CARTEL
PISTON CITY RACKETEERS
v0.8

In Cartel, you take on the role as the head of a criminal gang that's part of a Cartel. Building businesses in towering Piston City expands your forces, which you must maneuvre to control the most lucrative businesses to generate income and buy important figures in the city into your pocket. But watch out! When corruption gets out of hand, someone could turn snitch and sell all the cartel's secrets out for amnesty and wealth!

THIS PRINT & PLAY REQUIRES:

73 cards, making up the communal Bankroll deck

4 double sided quick reference sheet cards

40 tokens in four colours, 10 of each colour.

Contents

Quick Overview

The goal

Win the game by controlling the most Victory Points ◆ when the game ends.

Each player gains Victory Points ◆ by:

1. Having control of **Businesses** ▪ that are *operational* at the end of the game.
2. Having **Officials** ☻ In your service at the end of the game.
3. Playing **The Snitch card** *(Selling out the Cartel)*.

Playing

• Each turn, each player has two **Actions** ▷

Actions ▷ **are spent to:**
a. Play a card from hand,
b. Draw a card, or
c. Move an Agent.

Icons Summary

◆ **Victory Points:** They come from controlling Businesses and Officials.

▷ **Actions:** Each player has two actions per turn to spend to do things.

☻ **Officials:** Buy them off by playing them for special abilities.

▪ **Businesses:** They stack to form buildings and generate resources (agents and cards).

👤 **Agents:** Your soldiers that you move around the city to control buildings.

⊞ **Costs:** Costs are paid by discarding cards from your hand.

Businesses ▪ & buildings

• When a **Business** ▪ is built, you gain an **Agent** 👤 if it is *operational*.
• **Businesses** ▪ are *operational* when their placement fulfils the criteria stated on the card.
• When you build a **Business** ▪ on top of others, you must be able to pay the building **Cost** ⊞ by discarding from your hand. *(The building cost is the number of Businesses + Agents in the building you are building on)*
• **Agents** 👤 are your soldiers that you move around the city to control buildings and battle rival gangs.

Officials ☻

• **Officials** ☻ are played from hand but not into the city.
• **Officials** ☻ you buy off stay in front of you.
• **Officials** ☻ in your service confer to you special abilities, either *Once-off* when played, or *Ongoing* as long as they are in your service.
• If another **Official** ☻ of identical name is in another player's service when a player plays one, the existing one is discarded.

This is the treachery mechanic.

Resource & costs

• The number of cards in your hand represents your gang's resources.
• All **Costs** ⊞ are paid by discarding cards from your hand.
• Each turn, after your actions, you draw as many cards from the **Bankroll deck** as there are **Businesses** ▪ in all of the tallest building**s** you control. (e.g., if your tallest building is one building of 5 floors, draw 5. If your tallest are three buildings of 3 floors each, draw 9.)
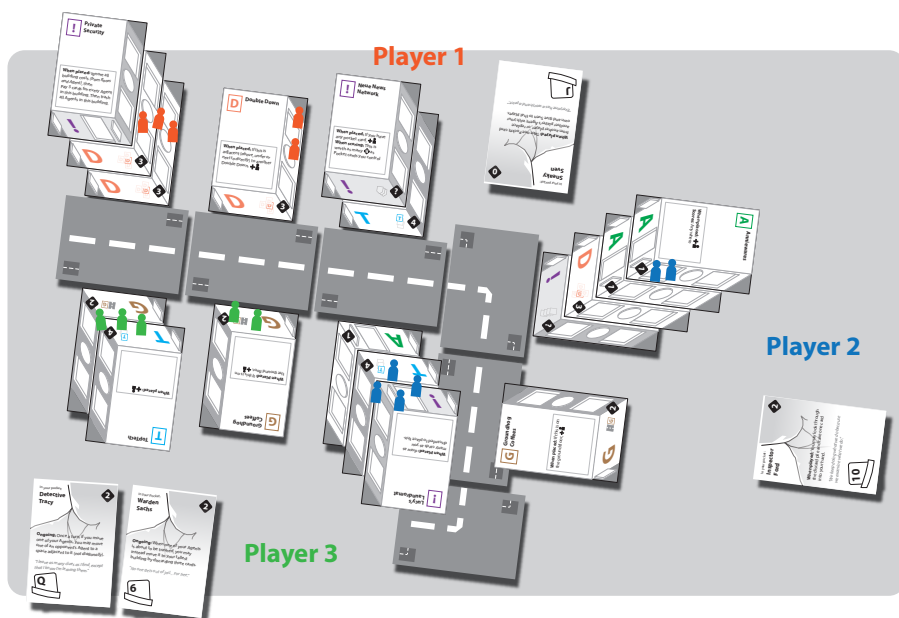
Endgame:

The game ends in one of three ways:
• When the deck runs out for the second time.
• When one of the gangs has 10 **Agents** *(variable by the number of players)*
• **The Snitch** is played

All players' *operational* Victory Points ◆ are tallied and the winner is the one with the most points!

Player 1

Player 2

Player 3

❶ Setup

- Each player chooses a color and takes a number of the corresponding **Agent** 👤 tokens as follows:

  2 Players - 10 👤 each
  3 Players - 9 👤 each
  4 Players - 8 👤 each

- Pull out two straight road cards from the deck and lay them side by side.

Bankroll deck
(communal draw deck)
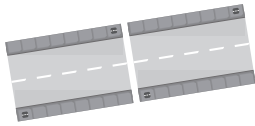
Starting Streets

Starting hand

Reserve pool of Agent tokens

- Shuffle the **Bankroll deck** and deal five cards to each player.

- If a player has no **Businesses** ▪ in their hand, they may reveal their hand and draw a new hand, shuffling their old one into the deck.

- A starting player is selected at random.

- Each player, in turn, places a **Business** ▪ from their hand, without resolving the effect on the card, and puts one of their **Agents** 👤 on it.

- Setup is complete, play commences in a clockwise direction.

❷ Turn sequence

1. Perform two Actions. ▷ ▷
2. Discard down to 4 cards.
3. Draw as many cards as the floors in the buildings tied for tallest you **control**.

▷ : DRAW A CARD
Spend an action to draw a card from the Bankroll deck.
(This action is seperate from drawing cards at the end of your turn.)

▷ : PLAY A CARD
Spend an action to play a card from hand. There are four types of cards:

1. Build a Road:
- You must extend an existing road.
- At least one side of the road must lead to an open space.
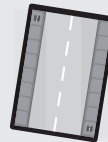
2. Build a Business:
- You may only build on the sidewalk side of roads.

> 🏢 **Building Cost**
> For each **Business** ▪ and **Agent** 👤 (owned by anyone) in the building you are building on, you must discard one card. If you can't pay the cost, you can't build there.
> (It is therefore free to build on the ground floor)

- When you build a **Business**, resolve the effect on the card.

> ➕👤 **Gaining Agents:** Whenever you gain an **Agent**, you may place it where you built the **Business**, or where you already have an **Agent**.

3. Buy off an Official 😊
- Playing an **Official** is free unless stated on the card. When you play an **Offcial**, simply place it in front of you and resolve any effects.
- **Offcials** either have *when played* effects which are resolved immediately when playing the card from your hand, or *ongoing* effects that can be used for as long as its in play under your control.

> **Treachery!** If another copy of the same **Official** is on the table when one is played, the existing copy is discarded.

4. Snitch!
- **The Snitch** can only be played when all seven **Officials** are in play *(under any players's control)*
- Resolve the effects on **The Snitch**, and the game ends immediately.

> **Control**
> You control a building if you have the most Agents in that building. In the case of a tie, no one controls that building.

(e.g., if your tallest building is one building of 5 floors, draw 5. If your tallest are three buildings of 3 floors each, draw 9.)
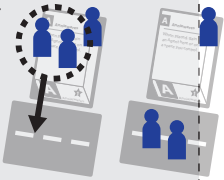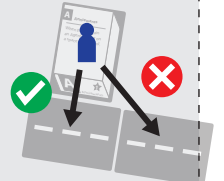
Actions

▷ : MOVE
Spend an action to Move one or more **Agents**.

- You may move any number of **Agents** with one move, as long as they all started from the same space.

- The **Agent/s** may move adjacent to itself, but not diagoally.

- The **Agent/s** may move through other **Agents** in your gang without ending its move, using each other like a bridge. *(Other players' Agents will not block the bridged move.)* *(You may not use other players' Agents as bridges, even with their permission.)*
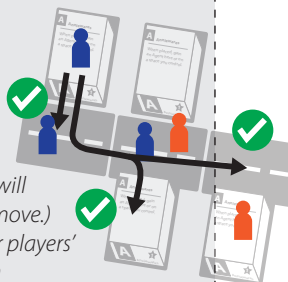
- Buildings on roads with turning corners are considered adjacent.

> **Attacking:** Whenever you move **Agent/s,** if the space the move ends has more of your **Agents** than any other players', you may choose an agent in that space to trash.

No loss

Orange removes an Agent

No loss

Blue chooses one orange or green to remove
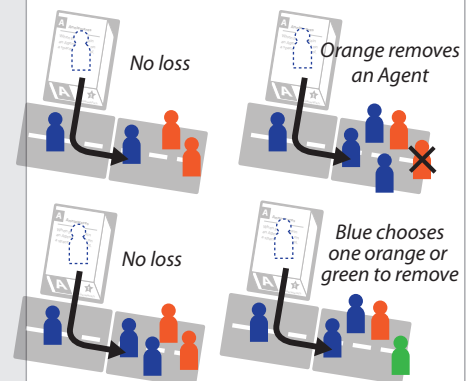
> **Trashing Agents:** When an **Agent** is trashed, it is returned to its owner's reserve pool, ready to be deployed again.

Reserve pool

❸ Finishing

When any of these three conditions are met, the game ends:

1. When any player has placed all their Agents 🧍 on the board, the game ends immediately.

Players start with different amounts of **Agents** in their pool, depending on how many players are in the game.

2 Players - 10 **Agents** 🧍
3 Players - 9 **Agents** 🧍
4 Players - 8 **Agents** 🧍

2. After the Bankroll deck is exhausted for a second time the game ends immediately.

> **The first time the Bankroll deck is exhausted:** The discard pile is shuffled to form a new Bankroll deck.

After this second Bankroll deck is exhausted the games ends immediately when a player is unable to draw a card because none are available.

(This can be as a result of a player choosing the Draw Card action during their Actions (step 1 in the Turn Sequence), or during Step 3 in the Turn Sequence when drawing cards for the tallest building.)

3. When The Snitch is played, the game ends after The Snitch is resolved.

Scoring

When the game ends, tally up the score according to the scoring reminder card:

SCORING

When the game ends, you score only on the buildings you control (*have more Agents than anyone else*).

1 for A placed anywhere.

4 for T with nothing above it.

2 for G on the ground floor.

3 for D adjacent to another D

? for special **Businesses** ! , refer to the card itself.

? For **Officials** ☻ you control, also refer to the card.

Double Down clarification:
Adjacency counts if they are above one another, or next to each other on the same floor. Diagonally adjacent does not count.

✅ ✅ Is adjacent

❌ Is not adjacent ❌
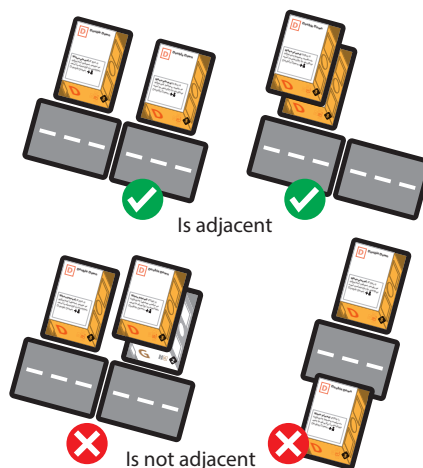
Tiebreakers

In the case of a tie, these are the tiebreakers, in order of importance:

1. Most buildings owned.
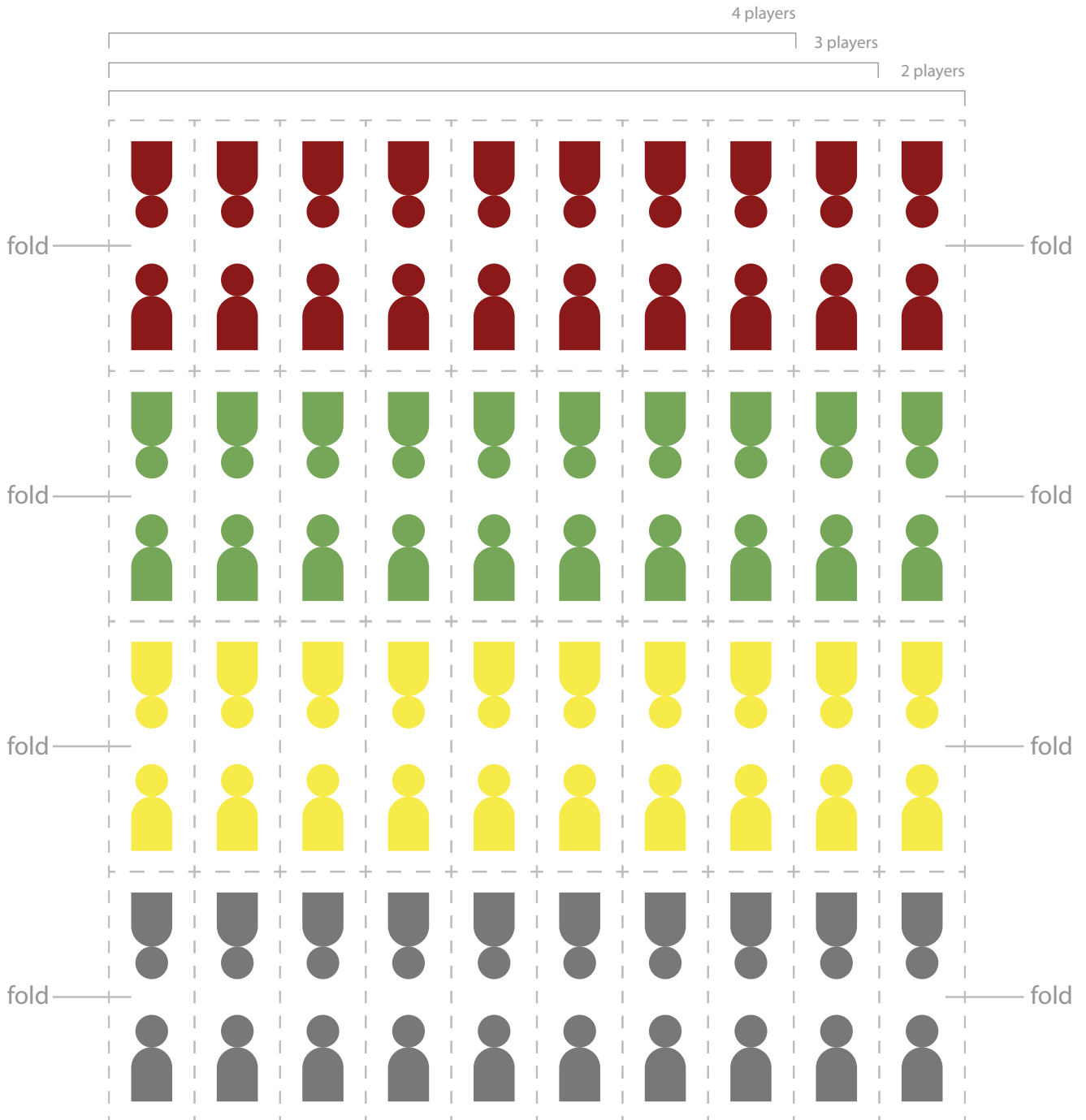2. Most officials owned.
3. Most Agents owned.

And if there's still a tie after those, pat yourself on the back, take a photo of the game state, and email me at **steven@twoplusgames.com** for a prize :P

Colourblind friendly Agent tokens

fold

4 players

3 players

2 players

fold | fold

fold | fold

fold | fold

fold | fold

A Anniewares

When placed: gain an Agent 👤

A · 1

A Anniewares

When placed: gain an Agent 👤

A · 1

A Anniewares

When placed: gain an Agent 👤

A · 1

A Anniewares

When placed: gain an Agent 👤

A · 1

A Anniewares

When placed: gain an Agent 👤

A · 1

A Anniewares

When placed: gain an Agent 👤

A · 1

A Anniewares

When placed: gain an Agent 👤

A · 1

! ShelfCorp

When placed: Ignore all building costs ⊞ *(from floors and Agents)*

! Lucy's Laundromat

When placed: draw as many ⊞ as you discarded to place this.

Double Down

D

When placed: If this is adjacent *(above, under or next to directly)* to another Double Down, gain an **Agent** 👤

3

Double Down

D

When placed: If this is adjacent *(above, under or next to directly)* to another Double Down, gain an **Agent** 👤

3

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3

Neue News Network

!

When placed: If you have any **Officials** 😊 gain an **Agent** 👤

When scoring: Neue News Network is worth as many ◆ as **Officials** 😊 you control.

× 😊 ?

Skyline Construction

!

When scoring: Skyline Construction is worth as many ◆ as the number of **Businesses** ▪ in this building.

?

TopTech

When placed: gain an Agent 👤

4

TopTech

When placed: gain an Agent 👤

4

TopTech

When placed: gain an Agent 👤

4

TopTech

When placed: gain an Agent 👤

4

TopTech

When placed: gain an Agent 👤

4

TopTech

When placed: gain an Agent 👤

4

TopTech

When placed: gain an Agent 👤

4

Private Security

When placed: Ignore all building costs ⊞, then Pay 3 ⊞ cards for every **Agent** 👤 in this building. Then trash all Agents in this building.

Efficient Consulting

When placed: Gain two Actions ▷ *(so you've spent one to gain two for the turn)*

Groundhog Coffees

G

When placed: If this is on the ground floor, gain an **Agent** 👤

H **G** **2**

Groundhog Coffees

G

When placed: If this is on the ground floor, gain an **Agent** 👤

H **G** **2**

Groundhog Coffees

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Groundhog Coffees

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Groundhog Coffees

G

When placed: If this is on the ground floor, gain an **Agent** 👤

H **G** **2**

Groundhog Coffees

G

When placed: If this is on the ground floor, gain an **Agent** 👤

H **G** **2**

Manned Managing

!

When placed: If there is an Agent 👤 here, gain an Agent 👤
When Scoring: This Business is worth as many ◆ as Agents 👤 in this building.

?

SNITCH

This card can only be played if all the **Officials** 😊 (*7 in all*) are in play.

When played: You gain control of all **Officials** 😊 in play. The game ends immediately.

😊 Corrupt Official:

Captain Juan

When played: Remove one **Agent** 👤 of your choice owned by the player or players with the most **Agents** 👤

"Aim for the big ones."

2

😊 Corrupt Official:

Congressman Tu

Ongoing: As an **Action**, choose a player. That player must put an **Official** 😊 down without resolving its When Played ability. If they do not have an **Official** 😊, they must reveal their hand.

"You don't get a say."

2

😊 Corrupt Official:

Detective Tracy

Ongoing: Once a turn, if you move one of your **Agents** 👤, you may move one of an opponent's **Agent** 👤 by one space.

"I leave as many clues as I find, except that I know I'm leaving them."

2

😊 Corrupt Official:

Inspector Ford

When played: You may look through the discard pile and take one card into your hand.

"We keep doing what we do because we examine what we do."

2

😊 Corrupt Official:

Informant Fivel

Ongoing: You only need an equal numbers of **Agents** 👤 to an opponent's to win an attack. You cannot move **Agents** 👤 into a space occupied by other player's **Agents** 👤 unless you discard two cards ⊞

"You don't need to punch harder if you know where to punch."

2

😊 Corrupt Official:

Warden Sachs

Ongoing: When one of your **Agents** 👤 is about to be trashed, you may instead move it to your tallest building by discarding three cards ⊞ .
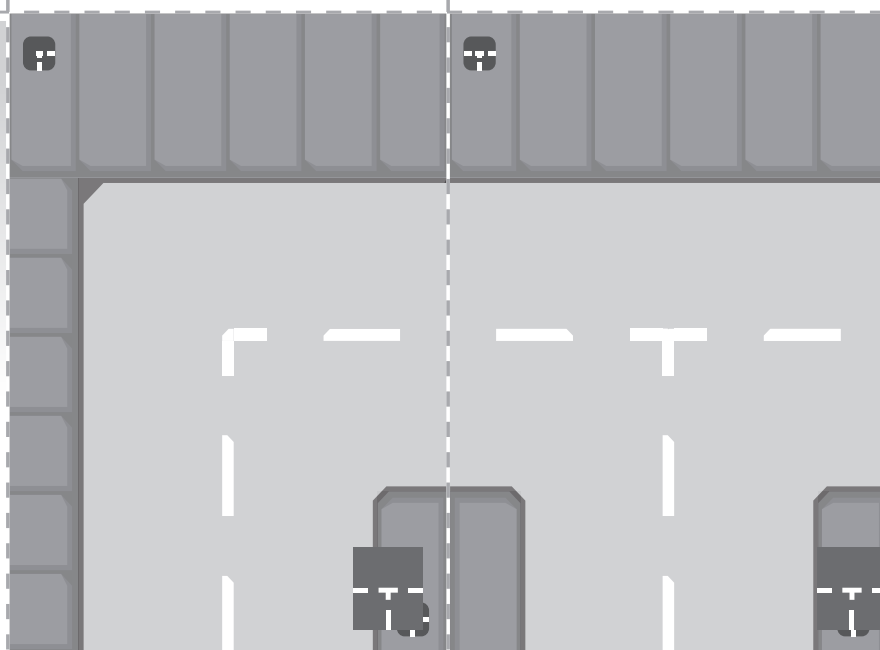
"No one gets out of jail... For free."

2

😊 Corrupt Official:

Sneaky Sven

When played: Trade ownership of Sneaky Sven with an opponent's **Agent** 👤 or **Official** 😊 of your choice.
(This ability only happens when being played from hand. Sneaky Sven also cannot steal another copy of itself)

"Everyone has a worth and a price."

2

😊 Corrupt Official:

Captain Juan

When played: Remove one **Agent** 👤 of your choice owned by the player or players with the most **Agents** 👤

"Aim for the big ones."

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"Everyone has a worth and a price."

2

Neue News Network

When placed: If you have any **Officials** 😊 gain an **Agent** 👤

When scoring: Neue News Network is worth as many ◆ as **Officials** 😊 you control.

✕ 😊 ❓

Skyline Construction
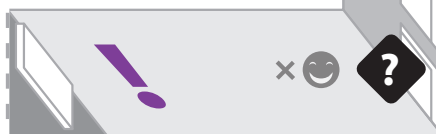
When scoring: Skyline Construction is worth as many ◆ as the number of **Businesses** ▮ in this building.

❓

Manned Managing

When placed: If there is an Agent 👤 here, gain an Agent 👤

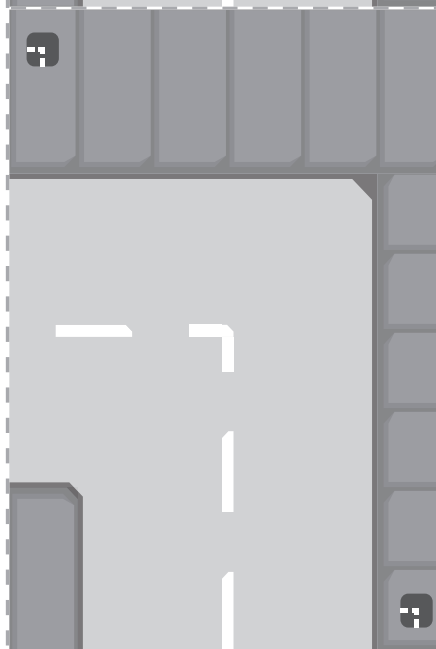**When Scoring:** This Business is worth as many ◆ as Agents 👤 in this building.

👥 ❓
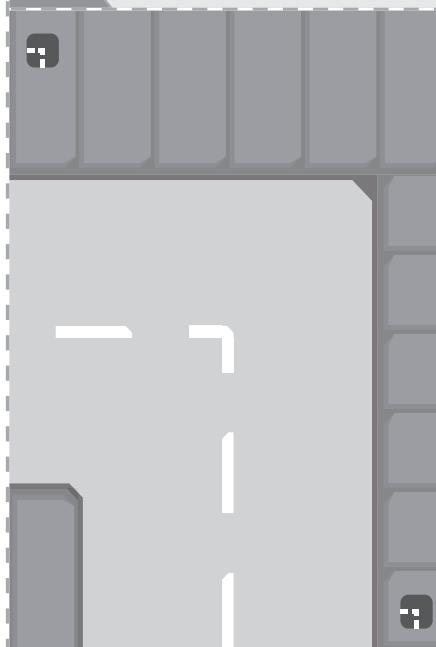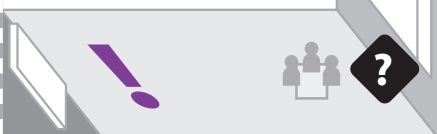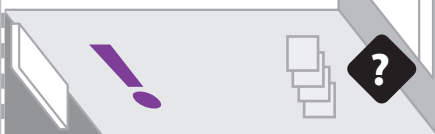
Private Security

When placed: Ignore all building costs ⊞, then Pay 3 ⊞ cards for every **Agent** 👤 in this building. Then trash all Agents in this building.

Efficient Consulting

When placed: Gain two Actions ▷ *(so you've spent one to gain two for the turn)*

ShelfCorp

When placed: Ignore all building costs ⊞ *(from floors and Agents)*

Lucy's Laundromat

When placed: draw as many ⊞ as you discarded to place this.
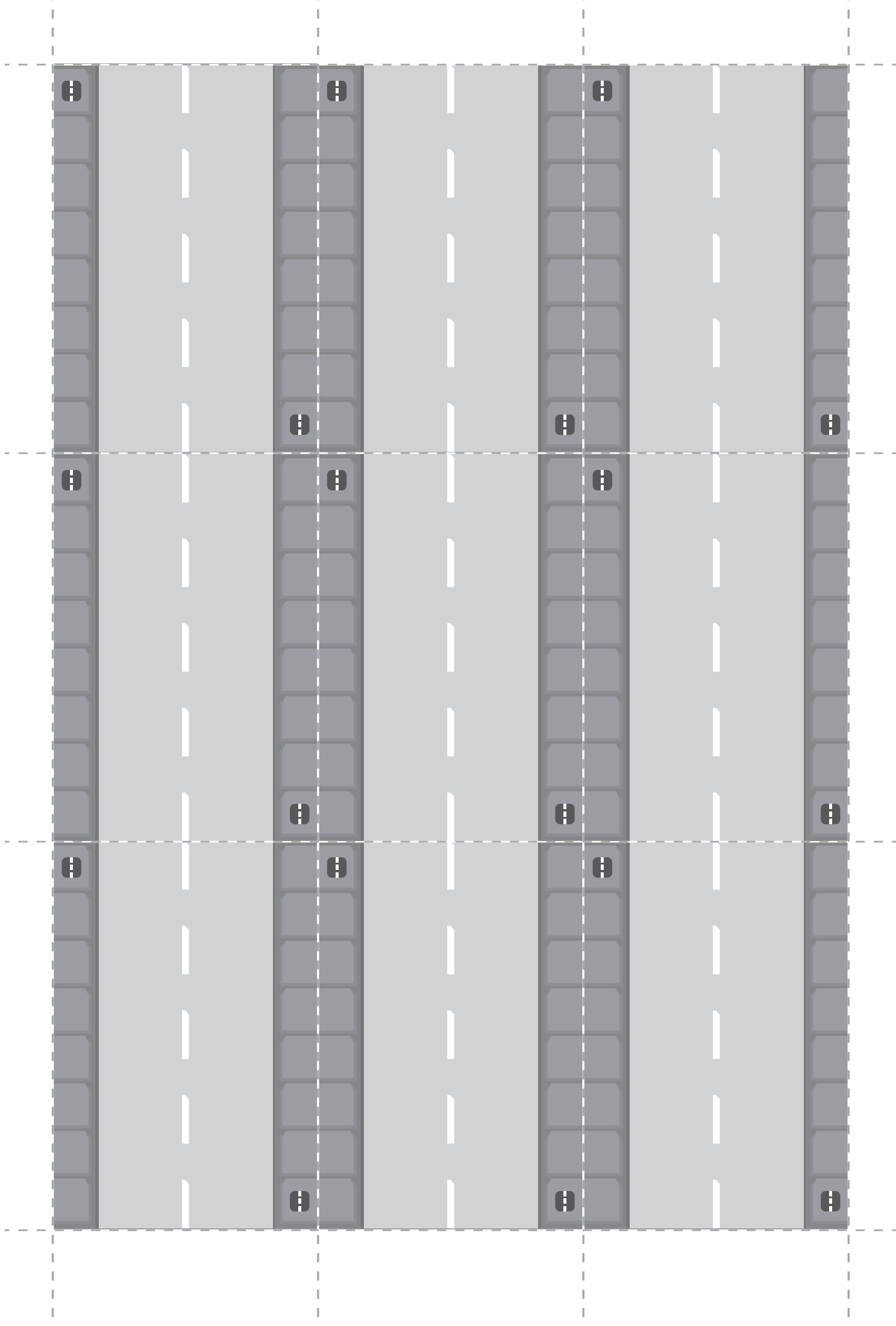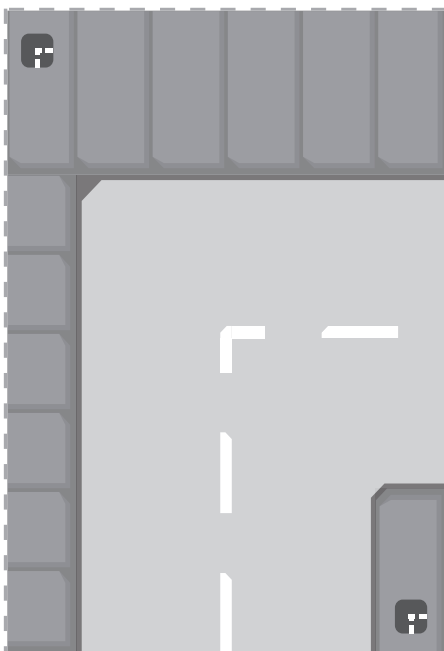
SCORING

When the game ends, you score only on the buildings you control (*have more Agents than anyone else*).

- **1** for **A** placed anywhere.
- **4** for **T** with nothing above it.
- **2** for **G** on the ground floor.
- **3** for **D** next to another **D**
- **?** for special **Businesses** **!**, refer to the card itself.
- **?** For **Officials** 😎 you control, also refer to the card.

TURN SEQUENCE

1. Perform two actions.
2. Discard down to 4 cards.
3. Draw as may cards as floors in the tallest buildings you control.

ACTIONS

1. **Draw a card**
2. **Move an Agent.**
3. **Play a card from hand,** it could be:
   - A **Road**
   - A **Business**, paying ¢ if you build on other Businesses.
   - Play an **Official** in front of you.
   - Play **The Snitch** (*only if there are seven Officials in play*)

QARTEL
CRIMINAL EMPIRE BUILDING IN A CITY OF BETRAYAL

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