Level Design Document

Quad City

Jacob Helgren - Level Designer
Karsten Drephal - Project Manager
Adam Ramsay - Character Artist
Riley Embacher - Environmental Artist
Wyatt Iacolucci - Programmer

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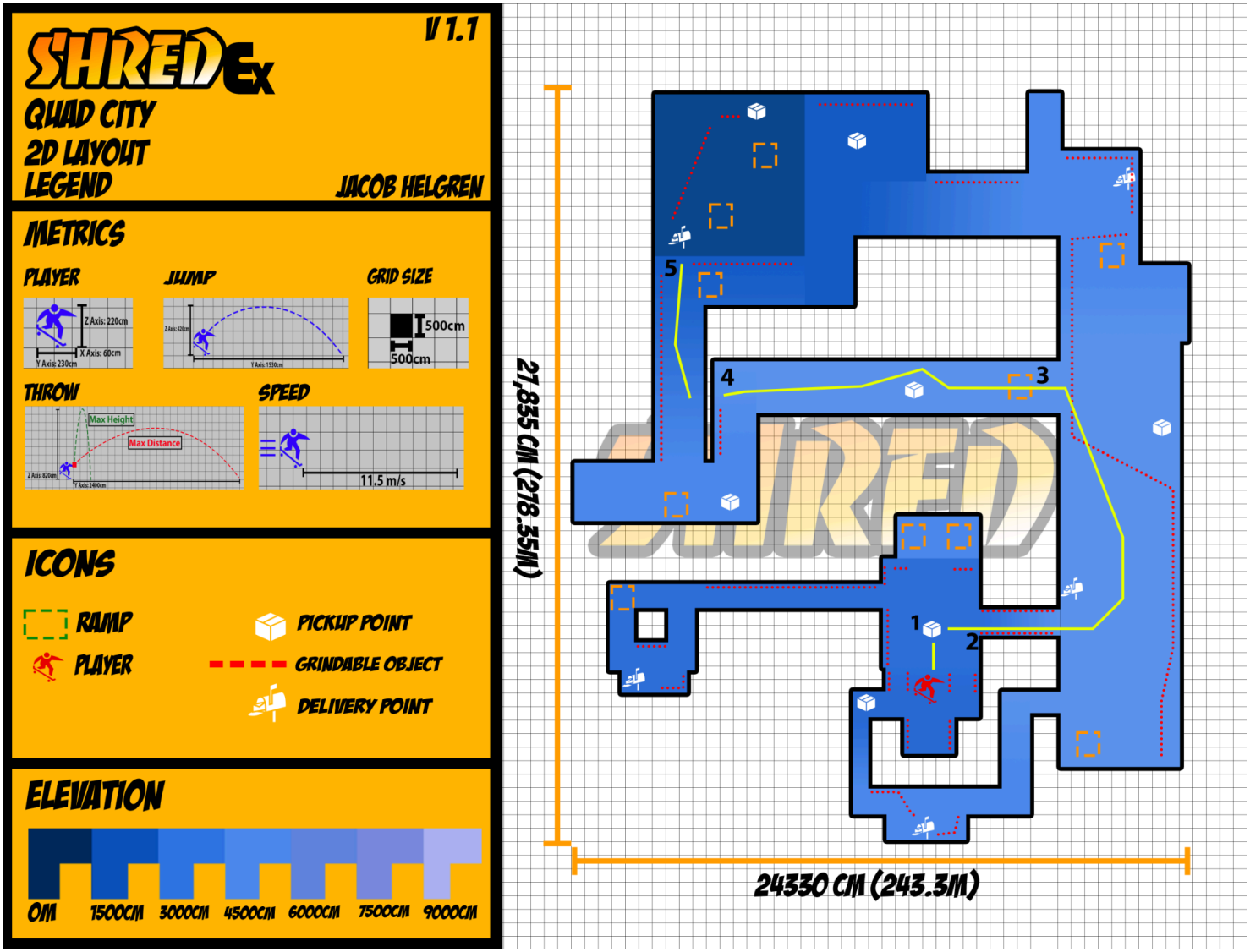
1. Level Overview

1.1. 2D Layout



(Fig 1.0 - 2D Layout Ver. 1.1)

(Green Line = Critical path/Encounter Path)

1. Move toward package and collects it

2. Grind up grind rail on staircase
3. Jump off ramp
4. Jump across gap
5. Drop package off at delivery point

Click here for link to high res image

1.2. Narrative Overview

Ed, the player protagonist of ShredEx, is a robot delivery man working for the parcel company BoxBot Expedited (or BBEx for short.) The parcel company has rebranded their vision recently, now wanting to replace their slow old robo-workers with new quick emotionless drones that won't complain about bad working conditions. As one of these old model robo-workers, you must work a full shift delivering packages at a quick enough pace to satisfy your impatient boss. Satisfy your delivery quota with enough speed to keep your place in the company BBEx and not be terminated for parts, who knows, if you do well enough you may even be promoted... but probably not.

1.3. Gameplay Overview

In the world of ShredEx, players will play in a city separated by districts. Each district is distinctive by their music theme, visual look, and landmarks. Players must utilize their movement and grinding to traverse the level in an effective manner, memorizing delivery routes throughout gameplay. Players must also remember where package spawn locations are so they are able to return to these locations after their current delivery. While the delivery timer counts down, players must transport packages to the specified delivery zone. In each district, gameplay will feel different, with the city/commercial district having lots of interweaving alleys and buildings and with a landmark of a building under construction. While areas like the docks will be more open but have more verticality with the landmark of the crane.

1.4. Key Gameplay Moments

1.4.1. Grinding

1.4.1.1. Setting

The setting of the level is Quad City, a tropical/arid city with a mix of modern and futuristic aspects. The city is extremely vertical with many alleys and interconnected areas. There are several districts in the level differentiated by landmarks and color scheme, each district will also feel different to play in using different level design factors. The city will be constantly sunny with yellow lighting and will give off the impression of a hot summer day in a sci-fi city.

1.4.1.2. Feel

During grinding, players should feel satisfied from the snappy and quick movement and the goal is to get players excited for finding and taking a shortcut or alternate path to somewhere. We would like these grindable objects to be a challenge in themselves so making players look for other grind rails to chain together would be an exciting moment.

1.5. Overall Feel of the Level

1 - Lighthearted
2- Upbeat
3- Interconnected

2. Walkthrough

2.1. Beats

2.1.1. Finding a Package

Intensity: 1/10
Difficulty: 4/10
Duration (Minutes): 0.5-2 Minutes depending on the player's perception

What Skills Are Being Challenged:

Perception - Players are tested on their perception during this beat, as they explore the level and run around possibly delivering other packages they had picked up prior, they must keep an eye out for packages available to be picked up. Some packages will be easier to find while others may be harder, however, all packages will be located around optimal routes of travel meaning that players with a keen eye will be able to locate packages during other deliveries.

What Happens:

After the first delivery of the game which acts as a tutorial, players are left on their own to find the next package. Packages will have a ray of light emanating from them which will give hints as to their general location so player's aren't left totally in the dark as to their goal. However, during this time there will be no pressure of time limit so player's are able to take their time to explore the map and learn where packages are spawned. This will give players the opportunity to plan out their deliveries and memorize certain aspects of how they want to approach the next delivery. Once the player finds the next package they wish to deliver, they will move onto the next beat.

Objective:

Here, players must find a package to progress in the game

Location(s):

There are many locations across the city with package spawn locations; however, most of them will be within visibility from critical routes and paths.

Design Goal:

The goal of having to search for packages gives variety to the pacing of the game. Instead of being high-intensity the entire time, we give players a break when they have no packages so they are able to pace themself and possibly discover more routes in the world. Having this break in pacing will allow players to try the game multiple times, further increasing their map knowledge, and not get them burnt out too quickly.

Progression:

- 1.0 - Player is currently without a package, either because of beginning the game or just making a delivery
- 1.1 - God rays (Light Beams) light up above where packages are currently spawned
- 1.2 - Player follows God Rays, exploring the map along the way
- 1.3 - Player finds a package. At this point they can go toward it or keep exploring

2.1.2. Pickup the Package

Intensity: 3/10
Difficulty: 5/10
Duration (Minutes): 0.5-1 Minute

What Skills Are Being Challenged:

Management - The player's management will be tested with this step if they have other packages in their inventory, the player has a limited inventory and so they must determine when they should pick up a new package; for example if they find a package on their way to delivering another package, but the package currently in their inventory's timer is almost expired, they may want to deliver that package first before picking up the package they found earlier.

Precision - If players decide to pick up a package while on their way to another package's delivery spot, they will need to be precise with their positioning and movement so as to not slow themselves down and lose their momentum.

What Happens:

During this beat, players will have just found a package and go toward it to pick it up. Packages won't just be on flat ground and will usually require some sort of platforming, so once this is done and players make their way to the package they must enter its pickup volume. If their inventory is full they won't be able to pick it up and must either throw a package in their inventory out or deliver a package first and then come back to the package later. However, if a player has a slot in their inventory open then they can move over top of the package to pick it up. Doing this will fill a slot in their inventory, bring a waypoint onto their screen, and start the delivery!

Objective:

Make your way toward the package and pick it up

Location(s):

There are many locations across the city with package spawn locations; however, most of them will be within visibility from critical routes and paths. Packages will not usually be located on flat ground but instead will take some platforming to get to.

Design Goal:

The reason for this beat is to make players decide on when the opportune time is to pick up a package and to make quick decision making on if they should go out of their way to pick up a package despite the timer of their current package going down. The reason for making packages in critical routes is to make

sure player's don't have to search for extended periods of time and will most likely see one during regular travel or deliveries. However, to still make it challenging we will put them in sections that need a little platforming to reach.

Progression:

- 1.0 - Player decides to pick up the package they found
- 1.1 - Platform toward the package
- 1.2 - Pick it up

2.1.3. Deliver the Package

Intensity: 3/10
Difficulty: 2/10
Duration (Minutes): 0.5

What Skills Are Being Challenged:

Timing - The player's timing is being tested as once they pick up a package, the delivery timer starts. As the player takes longer and longer to deliver the package they will receive less points for doing so.

Management - The players must manage their multiple packages at the same time, for example they may have 3 packages at once at will have to adapt and adjust their route in order to deliver all the packages efficiently

Reaction - Players will have to react quickly to path opportunities like grind rails or to sharp turns and other obstacles along their delivery that may prevent them from completing their route.

What Happens:

When the player picks up a package, it will be added to their inventory and the delivery timer will start. As the timer counts down they will receive less and less points for successfully dropping the package off. A waypoint will guide the player showing them where it needs to be brought to. During their route they will have to navigate through grind rails and platforming around the city to reach their destination.

Objective:

Reach the delivery destination and drop the package off by throwing it or entering the delivery volume.

Location(s):

Delivery locations will be scattered all around the map, indicated by the waypoint. Some areas will be higher up and require platforming or a throw while others will be on the ground and easier to reach.

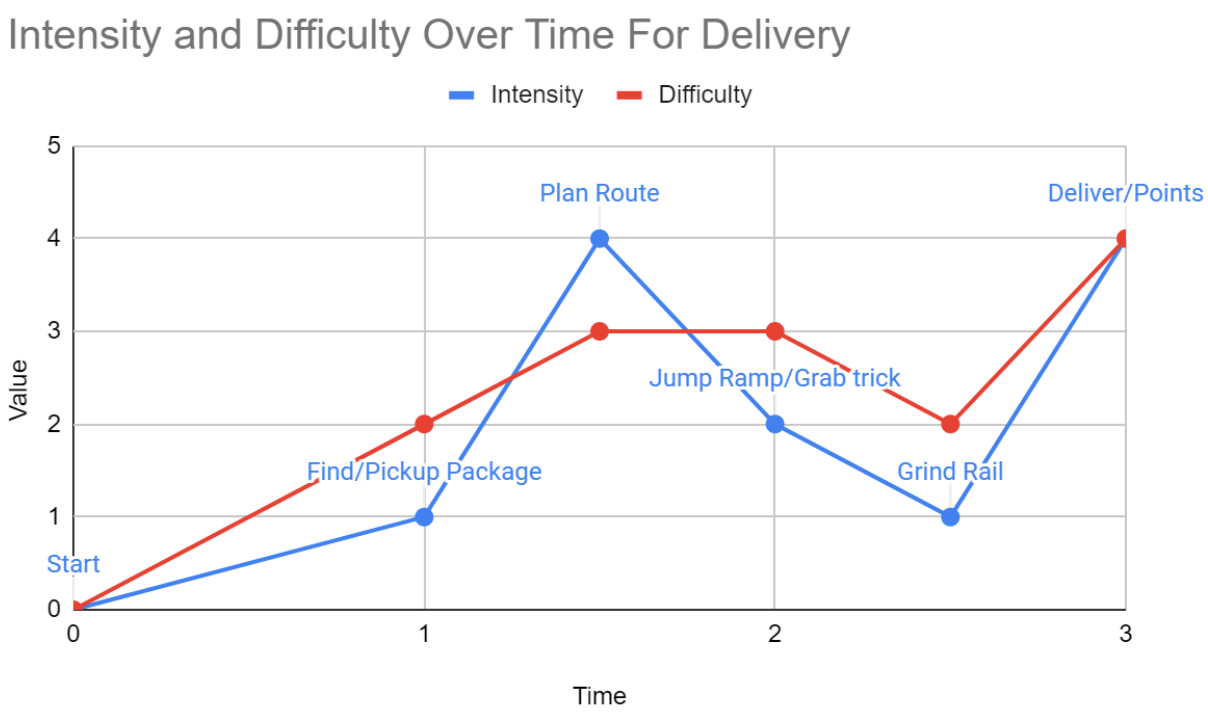
Design Goal:

The reason for delivery points is to provide a challenge for the player, a timer being placed on this action will bring a sense of urgency and make the pace of the game spike! This will be the hardest and most challenging but also the most fun part of our game.

Progression:

- 1.0 - Package enters the inventory
- 1.1 - Timer starts
- 1.2 - Player moves toward waypoint, grinding and taking routes efficiently
- 1.3 - Player reaches Delivery Zone
- 1.4 - Move through drop off volume or throw package into it

2.2. Core Game Loop Beat Chart



(Fig 2.1 - Core Loop Intensity Vs Difficulty Over Time Beat Chart)

3. Environment

3.1. MDD Link

MDD Link 1

MDD Link 2

3.2. Flora and Fauna

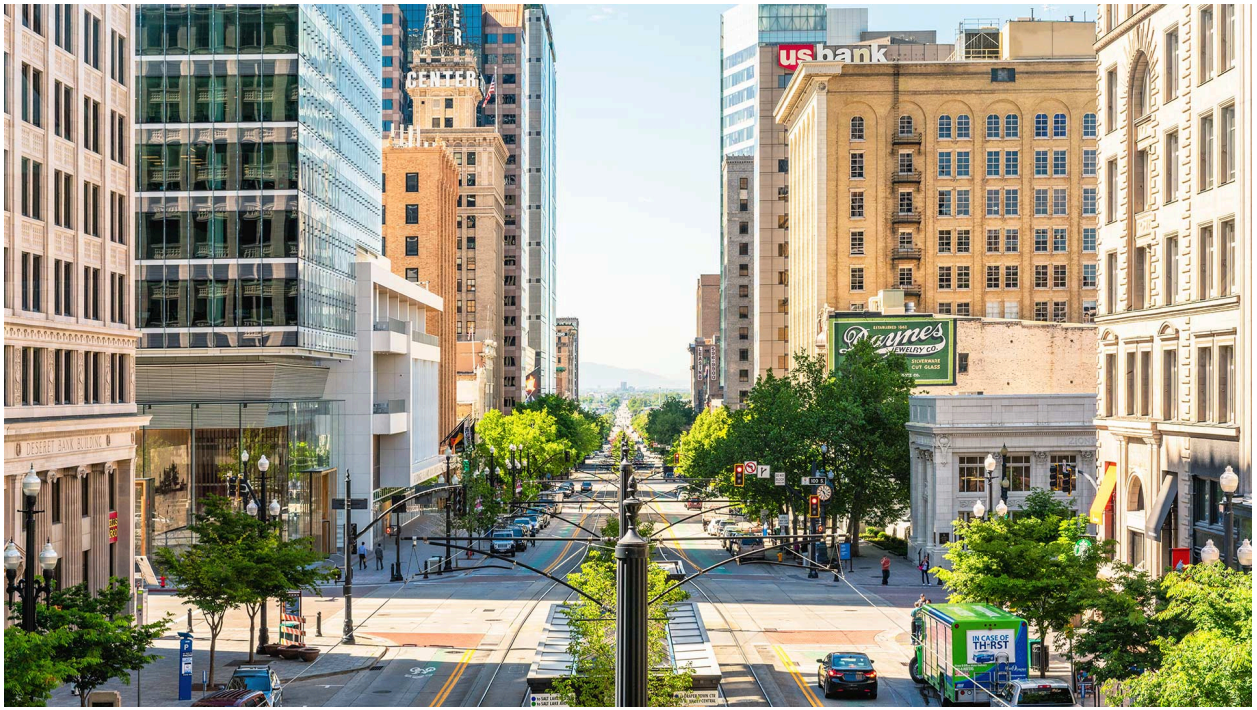
Our level includes flora fitting an arid residential climate such as palm trees, hedges, and grass. We don't have fauna in our environment that the player can interact with but do have birds (seagulls) in the sky and around the water.

(Fig 3.0 - Flora Example)

(Fig 3.1 - Fauna Example)

3.3. Climate

The climate of our level is consistent throughout and takes place in an arid California-like climate, mixing the hot tropical visuals like palm trees and beaches with sci-fi futuristic city elements. *(See Fig 3.2 and Fig 3.3)*



(Fig 3.2 - Example of Climate and Lighting)

(Fig 3.3 - Example of Climate)

3.4. Guiding Player & Boundaries

We use the environment to guide the player by using streets and buildings with leading lines that lead to optimal routes. We use mass and void to show the player the way forward and the way toward the delivery points such as having tight alleyways that lead into a courtyard area where the delivery point lies. We also use grind rails to guide the player toward new paths and package pickup points. Package locations spawn in critical paths to ensure players will be able to find packages with relative ease.

3.5. Landmarks

We are using landmarks throughout the different districts to differentiate the feel of each area and to give a memorable and interesting obstacle that players can interact with. Landmarks consist of large structures that fit the theme of the district they are in such as a crane for the docks district and an "under-construction" skyscraper for the industrial district. *(See Fig 3.4)*

(Fig 3.4 - Example of Crane Landmark)

3.6. Architecture

The architecture throughout our world mixes the visual style of sci-fi with a modern city. Each district has a different color scheme and different types of buildings to make each section in the world memorable. However, many props remain the same across multiple districts to keep consistency across the world. *(See Fig 4.5)*

(Fig 3.5 - Example of Architecture)

3.7. Audio

Each of the districts in our environment has 2 different music themes; one calmer and more relaxed but upbeat theme for use while you are in between deliveries, and another more intense and quick theme for use while a delivery timer is counting down. The different themes between each zone reflect the zones themself. (For example, the industrial zone has a more mechanical sound with use of tools and clangs in the theme)

SFX for ShredEx lean toward the “arcade” pillar, meaning they are accurate to their real-life counterpart sounds but more overexaggerated and stylized towards the scifi genre.

3.8. Lighting

The lighting in our world is always in a state of standard mid-daytime lighting with a yellowish tint. The lighting does not change or have a day/night cycle. *(See Fig 3.2)*

3.9. Aesthetic Feel of World

The visual aesthetic feel of our world we are aiming for is noted in our aesthetic pillar section with the main feel we are aiming for being to take inspiration from late 90's- early 2000's arcade/dreamcast games. Another visual aspect we aim for with our game is a tropical environment mixed with a sci-fi city. We wish for the game to have a lighthearted and comedic tone meaning that certain environment and world factors/objects will be over exaggerated and stylized. *(See Fig 3.6)*

(Fig 3.6 - Stylized Vision Goal Example)