's most remote communities.

Sincerely,

Patrick Fallon, Mayo
On behalf of the Town of Rico Board of Trustees

418. STANDARDS FOR REVIEW OF AMENDMENT APPLICATIONS

The Rico Planning Commission and the Board of Trustees shall use the following standards for review of Amendment applications. The reviewing board shall find that either standard **418.1** is met or that standards **418.2** through **418.4** are met prior to recommending or approving a proposed Amendment.

- 418.1.** The existing Zone District classification or desired Master Plan land use was adopted in error; or,
- 418.2.** the proposed Amendment is compatible with the land uses in the surrounding area; and,
- 418.3.** the proposed Amendment will serve a community need and thereby promote the public health, safety, or welfare of the Rico community and the public services and infrastructure are adequate to meet the needs of the proposed Amendment; and,
- 418.4.** the proposed Amendment is consistent with the purposes of the RLUC and the goals and objectives of the Rico Regional Master Plan.

To elaborate on our application, we would like to address sections 418.2-418.4 in the Land Use Code; copied above.

418.2 – The lot bordering ours to the north is currently zoned Commercial. By rezoning the subject lot from Historical Commercial to Commercial, any future use would be more compatible with the northern lot. To the south, Silver Creek creates a natural break between the Historic Commercial core of Rico and the subject lot. This break disrupts any continuity that is intended to be achieved via Historic Commercial building requirements.

418.3 – Changing the zoning would allow for off street parking, thereby promoting public safety and welfare. The highway infrastructure is two-lane in front of this lot and does not support any on-street parking, like the rest of the Historic Commercial core does beginning south of Silver Creek. Where the highway widens, there is ample space for public parking and sidewalks. This does not exist in front of the subject lot. Commercial zoning puts the responsibility on the owner to incorporate safe, accessible and private off-street parking and removes this burden from the Historic Commercial core.

418.4 – A zoning change could promote appropriate, right by use commercial development of a prime lot in downtown Rico. This concept is supported in our master plan's goals of "Economic Development" (section VII). By removing the red tape around Historic Commercial building requirements, the master plan's desire to "Promote Mountain Compatible Design" (section III, Goal B) is more achievable. Under Historic Commercial standards, a zero setback off the highway and required Western façade and parapet would detract from the visibility, authenticity and enjoyment of the actual Historic structure that exists on the lot (Atlantic Cable Headframe). Instead, Commercial zoning opens the door for more creative building concepts that can be designed to complement, rather than compete, with the headframe.

Dear Town of Rico Planning Commissioners and Trustees:

We have reviewed the owner's proposal to rezone the subject Property from Historic Commercial to Commercial. We are submitting our comments via email because we are traveling and not able to attend the December 10 hearing.

Our home is in close proximity to the Property and we believe that the proposed zoning map amendment is compatible with the surrounding land uses because the Property is uniquely situational within the Town. Specifically:

- The Property is located along Hwy. 145 where new commercial uses are appropriate;
- Silver Creek and Soda Street separate the Property from the rest of the historic commercial core;
- The existing historic structure situated on the Property, the Atlantic Cable Head Frame, is already protected with a historic preservation easement; and
- There is an elevation change, which buffers adjacent residential uses on the north and west sides of the Property;

The proposed amendment will serve a community need and is consistent with the purposes of the RLUC and the goals and objectives of the Rico Regional Master Plan because it would allow for development that complements, rather than mimics, the historic Head Frame's aesthetics.

For all of the foregoing reasons, we strongly support approval of the proposed rezone.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Cummings and Nicole Pieterse

138 N. River St.

Rico, Colorado