

CHAPTER SEVEN

INFRASTRUCTURE



WATER

Rural Audubon County is served by a few rural water associations. West Central Iowa Rural Water Association of Manning currently serves a few residents in the northern part of the county and has a franchise agreement with the City of Gray. Regional Water from Avoca will serve much of the southwestern part of the county including the rural county surrounding the City of Kimballton. Households that are not connected to rural water or wish not to be connected to rural water get their water from private wells.

The cities within Audubon County provide water through municipal utilities. Each city has different water rates which also can affect their sewer rates. The City of Audubon's water comes from a City-owned well. The City of Brayton purchases water from a regional source. The City of Exira utilized purchased ground water. The City of Kimballton's water comes from a city-owned well. Audubon, Brayton, Exira, and Kimballton all prepare utility bills for the residents of their community. The City of Gray is served by West Central Iowa Rural Water Association in Manning. The City of Gray does no water utility billing to it's residents.

SEWER

Residents of the City of Gray and those outside of city limits within Audubon County have private septic systems. The installation and replacement of septic systems are overseen by the Environmental Health Department which is contracted with Guthrie County. The Cities of Audubon, Brayton, Exira, and Kimballton have city-wide sanitary sewer systems which serve the residents of the communities.

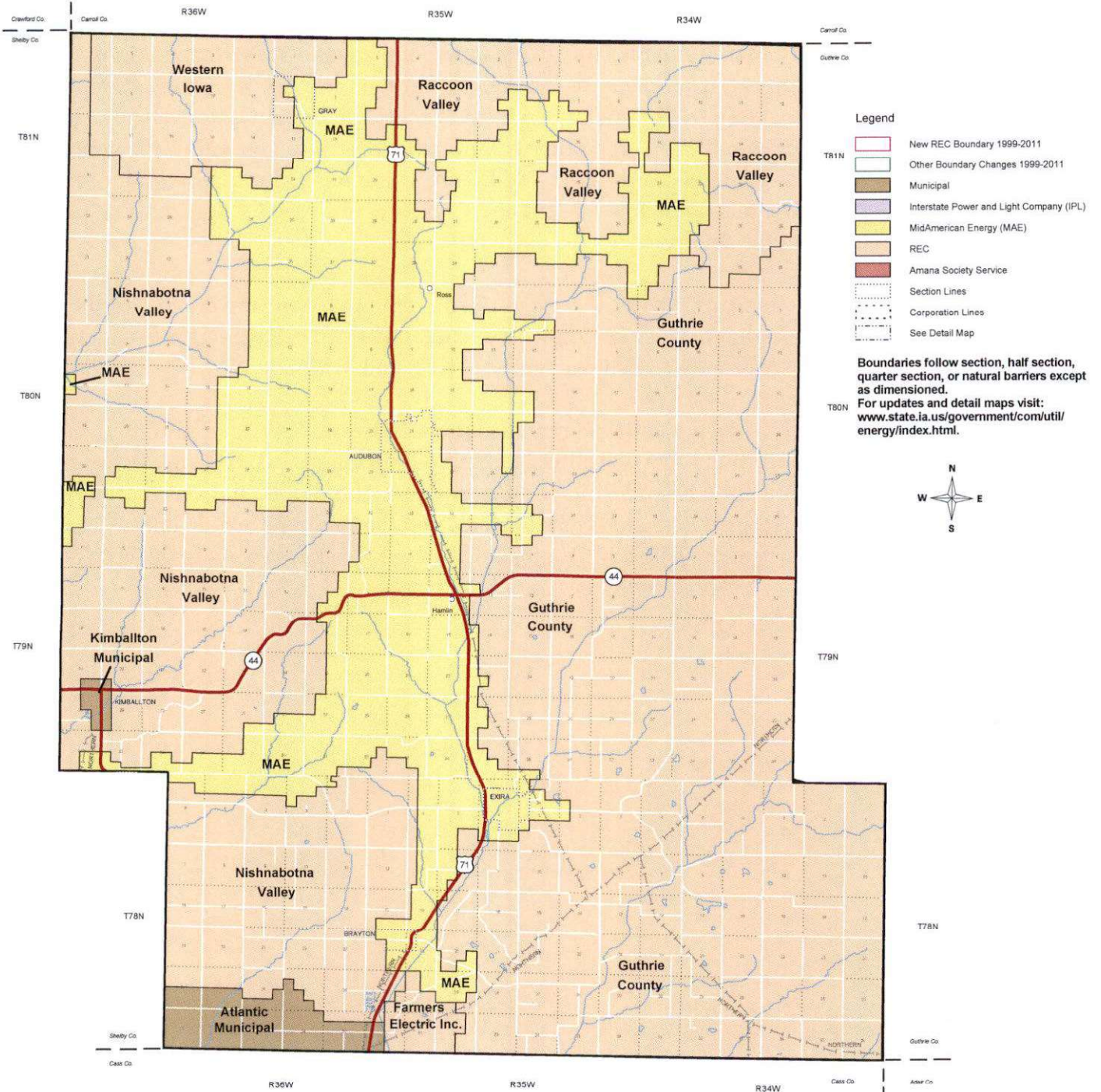
NATURAL GAS

MidAmerican provides natural gas to Audubon, Exira, Brayton, Kimballton, and Hamlin. The pipeline runs across the southeastern quadrant of the county. The City of Gray has no natural gas provider.

ELECTRIC

Audubon County is served by eight electricity providers. MidAmerican Energy provides service to the central area of the County from the northern to southern borders. Guthrie County REC Association provides service to a large portion of those in the eastern portion of the county. The Nishnabotna Valley REC serves most of the western residents. Kimballton Municipal Utilities serves the City of Kimballton with electricity. Other electricity providers include, Western Iowa, Raccoon Valley REC, Farmers Electric Inc., and Atlantic Municipal. Map 7.1 shows the electrical service area reference map for Audubon County.

Map 7.1: Electrical Service Area Reference Map, 2011



TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Windstream (formerly Iowa Telecom) is the primary provider of telephone service in Audubon County, serving over half of the county. Marne and Elk Horn Telephone Company provides telephone and wireless Internet service to the southwestern residents of the county. Farmers Mutual Telephone Company of Shelby County serves the far western area of the county. The Aureon Fiber Optic Network directly serves Audubon, Hamlin, and Kimballton. The other communities, except Gray, within the county are served by a partner network. Fiber Platform, LLC, Mediacom Communications Corporation, Panora Communications Cooperative, and West Iowa Telephone Company dba WesTel Systems also provide internet service to portions of the county.

Farmers Mutual Telephone Company, Marne Elk Horn, Mediacom, and Windstream all offer landline phone service to residents of Audubon County. Residents of Audubon County have access to a number of wireless providers including, Verizon, U.S. Cellular, Sprint, AT&T, and T-Mobile.

Three communities have access to the Iowa Communications Network. The Iowa Communications Network is an interactive closed circuit tool that allows classes and workshops to be broadcast throughout the state. This tool is frequently used by colleges and universities, high schools, and state agencies. The Audubon County Memorial Hospital, National Guard facility, and the Audubon school offer ICN access within the City of Audubon. The Exira-Elk Horn Kimballton schools also have access to the ICN.

GOALS

Maintain/Upgrade Existing Services

The existing services provided to Audubon County residents are vital to a good quality of life. Being able to maintain these services at the current level is a priority for not only the county, but the cities as well.

- Action Items:**
- In Kimballton, inspect then slip line and/or replace sewer mains as found necessary
 - In Kimballton, inspect then slip line and/or replace storm sewer mains as found necessary
 - In Audubon, rehabilitate manholes
 - In Audubon, replace fire hydrants which do not meet current standards
 - In Audubon, replace water valves as necessary
 - In Audubon, install a larger water main(s) heading south from the city
 - Work with Windstream to provide upgrades to the internet services within the County
 - Eastern Audubon County has internet connectivity issues, work with providers to reduce these connectivity issues
 - In Kimballton, upgrade the electricity generation, transformers, and bury remaining power lines for the City-owned electricity utility
 - In all communities and the county, acquire back-up generators to provide power for essential city facilities
 - In Audubon, seek additional locations for new city well and fund project to construct the new well

Expand Current Service Areas

There are portions of the rural county and portions within city limits which are not currently served by certain utilities. Being able to expand the service areas of the existing utilities will create opportunities for development within the county.

- Action Items:**
- Extend services to the outskirts of the communities to allow for additional housing developments
 - In Audubon, extend water main south to AMANCO
 - In Audubon, expand sewer and water service to and outside city limits

Complete Upgrades to Emergency Service Infrastructure

There have been changes to the equipment that the emergency services within the county are to use. The changes to these equipment now require a change in the infrastructure that this equipment uses. In order to protect the emergency responders within the County, it is important for the infrastructure to be upgraded to better serve the new equipment.

- Action Items:**
- Install additional towers to provide service to previously “dead” areas
 - Install additional repeaters to decrease issues with radio communication
 - Equip all agencies with the necessary radios, including the County Engineer’s Office