

MAP Project Highlights

**Where:**

Mineola, Iowa, located just south of Council Bluffs.

Problem:

Most homes in town had failed onsite wastewater systems.

Solution:

MAP staff facilitated the process and applications for financing a new wastewater system.

New system ensures future

The unincorporated town of Mineola is located in the scenic Loess Hills just south of Council Bluffs, Iowa. The 150 residents live in 62 homes, most of which have failed onsite wastewater systems. Mineola is a high-priority community for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and is listed in their unsewered communities publication.

The town was referred by the IDNR to MAP after warning letters were sent to the county. MAP staff immediately contacted Regional Water, a nearby rural water district, about serving as a wastewater utility management organization.

Most Iowa rural water districts will not own a small-town wastewater system unless the town is currently purchasing the district's water. However, MAP staff suggested to the regional water manager that this may be a way to establish their presence in the community and to sell water at a later date. The manager decided to take the risk.

USDA Rural Development doesn't normally finance projects for towns with populations over 100 unless another grant is obtained. MAP staff facilitated both a Community Development Block Grant and a watershed grant for Mineola. MAP and RD staff reviewed EPA impaired-waterway maps and determined Keg Creek to be impaired, which made Mineola eligible for the funds.

The applications resulted in a \$500,000 watershed grant, a \$173,000 CDBG grant and a \$355,000 RD grant along with a \$479,000 loan from RD. With a community bank, a thriving restaurant and a new wastewater system, Mineola now has a sound economic future.

MAP helps revitalize small communities and tribal nations in nine states by working with them to find solutions for their infrastructure, enterprise development, aging, technology, or training issues.

MAP is a member of the Rural Community Assistance Partnership. RCAP is a national network of regional nonprofit organizations that provide comprehensive, on-site technical assistance and training to help small, rural communities address their drinking water, wastewater, and other community development needs.

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