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## Calgary to cut off services to surrounding communities

By SHAWN LOGAN, Sun Media

Municipalities on Calgary's periphery that enjoy city utility and emergency services will have to pay the piper or be forced to find their own solutions, says Mayor Dave Bronconnier.

Council will meet Tuesday for a special strategic planning session to discuss millions that are being lost every year by subsidizing services for other jurisdictions as the city faces a financial crunch brought on by a slowing economy.

Bronconnier said the city has been providing services such as water, sewer, fire and EMS to a number of municipalities that border Calgary for years and the amount coming back to city coffers doesn't come close to reflecting the true price tag.

"We're reviewing the cost of providing these services outside the city of Calgary because we want to make sure those who are paying are paying the real cost," he said.

"We've been fairly generous in being a good neighbour but we're no longer able to keep subsidizing other users."

A report going to council says the Tsuu T'ina First Nation will be put on notice that 13 servicing agreements with the city will be cancelled by 2012 unless they are renegotiated to better reflect the true cost.

And long-standing agreements with other municipalities that have been historically subsidized will have to be considered as well, Bronconnier said, noting the city is losing millions on the servicing deals although he wouldn't discuss the exact amount.

He said a study on the true costs will be prepared and the numbers will be shared with other members of the Calgary Regional Partnership.

Peter Manywounds, a spokesman for Tsuu T'ina, which lies on the city's western border, said the nation is aware that Calgary is looking to cease a number of agreements and is looking to go it alone for most services in the future.

"The process of upgrading our own infrastructure is well underway and it will continue," he said.

Ald. Diane Colley-Urquhart said with Calgarians facing an increasingly heavy tax burden, it's no longer fair to ask them to pick up the slack for other towns.

"We have to do everything we can to keep taxes down and it's unacceptable that Calgarians are



subsidizing servicing for any jurisdiction, period," she said.

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