FOOD WASTE: MERCER COUNTY COLLEGES CENTRAL TO BOTH ISSUE & 2030 Efforts
By Shannon Cestero, Emily Docherty, & Gab Tinus

According to the most recent comprehensive study from the United States Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service, 31 million tons of food waste were produced in the United States during 2010. For perspective, that amount is equivalent to the flow of Russia's Volga River, and 67% of food waste was generated from food service establishments, such as colleges, after being consumed but still edible. In addition, the Mercer County Improvement Authority helps municipalities, school and fire districts, and non-profits to standardize due to things like the variability of food preference and quantity consumed per person.

CAMPUS POLICY
Five colleges are responsible for 23% annual tons of food waste in Mercer County. The K-Cup boxes have been placed in TCNJ residential buildings to promote recycling. Economically used items by college kids.

mercer county policy

The Trenton Green Team supports community participation in efficient food production and local food programs. In addition, the Mercer County Improvement Authority helps to implement programs and services to assist the Trenton County's municipalities, school and fire districts, and non-profits with the financing, project management, and redevelopment of local waste and recycling initiatives.

global policy

In May, Australia was the first country to set a target to reduce the amount of food waste it generates by 50%, by investing $1.2 million over two years in support of food rescue organizations. Norwegian supermarkets have recounted food near its sell-by dates, and are banning smaller loaves of bread to prevent overbuying. Additionally, in South Korea, a policy requires that each household be billed for amount of food it wastes.

THE UNITED NATIONS' SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: WHAT THEY ARE, AND WHY THEY MATTER TO TCNJ

The United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is an updated version of the UN's Millennium Development Goals, set in 2000 and culminating in 2015, to eradicate poverty. Many of the Millennium goals were reached early, in large part due to fast growth in Asian nations. The 2030 Agenda expands the number of goals from eight to seventeen, with 169 specific targets, and has a new focus on sustainable development while maintaining its emphasis on the goals associated with poverty.

The agenda is not being applied officially to the city of Trenton, but the following articles demonstrate that Trenton and Mercer County could benefit significantly if they implemented it. Of the 17 goals, students from Dr. Karen Becker's MKT370 Marketing and Public Policy class have single out those dealing with justice and state institutions, gender equality, food waste, and clean water as particularly relevant to issues which Trenton and Mercer County face.

Some articles will challenge TCNJ students to live more sustainably. Among the worst food wasters in Mercer County are its colleges; and TCNJ alone wasted approximately 465 tons of food in the past five years. Others will make readers aware of critical imperfections plaguing Trenton. High school graduation rates in the city are troublingly low, as is the supply of guaranteed clean water. While the UN had developing countries in mind when designing its 2030 Agenda, many of the issues they identified apply to developed countries and their communities, like Trenton, as well.

By Paul Mulholland

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By Paul Mulholland
TRENTON URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Special thanks to The BB&L’s economic development reporter, Jared Kofsky, for this custom edition of “New Jersey, New Business.”

Jared Kofsky:

CHANGES IN THE CAPITAL: More Development Proposed for Trenton

Like Newark and Elizabeth, New Jersey’s capital city is continuing to see proposals for new buildings, but the impact that they will have is still unclear.

Trenton currently has the fewest number of residents living within its city limits in over a century. However, decades after deindustrialization limited economic opportunities and spurred a movement out of Trenton, new residential developments are being planned. Further, the departure of institutions like TCNJ and Rider University magnified the negative impact on the city and created suburban sprawl in Ewing and Hamilton. Yet what impact will these projects have on existing residents? Here are some of the latest economic development-related headlines affecting New Jersey’s capital.

Construction was completed last year on the Roebling Lofts, the first phase of the new Roebling Center project at the edge of Trenton’s Chambersburg neighborhood. Now, developers are preparing to move forward on the remaining parts of this new community. HHG Development Associates of Mill Hill is in the process of constructing new structures and adaptively reusing the existing historic buildings that make up the former John A. Roebling’s Sons Company complex on Clark Street in order to create a major mixed-use development. The entire facility is designed to be a transit-oriented development since the property is adjacent to the Hamilton Avenue River Line Light Rail Station. When completed, the complex will include five buildings with 109,000 square feet of office space, along with restaurants, retail space, an 888-car parking garage, and 52 apartments. In addition, an outdoor public plaza called ‘The Railyard’ will offer movie screenings and live programming. However, rents at the new Roebling Lofts are among the highest in the city, leading to concerns from some residents over not being able to afford to take advantage of the new development in their neighborhood. Whether the upcoming buildings will include affordable housing has yet to be announced.

Across town, residents of the East Trenton community could soon see improvements at their neighborhood park. The Hetzel Field Park sits in the shadow of an abandoned industrial tower along the Assunpink Creek at 190 North Olden Avenue. Home to the annual East Trenton Reunion, the 10.4 acre park contains a swimming pool that has been closed for several summers, a baseball field, a walking path, a vacant pool house, and a parking lot that has largely not been maintained. However, the City of Trenton is now planning several improvements for the premises. Legal notices from City Hall show that the City is seeking landscape architectural and engineering services as part of a plan to revitalize the park. When completed, Hetzel Field is expected to include a renovated pool house, a “landscaped plaza” along North Olden Avenue, new lighting and fencing, a new swimming pool and splash pads and more. A timeline for the project has not yet been released.

A few miles away, downtown Trenton could soon see a mixture of existing buildings being converted into residential developments and new apartment buildings being constructed. For instance, the Delaware Building at 329 West State Street used to be a State office building that contained agencies such as the Department of Community Affairs’ Bureau of State and Regional Planning, the New Jersey State Clearinghouse, and the New Jersey Commission on Science and Technology; but it will likely soon be home to dozens of residents. Legal notices from the City show that The Delaware Edge, LLC of Lake- wood bought the property last year for $379,000 and is now planning to convert the building into 35 apartments. The structure is set to consist of one-bedroom and two-bedroom units, with 36 parking spaces provided on the premises. The entire interior of the building will be gutted and replaced, and new lighting, windows, doors, and a bike rack would be installed. The developer has already gone before the Trenton Planning Board and the Trenton Landmarks Commission for Historic Preservation.

Although Trenton is one of the largest cities in Central New Jersey, the City operates only one public library. The Trenton Free Public Library (TFPL) on Academy Street is within walking distance of Downtown Trenton and surrounding blocks, but is quite far from the city’s outer wards. However, there used to be four library branches spread out throughout Trenton’s neighborhoods until they were shut down nearly a decade ago after officials said they could no longer afford to keep them in operation. Today, although the library signs remain in front, the Briggs, Cadwalader, East Trenton, and Skelton Libraries remain vacant with no sign of being re-opened as branches of the TFPL. Despite this, the East Trenton Branch could possibly see new use. The branch is situated within the historic Samuel Dickinson House, a structure that organizations such as the East Trenton Collaborative and New Jersey Community Capital are looking to revitalize at some point. Although it would not be a traditional library, the building could become similar to a community center with books possibly available for local residents.

Sustainable development Goal 11: Sustainable Cities & Communities

A Sustainable Future for Trenton, New Jersey

- 11.1 By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe, and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums
- Local Control:
  - Currently, Trenton has inadequate housing and subpar housing standards for its residents
  - Trenton homelessness is increasing by 15% per year
  - Yet there are 4,451 vacant houses in Trenton
  - Approximately 2/3 of Trenton’s residents rent
  - 1/2 are paying 35-50% of their monthly income on housing expenses
  - Out of the homeless Trentonians:
    - 27% have mental health issues
    - 32% have medical disabilities
    - 10% have substance abuse
    - 25% are families with children

Existing Policies:

- Trenton Housing Authority helps people apply for housing but waitlists are very long & placement is not guaranteed
- High-rise apartment complexes expose residents to gang activity, drug traffic, bedbugs & lead poisoning
- Federal government has given Trenton a grant of 50.1 million dollars to help infrastructure
- The Rescue Mission of Trenton helps the homeless; only in cold weather and for the displaced during a disaster
- The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) allows no more than 30 days in emergency shelter and transitional housing

Suggestions:

- Counseling with qualified professionals for the impoverished who have mental disabilities and used professional help to improve their health and day-to-day lives
- Roofed broken-down/shanty/unsuitable housing, which is a cheaper alternative to renovating
- Year-round homeless shelters, not just ones for cold weather or people displaced by disasters
- Healthier, safer buildings will lead to more people who will strive to live in these homes

GRAPHIC COURTESY OF ARIANA BERBERAE
Societal Sustainability Goals

Trenton Municipal Institutions Can Be Better Supported, More Supportive

Resource on violent crime resources could better serve city safety & security

Peace, justice, and strong institutions are the foundation of economic growth and sustainability for all communities, regardless of socioeconomic status or wealth. As Trenton suffers from a lack of sustainable development and effective programming, its citizenry suffers. The city’s ability to attract new businesses and stimulate its economy should be subject to fundamental changes to improve the overall health of a neighboring community.

The capital of New Jersey faces high crime rates and low socioeconomic status across all of its demographic segments, which contribute to a more dangerous environment for all citizens, especially children. The majority of individuals in low-income jobs, such as food service, administration, and cleaning operations, are disproportionately non-white and without formal educations. In turn, these children are more likely to be involved in perpetuating significant physical, mental, and emotional damages.

It is our opinion that societal injustices can be attenuated by promoting programs that significantly reduce violent crimes in Trenton, which extend to the abuse, exploitation, and trafficking of children. As of the Trenton City Profile Report in 2014, nonviolent crimes had significantly dropped over the prior ten years; but aggravated assaults and homicides had not. With the changes detailed below, Trenton’s crime index, which currently sits at a score of 962 (3rd worst in the United States) can move closer to the national average of 280. When people feel safer walking around where they live, this is a key step for communities to progress and institutional development to prosper.

Reformulation in all or some of areas of crime will more likely to be involved in perpetuating significant physical, mental, and emotional damages.

There are challenges that women still have to overcome to reach this equality in representation. Section 1 of SDG 5 was developed with the understanding that women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunity for decision-making at all levels of national and international institutions is an essential factor towards gender equality and empowerment. It represents the principles that men and women are being paid the same, that everything else that a corporation does conforms to the current wasteful habits.

Food Waste, from Page A1

**Sustainable development Goal 16:** Peace, justice, and strong institutions

The United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goal 16 sets out “to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.” Specifically, Section 5 of the goal is to “ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life.” Equal representation of women in all levels of government, in Trenton and around the world, is important, because the crucial to foster open dialogues that are representative of all people.

Gender gap

Out of the 189 governments with elected officials, the U.S. ranks 77th in the world for female representation in its parliamentary body.

**FEMALE REPRESENTATION: TRENTON CAN BE AN EXAMPLE FOR ITSELF, OTHER GOVERNMENTS**

By CHRISTINE BORTON, ALLY FIFER, & SONIYA REDDY

The only form of food recycling that is currently wasteful habits.

This community service team is composed of a group of engaged Trenton residents and people who work or volunteer in Trenton. Some of their most prominent initiatives include efforts to create and contribute to community gardens and market farmers markets more accessible.

Food waste is not only detrimental to our environment, it also has a negative impact on economic growth. There are currently countries with little to no drinkable water, yet the disposal of food waste uses a volume of water that is equivalent to the flow of Russia’s Volga River, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). In addition, the FAO estimates 3.3 billion tons of greenhouse gases were emitted into the atmosphere by food waste. Food waste is not cheap, either, and almost every farm that grows food to sell has been affected by their having created this excessive waste of food. By over-requiring by-sell dates and fading to plan their shopping and weekly menu consumers have created an environment of everything. However, consumers are not the only ones at fault. Retailers have been known to reject large amounts of edible food based on aesthetic and quality beliefs.

Sustainable development Goal 2: Zero Hunger

Three main steps must be taken in the fight to reduce food waste. First, we must improve farming practices and technologies to increase crop yields and reduce demand for products so that natural resources are not wasted on unnecessary food waste. Additionally, we need to incorporate circular design into the food industry. Even if the food waste is not fit for human consumption, it can still be utilized towards composting. Finally, we must reject what we cannot reuse. Food waste in landfill is one of the largest emitters of Greenhouse Gases.

The highest priority should be given to slowing down global food loss. In order for this initiative to be successful, participation at every level – from TCNJ to beyond – is key.

淑女在汉的百分比

If the next level, national priorities were taken to close this gap, but they have since been halted. The Obama administration established an executive rule requiring corporations to report salary breakdowns by race and gender. However, President Trump’s head of the White House Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs stated last year that the stipulation was not practical, that it would be burdensome for major corporations and infringe on privacy and confidentiality rights. If this is truly the case, then Congress should pass legislation that slightly increases the workload of the SEC by having regulators document pay differences between workers in every public company. While the SEC already verifies that everything else that a corporation does conforms to sustainable development Goal 5: Gender equality

Currently, New Jersey and its capital city have had successes in promoting equality among citizens and demonstrating fair representation among elected leaders. It’s now up to Trenton and the Garden State to extend the example for surrounding municipalities, states, and national and international governments on how progressive gender equality and empowerment is being made.

Contact us: bbl@tcnj.edu

Sustainable development Goal 16: Peace, justice, & strong institutions

Trenton City Hall on East State Street

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OPINION

SANITATION SOLUTION: SOCIAL MEDIA

How platforms like Facebook and Twitter can be the final straws for troubling Trenton drinking water

BY KYLE BOYLAND, CHRISTOPHER MITCHKO, & JACK PURCELL

The issue of water quality within the TCNJ community has become increasingly relevant as over 225,000 people drink the water coming from Trenton Water Works in 2018.

The largest problems at hand include the public not being alerted when there are boil water warnings, as well as Trenton Water Works and the government not properly executing the policies that have been legislated to prevent contaminated water. For example, between September 25, 2017, and November 2, 2017, the water filtration system at Trenton Water Works stopped functioning. The protocol for this issue clearly states that the public should be notified with a “boil water alert” as soon as the issue was known about. In this instance, however, the public was never notified, and over 200,000 citizens might have been drinking water that contained excessive levels of haloacetic acids, or by-products of water chlorination that can increase risks of cancer and pose health threats to the young, elderly, and pregnant.

Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram allow the public free, easy access to a stage to gather and express opinions. The government and elected officials have yet to intervene and stop tolerating the leniency with which water safety policies are followed. In a letter to Trenton Mayor Eric Jackson dated October 30, 2017, then-commissioner of the NJ Department of Environmental Protection Bob Martin outlined steps that the city needed to take in order to fix obvious conflicts at Trenton Water Works. This focused on issues of understaffing and lack of talent management. However, the letter was not received well by Jackson, and despite Martin writing a second letter, it was not until this past Thursday, March 1st, that the City Council agreed to contract a Detroit-based civil engineering firm to take over the management of the water department. Additionally, the Comprehensive Watershed Management Advocacy is another program focused on uniting neighboring municipalities to demand higher quality drinking water. The organization’s main contention is that Trenton Water Works would be more successful at eliminating contamination in the water supply if the aging filtration infrastructure at Trenton Water Works were refurbished (a total restoration estimated to cost $2.3 billion). Other top priorities discussed by this organization include how to combine the efforts of community members in Trenton and in all neighboring municipalities to compel the Trenton government to act.

There is a platform that can help quickly meet the goal of public involvement. To this point, the Trenton public has not properly been informed about the hazards at Trenton Water Works, and therefore hasn’t had the opportunity to form a pronounced stance on the issues plaguing the utility. Our plan is to allow for the citizens affected by the water quality to step into the limelight and form an opinion on the topic by creating a social media campaign. On popular social media platforms, we believe that even individuals not looking to be involved will at least be informed of the negligence for which the Trenton Water Works operators and Trenton leadership have been responsible.

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