

Date: February 8th, 2021

TO: Town of Rico Board of Trustees
FROM: Kari Distefano
SUBJECT: Town Manager's Report

Summary of Work Session and 2021 Work Plan

Included in this packet is a typed copy for each Board member of the strength, weakness, opportunity and threat (SWOT) exercise from the January work session. It is important to note that the exercise was intended to capture the most pressing issues as determined by each member and just because an item was not mentioned by a trustee or more than one trustees does not necessarily indicate that they did not think it was an issue. The following is an outline of the exercise summarized by categories.

Strengths:

Most trustees (4) felt that one of Rico's significant strengths is the fact that is a small tightknit community. A demonstration of this is the formation of the Rico Cares program. An equal number felt that natural beauty and access to recreation were strengths as illustrated by a strong local membership in the Rico Trails Alliance. Other strengths that had some consensus were location in general (not specific to recreation) and the Rico Shuttle. The complete list of strengths are itemized on the individual sheets included in the packet.

Weaknesses:

The majority of the trustees (4) considered poor cell phone and internet service to be a weakness. Inadequate town revenues were considered a weakness by four members of the Board. Three members considered the lack of a school, the lack of businesses in the downtown area and deficiencies in infrastructure other than cell and internet service to be weaknesses. There were also two members that felt the Town's inability to enforce rules was a weakness.

Opportunities:

Four trustees felt that opportunities existed in approaching BP. Three viewed Town property and trails as opportunities. Two viewed grant funding and affordable housing as an opportunity.

Threats:

Five trustees agreed that mining or other unwanted development was a threat. Five were worried about the possibility of wildfire and drought. Two felt that a lack of an agreement with

BP to remediate lead contaminated soil was a threat and two felt that rising real estate costs and lack of affordable housing were a threat.

By building on strengths and recognizing weaknesses, I took this information and attempted to apply it to work plan, a copy of which is included in the packet. I have also added an evaluation of potential barriers to implementation, some over which we have very little control. For example, the school situation appeared on most people's worksheets. The barrier to resolving that issue in a manner which is favorable to the Town is the need to have the Dolores County School District agree to what is best for the Rico students and families of students.

I would like to engage citizens in Rico in this exercise also and I have devised a survey based on the SWOT comments by the Trustees that can be posted on the internet. Due to the pandemic and challenges with internet capacity, I see this as the best way to engage citizens.

It is the intension of this plan that the goals be linked to the Trustee's assessment of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Goal 1: upgrade Rico's access to broadband addresses what the Trustees see as a weakness. It also speaks to an opportunity that could exist with both the Governor Polis Rural Economic Blueprint and the Town's recent approval of a higher cell tower. Goal 2, Goal 3 and Goal 4 are related to the need to generate more income for the Town. Generating a master plan for Town owned property also has the potential to look at the possibility of sites for affordable housing. Goal 5 speaks to another weakness perceived by the Trustees, which is the lack of activity in Rico's commercial core and the difficulty small businesses have staying open. Goal 6 is an effort to support outdoor recreation, which is perceived as a strength in Rico. It also has the potential to support local businesses by encouraging visitors. The purpose of Goal 7 is to discourage poorly implemented development and to clarify Rico's carrying capacity with respect to environmental resources such as water. There is also some clarification and recommendations for the prevention of wildfires in the revised land use code. BP, ARCO and soil contaminated by mining activities is another issue that most trustees included on their worksheets. Goal 8 addresses this problem. Goal 9 addresses the school issues and finally Goal 10 looks at increasing water resources.

Maps and analysis of Town owned property

The Town of Rico owns 28 parcels. These lands include the Town Hall, the museum, the shop Justin Bains rents, the Town shop and the fire department. The following is a table that shows zoning, area, and developability based on an assessment of environmental conditions that would make development more difficult. There are maps included in this packet showing town owned land and areas of environmental concern. The numbers refer to the numbers on the maps.

Address/Location	Zoning	Area	Use	Environmental Conditions
1. No address - Piedmont	Residential	2,276 sq. ft.	Vacant	Less than 5,000 sq. ft.
2. No address – Yellowman Alley	Right-of-way	1,356 sq. ft.	Access	Less than 5,000 sq. ft.
3. 110 N. Garfield	Residential	3,617 sq. ft.	Van Winkle Mine Structure	Less than 5,000 sq. ft.
4. 213 W. Soda	Residential	15,279 sq. ft.	Vacant	Flood zone AE 100%, Wetlands 90%, Lead soil 1100 ppm+ 100%
5. 40 N. Glasgow	Historic Commercial	5,083 sq. ft.	Vacant	Flood zone A 40%, Wetlands 40%, Mine waste & subsidence 40%, Lead soil 1100 ppm+ 25%
6. 17 N. Commercial	Open Space	10,166 sq. ft.	Park	Flood zone A 50%, Wetlands 60%, Lead soil 1100 ppm+ 75%
7. 2 N. Commercial	Residential	5,083 sq. ft.	Town Hall	Lead soil 1100 ppm+ 25%
8. 24 N. Commercial	Open Space	2,541 sq. ft.	Park	Less than 5,000 sq. ft. Wetlands 90%,
9. No address - Hancock	Residential	8,843 sq. ft.	Vacant	Flood zone AE 60%, Flood zone X, 40%, Wetlands 50%, Lead soil 1100 ppm+ 100%
10. No address - Hancock	Residential	7,945 sq. ft.	Vacant	Flood zone AE 40%, Flood zone X, 60%, Wetlands 60%, Lead soil 1100 ppm+ 100%
11. No address - Picker	Right-of-Way	10,369 sq. ft.	Vacant	Wetlands 20%
12. 13 S. Glasgow	Historic Commercial	5,043 sq. ft.	Museum & Shop	Lead soil 1100 ppm+ 25%
13. No address – River Corridor	Residential PUD	5.26 acres	Vacant	Wetlands 90%, Flood zone AE 70%, Flood zone X

				30%, Lead soil 1100 ppm+ 30%
14. 121 S. Picker	Residential	2,500 sq. ft.	Vacant	Less than 5,000 sq. ft.
15. No address – River Corridor	Residential PUD	13.01 acres	Vacant	Wetlands 25%, Flood zone AE 60%, Flood zone X 40%, Mine dumps & waste 10%,
16. No address - Picker	Public Facility	35,214 sq. ft.	Town Shop	Lead soil 1100 ppm+ 50%
17. No address - Picker	Residential	27,950 sq. ft.	Vacant	30%+ slope 100%
18. 119 S. Glasgow	Historic Commercial	10,167 sq. ft.	Fire Department Building	
19. No address – River Corridor	Residential PUD	4.41 acres	Vacant	Wetlands 60%, Mine waste 20%, Flood zone AE 40%
20. No address – Silver	Residential PUD	6.79 acres	Vacant	Avalanche high 30%, Avalanche moderate 5%, Avalanche low 5%, 30%+ slope 100%
21. No address – River Corridor	Residential PUD	3.69 acres	Vacant	Wetlands 60%, Flood zone AE 95%, Mine waste 15%, 30%+ slope 0%
22. No address - East Hillside	Residential PUD	4.03 acres	Vacant	30%+ slope 100%, No access
23. No address – River Corridor	Residential PUD	7.24 acres	Vacant	Flood zone AE 70%, Lead soil 1100 ppm+ 50%
24. 466 Silverglance	Open Space	22,810 sq. ft.	Vacant	
25. No address - Silverglance	Open Space	7,036 sq. ft.	Vacant	30%+ slope 100%
26. 447 Silverglance	Residential	24,919 sq. ft.	Vacant	
27. 442 Silverglance	Open Space	11.57 acres	Vacant	30%+ slope 20%
28. No address – River Corridor	Residential PUD	9.66 acres	Vacant	Flood zone AE 30%, Flood zone

				40%, 30%+ slope 10%
--	--	--	--	------------------------

Notes regarding environmental condition designations:

1. Information for the maps was taken from “Documentation for Hazard & Constraint Maps” prepared by Chris Wilbur P.E. and Doug Bradley, September 1995. Maps were originally draw by Foley Associates and later digitized for GIS use. They are intended for planning purposes only and not accurate enough to be used for design purposes.
2. The flood zone designation AE refers to areas with base flood elevations that have been determined. Flood zone designation A indicates an area with no flood elevations that have been determined. Zone X refers to areas of 500 year flood with average depths of less than one foot. Zone Y indicates erodible material within the 100 or 500 year flood area.
3. High potential avalanche hazard is an area of frequent avalanche (average return period of 30 years or less), or an area subject to avalanche impact pressures greater than 630 psi. Moderate potential avalanche hazard is an area subject to avalanche with average return periods of 30 to 300 years and impact pressures of less than 630 psi. Low avalanche hazard is areas subject to avalanche with average return periods of more than 300 years and where impacts are expected to be non-destructive.

Consideration of a change the time of the Board of Trustees meetings to 3:00 PM until meetings are no longer being conducted on Zoom.

Zoom at the January work session failed entirely. I called Rico Telephone and they could not tell me what was going on. Barbara Betts also called them, explained about the sunshine law and asked what could be done. So far, it does not look like there will be any progress from them in the immediate future. I have asked our attorney about other options such as videoing the meeting and posting it on youtube, but she did not know if that would be in keeping with Colorado’s sunshine laws. I am waiting on an answer to that question from attorneys at the Colorado Municipal League. This upcoming meeting will have to go back to the format of having individual Trustees zoom in from home. So far, that has worked the best. The only other option that I can think of is to change in person meeting times to 3:00 PM when there is likely to be less traffic on the internet. I have always been able to get 40 MGBs of upload speed at Town hall during the day and have not had problems with other zoom meetings from 8:00 – 5:00.

Water Leak

Town staff had been noticing increased water use for a couple of months. At first the loss was small enough that it could have been attributed to increased activity over the holidays and a couple of houses with leaky plumbing but it finally got bad enough that we knew it was a leak in the mainline or a connection to a meter. After isolating sections of pipe on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, public works staff finally found the leak. It is on south Commercial Street (upper) and fortunately there are only two homes that will be affected while we are fixing it. We don't yet know what the repair will cost but I may have some sense of that in time for the Wednesday meeting.

Strengths

1. Small & tight knit community
2. Good Town manager
3. Engaged Board & Planning Commission members
4. Good grant writing
5. SMART – Rico shuttle

Barbara Betts

Weaknesses

1. Poor internet & telephone service
2. Town Attorney
3. Small budget
4. Staffing
5. Inability to enforce rules
6. No resolution to VCUP/BP
7. No School

Opportunities

1. Federal, State & local funding
2. Town property an asset
3. Approaching BP now

Threats

1. Mining
2. Gentrification
3. Forest fires & drought
4. Lead contamination
5. BLM & USFS land sales
6. Water shortages

Strengths

1. Close knit community
2. Alpine setting/natural environment
3. Limited growth potential
4. Recreation (outdoor)
5. Active cleanup endeavor - accountability
6. SMART – Rico shuttle

Nicole Pieterse

Weaknesses

1. No school
2. Tight housing market/limited growth potential
3. Lack of services
4. Failing main street
5. Slow broadband & poor cell phone service

Opportunities

1. BP/VCUP
2. Open space preservation/trail system connectivity
3. Town hall, other town properties/school building
4. Affordable housing
5. Grant funding

Threats

1. Mining/unwanted development
2. Call on the river/water system
3. Wildfire & drought
4. Drying up of grant sources & revenue streams
5. Loss of staff/no succession in place

Strengths

1. Unique/self governed
2. Ability to control future with USFS/BP
3. Access to Telluride/Cortez/National parks/50 mile to airport
4. BP/ARCO at our doorstep/hardball
5. Water source

Joe Croke

Weaknesses

1. Lack of strong leadership
2. Close to Telluride
3. Inaccessibility
4. Lack of funding for infrastructure
5. Empty downtown core
6. Dolores County

Opportunities

1. Dolores school – donate property – acquire from district
2. County boundary change
3. Create/preserve unique character of community
4. Control of future – growth/planning/finance mechanisms
5. Assess to 360 degree public/private land
6. Town wide broad band

Threats

1. Water resources
2. Water quality – river headwaters
3. Growth
4. Lack of housing opportunities
5. Pandemics

Strengths

1. Community
2. Close proximity to recreation
3. Community organizations – RTA, Rico Center, etc.
4. Dedicated staff

Joe Dillsworth

Weaknesses

1. Revenue
2. Dolores County
3. School
4. Lack of wastewater processing
5. Lack of enforcement

Opportunities

1. Land bank
2. Recreation
3. VCUP
4. Geothermal/Hot springs

Threats

1. Rising real estate prices
2. Budget woes
3. No VCUP agreement

Strengths

1. Location
2. Resources
3. Rapid growth
4. Available space
5. Still small/undeveloped

Pat Fallon

Weaknesses

1. Revenue
2. Being part of Dolores County
3. Lack of infrastructure including internet
4. No school
5. Few businesses
6. Not enough support for local businesses

Opportunities

1. Rapid growth
2. Being undeveloped
3. Being pioneers
4. BP

Threats

1. Rapid overgrowth
2. Being people's lottery ticket
3. Lack of infrastructure
4. Being in Dolores County
5. BP

Strengths

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Brandy Randall

Weaknesses

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Opportunities

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Threats

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Strengths

1. Surrounded by National Forest
2. Strong community (for now)
3. Off the beaten path

**Esteban
Roberts**

Weaknesses

1. Water issues
2. We have been discovered
3. Very little money as a town
4. Communication to taxpayers/voters
5. Sub-par internet

Opportunities

1. Improve trail systems/fix the trails we have
2. More community participation
3. Better infrastructure
4. Affordable housing

Threats

1. We have been discovered
2. Ongoing drought
3. Growing too fast

2021 Work Plan

Goal 1: Upgrade Rico's access to Broadband					
Key Action Steps	Timeline	Desired Outcomes	Evaluation Methodology	Persons Responsible	Barriers
Investigate the possibility of grant funding for infrastructure upgrades.	This can be researched over the course of the next couple of months	A list of potential funding sources and a determination as to whether or not Rico is qualified and can provide match funding	Is there a possibility of moving this forward?	Kari Distefano	Town funding for match and the need to coordinate with the existing internet provider (Rico Telephone)
Approach Rico Telephone about the possibility of a public/private partnership for internet upgrades	This will be dependent on Rico Telephone's response	A cooperative plan to upgrade internet in Rico	Does the Town have a cooperative agreement with Rico Telephone?	Kari Distefano / Rico Telephone	Rico Telephone has expressed no desire to upgrade their network in Rico because there is a lack of volume of potential customers.
Explore the possibility of improving internet and cell phone access utilizing the proposed new cell tower.	This will be dependent of the response from AT&T or any other carriers that may be using the new cell tower.	A cooperative plan to upgrade internet and cell service in Rico	Does the Town have a cooperative agreement with another carrier?	Kari Distefano / Consultant	Lack of a contact within AT&T that may be able to make a decision regarding this matter. Difficulties in changing cell providers even if there is evidence that a different carrier may be more reliable.
Goal 2: Increase Rico's access to revenue					
Key Action Steps	Timeline	Desired Outcomes	Evaluation Methodology	Persons Responsible	Barriers
Evaluate Rico's existing revenue streams and investigate potential actions that could produce more income	This can be researched over the course of the next couple of months.	A proposal that could increase the Town's source of revenue.	Tracking revenue	Kari Distefano	
Examine Town owned parcels and building as assets.	This can be researched over the course of the next couple of months.	An analysis of property owned by Rico and a determination by the	Do we have an actionable plan	Kari Distefano / Rico Board of Trustees / Consultant	

		Trustees what if anything can/should be done with the property			
Goal 3: Create a master plan for Town owned land					
Key Action Steps	Timeline	Desired Outcomes	Evaluation Methodology	Persons Responsible	Barriers
Determine what is the highest best and use for property near the Town Shop	Spring and Summer	A master plan of the River Corridor	Do we have a plan that is supported by the community?	Consultant	Funding
Goal 4: Develop an Infrastructure Ballot Initiative for the November 2021 Election					
Key Action Steps	Timeline	Desired Outcomes	Evaluation Methodology	Persons Responsible	Barriers
Determine if and to what degree there is public support for a tax for upgraded infrastructure and the maintenance of town services, in particular roads and Town shop.	March – September 2021	Several proposals will be discussed at community meetings. A preferred option will be generated	Will a ballot initiative pass?	Kari Distefano / Board of Trustees	There is a lot of resistance to increased taxes
Organize a voter registration drive.	Ongoing until the election.	People that are new to Rico and people who have not been voting will register and vote.	Does the Town have more registered voters?	Kari Distefano / Board of Trustees	
Educate Rico Citizens on the declining tax revenue and the lack of Town of Rico's sustainability if we continue without substantive upgrades in infrastructure.	Ongoing until the election.	A positive vote on increased funding for public works staff and projects.	Will an infrastructure ballot pass?	Board of Trustees	

Goal 5: Encourage and support economic development in Rico

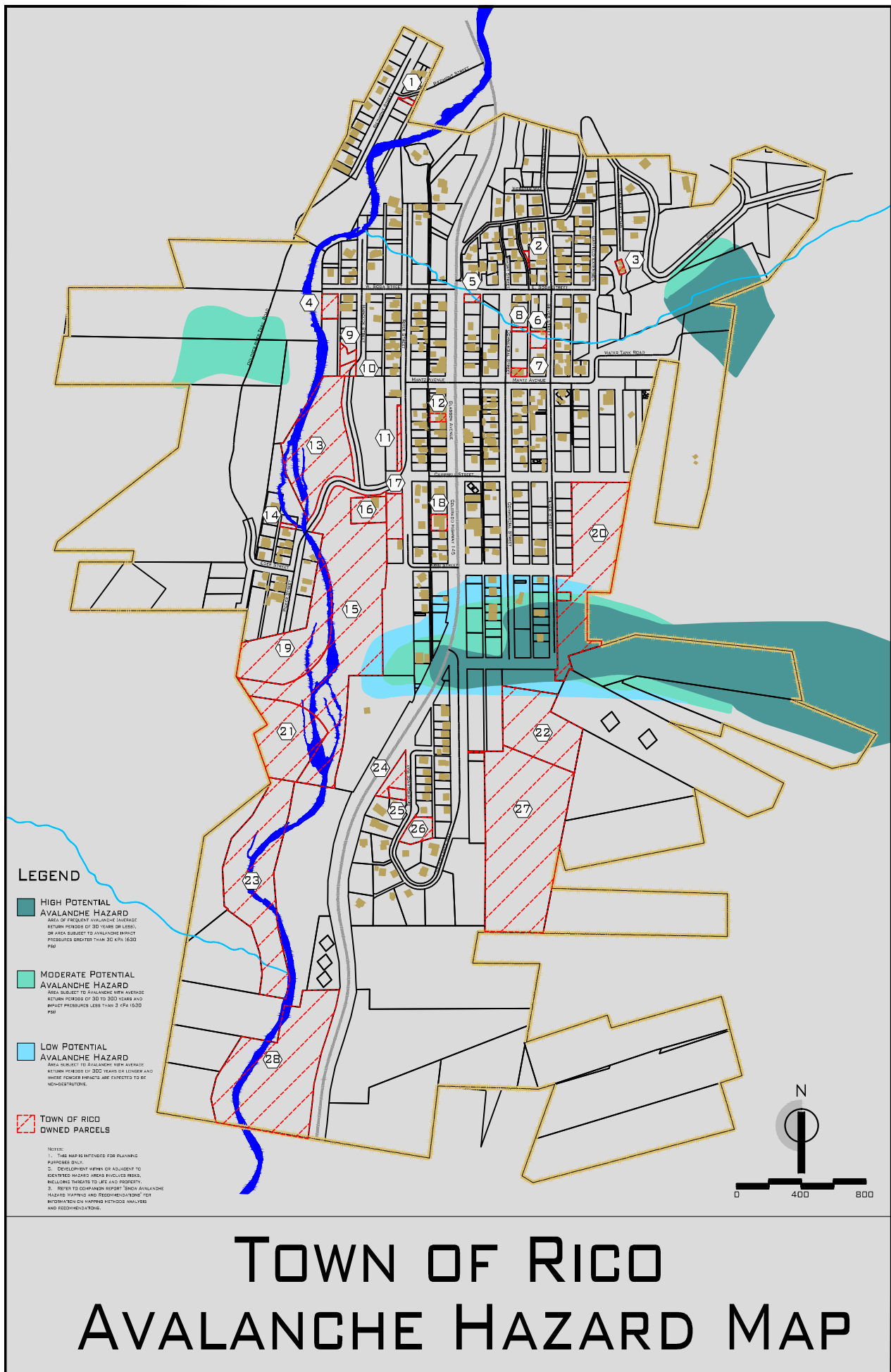
Key Action Steps	Timeline	Desired Outcomes	Evaluation Methodology	Persons Responsible	Barriers
Ensure that local businesses are educated about opportunities such as Enterprise Zone Tax Credits and Opportunity Zone	Summer 2021	That more businesses take advantage of these programs	Are more businesses enrolled in the Enterprise Zone Tax Credit program and are owners educated about the Opportunity Zone program?	Kari Distefano / Region 9	

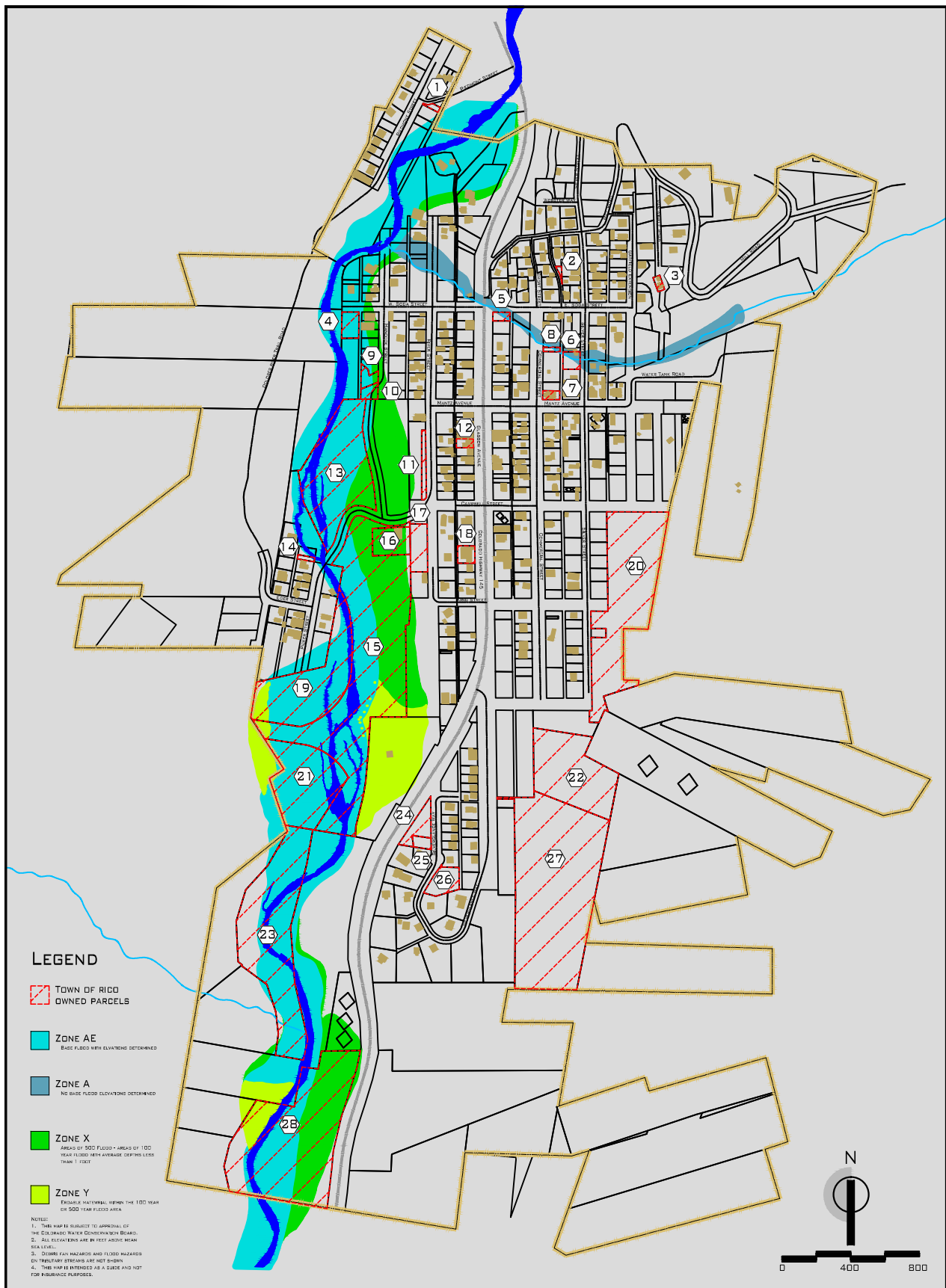
Goal 6: Finish River Corridor project and continue work on a trail easement along the Rio Grande Southern Railroad grade

Key Action Steps	Timeline	Desirable Outcomes	Evaluation Methodology	Persons Responsible	Barriers
Continue to send survey out for signatures.	This depends on potential problems with owners.	A survey filed in the Office of the Clerk & Recorder of Dolores County	Has the map been filed and easements secured?	Kari Distefano	One of the owners of the River Corridor died leaving the property to many heirs. Dave Bulson redid the map to exclude this property since we were not optimistic about finding the heirs. The revised plat is still awaiting the approval of Doug Clark, the owner that had requested a trade.
Continue work on the Rio Grande Southern Trail	We have applied for a planning grant through Colorado Parks and Wildlife and we will know in March whether or not we will get it.	A grant from Colorado Parks and Wildlife so that we can plan the trail and the bridge	Will our grant application be successful?	Kari Distefano	Although the Town can afford the plans for the trail without grant funding, construction of the trail will require a grant from either CPW and/or the Rico Center.

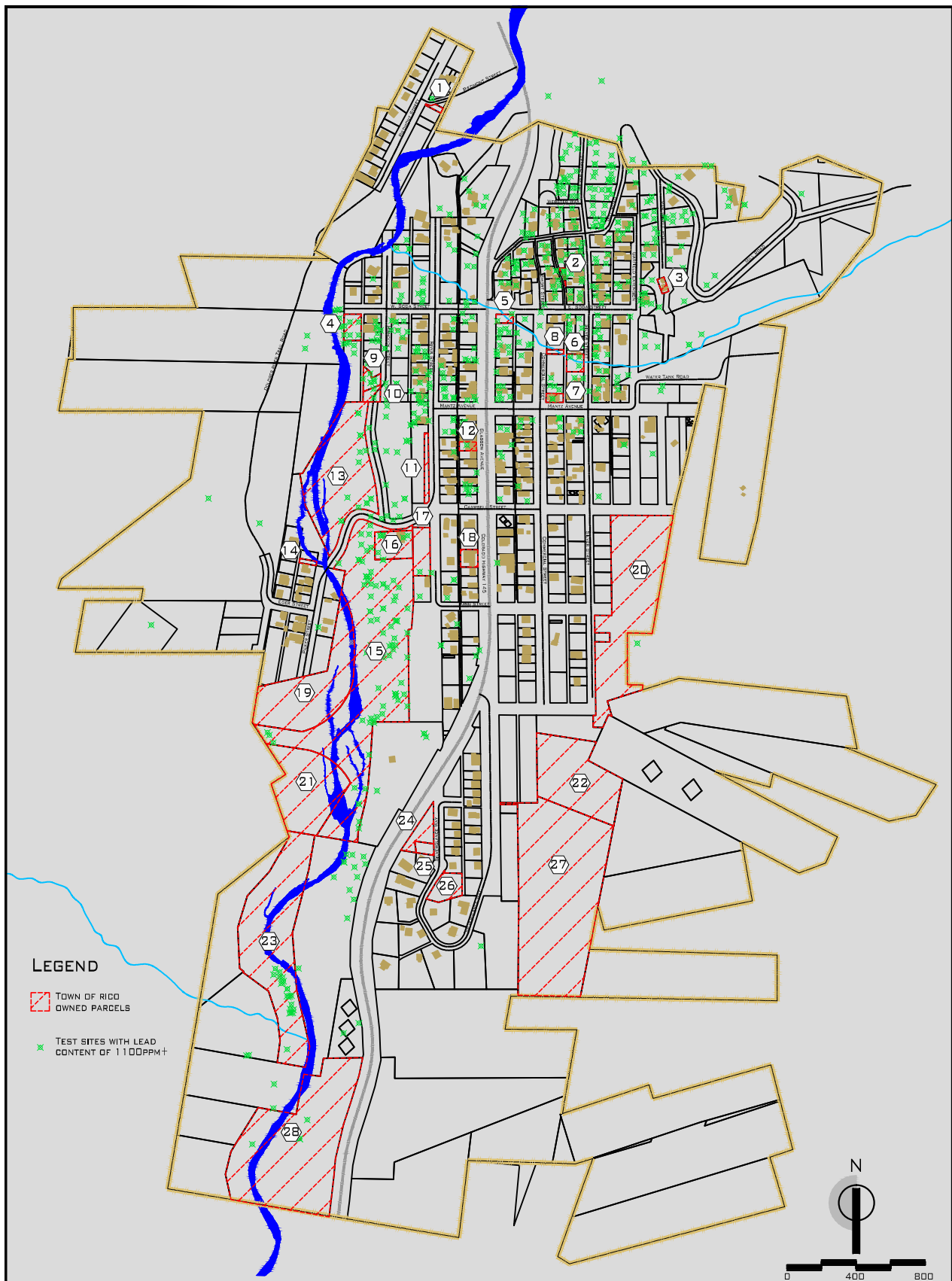
Goal 7: Update and revise Rico Land Use Code					
Key Action Steps	Timeline	Desired Outcomes	Evaluation Methodology	Persons Responsible	Barriers
Legal review of proposed revisions	March – April 2021	A more concise and user friendly Rico Land Use Code that imposes clear restrictions on development	Finished revisions by June 1 st , 2021	Kari Distefano / Rico Planning Commission / Attorney	
Invite public comments on revisions	May 2021	Public input on the draft revisions	Is there consensus among Rico citizens that the revised land use code accomplishes the goals of the Town with respect to maintaining the Town's character?	Kari Distefano / Rico Planning Commission	
Goal 8: Establish a Protocol for Vacant Lots Impacted by Lead and Other Mining Activities					
Key Action Steps	Timeline	Desired Outcomes	Evaluation Methodology	Persons Responsible	Barriers
Create a protocol for mine waste clean up on vacant lots.	Uncertain	Lots will be determined to be safe from contamination as per CDPHE requirements.	Are lots that were determined to have lead and other mine waste hazards considered free from contamination by CDPHE?	Town of Rico / BP & ARCO / CDPHE	Disagreement about funding
Goal 9: Explore the possibility of an agreement with the Dolores County School District					
Key Action Steps	Timeline	Desired Outcomes	Evaluation Methodology	Persons Responsible	Barriers
Attempt to reach an agreement with the Town of Rico and Dolores County School District regarding the use and upkeep of the school building and	This depends on the Dolores County School District.	That at least some of the money being spent by Rico citizens on education goes toward Rico students.	Is Dolores County School District taking some responsibility for Rico students?	Kari Distefano / Dolores County School District	COVID 19 and the lack of incentive for Dolores County School District to change the existing situation.

some provision for transportation of students to Telluride.					
Goal 10: Explore the possibility of increasing Rico's Water Resources					
Key Action Steps	Timeline	Desired Outcomes	Evaluation Methodology	Persons Responsible	Barriers
Determine whether or not it is worth while to attempt to change the Silver Creek Point of Diversion	2021 - 2022	A definitive answer to the question of changing diversion points: is it possible or desirable?	Do we have enough direction to either proceed with that approach or should we go back to attempting to re-activate Silver Creek	Kari Distefano / Consultant	
Begin planning to re-activate the Silver Creek Water System	2021 - 2025	The Town's ability to use water rights on Silver Creek	Do we have a plan to slowly re-activate the Silver Creek Water System	Kari Distefano	Lack of funding.



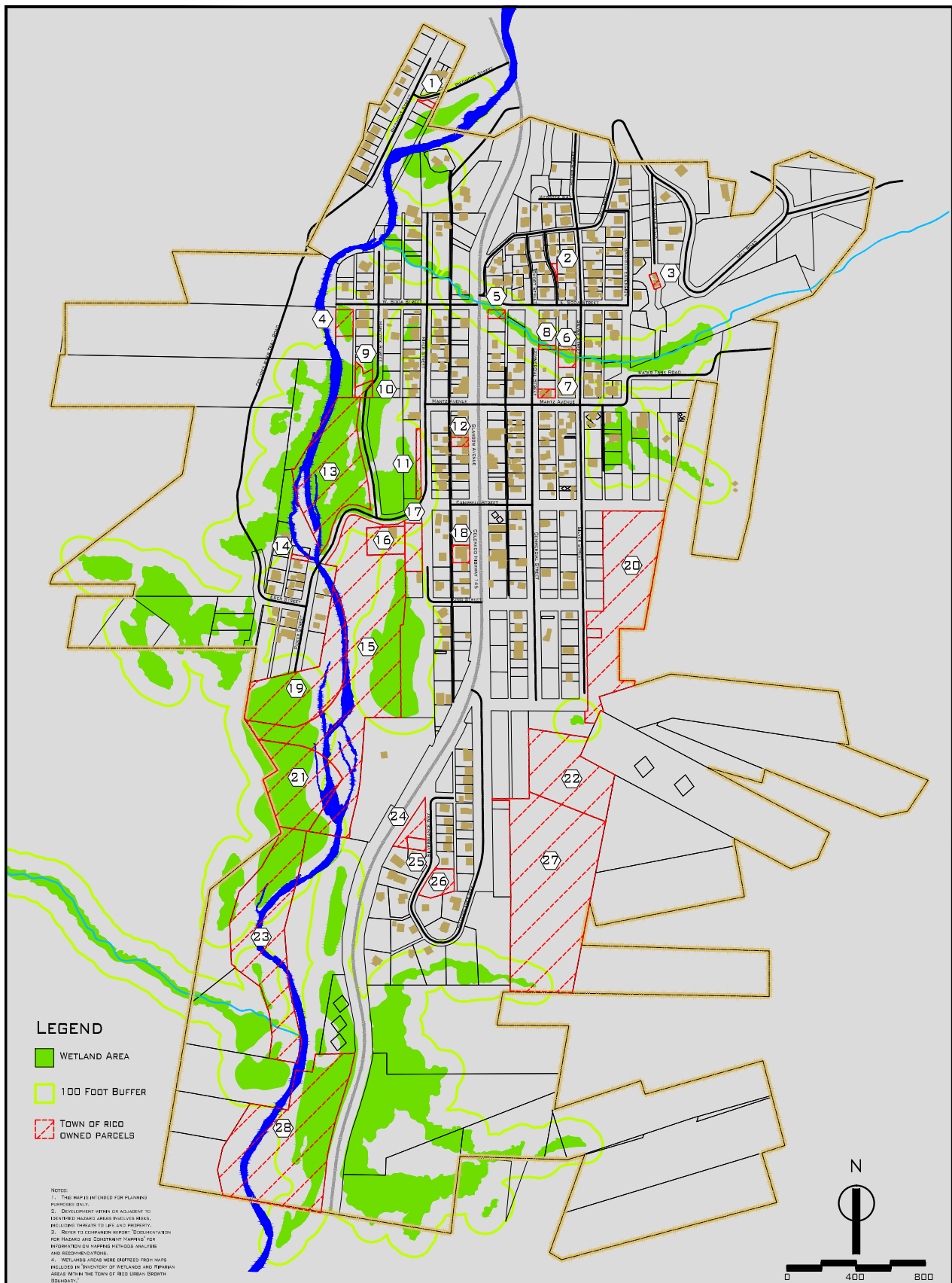


TOWN OF RICO FLOOD HAZARD MAP



TOWN OF RICO

TEST SITES SHOWING LEAD CONTENT OF 1100PPM+



TOWN OF RICO

WETLANDS HAZARD MAP