

## **ORDINANCE NO. 2025-O-106**

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 2024-0-196 TO RECOGNIZE CONTINUOUS SERVICE FOR FORMER UNITED WATER EMPLOYEES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TEXAS MUNICIPAL RETIREMENT SYSTEM (TMRS) RESTRICTED PRIOR SERVICE AGREEMENT; TO RE-OPEN THE VOLUNTARY RETIREE INCENTIVE PROGRAM (VRIP) FOR 30 DAYS FOR THESE EMPLOYEES; TO EXTEND THE VRIP BENEFIT TO THOSE WHO RETIRED DURING THE ORIGINAL VRIP WINDOW; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Laredo previously privatized certain water utility employees to United Water on September 30, 2002 and later returned these employees to City employment; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Laredo has established, in coordination with the Texas Municipal Retirement System (TMRS), a **bridge in service** to recognize the United Water employment period as continuous service for retirement eligibility purposes; and

**WHEREAS**, Ordinance 2024-0-196 currently requires 20 years of continuous full-time employment with the City of Laredo to participate in the Voluntary Retiree Incentive Program (VRIP); and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council finds it equitable and consistent with the TMRS bridge in service recognition to recognize the United Water employment period as continuous City service for the sole purpose of determining eligibility for the VRIP and related City retiree health insurance benefits; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council further finds it appropriate to **re-open the VRIP for a 30-day period and extend eligibility to those who already retired within the original VRIP window**, to ensure fairness and full access to the intended benefit.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAREDO, TEXAS, THAT:**

**Section 1.** Ordinance 2024-0-196 is hereby amended to add the following subsection:

**Special Provision for Former United Water Employees:**

For employees of the City of Laredo who were privatized to United Water in 2002 and subsequently returned to City employment in 2005, the period of employment with United Water shall be deemed continuous City service for the sole purpose of determining eligibility under the Voluntary Retiree Incentive Program (VRIP), consistent with the Texas Municipal Retirement System's (TMRS) Restricted Prior Service credit in service recognition.

**Section 2. Re-opening of VRIP for 30 Days:**

The City Council hereby re-opens the VRIP program for a period of 30 calendar days from the effective date of this amendment, solely for the former United Water employees described in Section 1, to allow them to retire and be eligible for VRIP benefits.

**Section 3. Extension of VRIP Benefits to Prior Retirees:**

The VRIP benefits provided under Ordinance 2024-0-196 shall also be retroactively extended to any of these former United Water employees who retired between October 1, 2024 and amendment of this ordinance, but were previously ineligible for VRIP benefits solely due to the United Water employment period.

**Section 4.** This recognition of continuous service shall not affect TMRS creditable service calculations, which have already been addressed through TMRS's Restricted Prior Service credit in service program, and is limited to VRIP eligibility and related City-provided retiree health benefits.

**Section 5.** This Ordinance shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

**Section 6. Severability Clause.** If any provision, section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this ordinance, or the application of same to any person or set of circumstances, is for any reason held to be unconstitutional, void, or invalid, the validity of the remaining portions of this ordinance shall not be affected thereby, it being the intent of the City Council in adopting this ordinance that no portion thereof or provision herein shall become inoperative or fail by reason of any unconstitutionality or invalidity of any other portion or provision.

**Section 7. Publication.** This ordinance shall be published in accordance with the provisions of the City Charter and state law.

**PASSED BY THE CITY COUNCIL AND APPROVED BY THE MAYOR ON THIS  
THE \_\_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_, 2025.**

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DR. VICTOR TREVIÑO  
MAYOR

ATTEST:

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MARIO I. MALDONADO, JR.  
CITY SECRETARY

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

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DOANH "ZONE" T. NGUYEN  
CITY ATTORNEY