



Request for Proposal:

Automatic Meter Reading System (AMR)

March 6, 2023

The Hertford County Southern Rural Water District ("HCSRWD") is seeking proposals for an Automatic Meter Reading (AMR) project. The system must meet provided requirements set forth in the RFP and most provide a cost-effective means to enhance service to the community in which we serve.

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1. HCSRWD BACKGROUND

a. Overview of RFP

The HCSRWD is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit proposals for an Automatic Meter Reading (AMR) project to include the following functional areas:

- Replace existing meters with new accurate meters
- Replace current meter reading method to an AMR drive-by system
- Ability to gather information/data from meter/transmitter
- Provide better customer service
- Increase productivity in time spent reading meters
- Ability to receive alarms for alerts in the field

Prospective vendors are encouraged to submit proposals for all the functional areas listed above.

It is requested that each Bidder identify the specific functional area(s) for which it is submitting a proposal; provide a technical overview and capability of its product and service offering for each functional area. A description of project management, implementation, system integration services, training, and/or any on-going operation and maintenance service that is part of its proposal; and a pricing structure model to provide its products and services to the County.

The HCSRWD will be the purchaser of any equipment or services through this process.

All proposals shall become the property of the County. This RFP is solely an invitation to submit proposals, not an offer to establish any contractual rights. Bidders shall be responsible for all cost and associated cost of RFP response and delivery of such response.

The HCSRWD reserves the right to:

- Reject or Accept any or all proposals received in response to this RFP for any reason or no reason
- Reject or Accept any incomplete proposals

- Waive any minor irregularities or minor errors in the proposals received
- Reject the proposal with the lowest price
- Request clarification from Bidders
- Conduct simultaneous negotiations with multiple bidders
- Modify its requirements due to any regulation or legislation

Responses to this RFP are made without recourse to the County for either rejection or failure to enter a binding commitment for any reason whatsoever or no reason.

b. Objectives of RFP

Two ways to describe the AMR solution that the County will select are: robust and proven. The selected solution must be robust, providing the expected level of service, and backed by a stable company that is experienced in delivering services to the municipal utility industry. The selected solution shall also be proven in the industry and known to back their customers with support and proven products.

The County is planning to select a cost-effective solution. However, the County is not only considering cost in its evaluation but also the total value proposition.

The County is aware that project management, implementation services, financial and/or on-going system operation and maintenance may also be a factor in selecting proposed products and services.

c. About the HCSRWD

The HCSRWD is located in the northeastern region of North Carolina, bounded on the north by the Virginia state line. Located on the beautiful Chowan River, Winton the county seat was incorporated as a town in 1766. The County is home to 25,000 citizens.

The County's governmental structure is a Council-Manager form of government. The County operates under the following department structure: General Administration, Finance, Planning & Inspections, Police, Fire, Public Works, and Parks & Recreation.

The County provides water services to approximately 3800 customers in total.

d. Volume

The County realizes that the products and services requested in this RFP may be met by a variety of suppliers but request that all products come from one single source. This will provide the County with the greatest ease in a successful complete AMR project.

Once the responses to the RFP have been evaluated, the County reserves the right to clarify its understanding of proposals at a greater level of detail, including specific pricing, performance guarantees, financing alternatives, service and maintenance agreements, etc.

e. Schedule

The RFP schedule, subject to change at the County’s discretion, is as follows:

Issue RFP	March 9, 2023
Intent to Respond	March 23, 2023
Final RFP Questions Received	May 10, 2023
Proposal Due Date	May 23, 2023
Clarifications & Negotiations with Selected Bidder	June 13, 2023

2. SUBMITTING PROPOSALS

Any communications related to this RFP shall be directed to:

HCSRWD

Stanley Lassiter, Rural Water Manager

All questions and request for clarification should be made in writing, preferably by email to stanley.lassiter@hertfordcountync.gov and should refer to the “RFP FOR AMR PROJECT”. Hertford County in its sole discretion, will decide whether and how a response will be made.

We also ask vendors to submit an **intent to respond** by email to stanley.lassiter@hertfordcountync.gov by **3/23/2023**. Vendors providing the intent to bid will be included on communications for any addendum and answers to any questions or clarifications to the RFP.

a. Evaluation Process

The evaluation of proposals will be based on the information provided by the bidder. A complete response to the information requested in this RFP is requested so that the County can evaluate all of the options that are available. The county may also require the bidder to include demos of all equipment. The county reserves the right to negotiate with one or more bidders to improve their proposals, although selection for negotiation will not be a commitment by the county to enter into a contract with any bidder.

b. Proposal Format

Appendix A outlines the format bidders are to use in responding to the RFP. Bidders should provide a response to each of the line items, even if the answer is “does not apply”.

c. Assessment Criteria

The bidder's response to this RFP is intended to help the HCSRWD select the technology and support services that provide the best solution to its AMR project. Proposals will be evaluated using a number of factors including:

- Compliance with the requirements
- Unique advantages of solution
- Best fit for the County's budgetary and operational needs, both currently and in the future.
- Vendor's experience providing such solutions and customer references
- Total cost to deploy proposed solution
- Total cost to maintain the system over its lifetime
- Availability and delivery schedule
- Training
- Versatility and projected lifespan of proposed technology
- Time period for which quoted pricing is valid, which should be a minimum of 60 days
- Standard Terms and Conditions of a proposed contract, to include timing of expected payments by the HCSRWD; for example, upon delivery of materials, progress payments during installation, upon completion.

d. Proposal Content and Submission

Bidders should provide the information requested in appendix A; and include all required supporting documentation for their proposed solution. Three (3) references of similar size shall be given and all warranty information of such proposed products.

A hard copy of all proposals must be in Sealed Bid form, with the sealed envelope containing the proposal marked Southern Meter Project. Such Sealed Bid Proposals must be submitted to and received by the County, at P.O. Box 710 Winton, NC 27986, on or before Tuesday, May 23, 2023 by 5:00 p.m., at which time all proposals shall be opened. An electronic version of the proposal, matching the hard copy, must thereafter be presented to the County within 24 hours of bid opening. All proposals will become the property of the County. The bidder is solely responsible for any and all costs it may incur in responding to this RFP.

e. Confidentiality

Trade secrets or similar proprietary data which a bidder does not wish to be disclosed other than to representatives of the HCSRWD involved in the evaluation of its proposal will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by NC Gen Stat 132-1.3 identified as follows: Each page shall be identified in boldface at the top and bottom as "CONFIDENTIAL". Any section of the proposal that is to remain confidential shall also be so marked in boldface on the title page of that section. In spite of what is labeled as confidential, the determination as to whether or not such information may be kept confidential shall be governed by North Carolina law.

3. AUTOMATIC METER READING PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND REQUIREMENTS

a. Minimum Functional Requirements

The minimum requirements are listed below. The following areas are to be covered. Bidders are requested to respond to each section as:

- Comply
- Not Comply (provide future date or explanation)
- Alternative (provide detailed explanation)

In some sections a detailed explanation may be requested instead. Please respond to these are requested.

b. Software Requirements

The HCSRWD currently uses Sensus Autoread meter reading software for their Northern section of the County. The County would like to continue to use such software with the proposed Southern section of the County. Please describe if such proposed solution will integrate with County's current software platform. No software will be purchased as part of this RFP.

c. Meter Reading Equipment Requirements

The HCSRWD currently uses a Sensus vehicle gateway base-station (VGB) to read their current AMR northern section of the County. The VGB utilizes a licensed frequency to read the transmitter that is connected to the meter in the pit. The unit also provides the County with a mapping feature to easily report success of reads and alerts of alarms. The County would like to continue to use such equipment with the proposed Southern section of the County. Please describe if such proposed solution will be able to utilize the current VGB meter reading device. No Meter reading (VGB/Drive-by) equipment will be purchased as part of this RFP.

d. Meter Requirements

- All water meters shall be of the positive displacement meter type.
- All water meters shall be made of brass materials on the residential sizes.
- All water meters shall be of 5/8 x 3/4 and 1" size on the residential sizing.
- All water meters shall have a minimum of 120 days of meter data storage inside meter registers.
- All water meters must have the ability to produce own alarms such as (continuous flow, high flow, reverse flow, & tamper).
- All water meters registers must read down to the US Gallon.
- All water meters registers must have an LCD screen showing down to the 100th of a gallon.
- All water meters registers must have a leak detection visible on the screen.
- All water meters must have an external wire to connect to a transmitter as a separate item.
- All old water meters should be return to Hertford County Public Works.

e. Transmitter Requirements

- All transmitters must function accurately and not be damaged over an operating temperature range of -40-degree C to +70-degree C.
- All transmitter modules shall be housed in a single package designed for rugged, harsh environments and capable of complete submersion in water without damage.
- All modules shall be designed to operate in the above conditions and have an expected battery life of twenty (20) years.
- All modules shall have a minimum full warranty of fifteen (15) years with a total warranty of twenty (20).
- All modules shall have the ability to be reverse migrate-ability to work with a handheld and if such desired in the future a fixed based (AMI) meter reading system without any programming or field visit.
- All modules shall employ actionable alerts as such below
 - Tamper Alarm
 - Leak Detected
 - Reverse Flow
 - High Flow
 - Battery Health
- All modules must operate off a primary licensed network operating in the 900-950 FCC range.
- All modules must be able to communicate using two-way functionality.
- All modules must be able to communicate a command to shut off water to the meter it is connected to if such meter has remote shut off functionality.
- All modules must be mounted through the lid in a recessed meter box lid. No module is allowed to be installed underneath meter box lid. Meter Box currently used is a plastic square meter box.
- All modules must be able to communicate to existing Sensus VGB drive-by unit.

f. Deployment Process

Please provide a time-line for bidder's proposed solution. Time-line will be used a reference as County understands that such time-line cannot be given in full detail until further information is given.

g. Training

Training is an important part of fully realizing the potential of any AMR solution. Training must be included in the proposal. It shall include training for the County staff on central services and products, utility personnel and/or subcontractors responsible for the installation and maintenance of the hardware installed in the field. Training for the County's software system administrator(s), operators and customer service representatives will be required.

h. Project Management

Project Management is essential to the success of the project. Bidders will be evaluated, in part, on the strength and experience of their Project Managements capabilities. The successful bidder shall have multiple installations of systems of like-sized utilities with good references.

i. Quality and Industry Experience

The County is committed to providing quality products and services to our customers. As such, we insist on quality products and services from our vendors. Bidders will be evaluated, in part, on the quality of their products and services.

The County is seeking a proposal which meets its requirements from a vendor experienced in similar or larger projects. The preferred vendor will have multiple projects with water meters. Please provide references and/or case study examples of similar projects completed.

APPENDIX A

Proposal Submission Format

Section 1 – Executive Summary

- The scope of the Bidder’s proposed solution, identifying the functional areas included.
- Provide information on any sub-contractors included in your proposal including meter installation, communications provider, etc.

Section 2 – Company Overview

- Description of qualifications, including industry experience, organizational structure, and a statement regarding financial soundness.

Section 3 – Technical Proposal

- Refer to Section 3 of this RFP. Please describe the technical aspects of your product and/or service offering. Bidders should pay particular attention to describing clearly and concisely the functional and performance benefits of their offering.
- Proposals submitted should include a discussion of the capabilities of the proposed technology, recommendations on installation and deployment of the technology.

Section 4 – Price Proposal

- Please provide pricing information based on full deployment.
- Pricing should include all costs of all hardware, software, service, and service maintenance and licensing.

Quantity	Size	Item	Price (Pre-Tax)	Total Price (w/out Tax)
2900	5/8 x 3/4	Residential Water Meter		
200	1"	Residential Water Meter		
3	1-1/2	Compound Water Meter		
2	2"	Compound Water Meter		
3	3"	Compound Water Meter		
3108		Transmitter		
3108		Recessed Meter Box Lid		
1		Training		

1		Project Management		
1		Handheld		
1		Command Link		
2800	5/8 x 3/4	Install Labor		
150	1"	Install Labor		
3	1-1/2	Install Labor		
2	2"	Install Labor		
3	3"	Install Labor		
2953	Transmitter	Install Labor		
2953		Meter Box Lid Install if not included in install labor price		
1		Mass Meter File		

*Please include any additional items not listed above if required for your proposed solution.

Addendum 1-Responses to Bidders' Questions

Introduction

This addendum provides answers to questions submitted by potential bidders as of **May 17, 2023** . All questions can be emailed to stanley.lassiter@hertfordcountync.gov

Any questions received by any bidders will be reviewed, researched and responses will be provided to all bidders, whether they asked the question(s) or not.

To expedite the response time, please provide an email address for responses to your questions.