

The Strong Towns RVA Parking Game

This game simulates a city block in downtown Richmond, VA. You need to make tough choices between dedicating enough space for parking and allowing developers to build. The catch? If lots of people want to drive, you'll need a lot of parking.

Objective: The objective of the game is to optimize the best experience for 3 groups.

1. Drivers: People who drive care that they have a place to park.
2. Business owners: Businesses care that they get enough customers.
3. The city: City hall cares about tax revenue that helps fund better city services for all Richmond citizens.

Get to Know Your City Block

1. **Population:** Your city block's total population is 84 people. Each car/non-car figurine represents 12 people.
2. **Size:** The city block's total acreage is 1.44 acres. Each parcel is 0.12 acre or about 5227 sq. ft. (about the same as this block!).
3. **Tax revenue:** Based on real Richmond tax assessment data, each parking square converted to a building square adds \$750/year (a 7.4% increase) in real estate tax revenue to the city budget. If we extrapolate across all city blocks in Richmond, it would add \$18.6 million/year.

Playing Pieces

- 12 parking squares
- 12 building squares
- 1 pair of dice
- 7 cars (Hot Wheels or Matchbox cars)
- 7 non-car figurines (wooden people, toy bikes or dinosaurs)
- Optional town tiles

Ground Rules

- Every square must be set to parking or building by the end of the round. No vacant squares are allowed.
- Only 1 car per parking square. No double parking.

Transportation Scenarios

Scenario	Non-car	Car	Car modal share	Comparable city*
1	0	7	100%	Plano
2	1	6	86%	Atlanta
3	2	5	71%	Cordoba
4	3	4	57%	Rotterdam
5	4	3	43%	Bremen**
6	5	2	29%	Oslo

*https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modal_share

**https://bau.bremen.de/sixcms/media.php/13/SUMP_Bremen2025_web.pdf

Land Use Presets

Preset	Parking	Building	Parking/building	% buildable land
1	8	4	24.0	67%
2	6	6	12.0	50%
3	5	7	8.6	42%
4	4	8	6.0	33%
5	3	9	4.0	25%
6	2	10	2.4	17%

Playing on City Planner Mode (Default)

In this game play, you can't control how many people will drive or use non-car transportation. The transportation scenario (the ratio of drivers to non-drivers) will be predetermined by rolling a single die. Given that a percentage of your citizens would like to drive, you need to determine how to best use your land.

1. Roll a single die to determine the transportation scenario for your city block. Pick out your car and non-car figurines.
2. Choose 1 of the 6 preset ratios of parking to building squares that optimizes conditions in that scenario.
3. Assemble those numbers of building and parking squares in a 3x4 grid.
4. Place buildings on your building squares to customize your city block.
5. Attempt to park all cars (one per parking square). Non-car figurines can roam free.
6. Calculate your points using the scorecard.

Playing on Advocate Mode

In this game play, you can't control how city land is being used. The land use (the ratio of parking to building squares) will be predetermined by rolling a single die. Given that a percentage of your land is set as parking, you need to determine how many people should drive or use non-car transportation.

1. Roll a single die to determine the land use for your city block.
2. Assemble those numbers of building and parking squares in a 3x4 grid.
3. Choose 1 of the 6 preset ratios of car to non-car that optimizes conditions for that land use. Pick out your car and non-car figurines.
4. Place buildings on your building squares to customize your city block.
5. Attempt to park all cars (one per parking square). Non-car figurines can roam free.
6. Calculate your points using the scorecard.

Playing on Random Mode

In this game play, you can't control the scenario or the land use. Both factors will be predetermined by rolling a pair of dice. Given that a percentage of your land is set as parking and how many people drive or use non-car transportation, you calculate the result.

1. Roll a pair of dice to determine the scenario and land use for your city block.
2. Assemble those numbers of building and parking squares in a 3x4 grid.
3. Pick out your car and non-car figurines.
4. Place buildings on your building squares to customize your city block.
5. Attempt to park all cars (one per parking square). Non-car figurines can roam free.
6. Calculate your points using the scorecard.

Playing on Free Mode

In this game play, you can control both the scenario and the land use. Nothing will be predetermined by rolling dice. What scenario and land use choices will optimize for everyone?

1. Roll a pair of dice to determine the scenario and land use for your city block.
2. Assemble those numbers of building and parking squares in a 3x4 grid.
3. Pick out your car and non-car figurines.
4. Place buildings on your building squares to customize your city block.
5. Attempt to park all cars (one per parking square). Non-car figurines can roam free.
6. Calculate your points using the scorecard.

How to score

You will score points across 3 categories. Calculate for each and then total your points. You can get a maximum of 11 points.

- Driver points: You get 1 point for each open parking square. You get -1 points for each car that can't park. All cars parked without vacancy is a score of 0.
- Business owner points: If all figurines (cars and non-cars) can fit on the board, you get 5 points. Subtract 1 point for each figurine that can't park.
- City hall points: You get points based on which preset land use choice you select. Preset 1 is worth 0 points, preset 2 is worth 1 point... up to preset 6 worth 5 points.

Scorecard

Points		Transportation scenario							
Land use		1	2	3	4	5	6		
1		6	6	7	8	8	9	7.3	More parking
2		4	6	7	8	9	9	7.2	
3		3	5	7	8	9	10	7.0	
4		2	4	6	8	9	11	6.7	
5		1	3	5	7	9	11	6.0	
6		0	2	4	6	8	10	5.0	Less parking
Avg. pts.		2.7	4.3	6.0	7.5	8.7	10.0		
		Fewer non-cars			More non-cars				