

*An Atlas of the Chartiers City Neighborhood  
of Pittsburgh 1977*



**CHARTIERS CITY**

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# PITTSBURGH NEIGHBORHOOD ATLAS

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## INTRODUCTION

The Pittsburgh Neighborhood Alliance was formed in 1969 by a number of neighborhood organizations that were concerned with improving the city's neighborhoods and their relations with city government. The members of the Alliance recognized that in order to negotiate effectively with city government about such major concerns as public service needs, capital improvements and transportation, it was necessary to obtain accurate, up-to-date information about the neighborhoods. Unfortunately, this information was not available.

To remedy this situation, the Alliance developed its Pittsburgh Neighborhood Atlas project. First, the boundaries of the city's neighborhoods had to be determined. The Pittsburgh Neighborhood Atlas asked people attending community meetings to name and describe the boundaries of the neighborhoods in which they lived. This information was also provided by an Atlas-initiated survey. Responses from every voting district of the city were analyzed to assure citizen involvement at the neighborhood level. Seventy-eight neighborhoods were thus identified, each made up of one or more whole voting districts in order to comply with provisions in Pittsburgh's home rule charter relating to the election of community advisory boards.

The Atlas then gathered a body of useful and up-to-date information for every neighborhood. It is the beginning of a neighborhood information system that more closely reflects neighborhood boundaries as defined by residents instead of by public officials. In the past, statistics about sections of the city have been based on information published for relatively large areas such as census tracts. For the atlas, much of the material describing neighborhood characteristics came from figures compiled for smaller areas: voting districts or census blocks. As a result, detailed information is now available for neighborhoods whose boundaries differ substantially from census tract boundaries.

The information in this atlas provides an insight into current neighborhood conditions and the direction in which the neighborhood is moving. The best indicators showing the health of the neighborhood are provided by citizen satisfaction with the neighborhood, and changes in residential real estate transaction prices. Comparison of these statistics to those for the entire city provide a basis to begin understanding issues of neighborhood stability. In the years to come, as additional data are gathered for each of these indicators, trends will become more obvious.

It is important to recognize that neighborhood change is a complex process and that one indicator by itself may not be useful. Neighborhoods may be healthy regardless of their level of income, and therefore income-related statistics may not be useful guides by themselves. Neighborhoods must be viewed over time in terms of relative changes compared to the city as a whole, and any analysis of neighborhood conditions must focus upon all of the data in order to provide a comprehensive understanding.

To learn about specific sections of the neighborhood, figures by individual voting district or census tract may be obtained. Additional information on the neighborhood or the information system is available through the Center for Urban Research of the University of Pittsburgh, which has made an outstanding contribution to the development of this atlas.

NEIGHBORHOOD DESCRIPTION

Chartiers City is approximately 3.7 miles west of downtown. It is estimated to be 106.0 acres in size, containing 0.3% of the city's land and 0.3% of its 1974 population. The voting district in the neighborhood is #15, Ward 20. (See Appendix for a listing of the neighborhood's census tracts.)



NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY  
CHARTIERS CITY

Chartiers City was a part of Chartiers Township at the time of its annexation to Pittsburgh.

Chartiers Township was named for Pierre Chartiers, a trapper of French and Indian parentage, who spied for France while living in Philadelphia. Discovered in 1743, Chartiers left that city, moving west to establish a trading post at the mouth of Chartiers Creek. The mound above the creek's mouth (now McKees Rocks) was often occupied by Indians at that time. The Ohio Company of Virginia favored building a fort on the site to alleviate Indian problems which continued in the area up to the early 1800's. Active among the Delaware Indian tribes, Chartiers had a bad name among settlers.

John Bell was Chartiers Township's first white pioneer. He reached a point in what is now East Carnegie in October 1768, settling permanently the next year and raising livestock on land later owned by John Doolittle. David Steel was the first settler in the uplands of the township. Other early settlers included Joseph Hall, Jacob Day and the Stoop family.

In 1804, William McMachen came to the mouth of Ingram Station. Andrew Robinson settled one half mile northwest near Chartiers City. James McDonald settled near the mouth of Chartiers Creek in 1811. By 1808, Congress had declared Chartiers Creek a navigable and public highway forever, such was the importance of its location to the nation.

In 1825, General Edward Hand, commander of Fort Pitt, had a two story log hospital built in the area for convalescing soldiers. The rural serenity of Chartiers served them well.

Chartiers Township was officially incorporated from a part of Lower St. Clair Township by an act of assembly approved April 15, 1851. The township's population was 3,075 in 1860, increasing to 3,346 by 1880. The Pan Handle Railroad opened a line through the area in 1865.

The area surrounding Idlewood, a stop on the Pan Handle line within East Carnegie near Oakwood, was originally claimed by Cohee Campbell under a Pennsylvania warrant. In 1872, the Homestead Bank and Life Insurance Company secured 240 acres there and laid out a town known as Homestead Park. Lots were sold at "fabulous" prices. In 1873, however, the company failed, leaving enormous liabilities. The land reverted back to its original owners.

Although there was little building activity in Idlewood until 1880, development was not deterred. From then until the end of the decade, one hundred homes were built. A post office was established in 1882. The opening of the Idlewood Cottages, a resort and the establishment of a Methodist church in 1884, greatly added to the attractiveness of the township.

East Carnegie itself developed in connection with nearby manufacturing companies such as Columbia Steel and Union Electric Company. The neighborhood was built up during the 1890's.

Chartiers Township was annexed to the City of Pittsburgh on January 1, 1921. At that time the township encompassed Chartiers City, Windgap, Crafton Heights, Oakwood, East Carnegie and Broadhead Manor-Westgate village.

CHARTIERS CITY

Summary Statistics

	<u>Neighborhood</u>	<u>Pittsburgh</u>
Population (1974)	1,211	479,276
% Change (1970-1974)	-12%	-8%
% Black population (1970)	36%	20%
Housing units (1974)	346	166,625
% Vacant	2%	6%
% Owner-occupied housing units (1970)	92%	50%
Average sales price of owner-occupied dwellings (1975)	\$23,700	\$23,518
% Residential real estate transactions with mortgages provided by financial institutions (1975)	78%	59%
Crime rate (1975)	0.017	0.053
Average family income (1969)	\$10,000	\$10,500
Income index as % of city index (1974)	102%	
% Satisfied with neighborhood (1976)	29%	41%
Major neighborhood problems (1976)	Dog litter Stray dogs	Poor roads Dog litter Burglary

CITIZEN SURVEY

The purpose of the citizen survey was to obtain attitudes about the quality of the neighborhood environment. Citizens were asked to respond to questions concerning the neighborhood as a whole, neighborhood problems, and public services. The attitudinal data, heretofore not available, are key indicators of the relative health of the neighborhood. By specifying neighborhood problems or public service needs, the information may be a useful guide for public investment or service delivery decisions.

The city-wide survey was mailed to a randomly selected sample of registered voters. Of approximately 35,000 households contacted, 9,767 responded. The sample provides a 5% response rate for each of the city's 423 voting districts. (See Appendix for a profile of the respondents as well as for statistics on voter registration.)

I. Neighborhood Satisfaction

Chartiers City residents are generally less satisfied with their neighborhood than residents city-wide. Table 1 shows that 29% of the citizens responding to the survey were satisfied with their neighborhood compared to 41% in all city neighborhoods. When asked to state whether the neighborhood is better or worse than two years ago, 12% said that it was better which was the same as the city-wide response of 12%. Given the opportunity to move from the neighborhood, 53% said they would continue to live there compared to a response of 45% for the city as a whole. The responses to these satisfaction questions indicate a mixed attitude of residents toward their neighborhood compared to citizens city-wide.

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TABLE 1

Neighborhood Satisfaction  
Chartiers City

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Question 1: Generally, how satisfied are you with conditions in this neighborhood?

	<u>Satisfied (%)</u>	<u>Dissatisfied (%)</u>	<u>Neither (%)</u>
Chartiers City	29	41	24
All neighborhoods	41	37	21

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Question 2: Do you think this neighborhood has gotten better or worse over the past two years?

	<u>Better (%)</u>	<u>Worse (%)</u>	<u>Not Changed (%)</u>
Chartiers City	12	53	29
All neighborhoods	12	49	36

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Question 3: If you had your choice of where to live, would you continue living in this neighborhood?

	<u>Yes (%)</u>	<u>No (%)</u>	<u>Not Sure (%)</u>
Chartiers City	53	41	6
All neighborhoods	45	32	18

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SOURCE: Citizen Survey, 1976.

NOTE: The neighborhood percentages do not add up to 100%. The difference is accounted for by the following: "don't know", "unable to evaluate" or no answer.

## II. Neighborhood Problems

In order to identify specific neighborhood problems, residents were asked to consider twelve problems usually associated with urban communities and rate them for the neighborhood. Table 2 compares the problem ratings of the respondents from Chartiers City to those from all city neighborhoods. Areas of particular concern for the neighborhood include stray dogs and dog litter.

## III. Satisfaction with Public Services

Table 3 shows the satisfaction of Chartiers City residents with their public services and compares the responses to data for all city neighborhoods. City-wide, residents are least satisfied with street and alley maintenance. Chartiers City residents are more satisfied with respect to garbage collection and the fire department and less satisfied with respect to public transportation, street maintenance and the police.

The Citizen Survey also asked the respondents to list the services with which they were the least satisfied and to explain the reasons for their dissatisfaction. Residents from Chartiers City gave the greatest number of reasons for dissatisfaction to the services listed below. Included is a summary of the major reasons for their dissatisfaction.

1. Public Transportation: Need for more efficient transportation system; need better bus scheduling.
2. Street and alley maintenance: Poor service in bad weather, (i.e., snow removal and salting); problems with potholes.

TABLE 2

Neighborhood Problems  
Chartiers City

Problem Category	Problem Rating - Percent Response		
	<u>Not a Problem</u>	<u>Minor or Moderate</u>	<u>Big or Very Serious</u>
1. Unsafe streets			
Chartiers City	35	47	12
All neighborhoods	25	45	21
2. Vandalism			
Chartiers City	29	59	6
All neighborhoods	13	49	28
3. Rats			
Chartiers City	47	41	0
All neighborhoods	34	33	12
4. Burglary			
Chartiers City	24	53	12
All neighborhoods	14	44	29
5. Poor roads			
Chartiers City	24	65	6
All neighborhoods	17	41	33
6. Trash and litter			
Chartiers City	41	41	18
All neighborhoods	27	41	24
7. Vacant buildings			
Chartiers City	94	6	0
All neighborhoods	49	24	13
8. Undesirable people moving into the neighborhood			
Chartiers City	47	47	6
All neighborhoods	42	28	15
9. Stray dogs			
Chartiers City	29	35	35
All neighborhoods	25	38	18
10. Dog litter			
Chartiers City	35	24	41
All neighborhoods	21	38	32

SOURCE: Citizen Survey, 1976.

NOTE: The neighborhood percentages do not add up to 100%. The difference is accounted for by the following responses: "don't know", "unable to evaluate" or no answer. The problem categories of alcoholism and drug abuse are not included in the table because the response rates to these questions were low.

TABLE 3

Satisfaction with Public Services  
Chartiers City

Service	Percent Response		
	Satisfied	Neither	Dissatisfied
1. Parks and Recreation			
Chartiers City	41	18	29
All neighborhoods	51	15	23
2. Schools			
Chartiers City	59	12	18
All neighborhoods	46	12	21
3. Street Maintenance			
Chartiers City	47	18	35
All neighborhoods	32	15	49
4. Alley Maintenance			
Chartiers City	47	6	18
All neighborhoods	20	13	39
5. Garbage Collection			
Chartiers City	88	6	6
All neighborhoods	74	10	13
6. Police			
Chartiers City	29	12	35
All neighborhoods	51	17	23
7. Public Transportation			
Chartiers City	18	18	65
All neighborhoods	61	11	23
8. Fire Department			
Chartiers City	76	6	0
All neighborhoods	78	7	3
9. Sewage System			
Chartiers City	71	0	24
All neighborhoods	63	10	13
10. Condition and Cost of Housing			
Chartiers City	35	35	12
All neighborhoods	44	17	22

SOURCE: Citizen Survey, 1976.

NOTE: The percent responses to each question do not add up to 100%. The difference is accounted for by the following: "don't know", "unable to evaluate" or no answer. Public health and mental health/retardation services are not included in the table because the response rates to these questions were low.

CRIME RATE

The crime rate for major crimes has increased over the last three years (Table 4). In 1973 the number of major crimes per capita was .015 compared to .017 in 1975. The crime rate in the neighborhood was less than the city per capita rate of .053 in 1975.

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TABLE 4

Crime Rate: Major Crimes  
Chartiers City

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<u>Year</u>	<u>Major Crimes</u>	<u>Crime Rate</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Neighborhood</u>	<u>Pittsburgh</u>
1973	18	.015	.043
1974	20	.017	.047
1975	20	.017	.053

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SOURCE: City of Pittsburgh, Bureau of Police.

NOTE: Major crimes are murder, rape, robbery, assault, burglary and theft. The neighborhood crime rate is computed by dividing the number of crimes committed in the neighborhood by its adjusted population for 1974.

THE PEOPLE

Table 5 and Table 6 present data on the characteristics of the neighborhood population and compare them to city-wide statistics.

In 1974, the population of Chartiers City was estimated to be 1,211, down by 12% since 1970. This compares to a city-wide population decline of 8% during the same period. Information on the racial composition of the neighborhood is not available for 1974; however, the number of Black households in the neighborhood increased during the decade of the sixties, and the Black population was 36.4% of the neighborhood's population in 1970, compared to 20.2% for the city.

The average household size in the neighborhood was 3.21 persons in 1974, down from 1970. The percentage of the population 65 years and older was 5.2% in 1970, compared to 13.5% for the city as a whole.

TABLE 5

Population and Housing Characteristics, 1970 and 1974  
Chartiers City

	<u>Neighborhood</u>		<u>Pittsburgh</u>	
	<u>1970</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1974</u>
Population				
% Black	36.4%	....	20.2%	....
% 65 years and over	5.2%	....	13.5%	....
Households				
% One-person households	9.6%	16.5%	25.4%	25.5%
% Retired head-of-households	....	25.0%	....	26.3%
% Households with children	....	47.4%	....	32.7%
% Female head-of-household with children	....	5.3%	....	6.4%
% In owner-occupied housing unit	91.5%	....	50.3%	54.2%
% Households changing place of residence within past year	....	15.3%	....	27.0%
Average household size	3.76	3.21	2.82	2.67

SOURCES: U. S. Census (1970) and R. L. Polk (1974).

NOTE: Dotted lines (....) indicate data unavailable for that year.

The turnover rate of households in the neighborhood is less than that for all of the city's neighborhoods. During 1973, 15.3% of the households in the neighborhood changed their place of residence compared to a rate of 27.0% for the city. (The figures represent households who have moved within the neighborhood or city as well as those moving into or out of the neighborhood or city.)

Female-headed households with children in 1974 comprised 5.3% of the total households in the neighborhood compared to 6.4% for the city as a whole. In 1974, one-person households consisted of 16.5% of the total households in the neighborhood compared to 25.5% city-wide and to 9.6% for the neighborhood in 1970.

TABLE 6

Neighborhood Change: 1960-1970 and 1970-1974  
Chartiers City

	<u>Number</u> <u>Neighborhood</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>	
		<u>Neighborhood</u>	<u>Pittsburgh</u>
Population			
1960	654		
1970	1,372	+110	-14
1974	1,211	- 12	- 8
Households <sup>1</sup>			
1960	150		
1970	365	+143	- 6
1974	340	- 7	-12
Black Households <sup>2</sup>			
1960	31		
1970	117	+277	+15
1974	(Not available)		
Housing Units			
1960	173		
1970	372	+115	- 3
1974	346	- 7	-12

SOURCES: U. S. Census (1960; 1970) and R. L. Polk & Co. (1974).

NOTE: The population figures reported by Polk are adjusted to account for under-reporting. Population includes persons living in institutions and other group quarters, such as nursing homes, dormitories or jails. Differences in the population, household, or housing unit count between 1970 and 1974 are due primarily to changes occurring in the neighborhood. A small percentage of the difference may be accounted for, however, by variations in data gathering techniques. Census statistics were compiled from information provided by all city households answering a standard questionnaire either by mail or interview on or about April 1, 1970. R. L. Polk collected its information by a door-to-door survey carried out over a period of several months. (See Appendix.)

<sup>1</sup>The number of occupied housing units equals the number of households.

<sup>2</sup>Non-white households in 1960.

NEIGHBORHOOD INCOME

The average family income in Chartiers City was \$10,000, 95% of the city average, for the year 1969. R. L. Polk and Company computes an income index for each city census tract. This index, derived from the occupations of heads of households, was used to calculate the income index of the neighborhood. In 1974, the index for Chartiers City was 102% of the figure for the city as a whole.

Tbble 7 shows the number of neighborhood households receiving cash grants in 1974, 1975 and 1976 under the public assistance program of the Pennsylvania Department of Welfare. Public assistance in the form of food stamps, Medicaid and various social services are also available to these households, as well as to other households in need. Public assistance payments were made to 8.8% of the neighborhood households in 1976, a lower proportion than for the city overall and a slight increase since 1974.

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TABLE 7

Public Assistance: Households Receiving Cash Grants  
Chartiers City

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<u>Year</u>	<u>Neighborhood</u>		<u>Pittsburgh</u>
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1974	30	8.5	16.0
1975	32	9.1	17.2
1976	31	8.8	18.0

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SOURCE: Allegheny County Board of Assistance.

NOTE: The percentages are based on 1974 Polk households. Only households receiving cash grants under Aid to Dependent Children, Aid to Dependent Children-Unemployed Parent; General Assistance, and the State Blind Pension programs are tabulated. The count is of those on assistance as of April 5, 1974, February 28, 1975 and February 27, 1976; households whose grants were terminated between reporting dates are not included.

HOUSING

Table 6 shows that the number of housing units in Chartiers City increased during the decade of the sixties and decreased from 1970 to 1974. Of the occupied housing units in the neighborhood, 91.5% were owner-occupied in 1970 compared to a city-wide rate of 50.3%. The vacancy rate in 1974 for the neighborhood was 2.0% which was less than the city-wide rate.

The average value of owner-occupied housing in the neighborhood was \$15,100 in 1970, compared to a city-wide average of \$14,800.

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TABLE 8

Housing Characteristics, 1970 and 1974  
Chartiers City

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	<u>Neighborhood</u>		<u>Pittsburgh</u>	
	<u>1970</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1974</u>
Housing units				
% Vacant	1.9	2.0	6.2	6.2
% One-unit structures	87.1	....	52.9	....
Occupied housing units				
% Owner-occupied*	91.5	....	50.3	54.2
Average value: owner-occupied units <sup>1</sup>	\$15,100	....	\$14,800	....

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SOURCES: U. S. Census (1970) and R. L. Polk & Co. (1974).

<sup>1</sup>Average value rounded to nearest one hundred dollars.

\* As stated in the methodology a method of proration was used with neighborhoods that shared census tracts. An assumption was made that the neighborhood characteristics were evenly distributed within the neighborhood. However, in Chartiers City the results of prorating the percentage of owner-occupied housing units for 1974 seemed misleading; therefore, this figure was not reported.

REAL ESTATE AND MORTGAGE LOAN TRANSACTIONS

The average sales price of owner-occupied housing was \$23,700 in 1975. (See Table 9). Although the average price was greater than the city-wide average, the implications of this divergence are difficult to judge because of variations in the quality and size of the structures among city neighborhoods. As additional data are obtained, however, the trend in real estate prices for the neighborhood can be compared to the trend for the city as a whole in order to determine relative differences.

In order to evaluate the extent to which private lenders are involved in the neighborhood, the number of mortgage loans made on residential property each year must be divided by the number of residential real estate transactions for that year. The percentage of residential real estate transactions financed through financial institutions was 78% in 1975 in Chartiers City compared to a city-wide rate of 59%. The implications of the difference between the two rates are difficult to discern because of variations in risk factors and income levels among city neighborhoods. However, as additional data become available, trends in lending activity within the neighborhood compared to other neighborhoods or to the city as a whole can be assessed.

TABLE 9

Real Estate and Mortgage Loan Statistics  
Chartiers City

	<u>Neighborhood</u>	<u>Pittsburgh</u>
Average sales price: owner-occupied dwellings		
1974	\$16,773	\$21,582
1975	\$23,700	\$23,518
Number of residential mortgages		
1973	7	
1974	6	
1975	7	
% Residential real estate transactions with mortgages provided by financial institutions		
1974	56%	58%
1975	78%	59%

SOURCE: City of Pittsburgh, Department of City Planning.

APPENDIX

a. Data Sources: Information for the atlas was obtained from the 1960 and 1970 U. S. Census of Population and Housing; R. L. Polk and Company's "Profiles of Change" for Pittsburgh in 1974; Pittsburgh's Department of City Planning and Bureau of Police; the Allegheny County Board of Assistance and Department of Elections and Voter Registration; Southwestern Pennsylvania Regional Planning Commission; and the Citizen Survey conducted by the Pittsburgh Neighborhood Atlas.

b. Neighborhood Census Tracts: Part of 2002 and part of 2003.

c. Methodology: The opinions and characteristics of survey respondents, as well as voter registration, were recorded by voting district and then compiled for Chartiers City by the Pittsburgh Neighborhood Atlas in conjunction with the Center for Urban Research, University of Pittsburgh. Other material in the atlas was drawn from statistics tabulated for city census tracts or census blocks.

The neighborhood boundaries, which were determined on the basis of whole voting districts, do not conform exactly to census tract boundaries, so minor boundary adjustments were made wherever possible to simplify data collection efforts. In Chartiers City and in other parts of the city where substantial portions of a census tract fall in more than one neighborhood, the neighborhood characteristics for 1960 and 1970 were arrived at by adding together data for the census blocks in the neighborhood, item by item. The statistics from sources other than the U. S. Census were made available only by census tract, not by census block; therefore, a method for prorating the data among neighborhoods was developed. The procedure allocated data for each neighborhood containing partial census tracts on the basis of the proportion of total tract population, households, or housing units contained in each sub-section.

To compensate for under-reporting, the 1974 figure for the neighborhood population has been increased by 1.11, a factor that was derived from the U. S. Bureau of the Census 1973 population estimate for Pittsburgh. An additional adjustment has been made where applicable, since Polk and Co. does not count persons living in institutions or other group quarters. To arrive at the total estimated population for 1974, the neighborhood population was further increased by adding the number of persons in group quarters for the neighborhood according to the 1970 Census.

d. Characteristics of the Sample: In Chartiers City, 17 citizens answered the questionnaire. Based on the number of replies to each question, the characteristics of the respondents can be generally described as follows: an average age of 46; 81% female; 63% Black; 94% with at least four years of high school education; 81% homeowners; and an average of 15 years in the neighborhood. The median household income falls in the range of \$15,000 to \$24,999; the average household size is 3.82 persons; and 38% of the households have no members under 18 years old living in the home.

The total sample (all respondents to the survey) was over-represented by homeowners (68% compared to 50% for Pittsburgh in 1970) and under-represented by Blacks (14% compared to a city Black population of 20% in 1970).

e. Voter Registration: In November, 1976, 457 residents of the neighborhood were registered to vote, an increase of 39 (+9.3%) since November, 1975. In this period, city registration increased by 1.3% to 233,028 persons.

In the process of collecting data for this publication, the Pittsburgh Neighborhood Atlas staff was assisted by many community organizations. The following list reflects the organization that we were able to make contact with in Chartiers City:

Windgap-Chartiers City Civic Club  
3901 Mayfair Street  
Pittsburgh, Pa. 15204 (1958)  
331-0322

Note: Dates in parenthesis indicate when organization started.