In December 2016, an engineer’s report detailed concerns to the college about the aging facades on several NW Campus buildings, saying that they could possibly lead to “catastrophic failure.”

The report, from engineering firm Huitt-Zollars titled the Northwest Campus Facade Assessment, has never been publicly released, and TCC officials haven’t revealed many of the specific details in the assessment to the public. The Collegian obtained it through an open records request.

Reginald Gates, vice chancellor for communications and external affairs, did not respond to requests seeking comment.

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JUAN IBARRA
editor-in-chief

Workers stand outside the deteriorating WTLO tower while staring at a 200-square-foot void on the side of the building after a storm pulled the bricks off the wall in March 2016.

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The brick facade which fell from the WTLO tower caused $220,884 worth of damage and was the inciting incident that prompted an evaluation of NW Campus by engineering firm Huitt-Zolars. This led to the discovery of deeper issues with many buildings on campus.

The exterior walls of the swimming pool at the roof level had seven mortar cracks at the brick lulders due to the expansion of the lulders from heat, engineer Dan Chappell said in the report about WSHP.

Inside the assessment

According to the report, moisture was present between the structures and the brick facade. While two-inch air gaps are required to maintain some moisture between the two systems, some walls did not have the air gap required. Furthermore, several cracks were found in the masonry, indicating a lack of expansion and control joints for maintaining stress and preventing brick detachment.