

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)  
Wilkinsburg Transit Revitalization Investment District (TRID)  
Planning Study

RFP Issue Date: June 15, 2017  
Proposals Due Date: July 21, 2017 at 4 PM ET

**Section 1. General Information:**

- 1.1 The Borough of Wilkinsburg requests proposals from transportation, economic development and urban planning consultants to author a planning study that identifies transit-oriented development and infrastructure opportunities in and near the Borough of Wilkinsburg within the vicinity of Allegheny County's Martin Luther King, Jr. East Busway and examines the feasibility of creating a TRID district in the study area.
- 1.2 The project budget is **\$75,000**. The project duration is estimated to be 12 months. Interested parties are requested to submit a detailed Proposal Package that clearly defines the relevant experience of the proposed staff and subconsultant team members, as well as proposed methods and strategy to carry out the project scope of work.
- 1.3 Contact person for all queries and for receipt of proposals:

**Donn Henderson**  
**Borough Manager**  
**Borough of Wilkinsburg**  
**605 Ross Ave**

**Wilkinsburg, PA 15221**

412-244-2906

[dhenderson@wilkinsburgpa.gov](mailto:dhenderson@wilkinsburgpa.gov)

- 1.4 Respondents shall restrict all contact and questions regarding this RFP and selection process to the individual named herein. Questions concerning terms, conditions and technical specifications shall be directed in writing to Donn Henderson (See section 1.3). Questions will be answered in writing on the Borough of Wilkinsburg website under the rfp by June 30, 2017 (<http://www.wilkinsburgpa.gov>). Questions submitted after June 27, 2017 will not be answered.
- 1.5 Consideration is expected to be given, but is not guaranteed to be given, to the criteria listed in this RFP. The Borough of Wilkinsburg reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, to waive any and all informalities outlined in the RFP and in the selection process and generally to make the award that, in its judgment, will best meet the objectives stated in this RFP.
- 1.6 Expenses incurred by the respondents in replying to the RFP or in making any appearance before the Review Committee are at the respondents' own expense and risk.
- 1.7 Subconsultants may participate on multiple applicant teams. The Borough of Wilkinsburg reserves the right to make suggestions related to team structure during final contract negotiations.

## **Section 2. Background:**

### **2.1 *TRID BACKGROUND***

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Transit Revitalization Investment District (TRID) Act of 2004 provides a financing mechanism for local taxing bodies to encourage Transit Oriented Development at Amtrak and transit stations. The TRID Act has established planning study guidelines for the creation of districts within which the financing mechanism may be applied. The purpose of this project is to conduct the planning studies required to develop a recommendation on the feasibility of establishing a TRID in the vicinity of the Port Authority of Allegheny County's Wilkinsburg station of the Martin Luther King Jr. East Busway.

### **2.2 *Martin Luther King Jr. East Busway Background***

The East Busway is an exclusive, fixed-guideway bus rapid transit (BRT) that extends 9.1 miles from Downtown Pittsburgh through many of Pittsburgh's most populated eastern neighborhoods, eventually terminating at the Swissvale Park-and-Ride lot. Opened in 1983 and

extended in 2003, the East Busway is one of the earliest and most unique forms of BRT projects in the United States. Average weekday ridership of this 9-mile line is about 24,000 and annual ridership is almost 7,000,000.

Fourteen routes provide a mix of busway-only and on-street, fixed-route services linking Allegheny County's Eastern communities with Downtown Pittsburgh. The backbone of the service is the P1 East Busway-All Stops serving all stations along the East Busway from Swissvale to Penn Station and several stops within Downtown Pittsburgh. This route operates seven days per week from 5:44 a.m. to 11:57 p.m. with weekday service beginning at 5:07 a.m. and concluding at 1:02 a.m. Additionally, the P3 East Busway-Oakland route provides weekday express service from Swissvale to Oakland.

Between 1996 and 2008, an estimated \$800 million worth of development has occurred along the original East Busway between Downtown Pittsburgh and Wilkinsburg. Additional development has occurred since then and more development is underway. However, the East Busway is located within a rail corridor that has, since its days as the Pennsylvania Railroad Main Line, acted as a significant divide between the City's wealthiest neighborhoods and the City's most distressed neighborhoods. This divide has limited the full development potential of the East Busway, especially in those distressed neighborhoods. The railroad portion of the corridor is currently operated by Norfolk Southern.

One of the East Busway's five stations within the City of Pittsburgh, the East Liberty Station, has bridged that historic divide. In the last decade, development along the East Busway edge has blurred the chasm between one of the City's wealthiest neighborhoods, Shadyside, and East Liberty, a historically distressed neighborhood. With new commerce and new residents the East Busway is now viewed as an asset, not an impediment. In 2012, the City of Pittsburgh received a \$15 million grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation TIGER IV program to reconfigure the existing East Liberty Station into a new mixed-use transit center. This multi-modal transit project reconfigured the existing station to provide better access to transit, decrease road congestion, encourage economic growth, and bridge two business and residential communities. The center includes 54,000 sq. ft. of retail, more than 350 residential units and a new parking garage. At the end of 2013, a TRID was established, which help fund several infrastructure projects including the mixed use development. The East Busway corridor, between East Liberty Station and Wilkinsburg, has great economic development potential. The corridor is surrounded by flat, primarily vacant developable land; an intact, compact, and walkable street grid; and is proximate to many of Pittsburgh's most affluent neighborhoods. This study will start to look at the potential of that corridor with a focus on the Wilkinsburg Station. This corridor presents an opportunity to continue to leverage one of Pittsburgh's greatest assets, the East Busway- while also learning from the experiences of other areas. Wilkinsburg has a strong desire to focus on community-driven, inclusive infrastructure and development.

In addition to the East Busway, there are plans in development for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in the Downtown – Oakland – East End Corridor. Although the infrastructure investment would be focused in the Downtown – Oakland segment, proposed service would convert the P3 (Wilkesburg-Oakland) route to rapid service that would have greater frequency and span.

### **2.3 Wilkesburg Station Background**

The Borough spans just over two square miles and is a community of neighborhoods that are socioeconomically and racially diverse. These attributes contribute positively to the collective experience that many residents feel in Wilkesburg. Wilkesburg stands at the nexus of major transportation arteries, but they serve more to send opportunity elsewhere and divide the community today than benefit the Borough. Heavily travelled Penn Avenue strangles the business district as 20,000 vehicles daily pass through the Borough. The East Busway not only creates a physical barrier between more economically stable parts of the Borough and its challenged core, it also generates congestion as roughly 1,000 cars daily access its two park-and-ride lots and heavy bus traffic – on and off the Busway – traverses residential streets.

Once a thriving economic center on the edge of Pittsburgh’s East End, Wilkesburg, like many first-ring suburbs, fell victim to the same socioeconomic forces as adjacent City neighborhoods post-urban renewal, but struggles to recover. The Borough lost half of its population since 1950, with median household income plummeting during that time. It suffers from a residential vacancy rate of over 18% Borough-wide, concentrated in its core, and 29% throughout its vast commercial district. 18% of all taxable properties Borough-wide are tax-delinquent, the majority of the vacancies within its commercial district, and the median real estate sales price is \$21,000.

As was the case for its original rise and neighboring Pittsburgh’s rebirth, this infrastructure is the key to Wilkesburg’s future. Transit abundance and utilization is stronger here than all but a few places in the region. Large commercial and former industrial parcels at the Busway/Penn Ave. nexus position the Borough to catalyze its own major economic opportunities.

Wilkesburg sees these opportunities, and the Borough working with strong partnership with Allegheny County, the Wilkesburg Community Development Corporation (WCDC), Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation (PHLF), and the Wilkesburg School District, have already prepared to capitalize on them – through its comprehensive and business district plans, transit-oriented development has become a top priority of the Borough. There is a national register district nomination for the business district associated with and incorporating the train line and its associated structures. The joint tax committee to reclaim vacant and blighted properties, which consists of the Borough and School district are unanimous in their support of this study.

Port Authority of Allegheny County, the transit service provider and a major property owner in the study area, has identified Wilkinsburg as a top priority for its transit-oriented development program and a key location for infrastructure investment in its fixed-guideway system. This study will be a vital tool not just for Wilkinsburg Borough but also for Port Authority as it advances planning for TOD at Wilkinsburg Station. The Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group's (PCRG) Better Busway study also identified Wilkinsburg Station as a key strategic TOD opportunity area to make the entire Busway corridor more attractive to private investment and grow transit ridership, and the project made a planning investment in the station area during its Phase 2.

This TRID study will provide a roadmap to the project team that links together neighborhoods and connects them, in an engaging and effective way, to the most robust public transit asset in western Pennsylvania. A Wilkinsburg TRID study is vital to pulling together the myriad planning efforts, and identifying a funding and implementation strategy for them all. Building on the recommendations of previous and current plans, the study will develop an activation strategy for station area parcels – including the Wilkinsburg park-and-ride facility - as well as a parking/mobility strategy for the area to grow transit and pedestrian/bike utilization while re-energizing Wilkinsburg's commercial core and housing stock.

### **Section 3. Project Description:**

#### **3.1 Project Description**

While some strategies for transit-oriented development have been outlined in the Wilkinsburg Comprehensive Plan, a Wilkinsburg TRID will continue the revitalization of the East Busway corridor. Building upon Bridging the Busway's vision the Wilkinsburg TRID study will assess the feasibility of implementing a TRID as a component of the total vision for the station area. The Borough of Wilkinsburg believes that a TOD can be a revitalizing force in neighborhoods adjacent to existing transit and that the East Busway corridor and Wilkinsburg Station are excellent opportunities for this type of development. Work from the Wilkinsburg TRID study will be utilized in future studies.

The major goals of the Wilkinsburg TRID study are to:

- Evaluate existing and concurrent studies in the area to form the foundation for the Wilkinsburg TRID study;
- Utilize and update the Bridging the Busway study to define requirements for TOD at the Wilkinsburg Station and to determine the feasibility of a TRID at this location;
- Provide a more specific and strategic approach to transit oriented development;
- Assess the feasibility and potential of a relocated station that better serves the community as and commuters;
- Identify opportunities for green infrastructure and multi-modal transportation

connections;

- Support the work being done on the historic Wilkinsburg Train Station to maximize investment and linkage to the community;
- Identify the infrastructure needs to support TOD at Wilkinsburg Station;
- Work with the communities and taxing bodies to determine if the establishment of a TRID is acceptable and what area it should include based on the study results and potential development scenarios; and
- Identify other funding and financing opportunities, actors within the community, and put forth a realistic strategy that both the community and public and private investors buy into.

The Wilkinsburg TRID Study should consider goals outlined in the Wilkinsburg Comprehensive Plan, “The Wilkinsburg Plan” (<https://www.wilkinsburgpa.gov/departments/boards-committees-and-authorities/planning-commission/>)

The Wilkinsburg TRID Study also aligns with the objectives of Allegheny Places, Allegheny County’s Comprehensive Plan (<http://www.alleghenyplaces.com/>) and the Regional Vision Scenario of the Southwest Pennsylvania Commission (<http://www.projectregion.org/regvis.shtml>).

### **3.2 Stakeholders**

- Allegheny County Economic Development
- City of Pittsburgh
  - Mayor’s Office
  - Department of City Planning
  - Department of Public Works
  - Pittsburgh Parking Authority
- Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
- Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation (PHLF)
- Wilkinsburg Community Development Corporation (WCDC)
- Port Authority of Allegheny County
- Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission
- Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh
- Hosanna House
- Wilkinsburg School District
- Pittsburgh Public Schools
- PA Department of Community and Economic Development
- PA Department of Transportation
- State Legislative District 24
- Residents of Wilkinsburg

### **3.3 Study Area**

The Primary Study Area will focus on either the half-mile radius surrounding Wilkinsburg Station or an appropriate TRID boundary as defined by the TRID Act No. 2004-238 (see “Exhibit B”).

### 3.4 Scope of Work

To complete the requirements of the TRID planning grant, the TRID team will do the following:

#### 1. Analysis (East Corridor Area and Primary Area Study)

The Wilkinsburg TRID study will build on the work of previous studies, fill in any gaps, and update any recent changes in order to analyze existing conditions.

##### o *Review existing and current studies*

A number of studies have already been completed or are being completed for the East Busway Corridor and the Wilkinsburg area that examine the market, present a vision, evaluate demand for development and explore the infrastructure needs for the area. These studies will be available to the selected TRID consultant team:

- o Wilkinsburg Comprehensive Plan (2010);
- o Wilkinsburg Business District Revitalization Plan (2010);
- o Homewood Bridging the Busway plan;
- o Homewood TRID Study;
- o East Liberty TRID Study and Implementation Plan (2011)
- o Port Authority Transit-Oriented Development Guidelines (2016)
- o PLANPGH
- o Wilkinsburg traffic circulation study phase I & II;
- o PCRG Better Busway phase 1;
- o PCRG TOD Typology Strategy for Allegheny County;
- o Wilkinsburg trestle design & engineering study;
- o SPC/Port Authority Eastern Corridor Transit Study and Transitional Analysis;
- o Trestle Circulation Studies, Phase I & II;
- o Historic Preservation
- o Hazard Mitigation Plan
- o Keystone Communities Parking Study
- o *Update current land use conditions*
- o *Analyze existing infrastructure conditions and need (Primary Study Area)*

#### 2. Market Analysis

- a. The Wilkinsburg TRID study will build off the previous market studies to evaluate the current financial market surrounding the Wilkinsburg Station and the East Corridor Area.
  - i. Account for the review and analysis of previous market studies

- ii. Analyze current market
- iii. Identify market opportunities

### 3. **Multi-Agency Coordination**

The Borough of Wilkinsburg will coordinate inter-agency meetings for regular plan updates.

Communication is essential to TRID implementation.

- a. *Present plan updates at monthly steering committee/Planning Commission meetings*

### 4. **Community Outreach (Primary Study Area)**

The Wilkinsburg TRID study team will conduct a minimum of three (3) public meetings. At least two (2) meetings will be conducted during the study and a final meeting will be conducted to share the results of the study. The steering committee will help the consultant team advertise the community meetings and set the location of the meetings. The meetings will be utilized as an opportunity to facilitate community support and to solicit input on the proposed land use plan and infrastructure improvements as well as district boundaries. Community input is very important to the success of this planning effort.

Plan displays and other presentation materials are to be produced by the consultant team for this public engagement. These materials are also intended for utilization by the project team for future meetings and briefings.

### 5. **Land Use (Primary Study Area)**

The Wilkinsburg TRID study will review proposed land use recommendations and propose new development opportunities based on market analysis, community feedback, and stakeholder conversations.

- o *Account for the review and analysis of existing and ongoing studies*
- o *Identify the conceptual development scale, fit, and mix*
- o *Illustrate proposed land use recommendations*

### 6. **Transportation Improvements (Primary Study Area)**

The Wilkinsburg TRID study will identify and illustrate needed infrastructure, access, bike and pedestrian connections, and transit improvements. The Wilkinsburg TRID study will be used to develop these plans and provide cost estimates.

- o *Identify and illustrate infrastructure improvements and costs*
- o *Identify and illustrate transit and transportation improvements and costs*
- o *Develop Wilkinsburg Station designs and provide cost estimates*

## 7. Zoning (East Corridor Area and Primary Study Area)

The Wilkinsburg TRID study will examine existing zoning in the TRID area and determine with other important planning stakeholders if changes are necessary to facilitate TOD around the stations.

## 8. Financial Plan (Primary Study Area)

The Wilkinsburg TRID study will primarily be dedicated to this task. Utilizing existing studies, the market analysis, development recommendations, and the determination of the cost of improvements to the Wilkinsburg Stations and surrounding infrastructure, the Wilkinsburg TRID study will determine the ultimate feasibility of pursuing a TRID.

- *Provide a recommendation on the establishment of a TRID*
- *Identify a TRID boundary*

The TRID boundary should follow the guidelines defined by the TRID Act, No. 2004-238. The TRID boundary should also balance infrastructure and
- *transportation improvement needs with the scale, fit, and mix of development within the proposed district. Develop value capture projections*
- *Identify capital improvement costs and gaps in financing*

## 9. Implementation Plan (Primary Study Area)

The Wilkinsburg TRID study implementation plan will determine funding and phasing strategies to aid in the implementation of study recommendations and the TRID itself. This section will also plot out what would need to occur to make a TRID feasible if it is not at this time.

- *Develop a funding strategy*
- *Develop a phasing strategy informed by funding opportunities with specific implementation responsibilities identified*
- *Identify a management entity, a plan, and schedule for TRID implementation*

## 10. Deliverables

- *Final working document in digital format*
- *Maps and map layer files as developed for the project*

### 3.5 Budget

The budget for this project is \$75,000.

## **Section 4. Organization and Required Submittals for Proposal:**

### 4.1 Submission Requirements and Deadline

1. Proposals should clearly articulate an understanding of TRID Legislation.

2. Nine (9) hard copies, in 8 ½" x 11" format (graphics/ maps can be in 11" x 17" foldout format) and one (1) electronic copy (Adobe PDF, 300dpi, character recognition, bookmarked, on CD or DVD) of the proposal must be received by the Borough of Wilkinsburg before **July 3, 2017, 4 PM**. (Eastern Time). Proposals received after the deadline will not be accepted. **Postmarks are not sufficient.**

Submissions should be delivered or mailed to:

**Donn Henderson  
Borough Manager  
Borough of Wilkinsburg  
605 Ross Ave  
Wilkinsburg, PA 15221  
412-244-2906**

#### 4.2 **Proposal Format and Content**

##### 1. **Cover Letter**

Limit to one page. Containing at a minimum:

- a. Company name, contact name, address, fax number, and email address; and
- b. Why this team is the most qualified to complete this project.

##### 2. **Scope of Services/Fees**

- a. A detailed narrative of methods and plan to carry out the scope of work
- b. A proposed fee schedule (subject to negotiation) of items specified in the Scope of Work; Include hourly rates for key staff; Describe the terms of payment
- c. Project timeline with key milestones

##### 3. **Firm Information**

Description of the consulting firm and any additional subconsultant firms included on the team (one page for each firm). Please include the following:

- a. Name, address, and telephone number;
- b. Number and location of offices;
- c. Managing principal, CEO, or president;
- d. Person to contact regarding this submission;
- e. Size of firm;
- f. Type of organization (sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, etc.); and
- g. Legal actions currently pending against firm.

The Borough of Wilkinsburg requires that all consultants demonstrate a good faith effort to obtain minority- and women-owned (M/WBE) business participation in work performed in connection with Borough of Wilkinsburg projects. The Borough of Wilkinsburg acknowledges the City of Pittsburgh's goal of 18 percent (18%) minority and seven percent (7%) female participation in planning and/ or professional service

activities such as design or legal as well as construction contracts and purchases and will strive to achieve these goals. The successful applicant will be required to submit an M/WBE plan as part of the project approval process. The inclusion of MBE and WBE firms must be documented in the format below.

Firm Name	Firm Percentage of Team	Percentage MBE (%)	Percentage WBE (%)

**4. Relevant Projects and References**

Limit one page per project; please include the following:

- a. Name and location of project;
- b. Size and cost of project;
- c. Name, address and telephone number of the client; and
- d. How the project relates to Wilkinsburg TRID study.

**5. Relevant References**

Limit to one page;

- a. List up to three additional client references for projects that are similar.

**6. Consultant Team**

Briefly describe the experience and roles of your proposed team and provide a resume for each member;

- a. Principal in Charge;
- b. Project Manager;
- c. Key staff members to be assigned to this project; and
- d. Subconsultants

**Section 5. Evaluation Criteria:**

All proposals will be evaluated based on the technical and professional expertise and the experience of the consultant, the proposed method and the procedures for completion of the work, and the cost of the proposal. The apparent ability of the consultant to be independent and objective in performing the requested work will also be considered.

**5.1 Technical Expertise, Experience and Access**

The technical expertise, experience and access of the consultant will be determined by

the following factors:

- a. Overall experience of the consultant;
- b. Expertise and professional level of the individuals proposed to conduct the work;
- c. Clarity and completeness of the proposal and the apparent general understanding of the work to be performed; and
- d. Demonstration of accessibility to the Borough of Wilkinsburg and of responsiveness to community needs.

## 5.2 **Procedures and Methods**

Procedures and methods will be determined by the following factors:

- a. Evaluation of proposed methods and plan to conduct the scope of work in a thorough, objective and timely manner;
- b. Sequence and relationships between major tasks;
- c. Knowledge and understanding of the local environment; and
- d. Approach to project management.

## 5.3 **Cost**

Cost will be weighed in relation to the other proposals received and shall be evaluated relative to the number of professional consulting services dedicated to the Wilkinsburg TRID study.

## 5.4 **Equal Employment Opportunity**

A willingness to make meaningful wide-range subcontracting and employment opportunities available to all interested qualified firms and individuals in the market place will be evaluated.

## **Section 6. Selection Process and Schedule:**

- 6.1 Responses to the RFP will be evaluated by a selection committee for the Wilkinsburg TRID study. Finalists of the RFP process will be asked to meet with the selection committee in a formal interview process. Final consultant selection will be made by the Borough of Wilkinsburg Board, which will be informed by the recommendation of the selection committee. The Borough of Wilkinsburg reserves the right to reject any and all proposals.
- 6.2 A tentative schedule has been prepared for this selection process. Firms interested in this project must be available on the interview meeting date. The schedule is subject to change; however, the RFP due date will not be changed without notice on the Borough of Wilkinsburg website (<https://www.wilkinsburgpa.gov>)

Proposals due: July 21, 2017 at 4 PM ET  
Firms notified for interview: July 25, 2017

Interviews: July 27-Aug 1, 2017

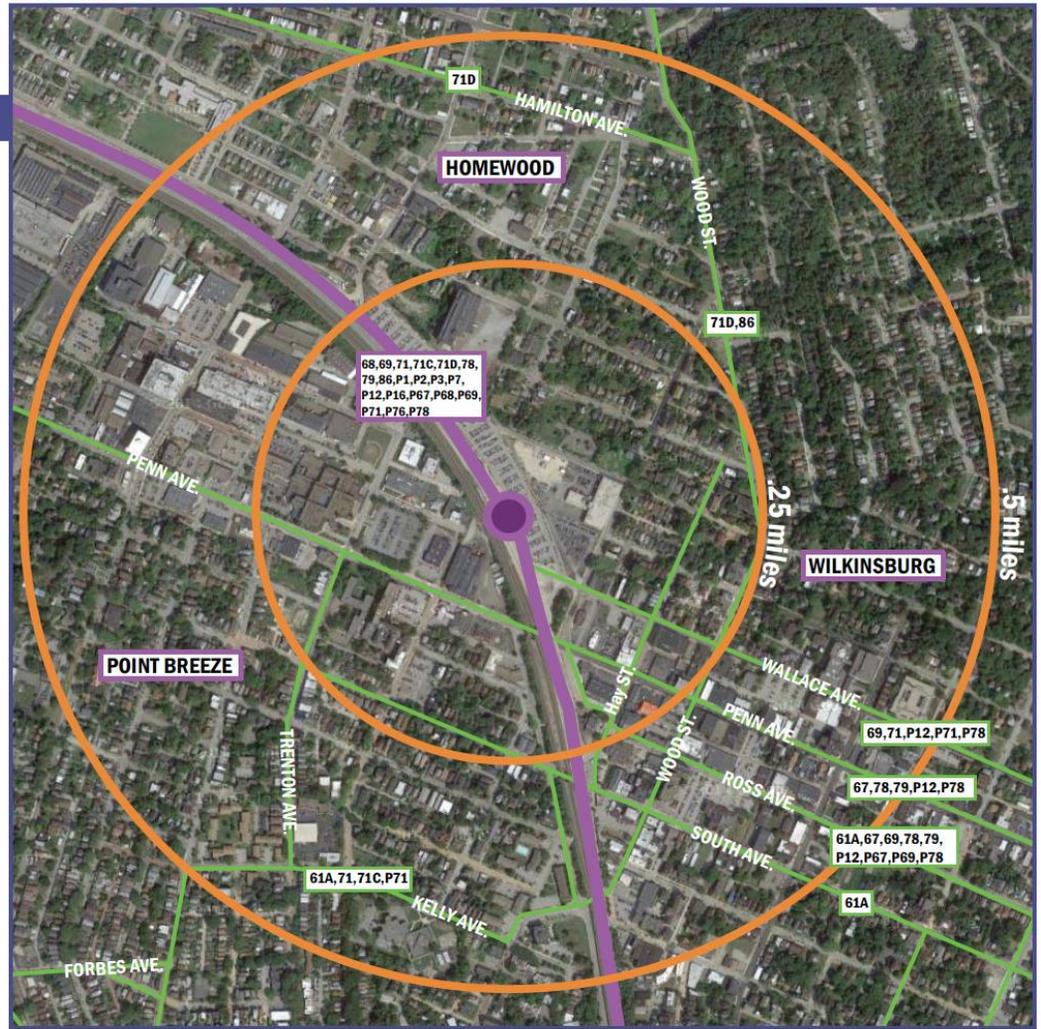
- 6.3 Upon notification of selection by the Borough of Wilkinsburg staff, the successful respondent is required to deliver a contract within four weeks of notification. If the successful respondent is unwilling or unable to execute the agreement as required by the RFP, the Borough of Wilkinsburg has the right to request another respondent to enter into the contract with the Borough of Wilkinsburg.
- 6.4 All dates in the RFP are subject to change at the discretion of Borough of Wilkinsburg, and notice of any changes will be posted on the Borough of Wilkinsburg website (<https://www.wilkinsburgpa.gov>)



# 5: Wilkinsburg

## Context

-  East Busway Station
-  East Busway
-  Bus Line
-  Institutional/Public/Schools
-  Retail/Commercial
-  Development
-  Parks



East Busway Corridor Revitalization Project 1