

# STOCKYARD, CLARK-FULTON & BROOKLYN CENTRE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

3167 FULTON ROAD, SUITE 303, CLEVELAND, OHIO 44109  
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## Pilot Project Highlights

### Summary

“Mow Goats” is a pilot project sponsored by the Stockyard, Clark-Fulton and Brooklyn Centre Community Development Office to identify a new environmentally sustainable and community-building alternative to city mowing – a crew of goats!

Clover, Buffy, Rosie, and Princess are four goats that we rented from a farm in Geneva from June 3<sup>rd</sup> to June 28<sup>th</sup>. The goats grazed Monday through Friday from 9am to 5pm at five vacant lots in the Stockyards and Clark-Fulton neighborhoods. We also experimented with using the goats to eat overgrowth in alleys. During weekends they stayed in the Detroit Shoreway neighborhood and cleaned out sections of two overgrown backyards. The goats made several public appearances, including Gordon Square Arts District Day, the Bridge Brigade 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Block Party and the Gordon Square Farmer’s Market.

The goals of the pilot program are:

1. Develop a comprehensive and feasible alternative to address vacant lots maintenance.
2. To build community and relationships among the community residents, business and stakeholders within the SCFBC service area and to provide education on urban agriculture, animals and farming to the community.
3. To develop an environmentally sustainable alternative to vacant lot maintenance.

### Community Engagement

- The engagement and positive responses from the community have been overwhelmingly positive. We have received numerous calls, emails, personal requests, etc., including the following:
  - “Hey, those are the MowGoats!” – A driving passerby
  - “Can I rent the goats for my yard/Church/property/farm?” – This request was made to our team on over 35+ different occasions
  - “How can I get a goat or two for my yard?”
  - “This is the coolest project!”
  - “I want to be a goat herd!”
  - “They are so friendly and sweet!”
  - “I would like to have goats mow my grass!”
  - “I could sure use them in my yard!”
  - “I love MowGoats!”
  - A local resident delivered over 10 lbs. of carrots and apples for the MowGoats to snack.
  - Our office received numerous calls and emails from the community inquiring about how they could utilize a goat for their yard and if we could assist.
- Our staff and team have given numerous presentations on the project to community stakeholders, organizations and residents. Neighbors and business owners alike really enjoy and appreciate the project.

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- Community relationship building occurred each day, at every site. Our organization was able to introduce a fun and unique program, teach the community about agriculture, animals and farming and connect people and community with one another.
- 200 people attended a “Meet and Greet” with the goats Tuesday, June 5<sup>th</sup> 4-6 pm.
- The MowGoats averaged 15+ visitors per day. Adults and children alike enjoyed petting and feeding the goats. Many visitors made multiple visits to see the goats again. One father and daughter came to visit at least six times on different days!
- Numerous school groups, preschool and day care classes visited the site to meet the goats and learn about the program.
- Over 12 neighborhood residents volunteered to help with the project; some volunteered for two or three days at a time. One volunteer helped full time 3-4 days a week.

## Social Media and Press

- 151 “Likes” on Facebook (as of June 27th)
- Media coverage included: Plain Dealer, Freshwater Cleveland, a three minute segment on Channel 5 News with Joe Pagonakis, the Alan Cox show on FM100.7, AOL News, the Plain Press
- The Associated Press selected the piece for coverage and the story appeared in New York City, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh

## Grazing Data

- Our program observed that goat’s appetites are very good. They will eat grass, weeds, trees, berry bushes, vines and much more. In areas where there were trees, bushes, and grass, the goats exhibited a preference for trees and bushes, which were eaten first. Additionally, goats eat at all levels of growth, low, medium and high.
- We experimented with fencing goats into smaller grassy areas with no trees and found that, on average, four goats in a 200 square foot area could eat 12” grass down to 8” in about an hour. Please note that this data varies at each vacant lot. Each property the MowGoats visited offered a variety of length of grass and plant materials. For example, in many areas of lots, the goats ate grass to approximately 4” in height. After the completion of “mowing” at each lot, the visual height and landscape for each property was drastically different and the grass and plants were substantially shorter or removed entirely.
- Goats are excellent climbers! Based on our research and observations, goats are able to climb approximately three feet off the ground, when using a fence, tree or structure for support. This is a great opportunity to abate overgrowth in our neighborhood alleyways, and along fence lines of vacant properties.
- The goats completely cleared vegetation from two overgrown areas: a 300 square foot area in their night and weekend home and the entire yard of an abandoned neighboring house. Towards the end of the pilot project, we had to bring in extra tree branches to keep the goats fed during the evening!
- Goat droppings were collected when possible from each grazing site. The manure was then used on local community gardens for soil fertility. Goat manure is considered a “cool manure” and can be placed in garden immediately.
- Goats emit no smell and very little sound or noise.
- The goats used for the pilot project were all female does. The goats were incredibly docile, friendly and sweet. They did not exhibit any negative or unfriendly behavior.

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- The project took place during a draught. The effects of the extreme dry conditions are unknown, but we assume that this had some effect on the eating patterns of the goats.

