Report warns of ‘catastrophic failure’

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.

Findings show that while the buildings are structurally sound, the 40-plus-year-old brick facades have issues such as missing brick ties, rust on studs and tracks, and mold in several areas.

A storm with high winds in the spring of 2016 tore off a large section of bricks from the WTLO building. No injuries were reported then, and no one has been hurt since then after scaffolding was put in place to protect students.

But the assessment showed the risk of bricks falling from the facade still existed as of the time of the report.

Structural issues raise safety concerns about NW campus

“Failure may not happen tomorrow, but there is no guarantee that it will not, which adds to the urgency of addressing these concerns.”

Northwest Campus Facade Assessment
by engineering firm Huitt-Zollars

Technology, fire truck amid approvals at meeting

The TCC board of trustees held a short meeting, approving continued contracts for technology maintenance; campus repairs and more training equipment Oct. 24.

Before the agenda items were up for consideration and approval from the board, president of the board Conrad Heede called to order the meeting with no public comments and unanimous approval of the past meeting’s minutes.

The previous governance meeting allowed for extensive questioning, discussion and debate to flush out the ideas and proposals presented to the board.

“We’ve already discussed them in full, so if we are very brief tonight, it’s because we’ve had a full discussion a week and a half ago,” said Heede.

Board of trustees member Bill Greenhill outlined the audit and finance report before summarizing recent board member training.

He also reminded the board and meeting attendees to get to the ballot box and cast a vote on the bond proposal.

“This election is probably not going to be well-attended, there aren’t going to be a lot of votes, so we urge you to go out because every vote is important,” Heede said.

Four board members attended the Association Of Community College Trustees Leadership Congress Oct. 16-19 in San Francisco, which is the largest professional development opportunity for community college trustees, presidents and other leaders.

“It was very helpful for me,” said Greenhill.