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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2026

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Water repair tab rises by \$600M

Additional project costs could hit home utility bills next year

SCOTT STRASSER

The city needs to add more than \$600 million to its budgets over the next two years to pay for required upgrades to water system infrastructure – including replacing the Bears paw South feeder main – a new report says. The report, which members of the executive committee added

to Tuesday's meeting agenda as an urgent notice of motion, recommends council support an increase of \$609.5 million to the city's 2026 and 2027 capital budgets.

The funding increase would go toward the Bears paw South feeder main replacement as well as the new North Calgary Water Servicing project. The increased funding

would also support the city's installation of new water metering infrastructure, as well as capital delivery costs.

To help pay for the feeder main replacement, which has been expedited in the wake of a Dec. 30 failure – the second catastrophic rupture in two years – council will be asked to amend its borrowing bylaw, increasing the city's maximum borrowing capacity by \$515.2 million.

"This is really about accelerating the replacement of the Bears paw South feeder main," said

Michael Thompson, the city's general manager of infrastructure services.

"We were always going to be building that, but we were going to be doing the work (into 2028). We've accelerated all of that and will be building that in 2026 now, so we need the funding right now to do all of that work."

The request comes after the previous council supported just over \$1 billion in borrowing authority for water-related infrastructure projects at the end of 2024. SEE WATER BUDGET ON **A3**



NHL commissioner Gary Bettman declined to divulge details of a possible joint bid by Calgary and Edmonton to host the 2028 World Cup of Hockey during a news conference at the Saddledome on Tuesday afternoon, but said "it's a bid people could be very proud of." **GAVIN YOUNG**

Bettman cagey on Calgary's chances of hosting 2028 World Cup of Hockey

DEVIKA DESAI

Albertans will have to wait a couple of weeks to find out if the province's two biggest cities will host the 2028 World Cup of Hockey, NHL commissioner Gary Bettman said Tuesday during a visit to Calgary.

Bettman declined to divulge details of the bid during a news conference at the Saddledome on Tuesday afternoon.

But he said discussions could be finalized in a matter of weeks and an announcement made soon after.

"Certainly, it's a bid people could be very proud of," he said.

Should the bid be approved, it would mark a milestone for the

province, which has hosted multiple junior hockey championships and a women's world hockey championship, but never a hockey World Cup.

The event is scheduled to take place in February 2028, featuring eight of the top hockey nations in the world, with NHL players expected to participate.

Canada took gold the last time the World Cup was held in 2016, in Toronto. Canada also won gold at last year's 4 Nations Face-Off in Montreal, a scaled-down version of the tournament featuring just four teams.

On Monday, Premier Danielle Smith confirmed that the province had pledged \$15 million to assist with a bid.

She added that it would be a joint bid by Calgary and Edmonton.

"It would be exciting," Smith said. "We're crossing our fingers and hoping that the NHL players' association and the owners make a decision on the bid."

It would precede the 2028 Summer Olympics, set to take place in July in Los Angeles. Smith called it the "second-most watched sporting event in the world."

Bettman would not confirm whether it would be a joint bid between Edmonton and Calgary, or whether there is a second bid proposed by Tourism Calgary, wherein Calgary would be the sole host. SEE BETTMAN ON **A2**

SPORTS



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