

START YOUR OWN PONYRIDE

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CONCEPT

We encourage people to share networks, knowledge and resources. Instead of building walls and space dividers we tore them down to force a nature collaboration between entities. We also want Ponyriders to engage with the broader community of Detroit. Afterall, they are our partners, customers, audience, etc. Every tenant signs a lease that commits their organization or project to three free hours of education a month.

We really believe in working together; when we give space to others we are able to work together, have organic interactions and have better outcomes than doing it in silos. Ponyride began by a lot of folks from different sectors sharing their expertise in developing the outcomes of the purpose for the building. The power of we is an important value of the space and building. In the beginning we had to tear down double drop ceilings, pull up old carpeting and boot strap to get us back to the guts. Phil and Kate did not do it alone but with the power of volunteers and sweat equity of tenants working together to make it happen.

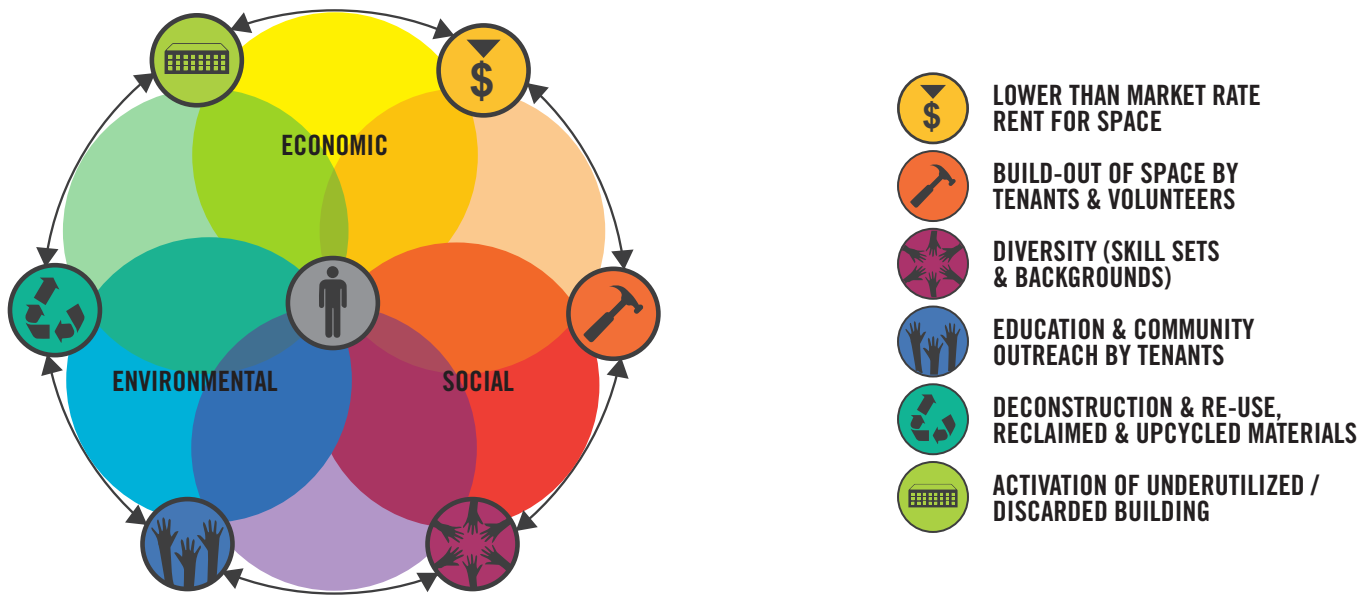
While Ponyride is something we may only do once, we want to give tools to others to feel empowered to embrace this idea for their community.

ABOUT THE PONYRIDE MODEL: FREEDOM & CONSTRAINTS

The driving force behind Ponyride as site for creativity, collaboration, and sustainable urban development is ultimately the people who work in the space. Indeed, the value of applying a design approach to any problem is that it is a user-centered process centered on understanding the needs of people. At the same time however, we have identified a set of parameters - freedoms and constraints - that structure the behavior of Ponyride tenants and the experience of working in the building, fostering collaboration across disciplines and contributing to sustainable growth in the city.

The six parameters structuring the experience of working at Ponyride also reinforce one another, while at the same time fostering creative collaboration and sustainability. With the creative entrepreneur as the driving force, these six parameters and the system they create suggest a model that might be implemented in other neighborhoods or similarly-situated cities.

The importance of these six parameters in structuring the experience of working at Ponyride and fostering collaboration and sustainability among tenants. There are a series of relationships between these six parameters, suggesting an underlying system in which the parameters reinforce each other while simultaneously propelling the creative entrepreneur toward cross-disciplinary collaboration and socially, environmentally, and economically sustainable growth in the low-density, post-industrial city.



THE SIX PARAMETERS OF THE PONYRIDE MODEL

LOWER THAN MARKET RATE RENT FOR SPACE

The tenants' rent, at 50 to 65 cents per square foot, is approximately one quarter of market rate in the neighborhood.

BUILD-OUT OF SPACE BY TENANTS AND VOLUNTEERS

The on-going renovation and build-out of tenants' spaces throughout the building has been conducted primarily by the tenants themselves, along with outside volunteers. Tenants participate in the design and build-out of their own spaces. Many of the individuals and organizations working at Ponyride were directly involved in its visioning and planning, and roughly \$200,000 worth of volunteer hours and material has been put into the building since its purchase in 2011.

DIVERSITY OF ACTORS (SKILL-SET, BACKGROUND, RACE, ETC)

A highly diverse group of individuals and organizations work alongside each other at Ponyride. As described in the study's findings, this diversity encompasses differences in discipline, skill-set, education, background, and race among tenants.

EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH BY TENANTS

Ponyride tenants are required to share their work and expertise with the community by providing at least 6 hours of free classes per month. Complimenting this requirement, many tenants conduct more informal community outreach and education or perform outreach and education as part of their business or organizational model.

DECONSTRUCTION AND REUSE OF RECLAIMED AND SALVAGED MATERIALS

To the extent possible, Ponyride's workspaces have been constructed using repurposed or reclaimed material, much of which was salvaged from deconstructed structures in the city, including portions of the Ponyride building itself.

ACTIVATION OF AN UNDERUTILIZED AND DISCARDED BUILDING

The 30,000 square foot, two-story industrial building that houses Ponyride was purchased for \$100,000 after foreclosure. Indeed, Ponyride is, in the words of its founder, Phillip Cooley, "a study to see how the foreclosure crisis can have a positive impact on our communities". The building is at full capacity, and there is a waiting list for space.