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Oklahoma Lawmakers Tour Crumbling Capitol

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) - Bright yellow barricades that prevent pedestrian traffic in front of Oklahoma's Capitol are just the most obvious indication that there are major repairs needed on the nearly 100-year-old building.

State officials including the Capitol architect took lawmakers on a tour Tuesday of areas in the building outside the public's view that revealed rotting pipes, disintegrating walls and a patchwork of disorganized repairs. Architect Duane Mass says the most pressing need is to fix giant limestone panels on the exterior of the building that are crumbling because of improper repairs.

Lawmakers are looking for ways to foot the bill for what experts estimate is about \$153 million in needed repairs. Among the ideas discussed Tuesday were a bond issue and the possibility of tapping the state's constitutional reserve fund.

Associated Press