

THE STILL VERY WORK-IN-PROGRESS

MENDELL CITY

LORE CANON APPLICATION

BY SAMMY / NAUT

"Welcome to the Capital of the Cosmos."

Mendell City, often referred to as just **Mendell**, is the capital of the Republic of Biesel, the most populous city in human space, the wealthiest city in the Orion Spur, and a center of finance, research and culture. It is located along the northern coast of the planet's Astraeon continent facing Severson Rift and holds hundreds of millions within its city limits.

The City into 15 administrative Districts which spread across a combined area of about 53,000 km², making for an average population density that is one of the highest in the Spur. Its massive figures lend it to be one of the largest cities in human space, often being described as more of a nation masquerading as a city than a proper urban polity.

Mendell has attracted galactic attention and gained a reputation as the most (in)famous city in human space; due to the sheer amount of people, variety of living conditions, and extreme wealth inequality. The city attracts a litany of varying opinions, with just as many praising the city as there are denouncing it and everything it stands for.

The city's sheer diversity often leads to residents experiencing entirely different qualities of living, crime rates, and even cultural aesthetics across different Districts and sometimes within the same ones. Many Mendell residents have their own experience of the city that might differ substantially from anyone else's time spent in it. This has resulted in citizens developing local identities of associating themselves with their Districts rather than with the city overall, as Districts have

more uniform cultures and standards within their borders. Even those of equivalent wealth classes can often have vastly better or worse experiences depending on where they are exactly positioned in the city.

The city's living standards are often skewed from the galactic perspective; while crime is often high and upward mobility is limited, especially among the lower classes, abject poverty is almost unheard of; over 90% of residents retain access to clean food and water, in thanks mostly to social safety nets and government subsidiaries. Despite this, income inequality is still rampant, and density, immigration waves, and overcrowded housing lead to the less-affluent parts of the city housing high rates of crime. In contrast, inner Districts with wealthier people are extremely safe, owing to a mix of heavy police and corporate security presence.

Economy

Mendell City is the undisputed economic heart of the entire Orion Spur, reporting over 15 trillion credits in gross metropolitan product in 2465. As the nerve center of galactic commerce, the city houses the headquarters of every major Stellar Corporate Conglomerate member and serves as the primary hub for countless industries as a result.

The Mendell economy itself is centered primarily around finance, technology, research, service, and real estate. Financial services alone account for nearly 30% of the city's economic output, with District 13's Bullard Avenue processing trillions of credits in daily trading volume that affects markets from Earth to the outer colonies. Secondary industries include tourism, culture and manufacturing, though the latter has dwindled down in size as companies moved factories outside of the city to more cost-effective locations like Phoenixport and Belle Cote. Over 40% of employed residents work in some form of service, management, or support role for corporations.

Most businesses in Mendell deal in consumer goods, as well as B2B services like finance, technology, and legal services. Solo- and family-operated businesses like food vendors, restaurants, freelancers and combis make up over 50% of small

businesses in the city and contribute a significant portion of income to the economy from the lower classes.

Real estate represents another major economic pillar, with property values in districts like Phoenix Park attracting galactic attention. Investments from prominent firms such as megacorporate developers or Board Realty often contribute both to neighborhood revitalization and gentrification, as new-generation developments encourage a mix of walkability and ease of access to consumer goods and services, though regulations exist to prevent condominiums from being used simply as vacant investments.

Labor

Despite the city's immense wealth, labor remains deeply stratified. Most high-income earners are corporate professionals living in Downtown or Midtown, including executives, financial analysts, research scientists, and legal professionals who command salaries often exceeding 100,000 credits annually. They typically enjoy corporate housing subsidies, comprehensive benefits packages, and stock options that tie their lifestyle directly to business performance.

Middle-income jobs include government workers, technicians, educators, and transit operators, often commuting from Midtown or the Periphery. This tier encompasses the city's essential workforce, who earn between 50,000–80,000 credits annually but often struggle with housing costs in more desirable districts. Many rely on inherited properties in areas like District 5 or corporate housing arrangements to maintain their standard of living.

Low-income workers are typically those of blue-collar jobs, increasingly those of customer service, low-tier corporate security, maintenance, and custodial jobs. Industrial workers are becoming increasingly rarer in the city as factories are continually moving operations out of Mendell due to rising costs; replacing them is a growing services industry looking for jobs such as tech support, BPO, and customer service roles that often require workers to support operations across multiple star systems.

A significant amount of blue-collar work in Mendell is staffed by owned or free IPCs, making up 31% of the working population of the entire city. While certain Mendell Districts skew more liberal than others in regards to IPC rights, servitude and oppressive conditions remain common citywide. Runaway, defective or replaced IPCs who can't make it off-world often either flee for other parts of Biesel, or settle for refuge in the abandoned factories of District 14.

Transit

Mendell City has one of, if not the, most comprehensive transit systems in the Orion Spur. Thousands of trains and millions of buses ferry hundreds of millions of passengers across the city every single day, spearheaded mostly by the Mendell City Transportation Board and the Port Authority of Greater Mendell. Mendell is a transit-oriented development (TOD) city, meaning transit hubs such as Metro stations and Citylink stops often have real estate development centered around them, from office buildings, to Plexes, to shopping malls, to universities.

The Board (MCTB)

All of Mendell City municipal transportation is overseen by the Mendell Central Transportation Board (MCTB), commonly referred to as just **the Board**, a public corporation majority-owned by the city itself. A significant amount of the Board's revenue comes from its real estate wing, MCTB Realty (colloquially Board Realty), which owns or partially owns a significant amount of commercial and mixed use real estate in close proximity to transit stations. The Board owns 54 Plexes, 21 shopping malls, and 295 highrise buildings in the city, with minority shares in hundreds more. Board Realty profits make up over 40% of transit revenue, allowing them to operate services like the Metro at a financial loss and remain in the green.

Despite being owned by the city government, the Board has a reputation for largely being operationally sovereign, largely independent and opaque in its decision making — many have called the bureaucracy “labyrinthine” due to its complex layers of guidelines and operational manuals that govern its usage. It has

a reputation of being the “real” rulers of Mendell due to its control over Mendell’s arteries, though this power is rarely usable in practice owing to the Board’s bureaucracy often stagnating its capabilities in actual projection outside of keeping the system running.

COSMO

Board-operated transit and even many commercial establishments use the **COSMO** contactless payment system to pay for fares, tolls, or other items. COSMO kiosks and payment can be paid through a COSMO card, a normal credit/debit card, smart device, or implant. COSMO transponders are also issued for vehicle use on the Interdistrict Highways.

COSMO’s low sign-up barrier, ability to be topped off at any train station, and near-universal acceptance have made it a popular cash card for Mendell residents. Its ubiquity and ability to do peer-to-peer transfers as well as commercial transactions have made “Cosmo it” a popular vernacular in Mendell for sending money. While it offers less security than a debit card and no interest generation, its transaction network is far more reliable and accessible than an ATM and also often remains online even during outages of bank or telecom systems.

Mendell City Metro (M)

The arteries of the city, the **Mendell City Metro**, known as just the **Metro** or even the “**M**”, is a massive 67-line mass transit railway linking all 15 Districts together in a single unified train network. With more than 320 million daily trips made on it and over 4,000 stations, the Metro is the largest mass transit railway in human space. The Metro is legendary for its headways — gaps between trains on rush hour often can get under 120 seconds flat. At 2.00-4.00 credits per ride, with congestion pricing at rush hour, the Metro remains one of the cheapest and most reliable methods of transit in the city.

Stations are in varying states of maintenance — while many in Downtown and Midtown are fairly well maintained, Periphery stations can often be dirtier, more neglected, or even falling apart. Despite this, all stations are kept to a basic standard of in-station platform transfers via mezzanines, platform screen doors,

good lighting, and ample signage to display headways. Many stations even commission artists to regularly paint murals on stations to give each one an iconic look.

Cars consist of 3.2m-wide fully automated 10-car consists. At rush hour, per-line throughput can often match or exceed 120,000 people per hour, per direction, thanks to extremely tight spacing and automation by decentralized AI “controllers”. This does mean trains have almost no room for error on busy routes, however, and delays — though rare — can often make major disruptions in a system, with trains often having to switch tracks on stations to different platforms or even depart early.

Metro lines are numbered, with 67 lines total. Even-numbered lines run a majority of their length east-west, while odd-numbered lines run a majority north-south (or whichever cardinal direction is closest). 38 lines have express (X) variants, often indicated by prefixing a line number with “X” (e.g. X47). Other additional lines are Shuttles (S, e.g. S3), which often have 3 or fewer stops, short routes, and high-capacity trains — such Shuttles include services to spaceports, for game days, and for extraordinary circumstances like construction or unusually large amounts of riders. Several lines might share a single stretch of track, especially in Downtown; these lines are bundled together into trunks, with common-trunk lines often sharing a colored bullet.

Citylink Maglev

The **Citylink** is an elevated phoron-powered maglev train network that rides above Downtown and parts of Midtown. Secondary to the Metro, the Citylink is cleaner, scenic, less crowded, and more consistently well-maintained. It is often met with praise by city elites and derision by the working class, with many calling it over-exclusive. Citylink tracks connect Districts 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 12, and 13, with the highest cluster of stations in Districts 1, 2, and 13.

The Citylink charges an expensive 10.00 credit flat fare, borderline unsustainable for most who depend on public transport. As a result, ridership is kept low relative to the Metro, with demographics consisting mostly of corporate executives,

white-collar professionals, and tourists. Consequently, Citylink trains are often extremely comfortable, with padded seating, quiet rides, and very little sway thanks to maglev technology.

Efforts to expand Citylink outside of Downtown have been met with staunch opposition by both city elites and by the working class; elites believe expanding Citylink access will choke Downtown ridership and cause congestion, while those in Midtown and the Periphery believe Citylink lines will lead to gentrification and rent gouging.

Interdistrict Highway System

The Interdistrict Highway System (IDH) is a labyrinthine network of city tolled expressways that stretch across the entire city, connecting 212 million people by road. Built to relieve traffic congestion, the project took over 155 billion credits and 6 years to construct. However, upon its completion, the highways cut road traffic congestion by over 40%, with many commuters and commercial traffic taking to the overbuilt highways for longer trips around the city.

The project was not without controversy, though; it attracted infamy for frequently invoking eminent domain and bulldozing several neighborhoods to construct overpasses above, often through the poorer Districts. Wealthier Districts including Downtown also had IDH highways built inside them, though these were underground via a network of tunnels.

The network consists of 12 highways, H1 thru H12, with two more — H13 and H14 — under construction. Each highway is always at least 6 lanes wide with divided lanes, minimal curves, and high speeds; in urban areas these can reach as wide as 12 lanes across. Tolls vary from 5 to 25 credits depending on surge pricing for cars and between 10 and 30 for commercial vehicles, collected either via COSMO transponder or by license plate capture.

Interdistrict Rail (R)

Traveling alongside the Interdistrict Highway System is the Interdistrict Rail (IDR), commonly called the **R** to contrast it with the Mendell City Metro (the M). The R is a commuter railway system using heavier carriages on elevated rail stretches to function as hub-to-hub mass transit and provide a near-express solution for commuters living in the Periphery who need to commute into the city quickly. The R was built alongside the Interdistrict Highway, with stations often being positioned in between carriageways with elevator access to the ground. The R has 6 lines, with more under construction as of 2467.

Compared to M trains, R trains are much larger and less dense, with cars often fitting tables and comfortable row seating for passengers. The longest routes often take anywhere from 45 to 127 minutes one-way, depending on commuter volume and the time of day. Pricing is affordable as well at 0.50 credits per kilometer. However, due to their less frequent nature and operation as a commuter rail service, the R often operates with 10-30 minute headways on weekdays, with much longer gaps on weekends or nighttime. Trains are also frequently subject to delays, especially due to inclement weather or track incidents.

Severson's Rift Port Authority (SRPA)

Operated by the federal government of the Republic of Biesel is the Severson's Rift Port Authority (SRPA), or simply the Port Authority, an intercity port organization dedicated to the various entryways into Mendell City and the surrounding area. The Port Authority controls all major spaceports and seaports in Mendell, as well as de jure ownership over the Interdistrict Highway system (leased to and maintained by the Board) and joint control over R lines that cross city limits.

The Board and the Port Authority regularly feud over several aspects of transportation, including the R and the Interdistrict Highway. While the Board is a city-owned corporation, SRPA is entirely owned and operated by the federal government, whose agenda regarding transportation often clashes with that of the city.

Severson Ferry

The Severson Ferry, although often facing competition from airborne shuttles, is a massive sea ferry system operated by the Port Authority. Originally bred as a way to connect Mendell and Phoenixport together across the over-300-mile strait, the ferry has since expanded into a service covering several towns and cities on the Strait.

The Mendell–Phoenixport Ferry route, often called the original Severson Ferry or sometimes “Men–Nix” to refer to it specifically, is a 6-8 hour high-speed service of 23 ships that transports thousands of cars and hundreds of thousands of people between the two cities every day. While day ferries are present on the schedule, overnight ferries are the most popular among travelers.

Politics

Owing to Mendell’s massive size and population, politics is heavily stratified and federalized into individual levels. With Mendell being home to hundreds of millions of residents and occupying as much land as many Earth countries, traditional governing becomes impossible, with a multi-tiered system resembling a federal state more than a city being implemented instead.

Alongside the city government, each District also has its own sub-municipal government, effectively functioning as administrative bodies with similar autonomy to a smaller city by themselves. Districts wield significant power over local zoning laws, tax policies, infrastructure projects, and social services.

Each District operates with a District Council and is headed by a District Chief, who serves dual roles as local leaders and representatives to the broader city government. District Chiefs send delegates to the City Council, which serves as the citywide legislative body overseen by the Mayor.

The relationship between city and corporate power is convoluted and oftentimes opaque; while megacorporations maintain significant influence through lobbying, campaign contributions, and the revolving door between corporate and

government positions, the sheer scale and diversity of Mendell's population prevents any single entity from achieving complete control, despite what the corporations might say to shareholders. Slum Districts like Flagsdale, Prospect and Little Adhomai often have functionally autonomous neighborhoods that the de jure District Council often has little control in actually governing, instead being responsible for delegations of smaller, more affluent neighborhoods.

Structures

Skyline

Mendell's skyline is, outside of Earth, the most recognizable one in human space. With over 2,000 skyscrapers standing at 150m or taller, and joined by tens of thousands more highrises and buildings taller than 30m, Mendell is a city of seemingly endless spires reaching into the sky, sunlight reflecting and refracting off of every single one. Most taller buildings are located in the Downtown districts of 1, 2, 12, and 13.

Skyscrapers are often clustered into their own District's respective urban center, though the Downtown proper skyline holds the highest and most contiguous concentration of highrises anywhere in the city, with 12 skyscrapers in the sector exceeding 1,000m in height.

Plexes

Centralized Development Complexes (CDCs), colloquialized as **Plexes** (singular Plex), are self-contained massive arcology skyscrapers that dot Mendell City. Coming in all shapes and sizes, Plexes often hold medium-priced but highly convenient and attractive real estate, able to house everything from shops to offices to apartments all in a single building. A single Plex can hold upwards of 20,000-50,000 permanent residents, plus thousands more workers commuting from outside. Hundreds of Plexes call Mendell City their home, each of varying names and states. The Plex has become synonymous with Mendell, and is so

common inside city limits that in fact only two Districts — Abaster Fields and Homewood — are free of Plexes entirely within their borders.

Though not done by most residents, a Plex dweller (known colloquially as a “Plexer”) could theoretically spend their entire lives without leaving a Plex; the buildings usually have education up to and including community colleges and trade schools, as well as utility floors, post offices, law practices and clinics, in addition to standard commercial businesses and office space.

Plexes vary by District; those in District 3, for example, are often highly affluent and much sleeker than, for example, a Plex in District 15. Most Plexes generally have standard maintenance and cleaning; however, there are a few that fall into disrepair due to funding or staffing shortages.

Most Plexes are owned and operated by dedicated real estate firms or the Board; megacorporations often reserve Plex ownership to towers meant as employee housing, usually found in Districts 3, 10, 13, and 15. These Plexes will often be dressed in company colors and have access reserved only to employees, their families, or prominent executive emeritus.

Canals

Mendell, especially around Midtown, has plenty of canals running through them. Originally constructed in the 2170s to facilitate inland shipping via Severson’s Rift, they later became home to prime canalfront real estate as the city expanded and density increased. While not nearly as iconic (or picturesque) as deliberately-maintained canals in other planets like Xanu Prime, Mendell’s canals still remain clean, and parks line several canals ripe for morning jogs or bikes.

While most are sealed from the Rift proper with locks to avoid flooding, a few — especially in the periphery — are kept open for shipping traffic and are still used actively by barges moving in and out of the city to inland docks and freight rail yards.

Culture

"Mendell always dreams with its eyes open."

Mendell is a city of contradictions, of entropy, and of never ending change. While each District can arguably be called a city of its own with their own subcultures and customs, Mendell's overall cosmopolitan identity does have several unique aspects to it that can be found in every resident, to some degree.

Mendellians are often characterized by several distinct social behaviors and cultural attitudes:

- **Pragmatism:** Everyday interactions in Mendell are marked by brevity and efficiency. Speech is typically direct, and conversations are often concluded quickly to maximize time in a fast-moving environment.
- **Directness:** Mendellians tend to communicate without excessive embellishment or euphemism. This bluntness is not generally perceived as discourtesy; it reflects a cultural preference for clarity over social pleasantries.
- **Tolerance of Eccentricity:** Nonconformity in dress, behavior, and appearance is widely accepted. Unusual self-expression is regarded as an expected element of urban life, provided it does not interfere with others.
- **Adaptive Presentation:** Social mobility in Mendell often depends on the ability to adopt the appearance and manners of different contexts. Locals are adept at shifting between registers of dress, speech, and demeanor depending on the audience, a skill seen across socioeconomic classes.
- **Hyperlocal Identity:** Identification with one's District or even neighborhood is a defining aspect of personal identity. While residents commonly describe themselves as Mendellian, district affiliations frequently carry stronger cultural weight and inform social interactions.

Street Scene

Mendell's street scene is among the liveliest of any city in the Orion Spur. With a massive population, wide streets, and loose ordinances allowing for vendors and

street shops especially in less curated parts of the town, Mendellian street culture is rife with cosmopolitan vendors, small businesses and carts from virtually every culture in the known galaxy.

Combis

Combis are the local moniker to refer to Mendell's iconic family-run convenience stores. Alternatively called **bodegas** as a holdover from old Earth, these general stores often hold various knick-knacks and goods demanded by their local neighborhood. They are typically sole proprietorships or family businesses with differing items on offer — some have preheated food, others have hardware, others might even stock electronics, depending on the goods their customer base requests of them. Combis exist in direct competition with corporate convenience store chains like NTMart or Getmore 24, who often set up shop in more affluent areas of the city instead.

Street Food

Mendell has gained a reputation for its quick, often-bastardized street food: affordable, rich in calories, able to be eaten on the go, and often significantly deviated from original cultural staples. While all types of street food can be found across the city, there are some that make regular appearances at almost every street.

In denser parts, commercial ground-floor space is often leased to open-air food courts hosting stalls of street food vendors called “street courts”, with the space jointly rented by every vendor in a coop arrangement. Street courts often feature seating and heavier meals that require utensils to eat properly, and are frequented by those looking for proper lunches and dinners.

The following are the most popular kinds of street food offered in the city:

- **Turnovers:** The most popular street food type in Mendell. Thin, often slightly crispy pastry served with an assortment of fillings, ranging from meat stew, to ham and cheese, to calzones, to sweet flavorings like strawberry or even ube. Mendell turnovers are usually baked thick and rectangular, almost pie-like, with laminated dough crimped with filling, usually in metal or plastic

presses, air-fried, and served in a paper sleeve or, less frequently, a paper plate.

- **Street buns:** Small, spherical buns, steamed or fried, with fillings like jerk pork, tikka masala, or cheeseburger mash. Often eaten by hand or with a skewer out of a plastic or paper pouch.
- **Bagels:** The archetypical Mendell bagel is a rich, hearty spin on the classic. It often features brisket (either beef or pork), a hashbrown patty, and an over-medium fried egg, served on a toasted garlic bagel with a lacquered crust. Variants can swap the way eggs are prepared or add or swap condiments; the “Niner” bagel from Little Adhomai in particular uses Adhomian fatshouter brisket and earthen-root hash browns.
- **Pizza:** The iconic pizza slice has also made its way to Mendell City, with almost every District being famous for having its own variations. The classic duo of cheese and pepperoni, however, remain perennial selections in almost every pizzeria.

Old Earth street food such as hot dogs, pretzels, dim sum, banh mi, and samosa can also be found in various concentrations throughout the city.

Sports

The Mendell sports scene is massive, diverse, and highly competitive. Many teams call the city their home, with sports often fielding at least two different teams to compete with each other in both the local, national and international scenes.

As an equal parts institution and entertainment provider, sports teams often build a brand image centered around either optics, playstyle, player personas or team composition. Some might lean into being more scrappy and blue-collar, while others may go for more flamboyant, entertaining styles. Each lends itself a niche among the hundreds of millions of city inhabitants, and people of all shapes, sizes and wallets cheer on teams of their choice, often very enthusiastically.

Mendell sports are each regulated by their own authorities, though overall sports regulations are still subject to the purview of the Mendell Entertainment Board (MEB).

Gridiron Football

Imported by American immigrants to Biesel, American football (referred to as gridiron to avoid confusing it with association football) has an immense following in the city. Frequently taking the center stage, Mendell gridiron games are known for being especially ruthless and almost gladiatorial in their rough play and dramatic shows.

Mendell City Mavericks - The Mavericks are arguably Mendell's most famous sports team. A juggernaut on the stage, the Mavericks have advanced to the final Orion Cup 17 times, winning 8 of those games. The Mavericks are based in Vanguard Arena, District 10, and are jointly owned by several companies of the SCC.

Mendell Tankers - Based in District 11, the Tankers are the scrappy, brutalist underdog footballers of the city. It made its way to fame via its infamous "ground and pound" strategy, used to staggering effect due to its highly athletic players, whose ranks were often drafted from former blue-collar workers. Fans see them as a resistance to Downtown's glitz. They play in 11's own Wickes Field.

Baseball

Baseball is the oldest sport continuously played in Mendell, with the Cetians being founded not long after the city itself. The baseball scene sees two primary teams compete in grand, heritage-soaked games that value traditional stadium foods and followings of centuries-old superstitions.

Mendell Cetians - The Cetians are the oldest sports team in the city, with a history stretching back to the early 2200s. A heritage team at heart, the Cetians proudly wear the colors of white and navy blue pinstriped uniforms. They are the team of choice for old money, political elites, and wealthy traditionalists, and their stadium, the Ceti Center, is at the heart of it all in District 2's Celestial Arena.

Mendell Hawkers - The rowdy counterpart to the "posh" Cetians, Mendell Hawkers are a District 10-raised baseball team beloved by immigrants and workers alike. They are infamous for having the longest time spent without a single qualification win of any baseball team outside of Earth at 8 years, though this has since long

been rectified; the Hawkers today stand as a very formidable team, one that can butt heads with the Cetians and live to tell the tale.

Association Football (Soccer)

Association football, occasionally referred to as soccer, is a fiercely popular and loyalist-oriented sport in Mendell. Games often get the largest crowds of any sport in the city and often the fiercest too.

Mendell United FC - The city's largest soccer team, Mendell United has colossal fan devotion, especially from immigrants, the working class, and even from abroad. Featuring loud, often violent playstyles and a motto of "Play fast, fall forward," they often make for the most dramatic game days in the city, with festivals, fireworks, and open-air grilling sessions after-hours.

Homewood FC - District 5's soccer team, Homewood FC started off as an informal extracurricular gathering of hobbyist sports players that later grew into a full team recognized by the greater sports scene. Younger and less institutionalized than Mendell United, Homewood FC is making a name for themselves with their pool of up-and-comers and being able to hold ground against larger teams.

Basketball

Basketball is the most diverse sport in the city's sport scene, reflecting both the tradition of company-owned basketball prominent in Asia on Earth and the corporate structure of the Stellar Corporate Conglomerate itself. Unlike other sports where Mendell fields city-based teams, basketball operates on a corporate league model where each major megacorporation fields their own franchise. Games are held in various arenas across the city, with the Biesel Basketball Association (BBA) coordinating schedules and championships.

Nanotrasen Thunderbolts - Based in District 1's Pioneer Square Arena, the Thunderbolts are the most well-funded and historically successful team in the league, having won 11 BBA championships since the league's founding in 2401. The Thunderbolts are known for their team-wide strategy of aggressive, fast plays, which when combined with their elite roster lends them a formidable reputation

that has made them both the face of the BBA and a constant rival in the galactic basketball scene.

Hephaestus Titans - The District 10-based Hephaestus team from the Anvil Arena, the Titans, recruit heavily from former laborers and emphasize raw strength and endurance in their players. The Titans have won 7 championships and maintain fierce working-class support, particularly in Districts 10 and 11. They have an intense rivalry with the Thunderbolts.

Zavodskoi Hunters - Based in District 12's Academy Court, the Zavodskoi Hunters are a team which recruit heavily from university athletics programs and are known for their highly disciplined playstyle. They have 5 BBA championships to their name with a fanbase that skews towards academics and professionals.

Idris Royales - One of the most flamboyant teams, the Royales play in District 7's Crown Plaza stadium, the Royales emphasize flashy plays, individual star power, and entertainment value over pure competitive success. Their games put heavy emphasis on mid- and postgame entertainment, and recruit charismatic players who excel at both basketball and brand imagery. They have 3 BBA championships to their name.

Zeng-Hu Chariots - Based in District 13's Meridian Arena, the Chariots are a team utilized by Zeng-Hu as equal parts sports research case studies and a genuine sports team. The Chariots are known for hiring more "ordinary" basketball players and upcomers rather than superstars, conditioning them into elite status through strict training and health regimens. While their analytical approaches have lent them 5 championships, their style is often criticized as being overly mechanical and not "passionate" enough among devout basketball fans.

Orion Sprinters - Founded in 2464, the Sprinters are the BBA's youngest franchise. Based in District 15's Velocity Arena, they've embraced an underdog identity and community engagement, offering affordable tickets and youth programs. Their youth has prevented them from winning a BBA championship so far (though were finalists in 2466), but they have garnered passionate underdog support from younger and working-class fans.

Racing

Mendell is a member of the Biesel Association of Racing (BAR), and operates several racetracks and courses for different racing sports:

- **Erlendale Raceway** is an 18-kilometer Grand Prix racetrack with tight twists and turns located on the outskirts of District 15. It is used for the majority of GT4, GT3 and other stock car races.
- The **Mendell Grand Prix** race takes place in District 10 and features a 21-kilometer stretch of street road reserved for racing. It takes place over a series of 60 laps for 1,260 km total and forms the GP leg of the Biesel Triple Crown.
- The **Tenway Coast Race** is a sailing catamaran boat race held every year in July off the Tenway in District 10, featuring several teams from both corporations and nonprofit organizations in a 33-kilometer race from one tip of the District to the other.

Statistics

Demographics

Mendell City is the most demographically diverse city in the entire Orion Spur, bar none. Every known species makes their home among the city streets in all Districts. While some places and neighborhoods have higher concentrations of particular species than others, most are spread out across the place. 71% of Mendell's population is human, the lowest in any major human city, and of the human population there exist ethnicities and origins of almost every type and colonized planet in the species.

Crime

Crime in Mendell City varies dramatically by district, reflecting the extreme economic stratification across the metropolis. Overall crime rates sit at moderate levels for a city of its size, though this citywide average obscures stark geographic

disparities — Districts 2, 4, and 5 experience crime rates comparable to wealthy suburbs, while Districts 6, 9, 11, and parts of 15 face rates rivaling the most troubled urban centers in human space.

Property crimes — theft, burglary, fraud — dominate overall statistics, particularly in transitional areas with extreme wealth gaps. Pickpocketing and bag snatching are endemic on crowded Metro platforms, especially during rush hour when platform congestion makes enforcement nearly impossible. White-collar crime flourishes in Districts 1, 2 and 13, though corporate influence and legal resources mean prosecution rates remain notably low despite sophisticated financial crimes involving millions of credits.

Violent crime, though rarer than media often suggests, focuses heavily in financially distressed Districts and slums. Districts 6 and 11 suffer from the highest rates of indiscriminate violent crime, while more self-governing Districts like Districts 8 and 9 are notorious for underreported crime from their neighborhood watch agencies.

Organized crime maintains a substantial presence across multiple districts, from traditional gangs in District 11 to sophisticated smuggling operations in District 8's ports to corporate-adjacent criminal enterprises in Downtown that blur lines between legitimate business and illegal activity. The phoron scarcity has dramatically expanded black market operations, with smuggling networks now rivaling legal commerce in some peripheral districts.

Law Enforcement

See also: Biesel Security

The famous Mendell City Police Department (MCPD) is the city's main law enforcement body with authority over almost all policing matters in city limits. Though it has had a long reputation of being able to quell city crime effectively for much of the city's history, recent events including the phoron crisis have dwindled the MCPD's ranks to make it understaffed and overstretched. More and more gaps in MCPD coverage nowadays are needed to be covered by corporate security or, in slum areas, neighborhood watches and citizen militias.

Today the MCPD has retreated to sparse coverage in middling Districts especially around Midtown — too poor for regular corporate security protection, but too wealthy to be left alone entirely. Slum Districts often have minimal, sparse police presence in the areas by contrast. Corporate security officers often are given arrest authority, acting as deputies. SCC corporate guards like those from Nanotrasen, Idris and Zavodskoi populate Downtown patrols, often working in joint squads, while more mercenarial officers, especially from the Private Military Contracting Group, are typically stationed in Periphery Districts alongside heavily armed MCPD officers. While communication does exist between MCPD and corporate security, enforcement quality varies heavily due to differing training standards; an arrestable offense by the MCPD might be overlooked by a security officer, and vice versa, as does the level of force used.

The department's short staffing has led to its tactics becoming increasingly authoritarian and severe, in an attempt by city administration to increase the efficacy of individual officers in combating crime, with individual officers receiving heavier armor and better equipment. Though this has helped in decreasing crime rates, rates of police abuse have shot up as a result, as have retaliatory assaults of abusive police officers in poorer Districts.

Phoron

Mendell's history with the miracle material phoron has always been a contentious one. With much of Mendell's industrial boom economy being built on phoron-related industries with the rise of mining and refining operations in Tau Ceti, a significant amount of Mendell infrastructure is reliant on phoron. With resources running low starting in the 2450s, Mendell has been severely affected by the phoron shortage, with the most significantly affected infrastructure being none other than the power grid itself. While Downtown has largely stayed insulated from rolling blackouts and power rationing, Periphery Districts, especially poorer or less well-represented ones, are being hit especially hard by Mendell's power policies, with electricity in some areas only being provided during the day in summer or at night in winter.

Residents in these Districts are not completely powerless, though — portable generators, solar panels and other forms of fueled or renewable energy often dominate these areas of Districts by those with enough money or influence to afford hooking up to improvised power grids. Distribution is uneven though, and often those too destitute to afford to tap into these informal networks find themselves working by candlelight or by fire. The homeless especially are the most affected, with city shelters often filled to capacity and more strict street policies sweeping homeless people off of streets.

While Downtown is unaffected for the time being, the shortage only spells the beginning of the inevitable. Massive amounts of Downtown infrastructure, including their own Citylink, rely on phoron for everything from power to telecommunications to the commodity itself being a significant part of traded futures on Bullard Avenue. The shortage dropping to critical levels could easily spell disaster for the otherwise-insulated parts of Mendell as a result.

Districts

Mendell City is home to 15 Districts, administrative regions with their own District Council and, importantly, their own zoning laws, tax policies (though enforced against a citywide minimum), and other regulations. Each District often has its own culture and styles, owing to their demographics, wealth classes, and customs.

Districts function mostly as megacities of their own; their control over funding as well as zoning policies and even limited infrastructure projects mean that most of the city government's work is delegated to the District governments instead. Due to this, residents might often feel as though stepping across District lines is like stepping into a new city altogether. A typical District houses anywhere from 8 to 30 million people in its borders alone.

Districts are often named by number more often than name, often prefixed with a "D"; for example, Phoenix Park is "D2", Republic's Landing is "D10", and so on.

Districts were numbered in the order they were incorporated, and successively numbered Districts do not necessarily border each other.

Sectors

Districts are split into three geographic **sectors**:

- **Downtown** - Districts 1, 2, 12, and 13. These Districts form the economic “heart” of Mendell and are the wealthiest and most influential, and are the least affected by the ongoing phoron shortage.
- **Midtown** - Districts 3, 5, 7, 10, and 11. These Districts vary in economic output and average wealth, but are generally still in the city proper and in areas considered “urban”.
- **Periphery** - Districts 4, 6, 8, 9, 14, and 15. These Districts are far from Downtown and often on the periphery of the city. Periphery Districts usually are poorer than average, with the exception of District 4.

District 1 - City Center

Sector: [Downtown](#)

Population: ~4.4 million (2460)

City Center, also known as District 1 and in Sol Common as the Zhèngfǔ District, is the heart of Mendell City, both politically and legally. It is the home of both the planetary and federal governments, as well as the headquarters towers of most major SCC corporations.

Being essentially a massive business-civic district, District 1 has few permanent residents, and the majority of people who might be sleeping in the District are either bureaucrats, overnighting employees, or hotel guests. Several apartments do exist here, though, and despite being rather old their location has made them extremely valuable pieces of land.

The District’s composition is mostly of glass skyscrapers interspersed with parks and shopping plazas. The entire District is planned symmetrically, often featuring malls, pavilions, stations and parks in central locations.

Federal Mall

Federal Mall is a 2 kilometer long tree-lined park in the center of District 1. Rows and rows of government buildings flank its sides, and it is capped on either end

with City Hall on the western side and the federal Capitol Building on the east. The avenue is bisected by a massive roundabout, decorated with the **Eternal Torch**, a landmark and a massive torch statue lit ablaze 24/7. Connecting to the roundabout are four additional roads each leading to more government offices. Interspersed between bureaucracies, embassies, and parks are the headquarter offices of the SCC's companies, often in glass or brutalist skyscrapers and complexes, the largest of which is the Nanotrasen Building at 215 stories tall.

Pioneer Square

Pioneer Square is the name of both the square in front of City Hall as well as the area immediately surrounding it. The square itself is the original landing site of SAEV *Winterbottom* and the original settling point for what would become Mendell. In the center of the square there is a large statue depicting the first colonists of Biesel as well as the *Winterbottom* itself, both cast in bronze.

The Square is a popular tourist destination, with millions of tourists annually coming to the area to view the Square as well as the historical exhibits set up around it. Street cafes, shops and hotels are clustered in the area, alongside municipal government buildings.

District 2 - Phoenix Park

Sector: [Downtown](#)

Population: ~6.7 million (2460)

Phoenix Park, or District 2, is regarded by many as the wealth center of Mendell and the stronghold of old money. Surrounding its eponymous park, and lined with both heritage condos and shimmering megastructures, it is Mendell's most iconic District, the crown jewel of Downtown Mendell, and the most expensive urban area in the city.

District 2 is home to Lumiere Boulevard and Celeste Boulevard, avenues housing ultra-luxe condominiums and high-end shops, respectively, as well as Phoenix Park itself being the true centerpiece of the District and, to an extent, the entire city.

With prime Citylink access, immaculate streets and plenty of street-level establishments, the District is surprisingly walkable and lively, if rather expensive for the average person. Dotting the ground-floor commercial stores are bookshops, brasseries, cafes, restaurants and high-end convenience stores selling premium food and supplies.

The Park

Phoenix Park proper, often simply called “The Park” due to its ubiquity, is the heart of District 2. The Park is a proper behemoth, a 1,400-hectare complex of artificially-seeded forests, lakes, rivers, meadows, and sports fields. Equal parts park and nature reserve, the Park often attracts a large number of visitors owing to its almost idyllic greenery and trail walks as a sharp contrast to the bustling city around it.

Crowning the Park is Mount Eleia, a 200-meter tall miniature mountain made of stratified stone and moss. Several hiking and bouldering routes are interspersed throughout the mountainside, heavily supervised for safety and overseen by park rangers. Eleia’s most notable feature is its pond about halfway up the mountain, carved into a plateau on the side, leading to a waterfall which spills down the mountain and into a river that runs the full length of the park into Eleia Lake.

Phoenix Park is known for having several tiered levels; these come as a result of the Park being originally composed of hilly terrain that was later flattened, terraced, and divided into levels. As a result of the tiered system, Phoenix Park has several partially-underground buildings and venues accessible via exposed entrances on lower tiers of the Park. These include the Biesel Natural History Museum and the Phoenix Park Concert Hall, two incredibly popular venues with entrances from both inside the Park and from the streets.

The Park is also home to the Phoenix Park Zoo, a 28-hectare zoo featuring animals from all across the Orion Spur in various climate-controlled environments. Alongside Earth and Biesel-native specimens (many of the latter which are extinct in the wild), the Zoo also holds animals from Vysoka, Xanu Prime, Port Antillia, Mictlan, Konyang, Adhomai, Moghes, Ouerea, and Qerrbalak. Over 250 unique

species can be found inside the Zoo, joined alongside over 480 different species of flora in the nearby affiliated Phoenix Park Botanical Gardens.

Lumiere Boulevard

Phoenix Park's most iconic boulevard is Lumiere Boulevard, a six-lane, tree-lined avenue hosting rows and rows of luxury apartments, legacy office buildings, and dynastic headquarters. Residential property at or near Lumiere fetches among the highest prices in the city; a 2-bedroom in this avenue can soar past 10,000 credits a month, and penthouses fetch anywhere from 5 to 50 million credits to own.

Owning a Lumiere condo or penthouse is considered the pinnacle of Mendell wealth, and the condos themselves are often massive or extravagant enough to easily justify the price for many. Lumiere condos range from old-fashioned regal apartments to chic modernist glassbox units and everything in between.

Despite appearances, Lumiere is surprisingly alive for what many residents consider a "hollow" neighborhood. Alongside casual shopping and luxury establishments, more casual places like bars, clubs, theaters and cafes adorn the streets and are frequented by many Lumiere residents. Though these offer high-end service, food, and drink, their prices often drive away those who either aren't local to the area or otherwise can't afford them.

Celeste Boulevard

Lumiere's flashier, yet still subdued sibling, Celeste Boulevard is the shopping capital of Downtown and boutique capital of the entire city. Flagship stores of countless luxury and boutique brands of corporate and indie alike dot the streets, and it's not uncommon for people to walk into Celeste and walk out tens of thousands of credits poorer with only two shopping bags or fewer in hand.

Celeste is home to the Grand Mile Mall, a shopping megamall owned by Idris Incorporated that consists of luxury boutiques, athletic supply stores, IPC shops, high-end restaurants, and more, catering to wealthy patrons and welcoming the occasional splurging Midtown or Periphery local. The mall is famous for its high-end design, with lush indoor greenery, marble floors, wooden accents, and even an indoor waterfall being only a few of the attractions found in its premises. It

also boasts a VR arcade, 3-story playground, and an indoor rollercoaster called the “Mile Marathon”.

District 3 - Apricot

Sector: Midtown

Population: ~27.4 million (2460)

One of the oldest Districts in Mendell City, **Apricot**, also known in Sol Common as the Xinghua Prefecture, is a primarily residential high-rise District. It was originally built around mid-tier commercial centers and rapidly densified into a mosaic of skyscrapers, midrises, and microneighborhoods, but later grew to accommodate a bulk of the city’s Downtown workforce, housing the highest concentration of Plexes in the city. Highrises often are connected aboveground by crisscrossing pedestrian skybridges. Teachers, data wranglers, city employees, warehouse managers, transit workers, freelancers, and many other walks of life from the middle class call this place home.

Apricot has a thriving street food scene, with people often calling it the “Stall District” for how ubiquitous street carts are in the area. and street food forms the primary food source for most of D3’s residents. Other attractions in the District include bungee jumping from Plex skybridges as well as the Apricot Stadium that hosts the Mendell United FC.

D3 is also home to a majority of corporate-owned housing — its proximity to Downtown and abundance of transit connections, including Citylink access, make it prime real estate for housing employees who commute Downtown for work.

The Web

The Web is the informal name given to the massive amount of night markets, stalls and cart vendors that dot District 3. The unofficial night market of the entire city, the Web is often said to be the place where one can buy anything legal (and sometimes illegal) under the sun. While District ordinances prevent much of the Web from showing up until nightfall, permanent markets still remain on pedestrianized streets, in designated vendor plazas, and on the side of the road.

District 4 - Abaster Fields

Sector: Periphery

Population: ~2.5 million (2460)

Technically part of Mendell's "Periphery," **Abaster Fields** is anything but peripheral in the minds of the city's elite. Situated in forested hills, the District is almost entirely made of low-density homes and mansions of 4 bedrooms or more, each bearing hectares of land to their own parcels. The District is built with the Abaster River meandering down the middle, leading from nearby Winston Lake and draining into Severson's Rift.

Abaster also holds the Abaster Trusts, the collective name for the dynastic families, estates, and think tanks headquartered in the District's manors. Trusts headquartered here quietly bankroll politicians, public projects, and megacorporate lobbies, giving the District a reputation of being a quiet powerplayer in galactic politics.

Despite its affluence, Abaster is notoriously unpopular among the rich for long-term living. Strict zoning laws forbid many forms of commercial development; only curated nature, golf courses, dining clubs, private libraries, and the occasional sculpture garden with centuries-old installations can be found dotting the landscape. As a result, the homes are often used either to raise a family, make a statement, go on a retreat, or hold parties; their owners or occupants often spend far more time either outside the city or in Downtown Mendell.

Many of Abaster's homes are rarely occupied, used instead as vacation estates, legacy holdings, or sites for lavish private events. On most days, the only people in residence are domestic staff, groundskeepers, or the occasional private security detail. Some residents live here full-time, but most are only visited on occasion by their owners.

District 5 - Homewood

Sector: Midtown

Population: ~12.7 million (2460)

To the east of the city is District 5, also known as **Homewood**, a neighborhood dominated by low-density rowhouses and single-family homes. District 5 is home to middle and upper-middle class workers who are often rich enough to move out of the city proper but not to the level of extravagance displayed in Districts 2 and 4. It is one of the most walkable Districts in Midtown and one of the most airy, with corners often fielding shops, cafes, combis and a fair assortment of street vendors. Apartments are in high demand here, and the few who do choose to rent out their own units do so at high prices; buying units here without connections or networking is almost unheard of.

The District is infamous in government circles for being one of the most influential and untouchable Districts in zoning policy, being one of the only neighborhoods in Midtown to resist densification and highrise construction almost completely. Only 4 highrises are inside the District's boundaries, and even those exist only on the perimeter. Homewood's density difference to the rest of the city around it makes it easily distinguishable from the air and, to an extent, even from space.

Homewood culture is suburban, and neighborly, almost looking like a suburb despite being in a megacity. Community garden culture is common, and residents often straddle communal rooftop vegetable gardens between townhouses. Neighborhood watches and neighborhood "gossip culture" make felony crime rates low in the District, with most instead being petty crimes like pickpocketing.

Riverside

Riverside is Homewood's waterfront neighborhood, with the eponymous Homewood River going through the middle of the city and forming this small section. Turned into a straight canal, Riverside's houses notably change to almost European-adjacent tall, balconied houses, with frequent bridges made of stone and with high attention taken to maintenance and visual upkeep. Riverside is known as one of the most beautiful places in Mendell City, and photo tourism is common in the area.

District 6 - Imperial Plaza / Little Adhomai

Sector: Periphery

Population: ~15.8 million (2460)

Little Adhomai, also known as the Imperial Plaza or District 6, is the home to most of Mendell City's Tajaran population. With various dive bars, restaurants, and informal gaming venues, the District has attracted notoriety for its unusually high rate of crime, owing to its status as a mixed refugee commune hosting those from the different Tajaran nations of Adhomai. Although not an outright slum, the District is not widely trafficked by non-residents.

Little Adhomai's combination of different Tajara cultures gives it both rich cosmopolitan flavor and deep ideological divides. Many Tajara hailing from these neighborhoods often sort themselves into groups organized by origin nation and/or ideology; these often devolve into organized crime and turf wars.

More information on Little Adhomai can be found [here](#). (<- insert link to little adhomai article)

District 7 - Vega de Rosa

Sector: Midtown

Population: ~16.1 million (2460)

District 7, known as **Vega de Rosa (VDR)**, is a gambling and red light District in Midtown Mendell. Nicknamed the Playground by locals, the area is known for its noise, grime, and blinding neon and performances.

Vega de Rosa was originally a Latino immigrant commune. Card games would often be played illegally as group hobbies with minimal bets; these later ballooned into full underground gambling rings for games like conquian, poker and blackjack, ones that would later attract the attention of the MCPD. After lobbying negotiations and recognizing income potential, the city agreed to legalize gambling in the District provided the establishments were licensed businesses and paid taxes to the city. Casinos, hotels, and clubs exploded onto the scene shortly afterward, turning VDR from a sleepy urban neighborhood into a full-fledged vice

District. Any immigrants left in this area either went into the gambling industry or moved away to other Districts in the city, leaving behind a cultural fingerprint still visible in its food stalls, music halls, and family-run combis.

Staff who work in Vega de Rosa often describe the experience as being equal parts intense and exhilarating; while the casino culture is a lot more informal and less tokenized than ones in Silversun or Venus, for example, Mendell gambling is still high-stakes, and with plenty of patrons, dealers are expected to have sharp eyes for detail or cheaters. Gaming staff are often nocturnal as a result, and during the day often retreat into “day bars” where they wind down from night or graveyard shifts, often tucked away in alleyways or as alternative settings for bars that are ordinarily tourist-forward during the evenings.

Today, the District is the city’s gaming and entertainment center; tourists and locals alike often frequent the casinos, theaters and clubs for all sorts of recreational activities and gambling. Hotels in the District are also at the highest concentration found anywhere in the city. Culture outside of pocket neighborhoods is sparse, though traditional cultural influences like street food culture, social openness, and street loitering remain popular.

Little Mictlan

Owing to its Latin American roots, Vega de Rosa also holds the city’s Little Mictlan, tucked away in one of the borders of the District’s boundaries. It is home to both immigrants fresh from the planet of Mictlan as well as the original residents of Vega de Rosa before it became an entertainment district. Quieter, conservative, and much more “normal” of a neighborhood by Mendell standards, Little Mictlan has a proud, tight-knit community and a bustling street scene, and although the neighborhood is different enough from the rest of Vega de Rosa to not attract as many tourists, the stray visitors who do enter the neighborhood are treated to lavish familial cuisine and renowned hospitality.

District 8 - Lekan / ‘Starlight Zone’

Sector: **Periphery**

Population: ~12.3 million (2460)

Named after the City Commissioner Lekan Mugabe, who commissioned the development of the district, District 8, or, **Lekan**, is the utilities center of Mendell, housing the bulk of fusion power plants and water treatment plants of the city, alongside massive recycling centers that neatly and efficiently sort through the millions of tons of trash generated by the city each year.

Lekan, in addition, houses the Port of Mendell West (PMW), one of two major seaports (the other being Port of Mendell East in District 10) that handle inbound marine cargo traffic from Severson's Rift and the rest of Biesel.

Lekan is divided into Upper Lekan, the main District proper, and the Starlight Zone, a coastal Skrell enclave that grew into an ethnic neighborhood.

Starlight Zone

The infamous Starlight Zone is the District's Skrell commune. Made of refugees who fled the Nralakk Federation during the refugee crisis of 2463, the District grew from a relatively underdeveloped portion of coastal land into makeshift aquatic tenements ducking into or floating above the water. Since the initial refugee crisis that birthed the Zone, the area has since bloomed into a full neighborhood of the Biesellite Skrell diaspora, its residents making up a large portion of Skrell Mendellians.

The Starlight Zone is divided into The Village (short for the full, albeit confusing name of Lekan Village) and the submerged Severson City. The two sections of the Zone compete with each other on matters of culture, politics and sometimes even law enforcement; the City's underwater nature in particular makes Mendell police presence rare; neighborhood watches supplant and sometimes replace police presence in less-trafficked or accessible areas of the city as a result. By mid-2467, the Mendell City Police Department has expanded its presence after an expansion of cooperation between Biesel and the Nralakk Federation, with the MCPD and both Lekan and Severson's neighborhood watch groups coordinating with the city police in curbing crime, and more infamously, searching for criminal groups to deport to the Federation.

Upper Lekan

Upper Lekan is the primarily utilities and industrial district of Midtown Mendell. It hosts most of the city's power generation, water treatment and desalination plants and city utility garages for services like sanitation and public services. It is one of the least populous urban neighborhoods in the city, with most residents living in PLEXES as utility or port workers.

Port of Mendell West / Westport

The Port of Mendell West, otherwise known as Westport or PME, is the second largest port of Mendell. Operated by the Port Authority, Eastport services container traffic typically inbound from waters to the west of Biesel, primarily Belle Cote. It also operates the cruise port of the city, with dozens of cruise ships docking at the piers every week.

District 9 - Flagsdale

Sector: Periphery

Population: ~19.9 million (2460 registered)

Present day District 9 is a Vaurca refugee district, known officially (and by most citizens) as **Flagsdale** and by Vaurca residents as "Vaur'xoer", the "City Upside Down." Much of Flagsdale is taken up by the **Quarries** that stretch up to 4 kilometers wide and several dozen meters deep, housing tiered, maze-like vertical shantytowns stacked dozens of stories high that are home to Queenless Vaurca refugees.

Formerly a mining district, Flagsdale used to hold a massive limestone quarry used to construct the concrete and stone bricks used to build much of early Mendell City. Following the quarry's exhaustion and an economic downturn in the 2250s, mining operators, including Hephaestus Industries, abandoned the site, leaving a series of large scars in the District that became too costly to fill in. Residents and businesses were also later driven away from the sites near the quarries due to a buildup of rainwater pooling inside them as well as city residents throwing trash into several dig sites as impromptu landfills. The city eventually caved to local

inertia and officially sanctioned the dumping process, creating the Flagsdale Landfills that would host a majority of the city's trash for over 70 years.

During the Vaurca refugee crisis, in which tens of thousands of Vaurcae, primarily from Hive Zo'ra, came to Mendell, they quickly settled into the damp, undesirable, partially-underground quarries and began constructing impromptu shelters there. Though initially resisted by city officials, negotiations with the refugees later allowed them to live in the quarries provided they assist in relocating trash to a new series of landfills much further away from the city. Though this gave hundreds of Vaurcae temporary employment, xenophobia and a lack of worker's rights left the rest of the populace nearly destitute even after working, pushing them to transform the shantytowns into dense, self-sustaining hive-cities.

Today the Flagsdale Quarries hold the most infamous part of the District, the Vaurcesian partially-underground hive-cities constructed out of remnant limestone, concrete, sheet metal, and other scavenged materials in vibrant colors often stacked hundreds of meters high and housing hundreds of thousands of Vaurcae across layers so densely packed they defy conventional urban planning. Massive steel fences surround the Quarries, with only sparse airlocked checkpoints connecting the pits to the rest of the city via staircases and occasional elevators. Access is often granted only for extraordinary reasons such as charity, scientific, or diplomatic missions, and even then most parties that venture into Flagsdale do so with a security escort armed for close quarters.

Most residents, including law enforcement and even other Vaurcae, rarely enter the Quarries; security is maintained instead by the Flagsdale militias, notorious for their overwhelming retaliatory violence enacted following several riots in the area. The liberal use and distribution of phoron and k'ois also make the city hazardous to navigate for non-Vaurcae, effectively cordoning it off permanently against the rest of the District.

Outer Flagsdale

Despite the quarries holding the majority of the District's area and population, **Outer Flagsdale** remains as a peripheral industrial neighborhood and remnant of the District's old economy. It holds hundreds of factories and small scale office

parks that, due to being at a comfortable distance from the quarries, are fairly normal and attract affordable real estate prices for medium industrial and commercial businesses. With much of the Mendell economy treating the Quarries as an unproductive slum, Outer Flagsdale is seen by both corporations and the government as the “real” Flagsdale, with most government and civil offices including the District Council stationed here.

District 10 - Republic's Landing

Sector: Midtown

Population: ~17.5 million (2460)

District 10, or Republic's Landing, is a massive Midtown District hugging the coastline of the city. Equal parts tourism, transportation, and old residential, the area was built half on a coastline and half on reclaimed land; formerly water-adjacent properties were since moved inland as new developments were constructed on landfill to extend the city's area out into the Rift.

Despite District 1 being the actual landing zone of SAEV Winterbottom, District 10 has derived its name from being both the location of the first colonial-era settlements that would become Mendell (owing to its proximity to both river and sea) and its wide flat land being capable of holding landing ships and shuttles.

The Tenway

District 10 is most famous for its coastline, named the Tenway, housing one of few beaches in the city. The District's 43-kilometer beachfront is divided among several public beaches as well as swathes reserved by seafront resorts. Spread out alongside the public beaches are several amusement parks, the most famous of which is the Cayenne Pier, home to the pierfront theme park of the same name featuring rollercoasters and the Pier Wheel, the largest Ferris wheel in Biesel.

The Tenway also holds several shows and competitions along the boardwalk, often centered around the various grandstands spread throughout the coastline. Such events include music performances, various shows, and surfing competitions. However, the most famous events held on the sea are several boat racing events

held by the Biesel Association of Racing, with contests often held once every two months or so.

Port of Mendell East / Eastport

Port of Mendell East (also Eastport or PME) is the larger of the two container ports in Mendell and the younger one. Home to the Severson Ferry, Eastport also is responsible for most marine traffic inbound from the eastern Severson's Rift, including traffic from Ashton.

District 11 - Carver / 'Eleven'

Sector: Midtown

Population: ~24.3 million (2460)

District 11, also known as **Carver** (though rarely called that outside of official contexts), is Mendell's most intensely blue-collar District, originally built as a high-density workers' quarter during the city's post-Expansion boom. Eleven has one of the highest crime rates in the city; organized crime has a strong foothold in parts of the District, with some neighborhoods facing regular extortion and gang skirmishes that law enforcement struggles to contain. Due to the limited upward mobility from residents in Eleven and the high amount of debt taken by residents on average, corporations like Nanotrasen often recruit from Eleven's residents, offering debt-ridden residents a chance at steady pay and relocation, often to corporate housing in D3 or postings on space installations.

Heavily affected by rolling blackouts in the wake of the phoron scarcity, Eleven has often been forced to contend with outages with improvised cabling, portable generators, and solar panels to offset losses. Due to much of these being ad-hoc and poorly maintained, fires are not uncommon in the District as a result.

Despite the challenges, residents take fierce pride in their grit, resilience, and humor. Often dubbed "the real Mendell" by locals, District 11 is known for its warmth and community spirit. Countless family-run shops, street vendors, and hole-in-the-wall eateries fill the open-air plazas that form the ground floors of its residential high-rises. Store owners greet customers by name, neighbors look out

for one another, and many polls rank Eleven as home to the friendliest people in the city, despite their circumstances.

North and South Eleven

Eleven was one of the most prominent victims of the Interdistrict Highway System project, with the District being bisected by Highway H3 in 2422, splitting it into North Eleven and South Eleven. The construction displaced thousands of families and severed long standing community ties, replacing walkable corridors with concrete trenches and sound barriers. Several blocks were demolished outright, and many others were carved up into isolated pockets surrounded by overpasses, ramps, and service roads.

The project was controversial even at the time — accused of targeting lower-income areas with limited political capital — and it remains a point of bitter contention among older residents. Today, the divide between North and South Eleven is not just geographic but cultural: while North Eleven has seen modest recovery through small business revival and targeted social programs, South Eleven remains more neglected, marked by higher crime and poorer public services.

District 12 - Xavier District / ‘Think Tank’

Sector: [Downtown](#)

Population: ~13.8 million (2460)

District 12, named the **Xavier District** after Nanotrasen founder and scientist Xavier Trasen, is a predominantly academic quarter of the city. Home to eight universities, twelve colleges, and several laboratories, the District boasts the highest concentration of white-collar academics and professionals in the city. Its high density of academics and STEM professionals has given it the nickname the “Think Tank”, used interchangeably with its official name and District number.

Institutions in the District are often clustered together, with many academies being only a few blocks away from each other. Student housing comprises a majority of the residential space in District 12 around these areas, with entire Plexes dedicated

to housing students in dormitories and studio apartments. Due to 12 having a high concentration of young students, the District is known for being one of the most progressive, tech-forward, and socially active in the city, with many protests, grassroots movements and petitions originating here.

Besides academics, District 12 also has a massive science space. Though not as large as dedicated science outposts and even worlds, the District is known for corporate research labs and eponymous think tank groups, with a significant amount of corporate R&D from SCC megacorporations happening here. Many university students intern (or hope to intern) at these laboratories as gateways to full jobs in the corporations.

The district experiences massive daily population swings during the academic year, with shuttle services and dedicated Metro lines struggling to handle the influx of students, faculty, and research staff. Campus-to-campus culture varies dramatically, from the wine-and-cheese networking events at elite institutions to graduate groups' cafe huddles. A majority of businesses here are donut shops, cafes, street food restaurants, stationery stores and combis.

Academic Circle

District 12's central roundabout is the Academic Circle, built centered around three of the largest universities in Mendell — Diezel University, Nanotrasen Academy, and Mendell City University, each with their campuses built around the Circle in their respective corners. The Circle itself is home to a large park in the middle, crowned with a grand fountain, accessible by elevated walkways from the surrounding roads.

The name also refers to the larger neighborhood around which the universities are built, which is home to plenty of student apartments, cafes, walkable commercial zones, and parks. Due to its overwhelming student population, only a handful of K-12 schools are in the area, mostly catering to families of students living near campus or students with children.

District 13 - Bullard

Sector: [Downtown](#)

Population: ~4.3 million (2460)

District 13 is a Downtown district and the financial center of Mendell City. Dubbed “**Bullard**”, “Bull-Av” or “the Bullpen” after its main arterial road Bullard Avenue, and later solidified into the District’s name upon incorporation, Bullard holds the Biesel Stock Exchange, offices of countless financial firms, and the headquarters of Idris Incorporated.

Bullard is Mendell’s — and to a significant extent the entire Orion Spur’s — financial heart, so much so that “Bullard” is often used as the metonym for the entire galactic financial apparatus, similar to how Wall Street was for old Earth. Billions of credits flow through servers, exchanges, banks and trusts every single day, with trading floors for corporations securing deals and trades, from Earth, to Moroz, to Moghes. The Biesel Stock Exchange (BSX) is the symbolic heart of the District, with its physical location nestled in a Neoclassical sandstone building modeled after the old New York Stock Exchange building on Earth. Surrounding the Exchange on Bullard Avenue are hundreds of skyscrapers holding everything from financial firms, to day-traders, to legal practices and family offices. Most residential units in the city are high-rise apartments or penthouses holding a demographic of mostly traders, dynasts and business executives, with Bullard holding the second highest concentration of high net-worth individuals in the city, after Phoenix Park.

The District has developed a microculture of its own; business formal is all the rage in the District, with tailored suits, dark fabrics, and muted colors dominating the scene in a competition of standing out the most and the least simultaneously. After dark, Bullard’s bars and lounges come alive, home to both recreational drinkers and closed deals. Many of Mendell’s most prestigious restaurants also call 13 their home, often with custom menus, galaxy-renowned chefs, and waiting lists weeks long — unless you know the right strings to pull. Lunch culture is also rampant here, with street courts and brasseries dominating the ground-floor casual dining scene.

Bullard Avenue

The infamous Bullpen itself, **Bullard Avenue** is the heart of the Bullard District and home to most of its offices. The road stretches for 32 kilometers, but the centerpoint, known as **the Belt**, holds the highest concentration of financial offices and institutions in the Republic. Many of these buildings are either affiliated with or directly owned by member corporations of the SCC, the largest of which being Idris Incorporated, whose headquarters are located in the Belt.

The Belt also holds Bullard Avenue Station, a massive 15-platform underground train station and interchange servicing 12 M lines and 3 R lines, often considered the heart of the entire Mendell mass transit network.

District 14 - Prospect / 'The Scrapheap'

Sector: Periphery

Population: ~13.3 million (2460)

District 14, known officially as **Prospect**, is a Periphery District and the fallen industrial heart of Mendell. Built in the city's heyday as a manufacturing hub, over time, material shortages and astronomical costs of in-city operation have led to businesses outsourcing their production away from Mendell and into neighboring cities like Phoenixport and Belle Cote instead.

The resulting factory complexes that comprised a majority of Prospect were eventually largely abandoned, with remaining business owners driven out by neighborhood inertia. Initial attempts to gentrify have resulted in failure owing to the oppressive architecture and minimal commercial opportunities. Combined with the Health Department condemning several factories for industrial contamination, any hope of restoring the District died off in the 2430s.

However, the District's remnant industrial infrastructure, especially the ample chargers, inlets and high-voltage cabling, led to it being a natural haven for a new demographic: synthetic squatters. IPCs began to move into the District's factories following its decline, building ramshackle tenements inside the large vacant factories, scavenging remnant power by hijacking the abandoned cabling running

throughout the District. The ramshackle nature of these settlements earned these parts of Prospect the nickname of “**The Scrapheap**”.

Local “Scrappers” that give the neighborhood its name are infamous for their ruthlessly materialistic behavior bordering on what could be considered a robotic form of cannibalism. Severely damaged, vulnerable, or dead IPCs often have their chassis jumped on and disassembled into pieces for either local use of repairs or selling on the black market. While it is usually the dead or terminal-conditioned IPCs that get this treatment, more desperate Scrappers will try to jump healthy ones too, or even organics with cybernetic implants. Due to this, travel into the heart of the Scrapheap by outsiders is rare and dangerous, and most visitors inside District limits stay in safer areas or even the revitalized Castle Park.

Some of the older IPC “residents” of the District come in the form of “shamblers”, disenfranchised IPCs who often have suffered significant degradation and are in various states of detachment, either displaying signs of inattention to outside stimuli to near-catatonic or catatonic states. Shamblers receive varying treatment; some are cared for by other District locals and given maintenance and charging, while others are left to wander before they inevitably run out of charge and are disassembled for scrap.

The Spires

The Spires is the nickname given to the two Plexes, known colloquially as just “The Tower” and “The Pyre”, that adorn the center of the Scrapheap. Originally known as the Prospect Twins, both were abandoned by their legal residents during the District’s decline in the 2400s to 2430s, its tenements being taken up instead by IPC squatters.

While one of them, the Tower, stands today as a ramshackle vertical slum estimated to host millions of disenfranchised squatters, the other, the Pyre, suffered an infamous fire in 2455 due to a massive electrical short from poorly-constructed wiring. The Mendell Fire Department saw the risk of sending firefighters to combat the blaze far too high, and after a brief time spent with firefighters on scene, ordered them pulled out to let the Spire burn. Estimates place over 1,000 IPCs burned to death inside the Pyre, one of the largest losses of

IPC life in Spur history. Its charred husk, though still standing, remains as a blackened twin to the still-standing Tower. Scrapheap residents became highly distrustful of the Mendell Fire Department following this, often resorting to refusing to call them in favor of fighting fires on their own, often with disastrous consequences.

Today, the Pyre is a salvaging ground, with many IPC residents, especially those in the Tower, often going for runs in the remnants of the Pyre to attempt to salvage parts, wiring or other intact items, often from former tenements or the chasses of long-deceased units. Some have turned it into a business, with organized salvage rings churning out items and selling it to IPC residents in the Scrapheap or circulating them into the black market.

Castle Park

Castle Park is a bustling, gentrified segment of District 14 that successfully managed to revitalize itself, becoming an arts district heavily centered around small businesses and artisan crafts taking residence in peripheral factory buildings closer to the District border. With over 40,000 people and 18,000 small businesses in the neighborhood, Castle Park is seen as the future of Prospect and an eventual replacement for the rest of the decrepit area. Castle Park has seen corporate investment injected into it as well with more large businesses like restaurants, shops and even banks opening shops in the area. It is located on the border of District 14, next to District 15.

Scrapheap residents often regard Castle Park as a “tumor” on the District — its gradually expanding influence is gentrifying streets and displacing Scrapheap IPCs, sometimes by force, and compacting them into denser and denser communes further away from Castle Park and closer into the heart of the District.

District 15 - Jie

Sector: *Periphery*

Population: ~21.8 million (2460)

Jie, or **District 15**, named after Admiral Jie of the Solarian Navy, is a blue-collar Periphery neighborhood and the latest District to be incorporated into Mendell's municipal districting system.

A medium-density District sprawling across the northeastern periphery, Jie is decorated by endless apartment blocks, condominiums, and townhouses that stretch for kilometers in orderly but aging rows. Most residential construction dates from its 2380s-2420s expansion boom, with little new developments since. Its commercial developments are generally ground-level small businesses like restaurants and combis operating from converted first floors, with malls and plazas growing more concentrated in the center of Jie where M access improves.

Jie holds the majority of Mendell's subsidized low-income housing. The district attracts workers priced out of Midtown districts alongside recent immigrants seeking affordable entry points into Mendell life. This creates a diverse but economically strained population where multiple families often share apartments designed for single occupancy, and "roommate matching" services have become a normalized part of housing access.

Jie's reputation is often that of a maverick — its politics often differ from that of greater Mendell, largely owing to its population of Solarian refugees and sympathizers from the Alliance that have led the place to be far more sympathizing of pro-Alliance policies and more disapproving of Biesel-centric or isolationist ones. The District's large population gives it sway in the City Council, often to the dissatisfaction of more Biesel- and capitalist-oriented politicians representing the other parts of the city.

Little Sol

Little Sol is the unofficial name for the western neighborhoods of Jie, where Solarian immigrant concentration is highest. Despite being far from the only Solarian commune in Mendell, the area bears the name of Little Sol for holding a population mostly originating from the Sol system itself, with highest concentrations being that of Earthers, Lunans and Callistans, with lower concentrations of Martians, Europeans and Venusian Jintarians.

The Plexway

A corridor of aging Plexes running north-south through Jie's eastern half, the Plexway holds some of the district's highest-density housing. Many of these Plexes have notably deteriorated owing to their sheer remoteness and lack of budget for comprehensive renovations; however, their affordability and self-contained nature make its apartments attractive to immigrants and low-income families.