



Waste Transfer Station Definition and Standards

City Councilmember Barb Warwick

Dec. 2, 2025

Legislation Language

2025-2385: Ordinance amending the Pittsburgh Code, Title Nine: Zoning Code, Article V: Use Regulations, Chapter 911: Primary Uses, to add a definition for Waste Transfer Station and standards associated with the use.

body

The Council of the City of Pittsburgh hereby enacts as follows:

Section 1. The Pittsburgh Code, Title Nine, Zoning Code, Article V, Use Regulations, is hereby amended as follows:

911.02 Use Table

	Base Zoning Districts																							Standard See Section 911.04.x	
Waste Transfer Station A supplemental transportation facility used as an adjunct to solid waste route collection vehicles, for the primary purpose of moving the solid waste from the collection vehicles to other vehicles for further transfer.	Residential					Mixed Use										Special			DT	RIV					
	R1D	R1A	R2	R3	RM	NDO	LNC	NDI	UNC	HC	GI	UI	UC-MU	UC-E	R-MU	P	H	EMI	GT	RM	MU	NS	GI	IMU	
											C												C		§ 911.04A.101

Section 2. The Pittsburgh Code, Title Nine, Zoning Code, Article V, Use Regulations, is hereby amended at Chapter 911 Primary Uses as follows:



Legislation Language

2025-2385: Ordinance amending the Pittsburgh Code, Title Nine: Zoning Code, Article V: Use Regulations, Chapter 911: Primary Uses, to add a definition for Waste Transfer Station and standards associated with the use.

911.04.A.101 Waste Transfer Station

1. All waste shall be contained and managed within a completely enclosed facility.
2. The RIV-GI Buffer requirements of 905.04.J.2.D shall apply to all boundaries of the subject Zoning Lot regardless of whether the boundary is another RIV-GI district. The Approving Body may waive some or all of these requirements if it determines that screening is not necessary where abutting property is another industrial use.
3. Any buildings housing waste transfer stations shall be located at least five hundred (500) feet from the following uses, defined by a radius of 500 feet from the property lines of the proposed facility:
 - a. Any use zoned as residential under the Zoning Code;
 - b. Local Neighborhood Commercial (LNC);
 - c. Urban Neighborhood Commercial (UNC);
 - d. Highway Commercial (HC);
 - e. Elementary or Secondary School; or
 - f. Parks and Open Space (P).
4. A Transportation study shall be provided that shows vehicles operating in service of the use will be routed to cause the least feasible impact on surrounding residential and commercial uses.
5. Applicant shall submit an operations plan for review and approval by relevant city agencies, that shall include but is not limited to hours of operation and vehicle routing.
6. The use shall not be located in any Identified Floodplain Area (Section 906.02.E.2).
7. The use shall be in compliance with all state permitting and the State Department of Environmental Protection.
8. The Approving Body shall determine that such use will not create detrimental impacts on surrounding properties, taking into consideration the probable traffic generation, the physical relationship of the proposed use and structure to the surrounding uses and structures, the probable hours of operation, the design and location of areas for parking and maneuvering of vehicles, and the emission of odors, fumes, dust, noise, vibration, or glaring light.

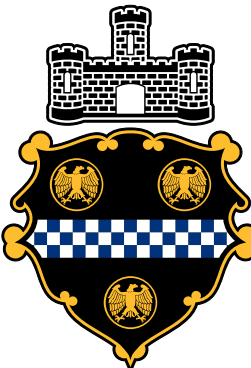
Full legislation details with text:

<https://pittsburgh.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=7707678&GUID=6AEB38C2-1413-414C-A703-79E676361624&Options=ID%7CText%7C&Search=waste&FullText=1>

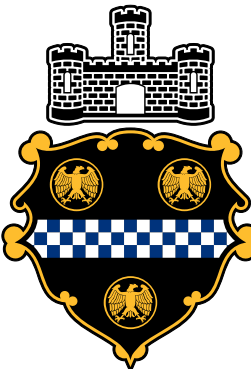
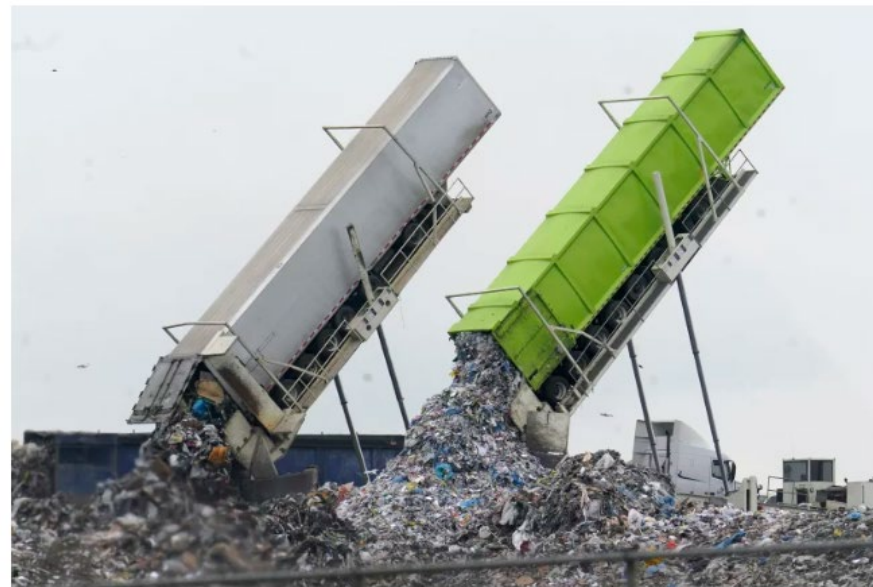


Current waste transport and waste transfer station discussion

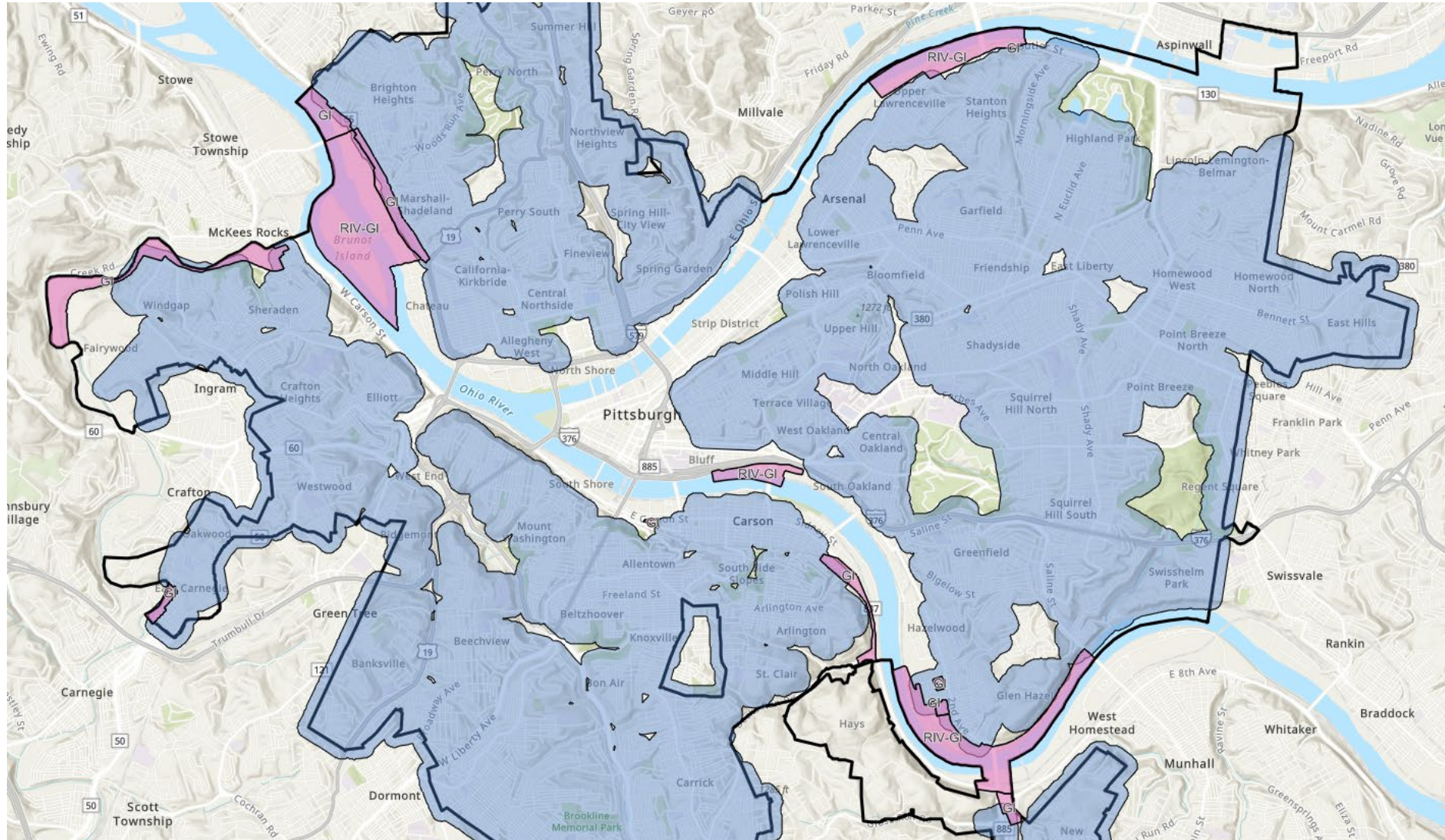
- Currently there is no municipal solid waste transfer station operating in the City of Pittsburgh
- Environmental service (ES) drivers must drive non-recyclable municipal waste directly to the landfill in Imperial – about 20 mi
- Puts a strain on ES vehicles and takes time from ES routes
- Could benefit the City of Pittsburgh to have a waste transfer station, so that our ES trucks do not have to travel as far to unload
- But there is currently no plan or guidance from City Planning on where such a facility might go
- It is critical that the City find ways to meet the need for operational efficiency without negatively impacting the health and well-being of residents



Large-scale storage containers for municipal solid waste



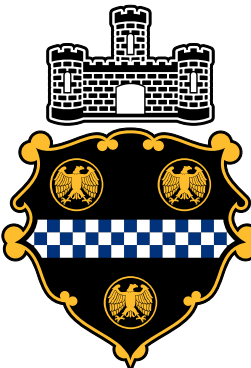
Map for Potential WTS

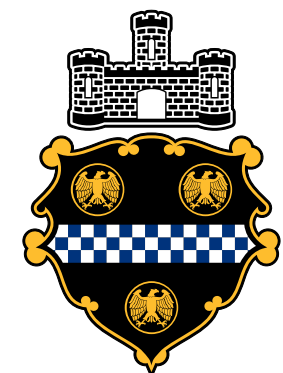


Community impact of large-scale waste transfer stations

- Excessive trash and litter
- Light pollution from large-scale facilities
- Noise pollution from increased traffic, large trucks, and loud equipment
- Air pollution from trucks and odor from waste
- Rodents, roaches, and other pests

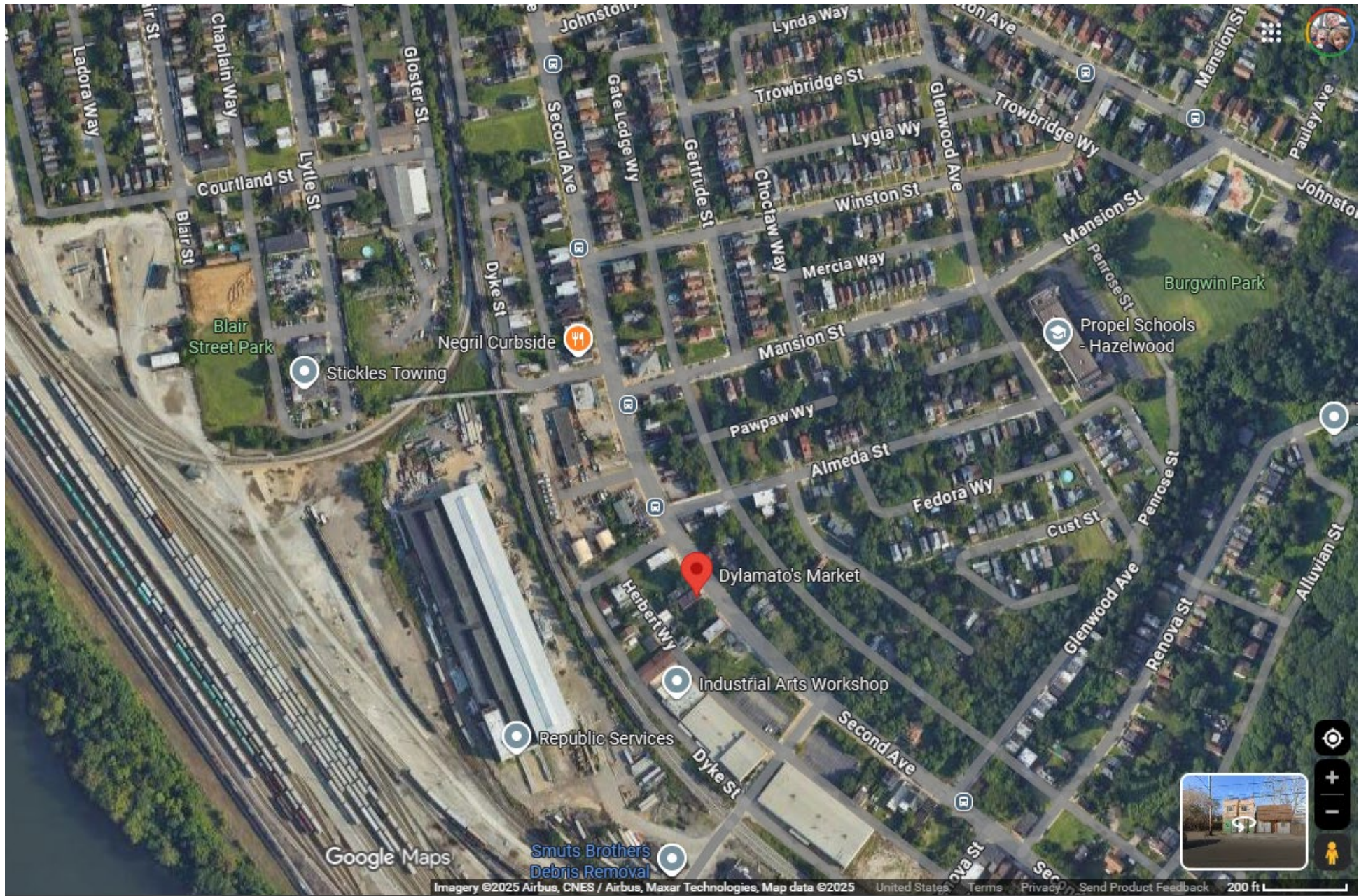
As a City, it is our job to find solutions to logistical and environmental challenges that do not do harm to our residents. While a Waste Transfer Station may be necessary, we should be proactive about determining where one could be safely located – not allow the private market to make that determination based on what works best for any one company or waste operator's bottom line.











Questions or comments?





Thank You