

September 27th, 2024: Paralives Developer Weekly Chat

This weekly chat is held on Discord for Hero and Legend tier patrons. Every week, you can ask a few questions to any developer from Friday 12PM to Monday 12PM ET and they will get back to you with their answers the next Friday.
Visit www.patreon.com/alexmasse/ for details.

☀️ Community's choice question

This question got 5 votes from the Super Patrons on Discord!

Deimon:

Hi! Your newest Patreon post briefly talked about getting things ready for creating the first town. Are you already doing some brainstorm/planning for what you want to aim for? (I'm very excited to see how it'll be when it's ready to be shared 😊)

Alex:

Hi! Yes, we have started the work on research and brainstorms for the town. We have collected a lot of references for what we aim for. In the coming months, we will start working on prototype buildings that could be included in the first town as well as specific items needed to fill it! Exciting!

🎮 General questions

Spooky Entity:

I have a question about the camera. Will players be able to lock it to follow a specific para, or will we be using manual controls to follow our characters?

Alex:

We don't have a feature to lock the camera to follow a character yet but it's very likely that we will add it before the release!

rulerwork:

I apologize if this has already been asked, but will we be able to create Paras who already have degrees and certain levels of skills if we want to create backstory and so we are not starting each one from the beginning?

Alex:

It's not planned right now to let you pick a career, skills, etc from the Paramaker but it could be a great thing to add in the future! It could be in an advanced menu though because we don't want new players to find that the game is too boring if your character is already maxed out in their skills and their character.

LavaMike:

I hate that we keep making Sims comparisons but what else can we do? Anyway, in the Sims when you can take music on you laptop/PC and put them in a certain folder. You can then play that music through the stereo system. Likewise you can move photos or pictures from your laptop/PC to a certain folder, and then the Sims could paint those pictures on an easel. Are you planning on including a feature like this?

Anna:

Yes, it should be easy to do that with the mod system and other features without even having to find a specific folder! For instance, right now, you can change the image of a frame and put any image you have on your computer.

Lianna:

How much of your decisions are informed by traditional game design practices, versus the sandbox idea?

For example, in a traditional game, you'd create incentives and challenges to overcome using the tools at your disposal - in Roller Coaster Tycoon, if you want happy guests, you need to spread out your food stands smartly rather than all in one place. In career mode, that overrides the desire to build a pretty park.

In a life sim, the typical interaction-canceled routing pile-up at a narrow doorway might deliberately encourage you mechanically to build more or wider entries and exits. This may be engaging to some places, limiting creativity to others.

Is creativity and free "sandbox mode" simulation a goal that overrides the desire to design a traditional "career mode" game with rules, tools and challenges?

Alex:

Unlike Roller Coaster Tycoon (love that game so much btw), Paralives doesn't have a career mode and it's up to the players to set their own goals. With that being said, there are many rules and challenges in Paralives like career progression paths, wants and aspirations to fulfill. We want the players to have fun finding the best ways to use the rules of the game to complete these objectives in a effective way or a way that fits their own storytelling

👋 Devs questions

Gui

Time for the call roll! Hi Alex! How are you? How was your week?

Alex:

Hey there Gui! Everything's good, I love the fall weather :)

Hi Léa! How are you? How was your week?

Léa:

Hello Gui, I hope you're doing ok 😊 I'm ready for spooky season, fall is my favorite time of the year! 🍂 I've been reading a lot lately and preparing my apartment for winter!

Hi Anna! How are you? How was your week?

Anna:

Hi Gui! I'm good thanks :)

Hi Alice! How are you? How was your week?

Alice:

Sick! It's tissue time :'(Hope you're feeling better than I am haha.

Hi Jérémie! How are you? How was your week?

Jérémie:

I'm okay, thanks!

Hi Sonia! How are you? How was your week?

Sonia:

Heya, I'm good, thanks! Just got back from my week in New york, it was a lot of fun but I prefer Montréal haha

Hi Andrei! How are you? How was your week?

Andrei:

Hey Gui! I'm doing alright and I had a great week thanks!

Hi Chloé! How are you? How was your week?

Chloé:

Hiiii I am good :) ate lots of cake for my bday but and I'm now regretting it.

Hi Gab! How are you? How was your week?

Gab:

it's my birthday week and it's going really well!!

Hi Richard! How are you? How was your week?

Richard:

Richard is away this week!

Hi Alejandro! How are you? How was your week?

Alejandro:

I had a good week! I hope your week was just as good!

Hi Charlotte! How are you? How was your week?

Charlotte:

Heya ! :- D Had a fun lil weekend hanging out with friends.

Hi Lina! How are you? How was your week?

Lina:

Hiiii! I'm doing good! Hope you are as well !! 🍂

Indi:

If you could invite the developers of any game to test out Paralives, who would you invite?

Léa:

Probably Coral Island's devs! I love their game and characters 🍷

Chloé:

I'd invite classic Shigeru Miyamoto 🍷

Sonia:

Hades devs, I loooove that game and I'd love to have their opinion on the game 🍷

Alejandro:

I would like to invite Todd Howard and tell him we have 16 times the details, but for real, I do not know, maybe Sabotage Studio, makers of Sea of Stars which are based in Quebec.

Alice:

I would probably think of devs that also made Cozy Games, like Tiny Glade, Summer House etc!

Alex:

The Sims devs, inZoi devs and Planet Coaster devs

Kalamity:

After spending all this time making your dream lifesim, do you think you'll still have fun playing it without the surprises?

Sonia:

I don't already having fun playing it! We work on some aspects of the game but the rest isn't too much known, me, for example, I love discovering new items and feature in the build mode :D

Léa:

We can't know EVERYTHING that's going on in the game all the time, I still get happy surprises every week and I love it! (especially when I find one of the new clutter items Chloé keeps adding hehe)

Chloé:

I have fun just playing with the Build Mode, and I already spend whole days with it, soooo I think I'll still have fun, especially in the sections of the game I am less familiar with, ahah.

Andrei:

I already have so much fun playing the game and I'd say even more so than if we had all the content in our hands cause we get to value EVERY single thing that is added every week. The day Chloé added the piano I was like 🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷

Charlotte:

Oh man, for sure !! Even if I spend most of my time in the game, there's soooo much I know I'll want to do once the game comes out. That's the fun of life sims, so many opportunities and ways to play !!

Alejandro:

For sure I will have fun playing it! I love to build! I am obsessed and now I look at buildings and think how I can do them in game, it has become an obsession.

Alice:

YES, I already have so much with it! 🍷

Alex:

I'm having a lot of fun playing Paralives! You will see it in next week's Patreon post!!

Spooky Entity:

You're all having an office dinner party, but you can only serve dishes that are already in Paralives. What will you bring?

Léa:

We love Pizza over here 🍷 (with fries on the side, for some reason)

Sonia:

Pizzaaaaaaa

Chloé:

Japanese curry

Charlotte:

Ouhhh I'll bring some of that cake !

Andrei:

RAMEEEEEEEEEEEEEEN 🍷🍷🍷

Alejandro:

Spaghettii!

Alice:

Cake party!!! 🍷

Lina:

Cake, always Cake!

Spooky Entity:

Do you ever just look at someone/something on the street and think 'I need that ____' in Paralives? Has anything like this inspired content, like an outfit or a house?

Chloé:

Totally! When I walk around the city or see interesting furniture at shops, I often take pictures for future reference.

Léa:

Every day of my life 🍷(interesting doors, street art, cute dogs, cute outfits, cute hairstyles... The list is endless)

Sonia:

All the time haha

Andrei:

I don't know why but every time I look at specific moldings on buildings I think of how good they would look in the game 🍷

Alex:

Always! And same as Andrei, I have little something for moldings

Alejandro:

More PC parts 🍷

Sin chicken:

what's an animal you've never seen in person that's you'd love to see in real life? for me it's a mouse 🍷 i need to see how big they are!

Chloé:

A mole rat.

Charlotte:

Eurasian eagle owl ! 🍷

Léa:

A mouse too!! I wan to see them in real life but I'm also super scared of them because canadians keep telling me they are dangerous!

Andrei:

Either a komodo dragon (to say that I saw a dragon), a fully-grown grizzly bear or a silverback gorilla!

Alice:

Really crazy here but I've only seen elephants once or twice, and every time I was amazed. I'm in love with them, so if I could I'd probably choose them!

Alejandro:

A whale!

Lina:

A panda and a Whale! Probably not at the same time tho

🌿 Live mode

Possible Assassin:

I know genetics haven't been worked on for a while but re-watching the PAM video made me wonder about something. I noticed when messing with the heights you saw the other people in the household if I made a para to be 5 foot 3 and other one who is 5 foot have a child would the child grow up to be in that range also (except of course if there's a hidden taller gene they have)?

Anna:

I can't confirm any specifics but yes height is one of the things that is going to be inheritable and children will most likely be around their parents heights!

Sin chicken:

i've been playing the sims 2 recently and one major thing that stands out in this game is all the details that go into the animations they are so lively! we have seen a few animations from the paralives team and they're coming along well too! i also learned recently from plumbellas bustin out video that maxis was getting team members to act out the animations in real life to get them right! it was so interesting do you guys ever act out the animation for reference? (btw highly recommend that video super interesting!)

Alice:

Hi!! Yes I agree,the Sims 2 animations are great!! We would love to add this level of detail, sadly being the small team we are, we have to find ways to create animations that could fit as many item designs as possible. For example, washing your hands in a sink will depend on the sink, where the faucet is etc. If you have multiple designs, it would mean having animation variations for each! Being only two animators, we can't, as we have to focus on every basic action first. This is why in our case, our parafolks will directly put their hands into the water, and not touch the faucet first. This way it will work with every item in the game. :)
And yes, most of the time we shoot and act in our own video references! Except if it is something too technical, like dancing for example haha.

lianna:

Now that you're working on live mode; have you figured out what you're going to do with multiple paras colliding in routing? Will they wait at a distance for someone else to pass through in anticipation of paths colliding, or brute-force it by colliding/complaining and rerouting (like in The Sims), or cancel their action queue, or pass through each other like ghosts, or something else?

Anna:

For now we're keeping it simple so Paras pass through each other like ghosts but eventually we'd like to improve that and make Paras walk around other Paras or wait if the path is too small.

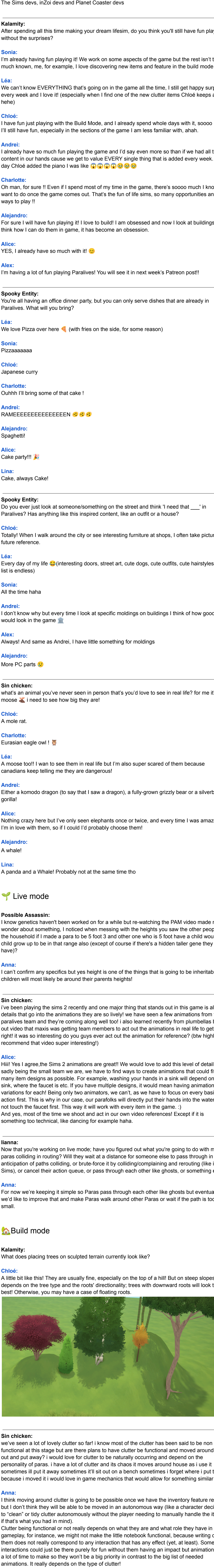
🏠 Build mode

Kalamity:

What does placing trees on sculpted terrain currently look like?

Chloé:

A little bit like this! They are usually fine, especially on the top of a hill! But on steep slopes, it depends on the tree type and the roots' directionality; trees with downward roots will look the best! Otherwise, you may have a case of floating roots.



Sin chicken:

we've seen a lot of lovely clutter so far! i know most of the clutter has been said to be non functional at this stage but are there plans to have clutter be functional and moved around taken out and put away? i would love for clutter to be naturally occurring and depend on the personality of paras. i have a lot of clutter and its chaos it moves around house as i use it sometimes ill put it away sometimes it'll sit out on a bench sometimes i forget where i put things because i moved it i would love in game mechanics that would allow for something similar

Anna:

I think moving around clutter is going to be possible once we have the inventory feature ready, but I don't think they will be able to be moved in an autonomous way (like a character deciding to "clean" or tidy clutter autonomously without the player needing to manually handle the items, if that's what you had in mind).

Clutter being functional or not really depends on what they are and what role they have in gameplay, for instance, we might not make the little notebook functional, because writing on them does not really correspond to any interaction that has any effect (yet, at least). Some interactions could just be there purely for fun without them having an impact but animations take a lot of time to make so they won't be a big priority in contrast to the big list of needed animations. It really depends on the type of clutter!

👉 Paramaker

LavaMike:

Sorry if this has been asked already, Have you had any issue with clipping in the paramaker? I mean with how clothes and hair bleed through other items and even the paras themselves. How have you dealt with that issue that is so prevalent in Sims and even Inzoi?

Sonia:

It happens often with clothes that are oversized or shaped a bit differently from the body shape. In that case, we're careful and test the deformations that are more likely to cause issues and try to fix the mesh or in the set of UVs that are used for the deformation. Usually, when we figure out what works for that clothing shape, we just use it as a base for our other clothing items that are similar!