

# Leaders OK renovation timetable

**By John Hanna**  
**The Associated Press**

Legislative leaders have set a schedule for the \$135 million renovation of the Statehouse, one that doesn't require asking for more bonds to be issued next year.

The work, already under way, is supposed to last into 2010. Plans are for an extensive restoration of the building's interior; an upgrading of its electrical, plumbing and mechanical systems; an addition of an underground parking garage; and creation of a visitor's center in what is now the basement.

On Wednesday, the Legislative Coordinating Council, the top four leaders in the House and three in the Senate, approved the schedule. They already had a schedule for the first phase, but little detail about the second, third and fourth phases.

The state has issued \$55 million in bonds to cover costs for the first phase, but the Legislature would have to approve more bonds for the work to continue. The next request, for \$19.8 million, would have to be made in 2004.

In 2003, legislators must grapple with a budget crisis. The state faces a \$312 million deficit on June 30, and Gov. Bill Graves has ordered \$78 million in cuts and canceled \$48 million in payments to local governments.

"People realize that in a project of this magnitude, spread out over a number of years, there will be good years and bad years," said Senate President Dave Kerr, R-Hutchinson.

Legislative leaders generally have supported the renovation as necessary to make the Statehouse more friendly to visitors, make much-needed mechanical changes, restore parts of it to its previous splendor and make the grounds more secure.

Other legislators have been critical because of the cost of the work and say their constituents don't like money being spent on the Statehouse when spending on schools, social services and highway projects may be cut.

But even critics wonder whether the state, having started the work, can stop it before it is done.

"It'd probably cost us more to stop the project than it would to proceed," said Rep. R.J. Wilson, D-Pittsburg, recently designated as House assistant minority leader. "That's what they tell us: Once you start it, you can't stop



The north side of the Kansas Statehouse grounds, pictured in October, remains under construction. THAD ALLTON/The Capital-Journal

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## Master plan

A look at the planned \$135 million Statehouse renovation, begun last year and scheduled to finish in October 2010.

### Phase I

- Cost: \$55 million.

Includes: Underground parking garage, four underground vaults for offices and mechanical systems, new elevator for the west side of the north wing, shell for the visitors' center.

Finished by: June 2004.

Other details: Parking

it."

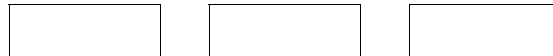
The first phase is supposed to be done by June 2004. It includes building the parking garage, four underground vaults for mechanical systems, the shell of the visitors' center and installation of a new elevator.

**On the Net:**

Kansas Legislature: <http://www.kslegislature.org>

Statehouse photos: <http://www.kslegislature.org/photos.html>

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garage would have space for 551 vehicles. The garage would be on the north side.

Phase II

• Cost: \$19.8 million.

Includes: Interior renovation for the east wing; upgrade of east wing mechanical systems and restoration of the wing's roof and exterior.

Finished by: July 2005.

Other details: Revisor's office, which drafts bills for the Legislature, would move to new offices in the basement, along with news organizations. Approval for bonds needed in 2004 legislative session.

Phase III

• Cost: \$21.7 million.

Includes: Interior renovation for the west wing, from basement to attic; upgrade of west wing mechanical systems; restoration of wing's exterior stone and roof; and new bathrooms.

Finished by: December 2006.

Other details: Legislative Research Department would move into new offices in the basement. Approval for bonds needed in 2005 session.

Phase IV

• Cost: \$38.5 million.

Includes: Interior renovation for the north

and south wings and rotunda; upgrade of mechanical systems; restoration of exterior stone and roofs; and completion of the visitors' center on basement's north side.

Finished by: October 2010.

Other details: The new visitors' center will include an auditorium, classroom and cafeteria. Approval for bonds needed in 2006 session.