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The Public Goods CO-OP is a branch of New York City's Office of Public Imagination that uses critical design, collaborative ideation, and co-production to engage the citizens of the Lower East Side, increase policy awareness, and generate community-supported political reforms.

# THE PROBLEM SPACE

Let's state the obvious. In spite of all that the government does for its citizens, in every situation there exists lessons and insights which provide information into how government might improve on its successes in future scenarios.

Citizens are naturally activated in their communities and appreciate action and visible results above all else. The Government should strive to explicitly showcase its involvement in the community and the successes achieved therein.

Government needs to bolster infrastructure for constructive feedback from its citizens. Though there are already forums for feedback in the community, interaction with residents should be designed to facilitate conversations that are both constructive for the government and informative for the community.

Citizens are polarized on issues, creating incredibly difficult

situations for the government. The goal of the government does not need to be to solve every group's needs some of the time, nor does it need to be to solve some groups' needs all of the time. Rather, the goal of government should be to build empathy, facilitate conversation, elucidate policy, and empower its citizens to initiate interventions themselves.

Citizens have unheard solutions/ideas. Current policies are government initiated and require further investment and input from residents. By empowering its citizens and by creating a forum through which community generated ideas can be captured, the government increases its capacity to both innovate policy and give voice to its constituents.



The Public Goods CO-OP's mission is to use design to give communities a voice in the New York City government.

# THE PUBLIC GOODS CO-OP

The Public Goods CO-OP will use the façade of a storefront to interact with community members in an approachable way, generating feedback regarding local policies and the current conditions of the neighborhood.

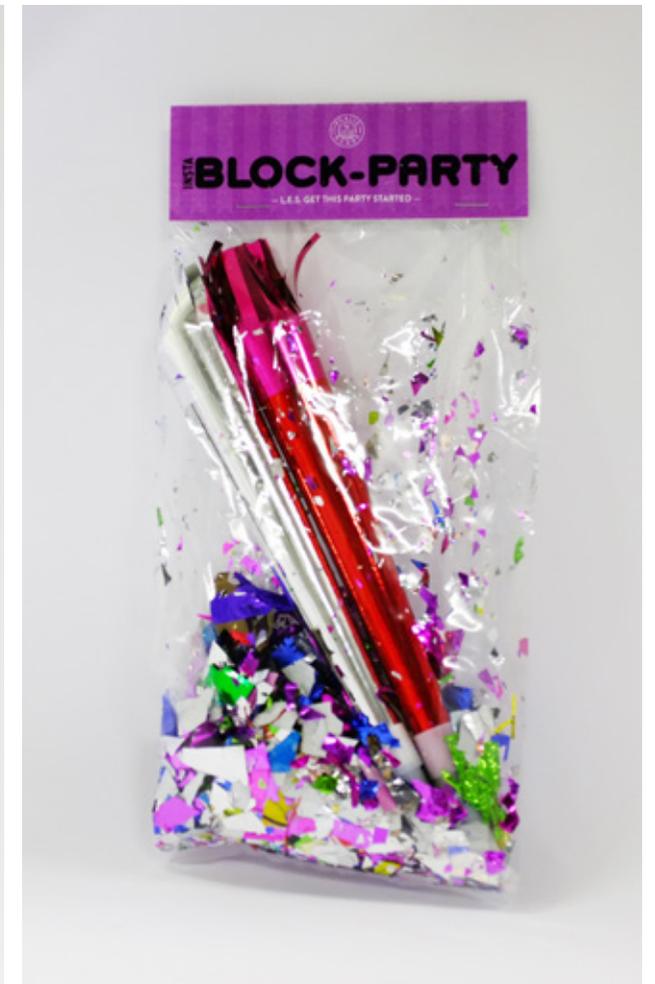
This feedback will be passed on to various offices of the New York City government, as well as local NGOs and non-profits, to help facilitate ground-up initiatives. Ideas generated by government officials and non-profits can, in turn, be brought into the Public Good CO-OP's Development Workshops to co-produce with CO-OP design staff, or into Visioning Workshops with local citizens to gauge potential concerns and achieve some community buy-in prior to implementation. Consequently, in this model, ideas can both be generated by the community and shopped to government agencies to produce bottom-

up solutions, or produced by government then developed in-store to ensure that top-down policy is understood and appropriate in meeting the community's needs. This approach would ideally increase the likelihood for success of ground-up initiatives, improve education and build citizen approval of top-down policies, and provide government with continuous, constructive feedback. The Public Goods CO-OP provides a conduit for government to communicate with local residents, while simultaneously cultivating community resilience through collaborative political innovation.

## THE OBJECTS

The prompt objects serve to stimulate conversations around relevant community issues. They are generated by the Public Goods staff, but also by the prompts and concerns that are integral to the storefront experience.











## PROMPT BOARDS

The prompt boards act as conversation pieces for the community. From a service perspective, they help the Public Goods CO-OP to generate ideas for the objects used in the storefront, and for the development of the ideation workshops.

A person wearing a grey beanie and a dark jacket is standing at a white table in a community meeting room. They are looking down at a document or folder they are holding. The room has a blue tint and features posters on the wall, including one with 'ZERO HALF' and another with 'SINCE NOVEMBER 24'. There are also some items on the table, like a patterned bag and some papers.

The Public Goods CO-OP is a service that has been designed to favor both the residents of L.E.S. and the government figures who are hoping to positively affect change for their constituents.

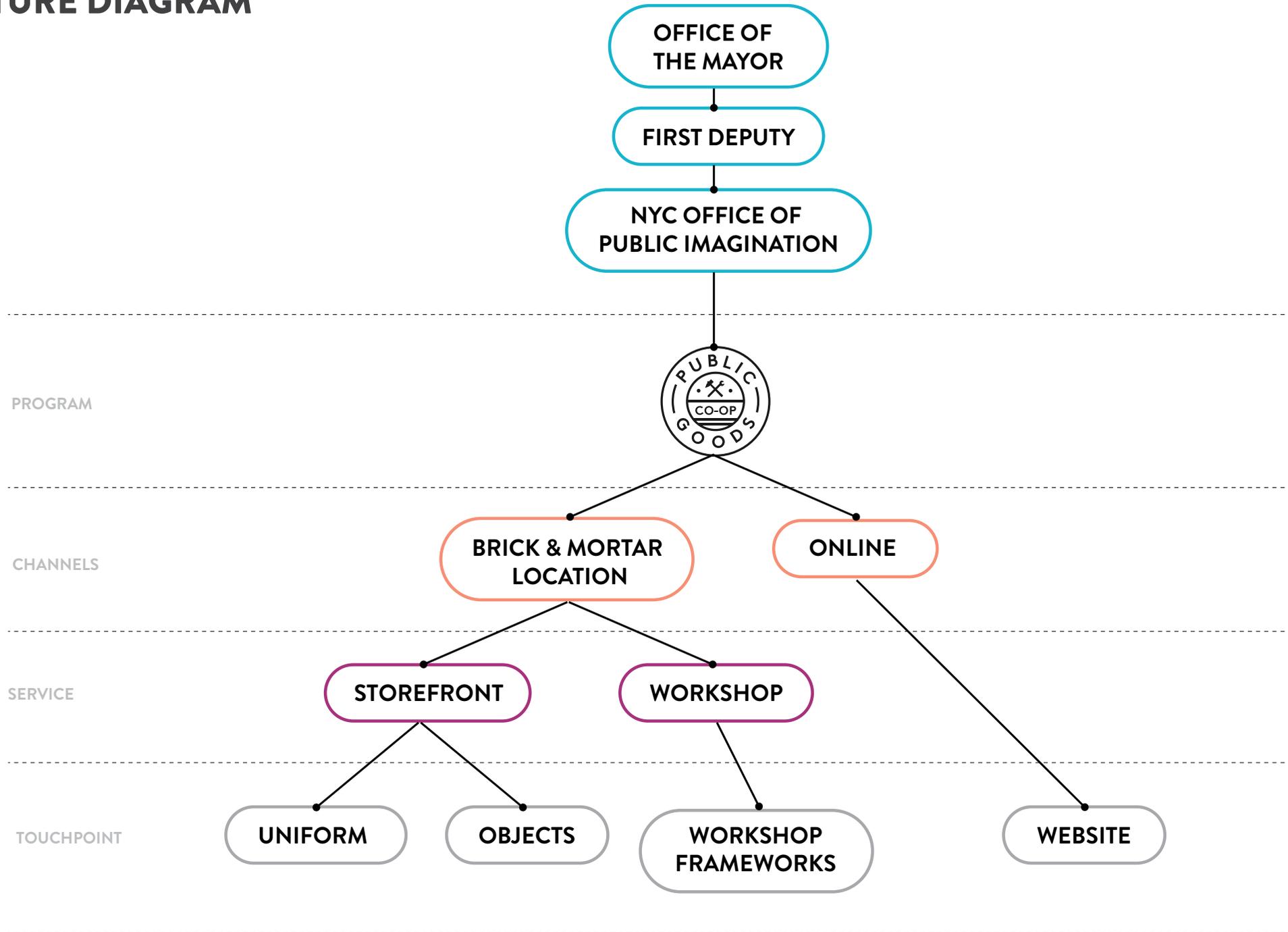
# THE AGENCY STRUCTURE

The Public Goods CO-OP is a branch Office of Imagination which falls under the jurisdiction of the First Deputy in the Office of the Mayor.

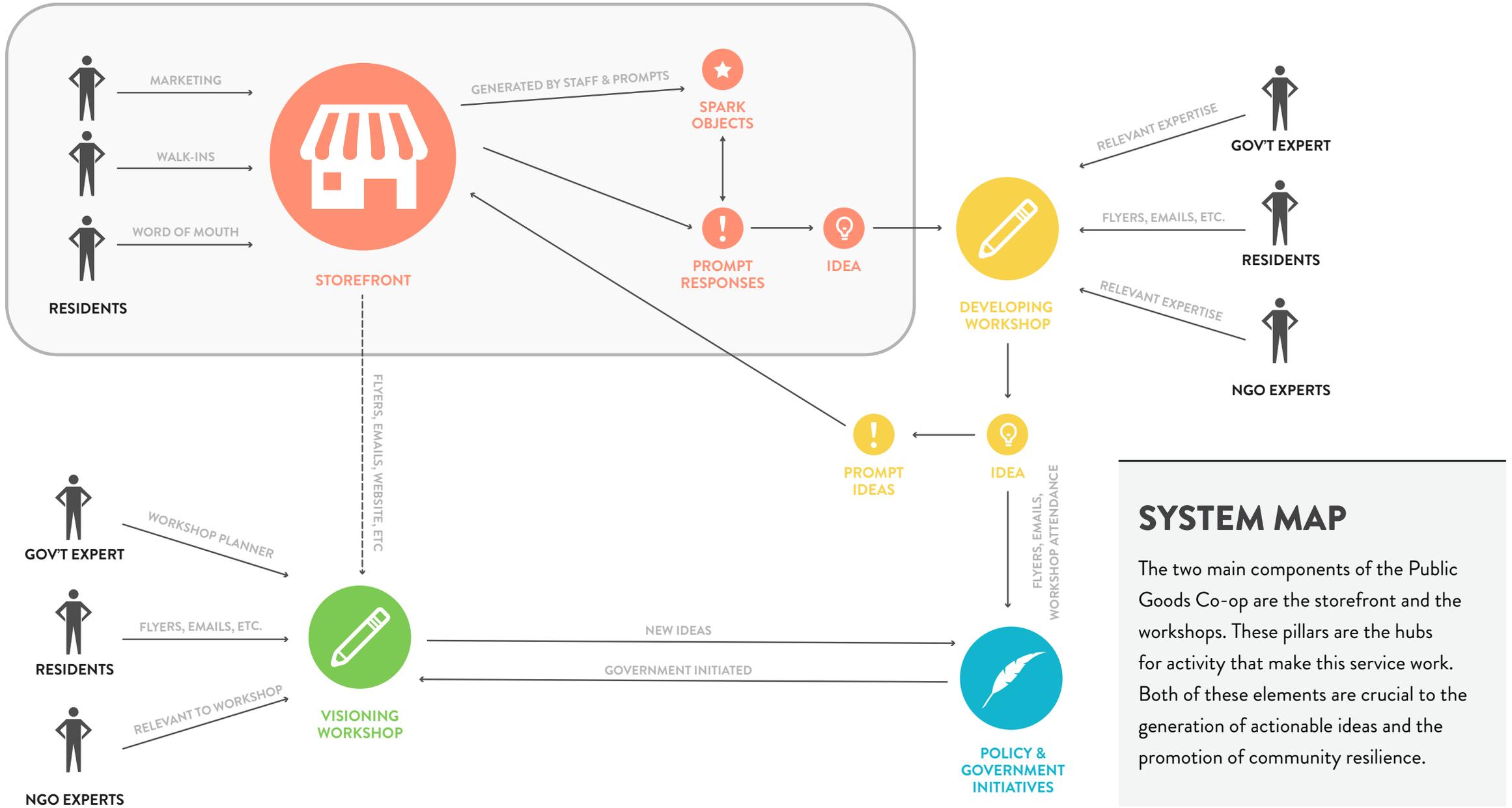
The Public Goods CO-OP will reach out to citizens and government officials through two main channels, our brick and mortar location and online presence. In the front of house of our brick and mortar location will be our storefront, where community members will interact with objects and uniformed staff members to generate conversations while maintaining the illusion of a store for public goods products. In workshops, which are offered in the back of house of our brick and mortar location,

participants will work through premeditated workshop frameworks. These workshops will either be focused on ideation or futuring a potential intervention. Our online presence will include social media and other advertising, a calendar of events to keep participants informed, e-mailed newsletters to advertise success stories, and an online marketplace that will parallel the storefront consumer experience as a way to prompt dialogue in our digital community.

# STRUCTURE DIAGRAM



CORE TRANSACTIONS



# SERVICE BLUEPRINT

	MARKETING	STOREFRONT	WORKSHOP: IDEATION	WORKSHOP: GOVERNMENT
 <p><b>LOWER EAST SIDE RESIDENT</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Posters &amp; Campaigns</li> <li>Social Media</li> <li>Website</li> <li>Workshop Flyers</li> <li>Mobile Cart</li> <li>Social Network for Individual Objects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Issues boxes for issues &amp; concerns</li> <li>Prompt boards for issues &amp; concerns</li> <li>Objects to spark conversation</li> <li>Conversations with educated Public Goods staff</li> <li>Flyers about upcoming events</li> <li>Email sign-up sheet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Structured ideation workshop.</li> <li>Facilitated conversations for empathy building.</li> <li>Potential to create spark objects</li> <li>Potential to create actionable ideas</li> <li>Learning design thinkingskills.</li> <li>Outcomes showcased on website and in a newsletter.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Structured ideation workshop.</li> <li>Facilitated conversations for empathy building.</li> <li>Potential to create spark objects</li> <li>Potential to create actionable ideas</li> <li>Learning design thinkingskills.</li> <li>Outcomes showcased on website and in a newsletter.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>GOVERNMENT EXPERT</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monthly Reports</li> <li>Email Newsletter</li> <li>Website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding of issues that are relevant to the community</li> <li>Option to generate in-store prompts for boxes and boards</li> <li>Handout workshopflyers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential to participate in workshop as an expert.</li> <li>Potential to talk with residents to build empathy.</li> <li>Summary of ideas generated in the workshop.</li> <li>A newsletter that showcases outcomes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential to participate in workshop as an expert.</li> <li>Potential to talk with residents to build empathy.</li> <li>Summary of ideas generated in the workshop.</li> <li>A newsletter that showcases outcomes.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>PUBLIC GOODS WORKER</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social Network Updates</li> <li>Press Releases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Act as knowledge managers to walk-ins</li> <li>Select topics for store based on relevant issues</li> <li>Generate prompts for use inside the shop</li> <li>Question &amp; Answers</li> </ul>	<p>BEHIND THE SCENES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designs the workshop</li> <li>Facilitates workshop as Knowledge Broker and Knowledge Manager</li> <li>Manage conversations between residents and government participants</li> <li>Question &amp; Answers</li> <li>Choose ideas to be workshopped</li> <li>Invite residents and government to workshops</li> <li>Invite relevant outside experts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designs the workshop</li> <li>Facilitates workshop as Knowledge Broker and Knowledge Manager</li> <li>Manage conversations between residents and government participants</li> <li>Question &amp; Answers</li> <li>Choose ideas to be workshopped</li> <li>Invite residents and government to workshops</li> <li>Invite relevant outside experts</li> </ul>

# USER JOURNEYS

There are multiple types of users from within government and the community that have been factored into the design of the Public Goods CO-OP.

Our storyboards serve to illustrate the services offered by the Public Goods CO-OP, following the proposed interactions of Sally the founder of a New York non-profit, Bret a government employee, and Helen a resident of the Lower East Side. The three stories display a range of the services offered by the CO-OP, how different stakeholders would interact with the CO-OP, and how the CO-OP

might benefit community members, government officials, and activists each in separate but significant ways. These scenarios of interaction begin to show how the different mechanisms of the CO-OP would work together to serve all individuals who are looking to increase resiliency in the Lower East Side community.

## SALLY: FOUNDER OF A NEW YORK NON-PROFIT



Sally is the founder of Gateway Gardening, a non-profit organization working to support local urban agriculture.



Public Goods Co-Op employees contact Sally and ask her if she would be willing to participate as an advisor in a workshop about local food production.



Sally agrees, seeing it as a great opportunity to increase awareness and network with community activists.



In the workshop, Sally advises community members by providing expert insight about urban gardening and local food production.



Sally leaves with the contact information of community members who want to volunteer with Gateway Gardening.



Because of her positive experience, Sally contacts the Public Goods Co-Op to set up an ideation workshop to develop a Gateway Gardening intervention for the Lower East Side.



Before the workshop begins the Co-Op advertises the theme to draw in participants from the local community.



During her workshop, Sally and participants work to co-design potential interventions for Gateway Gardening to enact in the Lower East Side, and hold a dialogue about urban farming.



And in the process they co-produce a variety of critical design objects focused on urban green space and local food production to be sold in the Public Goods storefront.



Sally leaves knowing she has developed the conversation around the issues she is concerned about, and takes home a handful of new ideas of Gateway Gardening to develop for future projects in the Lower East Side.

## HELLEN: LOWER EAST SIDE RESIDENT



Helen is a 73 year old widow, and has lived in the Lower East Side for her entire life.



New bars that have opened up in Helen's neighborhood have drastically increased noise pollution at night and on weekends when Helen needs her beauty sleep.



On her morning walk Helen comes across the Public Goods Co-Op, and decides to head inside and try to voice her concern.



Helen looks at products revolving around noise pollution, new development, and increasing night life. She then submits her concerns and feedback on the topics, and leaves her contact information so she can be notified about upcoming workshops.



A few weeks later, Helen returns to the Co-Op for a workshop themed on increasing night life. At the workshop she voices her concern, proposes potential resolutions, and talks with other community members about their perspectives.



Other community members, who disagree with Helen, claim that night life is not a problem, that the increase in activity is healthy for local economies, and that they would like to see more local bars.



Helen still disagrees with the other community members, but she works with them to develop a compromised solution that supports the growth of local bars while acknowledging noise problems.



Later... Co-Op employees forward Helen's comments and proposed solution designed in the workshop to local government officials working on noise pollution in residential areas.

## BRET: GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE



Meet Bret, an employee of the Department of Transportation who has an idea about regulating traffic in the Lower East Side.



Bret wants community feedback regarding his idea, and wants to develop the policy alongside L.E.S. community members to insure the reforms he propose are in line with want the citizens want.



So, Bret goes to the Public Goods Co-Op to plan a futuring workshop with Co-Op design staff.



While in the Public Good storefront, Bret sees a critical design product relating to bike traffic, and realizes that his initial assumptions about what L.E.S. residents want might not be correct.



Later that month, Bret runs the futuring workshop with Co-Op designers and community members who are concerned about traffic in their neighborhoods.



Community members co-produce a “Summer Time ONLY” bike lane sign that will be sold in the Co-Op storefront, and leave with a better understanding of traffic policy that effects them.



Bret gains the insight that while community members enjoy bike lanes in the summer, they are inconvenient in the winter.



Bret takes the insights he gained from an open conversation with community members, and pushes to create seasonal bike lane policies which he knows will be supported by L.E.S. residence.

The longterm goal of the Public Goods CO-OP is to increase community resilience. This process, however, will take time, so we have plotted out a series of milestones that we believe are integral to the success of this program.

# IMPLEMENTING THE PUBLIC GOODS CO-OP

Implementing the New York City Office of Public Imagination would happen both on a governmental and community level.

Starting immediately, the OPI would be probing the community for issues in the neighborhood. Simultaneously, for the next twelve months OPI would be presenting design thinking as a potential new problem solving strategy to the government through design thinking workshops for civil servants. After one month, the Office would have enough products made and would have done enough advertising

that it could open the Public Goods CO-OP. After twelve months of the CO-OP running ideation and futuring workshops with the community, OPI would present its proof of concept to the government. Shortly afterwards the government would be brought into the workshops with the community. After another twelve months the CO-OP would be a fully operational service.



## TIMELINE

This 24 month timeline outlines the series of events that would ensure that the Public Goods CO-OP is a successful endeavour.

COMMUNITY

- Start probing neighborhood for issues
- Make products for store opening based on issues
- Guerilla market the neighborhood and advertise through social media

- Invite relevant government and NGOs to community workshop as "experts"
- Run ideation and futuring workshops for NGOs and government with citizens
- Co-create actionable ideas with citizens, government and NGOs
- Give monthly report to government about current issues
- Update products in store from workshops and monthly report analysis
- Update website with success stories
- Now this is a sustainable service

# THE PUBLIC GOODS THEORY OF CHANGE

The Public Goods CO-OP's longterm goal is to increase community resilience.

Our theory of change map shows the relationship between the short term and long term benefits of the Public Goods CO-OP for both the NYC government and the community they serve. The Public Goods CO-OP will build community resilience not only by addressing the social issues of the community, but by increasing the communication between citizen and government, thus strengthening L.E.S. citizen's understanding and appreciation of the services offered by their local

government, and reducing community tension generated by polarizing local issues. Many of the passive benefits of the Public Goods CO-OP go beyond the actual co-design and co-production of policy, generating dialogue, community empathy, and stimulating critical thinking about the community. Through the combined efforts of our storefront and workshop mechanisms the Public Goods CO-OP will ultimately serve to build a more socially connected, resilient Lower East Side.

# THEORY OF CHANGE

Our theory of change outlines the crucial value milestones that need to occur before we can reach our longterm goal of increased community resilience.

