

Subdivisions

- 1) An open sandbox environment that has no main storyline; just a wide array of side quests that the player can participate in, and have a myriad of blended ways to accomplish them.
- 2) The quests will be presented in a subtle and implicit fashion, and the player can leave/re-enter any quest at any time, probably without even realizing it. This will allow the game's experience to be homogeneous and natural, instead of sporting an explicit list of distinct missions.
- 3) The game's setting takes place in the suburbs - an area I know too well - and respectively call the game **Subdivisions**, as a tribute to my favourite RUSH song of the same name. Although this is a realistic setting, that doesn't mean no fantasy elements/quests can exist.
- 4) The protagonist will be a 10-year-old, the type of person that people typically have little regard and expectations for (especially in the suburbs), but is freethinking enough to make his/her own decisions. At this time, I'm not sure of whether to make the protagonist a boy, a girl, or player's choice.
- 5) Nothing in the game will be explicitly described; at the start of the game, the player would just be placed in the middle of the setting, and will roam around initially aimlessly, similar to the original Legend of Zelda.
- 6) As an example for quality #5, if the player encounters a sign on a bulletin board that says "lost dog", that means a lost dog exists in the world. If the player finds the dog, she can use it in quests, or return to its owner for a reward (which may also be helpful for other quests too). Or, the owner could be a jerk and give no reward, and the player could choose to abduct the dog. This also doesn't mean no possible repercussions could follow.
- 7) If the player finds an item, for example a rope, she can use it to climb to and from ledges. Now if the player is creative enough, she can use the rope to climb from the window of her room during bed time, and experience the suburbs at night. Quests and rewards may follow, but also could repercussions. The game is as wondrous and dangerous as the player's mind.
- 8) Some quests require common sense initiatives from the player in order to progress through them. Other quests are cryptic and hidden, require thinking, and sometimes luck to progress through them.
- 9) The many variables that dictate behaviours and personalities of each non-playable character can be affected by the player's direct and indirect interaction, which is then propagated to other NPCs in real-time (who could also have been affected by the player). This allows the world to morph around the player's actions in a natural and blended fashion.
- 10) All quests run in real-time, even when the player is involved in another quest. It's important to note that quests don't exist through hard-coded game-states, but implicitly through the intricate placement of people, items, and environments in the game. All quests can be laid out in a design document.
- 11) The graphics will be of low-fidelity, as a means to increase processing time for the above game mechanics, and to invoke the player to fill in the missing realism with her own perspective based on life-experiences; somewhat like Jason Rohrer's game, Passage. The 2.5D world will come to life through 2D graphic algorithms like John Carmack's Wolfenstein 3D engine, and Nintendo's Mode 7 engine found in the Super Nintendo Entertainment System and Game Boy Advance.
- 12) Will integrate social game acquisition, retention, and monetisation techniques – **diegetically**.
- 13) Finally, although all quests and people are unique through the blending mechanics described above, they all contribute to the same theme; boredom and isolation in the suburbs.