Urbandale Water Utility

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Enterprise Utility Business System

Proposals Due: February 10, 2026, by 2:00 p.m. CT

Urbandale Water Utility
3720 86th Street
Urbandale, IA 50322-4058

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1. Background Information

Urbandale Water Utility is seeking proposals from qualified vendors for a fully integrated Customer Information System (CIS), Billing, Accounting, and Cashiering solution to replace its aging legacy systems. The desired solution must modernize operations, improve the customer experience, enhance financial transparency, and integrate with the utility's existing and planned technology stack, including Sensus AMI and future utility enhancements.

Urbandale Water Utility (UWU) is a municipal utility serving 23,489 residential, commercial, and industrial accounts across 286 miles of water mains supported by three pump stations. The system serves:

- 21,965 residential meters (93.5% of total customer base)
- 1,097 commercial meters (4.7% of total customer base)
- 11 industrial meters (less than 0.1% of total customer base)
- 416 other meters including duplex and multi-resident properties (1.8% of total customer base)

Annual system performance includes 1.6 billion gallons in sales, generating $13.0 million in revenue. The anticipated initial contract term will be five years, with an option to renew, and a target system go-live date of December 2026.

Project Objectives

The implementation of a new integrated business solution represents a critical initiative for Urbandale Water Utility with the following strategic objectives:

A. Improved Customer Experience

Our customers increasingly expect digital-first interactions with seamless, efficient service across all channels. The new solution will enable comprehensive customer self-service capabilities, mobile-friendly interfaces, real-time account access, flexible payment options, and transparent communication that meets modern consumer expectations.

B. Operational Efficiency

Manual processes, redundant data entry, fragmented asset information, and limited workflow automation in our current systems consume valuable staff time and introduce potential errors. The new solution should eliminate repetitive manual tasks, provide accurate data when decisions need to be made, integrate seamlessly across departments, and provide intuitive interfaces that reduce training time while improving staff productivity.

C. Financial Accuracy and Transparency

The integration of customer billing with financial accounting will ensure automated financial management, real-time financial visibility, streamlined reconciliation processes, and transparent financial reporting. The system must support full integration across all utility operations, proper audit trails, and financial controls while simplifying period closings and regulatory reporting.

D. Data-Driven Decision Making

Business intelligence and reporting capabilities will transform operational and financial data into actionable insights, supporting proactive management of revenue collection, consumption patterns, financial performance, customer service metrics, and advanced analytics for operational insights.

E. Technology Modernization

The selected solution should provide a flexible, scalable platform that can adapt to changing business requirements, regulatory mandates, and technology trends without requiring extensive customization or vendor intervention. The solution must address our approaching end-of-life support for Cogsdale in 2028.

F. Regulatory Compliance

Water utilities face increasing regulatory requirements for customer communications, data privacy, financial reporting, and environmental compliance. The new system must provide configurable capabilities to adapt to evolving compliance needs including GASB-compliant financial reporting.

2. Scope of Work

Urbandale Water Utility is seeking to implement a comprehensive solution that delivers integrated functionality across Nine critical functional areas. The system will serve as the foundation for customer service, billing operations, cashiering, and financial management, providing a unified platform that eliminates duplicate data entry, streamlines workflows, and enhances reporting capabilities.

This RFP encompasses detailed requirements as documented in the accompanying "UWU Requirements.xlsx" spreadsheet. Vendors are required to respond to each detailed requirement using the response indicators defined in the requirements document.

The Nine critical functional areas included in this procurement are:

1. Accounting

Moving from manual processes and disconnected financial reporting to automated, real-time financial management requires transformation across six core functional areas. The solution must provide fully integrated financial management including:

- **General Ledger and Financial Reporting**: Automated journal entry processing, real-time integration with all utility operations, and GASB-compliant financial statements with multi-year comparative analysis
- **Purchasing**: Streamlined vendor management and procurement processes through electronic workflows, three-way matching capabilities, and integration with budget management
- **Accounts Receivable**: Comprehensive revenue cycle management supporting specialized utility services including construction charges, tap fees, and miscellaneous billings
- **Capital Asset Accounting**: Automated asset identification during procurement, construction-in-progress tracking, and integration with work order systems for maintenance cost allocation
- **Budget Management**: Department-level budget development, real-time monitoring with variance alerts, and support for both operating and capital budgets
- **Chart of Accounts**: Multi-segment structure supporting utility fund accounting with flexible segmentation for departments, projects, and grant tracking

2. Billing

Transitioning from basic billing functionality to flexible, transparent billing requires comprehensive capabilities that support diverse rate structures and enhance customer

engagement. The new billing system must integrate seamlessly with meter data management, customer information systems, and financial management to provide:

- Support for multiple billing types including consumption-based, flat rate, master billing, installment billing, and proration capabilities
- Complex rate structure support with multiple billing cycles
- Integration with customer accounts and payment processing
- Automated validation and exception processing
- Flexible billing adjustment capabilities

3. Customer Information System (CIS)

Replacing the aging Cogsdale platform represents the cornerstone of Urbandale's modernization effort. The new CIS must provide comprehensive customer relationship management that consolidates all customer interactions, service history, and account information into a unified, intuitive interface. Key requirements include:

- Support for multiple customer types (residential, commercial, industrial, institutional) with different business rules
- Flexible account structures accommodating multiple service addresses and billing arrangements
- Robust search capabilities using multiple identifiers
- Comprehensive interaction tracking across all communication channels
- Integration with billing, work order management, and payment processing
- Advanced customer management features including segmentation and targeted outreach

4. Cashiering

The cashiering module must provide comprehensive point-of-sale functionality for walk-in customer service operations. With 40-45 customers visiting daily, the system must support efficient, accurate, and secure payment processing. Key requirements include:

- Integrated cash drawer management with reconciliation and balancing
- Support for multiple payment types including cash, check, money order, credit/debit cards, and ACH
- Real-time posting to customer accounts with receipt generation
- Support for multiple cashier stations with individual till management
- Comprehensive cashier reporting including daily reconciliation, variance reporting, and audit trails
- Integration with accounting system for automated general ledger posting

- Security features including user authentication, transaction limits, and supervisor overrides
- Support for miscellaneous receipts and non-customer payments

5. Customer Portal

The customer portal must offer greater information to customers, create a platform to assist with customer interactions through self-serve functionality, and allow the utility to further reach customers. Requirements include:

- Secure, intuitive access via desktop, laptop, and mobile browsers
- Real-time integration with all utility enterprise systems
- Comprehensive account management and self-service capabilities
- Electronic bill presentation and payment options
- Detailed usage analytics and consumption history
- Service request submission and status tracking
- Document management for customer access

6. Payment Processing

Payment processing capabilities must provide secure, flexible payment options while promoting operational efficiency. The solution must:

- Support multiple payment methods and schedules
- Integrate seamlessly with CIS, billing, cashiering, accounting, and customer portal
- Ensure real-time reconciliation with robust audit trails
- Maintain PCI-DSS compliance and strong encryption standards
- Support both customer-facing and vendor-facing interactions

7. Meter Data Management (MDM)

Utilizing a meter data management system allows utilities to increase utilization and derive more value from existing advanced metering infrastructure. Requirements include:

- Configurable data collection schedules supporting hourly interval data
- Integration with Sensus AMI infrastructure and future meter technologies
- Validation, Estimation, and Editing (VEE) capabilities
- Advanced analytics for leak detection and demand forecasting
- Remote operations capabilities including connect/disconnect functionality
- Comprehensive reporting for operational monitoring

8. Workflow Management

Implementing automated workflows that route tasks efficiently, maintain accountability, and reduce administrative burden requires:

- Drag-and-drop workflow design capabilities
- Role-based task assignment with conditional branching
- Automated escalation and notification capabilities
- Integration with CIS, billing, work order, and financial systems
- Performance monitoring and bottleneck identification
- Mobile workflow capabilities for field staff

9. Work Order Management

Connecting field operations with customer accounts and asset management through mobile-enabled work order processing requires:

- Mobile workforce management capabilities
- Integration with customer accounts and asset tracking
- Intelligent scheduling considering priority, location, and skills
- Real-time work status visibility
- Automatic service and material charging for billable work
- Comprehensive work order financial analysis

3. Current System Environment

Urbandale Water Utility currently operates the following key systems that will interact with or be replaced by the new integrated solution:

- **Legacy CIS**: Cogsdale CSM 2023 R2.2 provides core billing and customer service functions but will lose vendor support in 2028, lacks modern self-service capabilities, and has limited integration flexibility
- **Accounting System**: Microsoft Dynamics GP 2018 provides general ledger, accounts payable, and financial reporting capabilities but has limited integration with the CIS, requiring manual reconciliation and duplicate data entry
- **Sensus Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI)**: Smart metering system providing automated meter reading data with most meters transmitting hourly reads, though data is currently uploaded only monthly for billing purposes
- **Payment Processing**: Paymentus provides customer web portal functionality and limited IVR capabilities

- **Asset Management**: Inframap Software provides both GIS functionality (ArcGIS/Inframap) and asset tracking for water mains and services, while other assets are tracked through Excel spreadsheets
- **Field Operations**: No current mobile workforce management system exists, limiting field crew efficiency and real-time communication

The current environment presents several challenges that the new integrated solution should address:

- Manual processes for meter reading uploads and financial reconciliation
- Fragmented asset information across multiple platforms
- Limited customer self-service capabilities
- Absence of workflow automation requiring manual routing
- Disconnected financial and billing systems requiring duplicate data entry
- Underutilization of AMI data for operational insights
- Difficulty producing comprehensive reports spanning multiple systems
- 8-10% of bills are paid late each month, with annual bad debt averaging $20,000

4. Vendor Requirements

Vendors must respond to all detailed requirements in the "UWU Requirements.xlsx" spreadsheet using the following response indicators:

- **S**: Standard - The functionality is included in the current version of the software without modification
- **P**: Partial - Feature/Function is partially included, but the proposed system does not meet the full extent of the listed requirement
- **F**: Future - The functionality will be available in a future release scheduled for deployment by December 2026
- **C**: Customization - The functionality requires custom modifications to the standard software
- **T**: Third Party - The functionality requires integration with a third-party system
- **N**: No - The functionality cannot be provided

Email the proposal submissions on or before February 10, 2026, by 2:00 p.m. CT to: glenn@shpigler.com

All responses, documents, terms, and information related to the proposal shall be submitted prior to the submission deadline. No separate schedules, agreements, terms,

or conditions shall be recognized or accepted if not submitted with the response to this RFP.

5. Proposal Requirements

A. Executive Summary

Provide a concise overview of your proposal including:

- A summary of your proposed solution and how it addresses Urbandale Water Utility's Nine functional area requirements
- Key differentiators that set your solution apart from competitors
- Implementation approach and timeline highlights
- Company qualifications and relevant experience
- Total cost of ownership summary (5-year projection)

B. Company Profile

Present an overview of your organization:

- Company history, ownership, and organizational structure
- Financial stability and annual reports for the past three years
- Experience in the water utility sector with similar-sized utilities
- Geographic presence and support locations
- Development roadmap and strategic direction
- Client retention rate
- Employee count by department (development, implementation, support)
- Partnerships and subcontractor relationships relevant to this proposal

C. Solution Description

Provide a detailed description of the proposed solution addressing all Nine functional areas:

- Product history and development approach
- System architecture and technical specifications
- Functional capabilities organized by the Nine business areas
- Standard interfaces and integration capabilities with existing systems
- Mobile and self-service features
- Configuration vs. customization approach

- Reporting and analytics capabilities
- Security features and compliance certifications
- Unique innovations or competitive advantages

Include screenshots, workflow diagrams, and functional demonstrations where appropriate to illustrate key features.

D. Implementation Approach

Detail your implementation methodology including:

- Project phases, milestones, and timeline to achieve December 2026 go-live
- Resource requirements and team composition
- Data conversion approach from Cogsdale and Dynamics GP
- Testing strategy and quality assurance
- Risk management and mitigation
- Change management and organizational readiness
- Knowledge transfer approach
- Go-live strategy and cutover planning
- Post-implementation support transition

Provide a sample project plan with major milestones and dependencies.

E. Training and Support

Describe your approach to:

- Training needs assessment and curriculum development
- Training delivery methods and options
- User documentation and help systems
- Ongoing training for new employees and system changes
- Support model and service level agreements
- Issue reporting and resolution processes
- System maintenance and upgrade procedures
- User groups and knowledge sharing opportunities

F. References

Provide a minimum of five (5) references from water utilities of similar size (20,000-50,000 customers) that have implemented your solution within the past three years. References should include:

- Utility name, location, and size
- Implementation date and project duration
- Scope of implementation (which functional areas)
- Key challenges and solutions
- Primary contact information (name, title, phone, email)
- Permission for site visits or system demonstrations

G. Pricing

Provide comprehensive pricing information including:

- Software licensing model and costs for all Nine functional areas
- Implementation services (project management, configuration, data conversion)
- Training costs
- Interfaces and integration development
- Hardware requirements (if applicable)
- Annual maintenance and support fees
- Optional modules or features
- Hourly rates for additional services
- Payment schedule aligned with implementation milestones
- The initial contract term will be five years
- Total cost of ownership (5-year projection)

Use your standard pricing format to include with the proposal.

H. Value-Added Services

Describe any additional services or capabilities that may benefit Urbandale Water Utility:

- Business process optimization consulting
- Staff augmentation options
- Utility best practices guidance
- Advanced analytics or AI capabilities
- Mobile workforce solutions beyond the core requirements

I. Contract Terms and Conditions

Provide standard contract terms including:

- Software license agreement
- Support and maintenance terms

- Service level agreements with performance metrics
- Warranty provisions
- Intellectual property rights
- Limitation of liability clauses
- Dispute resolution procedures
- Termination conditions

Note any terms that are non-negotiable or require special consideration.

J. Implementation Timeline

Present a detailed implementation timeline with:

- Major phases and milestones aligned with December 2026 go-live
- Critical path activities
- Resource requirements by phase
- Client responsibilities and dependencies
- Testing periods and acceptance criteria
- Training schedule
- Go-live preparation activities
- Post-implementation support transition

K. Requirements Response Format

Complete the "UWU Requirements.xlsx" spreadsheet according to these guidelines:

- Submit the completed spreadsheet as a separate Excel file with your proposal
- Use only these response indicators in the designated column:
    - **S**: Standard - Included in current version without modification
    - **P**: Feature/Function is partially included, but the proposed system does not meet the full extent of the listed requirement
    - **F**: Future - Available in a future release by December 2026
    - **C**: Customization - Requires modifications to standard software
    - **T**: Third Party - Requires third-party system integration
    - **N**: No - Cannot be provided

For any response other than "S", provide explanations in the Comments column:

- For "F": Specify release version and date
- For "C": Describe customization approach and effort

- For "T": Identify third-party product and integration method
- For "N": Suggest alternatives or workarounds if available

Include in your proposal a summary showing the percentage of requirements met through each method (S, P, F, C, T, N) by functional area.

6. Evaluation Criteria

UWU will review the proposals and identify the top respondents and invite those bidders to visit with the Urbandale Water Utility team for an in-person interview. Criteria to be included in the evaluation process include:

- Vendor's background and capability to provide services across all Nine functional areas
- Evaluation of references from similar-sized water utilities
- Experience implementing integrated solutions replacing Cogsdale and financial systems
- Pricing and total cost of ownership
- Proposal responsiveness to all functional requirements
- Ability to meet December 2026 implementation timeline
- Integration capabilities with existing infrastructure
- Support for future growth and regulatory requirements

7. Schedule

The anticipated schedule for this project is:

Activity	Date/Time
RFP Release	November 3, 2025
Bidder's Conference	December 1, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. CT
Deadline for RFP-Related Questions	December 17, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. CT

Activity	Date/Time
Answers to Questions Provided	December 30, 2025
Proposal Due	February 10, 2026, by 2:00 p.m. CT
Evaluation of Proposals	February 11-13, 2026
Invitations Issued to Finalists	February 17, 2026
Finalist Interviews	March 11-13, 2026

8. Terms and Conditions

- All communications should be directed to Glenn Purcell, Vice President at The Shpigler Group (glenn@shpigler.com)

- The Shpigler Group and Urbandale Water Utility will issue responses to inquiries and any other corrections or amendments it deems necessary in written addenda issued prior to the due date. All questions must be submitted by the deadline listed on the schedule.

- By submitting a response, the vendor represents and warrants that such bid is genuine and not a sham or collusive or made in the interest or on behalf of any person not therein named and that the vendor has not directly or indirectly induced or solicited any other vendor to put in a sham bid, or any other person, firm or corporation to refrain from submitting and that the vendor has not in any manner sought by collusion to secure to that vendor any advantage over any other vendor. By submitting a bid, the vendor represents and warrants that no official or employee of Urbandale Water Utility has, in any manner, an interest, directly or indirectly in the bid or in the contract which may be made under it, or in any expected profits to arise therefrom.

- All expenses involved with the preparation and submission of this bid package to Urbandale Water Utility, or any work performed in connection therewith is the responsibility of the vendor(s).

- All materials submitted in connection with this Request for Proposals will be public documents and subject to the laws of the State of Iowa, the United States of America and the open records policies of Urbandale Water Utility. All such materials shall remain the property of Urbandale Water Utility and will not be returned to the respondent.

- All respondents to this Request for Proposals shall hold harmless Urbandale Water Utility and any of their officers and employees from all suits and claims alleged to be a result of this Request for Proposals. Urbandale Water Utility reserves the right to determine, at its sole discretion, whether any aspect of a respondent's submittal meets the criteria in this Request for Proposals. Urbandale Water Utility also reserves the right to seek clarifications, to negotiate with any vendor submitting a response, to reject any or all responses with or without cause, and to modify the procurement process. If this Request for Proposals is withdrawn or there is a need to cancel the contract services for any reason, Urbandale Water Utility shall have no liability to any respondent for any costs or expenses incurred in connection with this request or otherwise.

- In case of failure to deliver goods or services in accordance with the contract terms and conditions, Urbandale Water Utility, after due oral or written notice, may procure substitute goods or services from other sources and hold the vendor responsible for any resulting addition purchasing and administrative costs. This remedy shall be in addition to any other remedies which Urbandale Water Utility may have.

- Any contract resulting from this Request for Proposals shall be governed in all respects by the laws of the State of Iowa and Urbandale Water Utility procurement code. The contractor shall comply with applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations.
- It is understood and agreed between the parties herein that Urbandale Water Utility shall be bound hereunder only to the extent of the funds available, or which may hereafter become available for the purpose of this agreement.

9. Bidder's Conference

The bidder's conference will be held on **Monday, December 1, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. CT**. For bidders that would like to attend in person, the location of the meeting will be at the municipal offices of Urbandale Water Utility, located at 3720 86th Street, Urbandale, IA 50322-4058. For those that would like to attend virtually, below are the details for the meeting:

Glenn Purcell is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Glenn Purcell's Zoom Meeting

Time: Dec 1, 2025 10:00 AM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

https://zoom.us/j/99851521968?pwd=PdqBjVuVNBIte3xcWbO2TEaZiKLBe2.1

Meeting ID: 998 5152 1968

Passcode: 783315

One tap mobile

+13017158592,,99851521968#,,,,*783315# US (Washington DC)

+13052241968,,99851521968#,,,,*783315# US

Join instructions

https://zoom.us/meetings/99851521968/invitations?signature=NT7HHsPNyEq8LDHC5_cjFk6WFhHl cxjEbPyzXz9PJT8