

TAMRIEL REBUILT
Production Pipeline
&
Roadmap

A Proposal with Appendices

July 2015

Introduction

It is no secret that Tamriel Rebuilt's current organization is in dire need of work. While we have begun the long road towards establishing our creative goals, how we reach them still remains unclear. Tamriel Rebuilt's current workflow continues to be a piecemeal patchwork of incoherence, a largely redressed relic of Tamriel Rebuilt's past. Even with proper conceptual planning, our current workflow is not adequately suited to the task at hand.

In order to address this problem, one must take a step back and make a big departure from currently established conventions. As a large, creative project that seeks to produce a large amount of content, Tamriel Rebuilt needs to adapt a production pipeline that is similar to a game studio, rather than a typical mod project. One that is subject to the same rigorous standards of professionalism and internal integrity. Before we even begin this undertaking though, we must begin to understand what is wrong with our current workflow, and why it doesn't work. While it's hard to avoid broaching this subject without talking about poor planning, this document will focus more on the technical aspect of our organization (of which the *Master Plan* is but a small part of).

The Current Approach

Asides from poor conceptual planning, one of Tamriel Rebuilt's biggest bottlenecks has always been it's piecemeal approach to content development and implementation. A running joke within the project has always been:

"It isn't Tamriel [Re]built if we've done things only once."

While a source of good humour, this quote perfectly illustrates why our current approach does not work. Tamriel Rebuilt has always rushed towards implementation, without the proper foundations and assets required to properly portray the diverse worldspace beyond Vvardenfell's shores in a consistent manner. As a result, we've always had to constantly revisit our work, resulting in low developer morale, and at worst developers leaving altogether. It has led to delayed releases, and perpetual delays that the project may not be able to recover from, unless we come up with a unified strategy on how to deal with the content pipeline once and for all.

The current claims system in which work is doled out in rather arbitrarily pre-determined parcels hinders our ability to see the content we wish to make as a single entity. It is an antiquated system that fosters inconsistencies in all aspects of development, from our overall quality standards, stylistic differences between our areas, and quests being too compartmentalized to geographic areas.

Another major flaw in our system is that instead of working on the province as a single entity, Tamriel Rebuilt has opted instead on finishing specific sections of the Mainland, prior to moving onto other areas. This produces a "leap-frog" effect in which older sections must constantly be revisited to match current standards. No more is this evident than the gulf between the areas that were once known as "Map 1" and "Map 5". While Morrowind is indeed a diverse province both culturally and visually, that fact does not mean we must sacrifice thematic and visual consistency, both in planning and execution. In fact, the lack of documented standards has often been more problematic than the contrived nature of our development (though once again, the two go hand-in-hand).

While Tamriel Rebuilt has been making some improvements to the project's overall workflow, the situation is still far from ideal. Current "planning sections" are both used for localized planning and as glorified detailing and

NPC claims. While this might initially seem like a vast improvement over our past system, it really just continues Tamriel Rebuilt's legacy of piecemeal development, and can be described as confusing at best. The biggest takeaway here is that both planning and implementation are still happening simultaneously, and in the same time and space, which once again, leads to the problems outlined above, in a sense development is poorly documented and executed on message boards, and still fails to see the overall picture of the world we want to make, a picture that hasn't even been developed.

While the current assesment of our current workflow sounds pessimistic and negative, it shouldn't be seen as such. Tamriel Rebuilt's past efforts should not have been in vain, and its' shortfalls should be classified as a learning experience. Never before has a group of fans undertaken such an ambitious project, without compensation or financial support. While this allows us a great degree of freedom that was unaffordable to Morrowind's original developers, it also gives us a tremendous responsibility to enact self-direction, if we are to meet or even succeed the legacy that was established by the original game. That responsibility extends to our ability to implemenet a system that adheres or exceeds the rigorous standards of the original developers, if we are to finish building their original vision. If Tamriel Rebuilt is to have a chance of meeting those lofty goals set so long ago, we must be willing to adapt and change and learn from our mistakes, and even start from scratch if need be.

The remainder of this document will outline a proposed replacement for our current antiquated workflow, a process that highlights the importance of pre-production, asset creation, and a more streamlined, workable, sensible approach to actual game implementation. It will also address the vague idea of what Tamriel Rebuilt's final product will look like, and how it will be distributed in its' final form. It is essentially a solid blueprint that outlines how we will reach our goals, something which has never been done or thought of in our project's history to such a scale as this document is about to embark on.

A New Beginning: A Path to the Finish Line

As stated in the first paragraph of this document, the nature of Tamriel Rebuilt's content is not different from content creation in a AAA video game. It requires an extraordinary amount of planning and preproduction, before our vision can be successfully implemented in-game. To prevent future haphazard implementation and inconsistencies, these processes must be completed sequentially, and steps further down the pipline should not be executed until preceding steps have been resolved in a satisfactory manner, unless stated otherwise (some processes such as quest design are ongoing after a certain point).

The proposed roadmap on the next two pages is just an overall blueprint of the direction our project should take. It is by no means exhaustive, and is more a broad vision of the journey we must take to reach our goals.

1. The Master Plan (must be done sequentially)

-*Foundation Document*: An broad outline of our goals and vision that establishes the various conceptual tropes and game mechanics of Morrowind. The structure of this document can be found in Appendix 1A.

-*Supplementary Documents*: Individual documents conceptualize our various faction, settlements, and regional tropes in greater detail. The structure of these documents, and the list of documents to be produced can be found in Appendix 1B.

- *Planning Map*: A map that visually documents all aspects of the above, where things are located, how they are distributed, etc, etc.

2. Conceptualization

-*Narrative Writing*: Writing the various storlines of Morrowind, most notably the Great House Questlines, but also our revamped Main Quest, and other questlines. Regional conflicts and narratives are also developed at this stage.

-*Character Writing*: Writing the various important non-player characters of the narrative, their personality and character traits.

-*Concept Art (Environmental/Character/Items/Clutter)*: Visualizing our narrative, deciding what assets need to be created, and what they look like based on the Visual and Narrative Tropes established in the Master Plan.

3. Pre-production & Asset Creation (outsourced)

-*3D Models*: The creation of actual 2D and 3D assets that will be used in the game, based off the concepts established in the above stage.

- *Books*: The creation of the in-game literature in the world, using the narrative style guide established in the Master Plan.

-*Character Dialogue*: Writing the various dialogue of the NPC characters.

-*Quest Proposals*: Writing the basic quests of Morrowind. This process is ongoing throughout Steps 4-6, or until it is determined that there is a satisfactory distribution of quest content.

4. Preparation

-*Heightmap Creation*: Creating the in-game heightmap based on the topographical features outlined in the Master Plan Map.

-*Asset Preparation*: Review and packaging of assets into our Data Files, and a creation of a Style Guide that determines how these assets are used in worldbuilding.

-*File Preparation*: Preparing the completed heightmap for actual claim work, and determining the sectional divisions.

5. Implementation (Workspace, repeat per section)

-*Stage I: Exterior creation.* Exterior claims can either encompass the area of the whole section, or be smaller child claims of the section. Must obey style guide.

-*Stage II: Interior creation.* The section's child interior claims are made and completed. Must obey style guide.

-*Stage III: NPC Implementation.* All of the section's characters, pathgrids, creatures, and non-quest dialogue is implemented. The dialogue must already be written at this point. Must obey technical conventions defined in Step 4.

6. Implementation (Questing)

-Quest claims are not bound to any section, like previously. Basic quest claims have flags that mark what sections they take place in. It is encouraged, so quests are not always geographically constrained to finished areas. They are dependent on the Master file.

-The Quest Writing process is ongoing, and new quests can always be proposed during the entire development cycle, and happens independently from implementation.

-Major Questlines will not be implemented until all sections are complete.

7. Quality Assurance & Merges (ongoing starting from Step 5)

-Stage 1 of Quality Assurance happens in Step 5, all claims must obey the Style Guide, and be complaint with the Master Plan.

-Stage 2 of Quality Assurance is an overall technical review, and should be trivial as all persons wishing to implement content using the game tools must be vetted in the Showcase. (Debate whether this happens during Step 5, or later after everything is done.)

-A Master File is automatically compiled every 90 days, a snapshot of all overall progress. This does not include quests (only finished quests are merged into the Master File). Direct editing of this file is only allowed to implement fast travel networks, modifications to vanilla content, and bugfixes.

8. Final Release

-Once all quests have been implemented, the project is considered in beta.

-After a cycle of bugfixing, the project is released as a finished product.

-Support continues as long as there are people willing to do so.

The remainder of the document will outline this process in greater detail.

Step 1: The Master Plan

A project like this requires an extraordinary amount of planning and preproduction before actual production can even begin. This master plan aims to provide in broad strokes the planning required before preproduction of the project can begin in any kind of concrete form. It contains a broad vision of the project's goals and vision and should primarily contain the metrics and principles by which we can design future content. It is, in other words, a blueprint for the way we will go about things. As such, it is also often an analysis of the existing game, *The Elder Scrolls III: Morrowind*, and its thematic, technical and design-related strengths and weaknesses, many of which only become apparent from the perspective of a project that tries build upon that game's legacy.

The Master Plan is not a single document, but a comprehensive series of documents that essentially will serve as a set of consistent guidelines for all project members to adhere to. Having our vision properly codified and organized will help mitigate a good majority of the developmental problems TR currently faces, and ensures consistency, even if the project's membership changes. The Master Plan is divided into three parts:

The Foundation Document is the first document that is planned and written. It contains a comprehensive description of our overall vision, then establishes the setting of our world, and its' various tropes and mechanics. This is quite possibly the most important document of the project, and everything else will derive from it. It will be the #1 reference point for all aspects of development, and is required reading for everyone who wishes to contribute to the project. The outline and structure of this document is defined in Appendix 1A.

Once the Foundation document is completed and agreed upon, the next phase of Master Planning is taking the overall setting and narrative tropes and using them to plot the various worldspaces and factions in greater detail. It naturally succeeds the Foundation document in painting an overall picture of what we want *Morrowind* to be. However, these documents are more detailed than their predecessor, and should determine how these tropes begin to take shape in the worldspace (metrics such as settlement density, the various character tropes of the different factions, how settlement spaces are portrayed, etc, etc.). A full list of these documents can be found in Appendix 1B.

The final aspect of the Master Plan is to visualize all the information determined above in a comprehensive map. Mapping this information will be key in the later stages of production, and having our Master Plan visualized for developers later on will be useful in determining where roads, dungeons, and settlements are placed in claims, as well as what types of dungeons and settlements go where. Having this information documented will make the task of implementation a trivial affair, and one that does not require constant redos and reworking of finished content.

Step 2: Conceptualization & Establishing Conventions

The next step in the production pipeline is the actual conceptualization of the world we're trying to create, in a more concrete plot. The vague visual tropes and narrative themes established in the first step slowly manifest themselves in a more concrete vision of how we plan on portraying them in-game. During this phase of development, groups begin work outlining the actual plotlines of the various factions, and begin writing the various important characters the player will interact along the way. Local and regional conflicts are also written for the various areas of the gameworld. *Morrowind*, as unique and diverse as it is, is a confusing place with lots of intersecting plotlines that all paint an overall narrative, thus development of these individual aspects must not take place isolated from one another. Thus it is important that all plot and character conceptualization happens in tandem.

On the visual front, this is also the time where focused brainstorming sessions occur on determining what assets need to be created. Artists of various stripes and backgrounds begin to visualize the setting into concrete concepts for modelers to tackle later on. When submitting designs for approval, artists must adhere to the project's established art direction, as to ensure effort is not wasted in the wrong direction. Not all assets need to be conceptualized, though a good majority of them should, as to prevent us from having to go back in later stages of production to add them in. A non-exhaustive list of the major categories of art that are required may be found in Appendix 2. Once concepts have been approved through peer review, claims are created for the asset creation phase.

During this time, the project must also come up with the various style guides that will determine the standards to be adhered to in later stages. Conventions on how assets are to be used in-game, artistic direction, and establishing what makes good writing (for books and dialogue) should be established in order to ensure consistency and quality in the production phase.

Step 3: Pre-production and Asset Creation

With the first two steps complete, the project should ideally have a solid vision of Morrowind, and how to portray that vision. It is during this step where the first stages of production can occur: the proposal and creation of the assets that will be used to build our game.

Asset production works a little differently than later production stages, in a sense assets creation comprises the more creative aspect of project development, and is more subjective to factors such as personal taste and creative liberties. As such, it would be inappropriate to have asset creators undergo the same showcase process as those who wish to implement content in-game. Since creative types are often hard to find in-house, we have the option of outsourcing this work to the community. Assets are still subject to our rigorous standards of quality and plan compliance, but will be judged on an asset-by-asset basis. Any member of the community may submit work for a particular concept that needs to be done.

3D models, since they rely on pre-existing concept art, will be structured as tasks. Instead of an artist claiming to work on a particular concept however, modeling tasks will be announced through various open community calls through our website, in which any artist may attempt to fulfill the modeling claim, without having to "claim" it. The first person who executes the concept to a satisfactory degree will be the person whose asset makes it into our data files. That concept is then marked as closed, and assigned to the respective creator. All assets developed for TR must be released into the public domain, although individual artists will retain the right to distribute their own work. *(See Appendix Zero: A Caveat on Copyright & Distribution at the end of this document for more details regarding this subject).*

Literature assets, on the other hand, are not pre-determined, and submitted pro-bono. Once again, a writer does not need to pass any showcase, so long as their work demonstrates an understanding and adherence to the project's standards, and fit the world that we are trying to make. Books are posted as proposals, reviewed, then added on an individual basis. While we do not set a hard quota on literature assets, there will be a point where we have enough books on a particular subject, in a sense we won't accept submissions in that particular area. There

will also be a point in this stage where we have enough books overall that describe the setting to a satisfactory degree, in which we will no longer accept any literature submissions.

The last type of asset that is created at this stage is character dialogue. Once again, no showcase is required to do this, as writing will be done based on a list of important player characters. These characters will already have been pre-determined in the above steps. Since there is so much to be written, this work is also outsourced to the community, and reviewed based on the dialogue conventions established in the previous step. During this time, basic quests may also be written, reviewed, and proposed, though not implemented yet. This step is ongoing, and can happen during Stages 5 and 6. See the Questing section of this document for more details.

Step 4: Preparation

Once the majority (ideally all) of the game's assets have been produced, asset packagers and file managers take over and begin to actually prepare the produced content for ingame implementation. The existing Vvardenfell content is imported into our Master File, after which the remainder of the world's heightmap (Mainland Morrowind) is painted according to the predetermined topography in the Master Plan. That heightmap is then imported into the Master File, which is now ready for work. The game's assets will also be packaged into an archive file, and entries linking the assets to the main file are created.

All that remains now is to determine just exactly how the landmass will be broken up into work. Once that is done, the file is split into individual sections and claims are established to be worked on. However, before that happens, Tamriel Rebuilt must ensure it has the proper backend to handle this work (Hint: Not Our Forums). A Content Management System is currently being developed as part of our website overhaul, that will see a transition from our old claims system, to a new trac-based task management system that will be directly integrated into our site CMS. This CMS will also handle the hosting and central repository of planning documents which can be linked to directly in specific tasks that are relevant. In fact, the ideal endpoint is that we do most of our work outside the message boards as much as humanly possible. No one likes having to sift through dozens of threads to find the information that they are looking for. CMS development should occur well before this step actually, but be finished by this step at the latest. *(Important things like a wiki for the planning documents should be well in place earlier, while the task management system can come later).*

Step 5: Production (Worldspace)

At long last, it is time to actually implement the fruits of our creative labour in-game. Everyone who wishes to do work in this step MUST have Developer Status and fully vetted in their respective field(s) through the Showcase Process. The only exception to this is certain low-impact claims that have been parceled off as Showcase Claims. A minimum quota of 20% of all available work must always be available for those wishing to apply for Developer Status. This quota must also always include work from all four fields of implementation (*Exterior, Interior, NPC Implementation, Quest Implementation/Scripting, though the latter is done in Stage 6 which happens somewhat in parallel to this one*). Once we have a pool of developers at the ready, actual production begins. The first major stage of main production is the creation of the worldspace. This occurs in three stages, which play out the same in every section. Every developer is responsible for being fully acquainted with the Master Plan, as well as any other

documents and conventions pertaining to the section they are working on. Using the new CMS, these readings will be conveniently linked in every claim/section at the very top. While all claimants have a degree of creative liberty (which they are encouraged to exercise) when working on their claims, they must still adhere to all relevant conventions and style guides that are linked in their claim. Failure to do so will result in their claim being forfeited during the review process, or not being granted at all.

The First Stage (referred to as Stage I) of production involves the creation of the world's exteriors. In larger, more sparsely populated areas, the exterior claim corresponds to the section, and can be rather large. In cities and sections with denser populations, exteriors will be child claims of a section. Regardless, during this time, the exterior developer will implement the environmental assets pertaining to their region, and place the interiors and dungeons (which are already predetermined in the Master Planning Map). Once the exterior passes a plan compliance and technical review*, the section is marked as Stage I complete. If a section has multiple exterior child claims, all of them must pass the process and be finished before the section is marked as Stage I Complete.

After the section passes Stage I completion, interior child claims are created (*with the Section Number.Interior Number naming convention*). Interior development is similar to exterior development, in which a developer must adhere to the conventions outlined in the parent section, as well as additional conventions pertaining to their respective interior types, and settlement faction tropes. Creativity is key in interior item placement, and should reflect the inhabitants of that interior. Once the interior passes a plan compliance and technical review, it is approved and merged and linked to the parent section exterior. Once all interiors of a section have passed review and have been merged with the exterior, the section is marked as Stage II Complete.

The final stage of sectional development is the implementation of NPCs and Creatures in the section file. This includes pathgridding, inventory, and the implementation of basic dialogue (already written). The developer working on this stage must also understand basic scripting. This stage is less creative, and more *technical (the actual creative writing and characterization as you can see has been separated from the NPCing process, and for good reason)*. Once again, the developer is responsible for meeting all conventions, as well as additional conventions on character tropes, and appropriate creature distribution, both of which have already been determined. Once this is complete, the section is marked as Stage III complete, and is eligible for the questing process.

Step 6: Production (Questing)

Unlike the more linear development of worldplace implementation, the process of questing the landmass is more organic in nature. The design and creative process is ongoing, and at this point, there should be many quest designs waiting to be implemented. As individual sections reach Stage III completion, the first basic quests may begin to be implemented. Quest claims are independent of any particular section, as to prevent them from being compartmentalized into specific areas. As quests are designed and approved, they must make clear what sections they involve, and only when those marked sections have reached Stage III, may they be opened for actual implementation. There are no exceptions to this whatsoever, as things will get messy if you are dependent on incomplete work. Quests that take place entirely in one section, or a localized cluster are allowed, but quotas will be placed to ensure there aren't too many of them, without good reason.

For the reason of overall flow, only basic quests may be implemented prior to all sections reaching Stage III completion. This gives an appropriate balance between having playable content in early alpha merges, and proper, Morrowind-wide questing in later stages. As such, the major questlines will not be implemented until the very end of the questing process, once the entire landmass is done. All quests will be dependent on the master file. Quests are only merged once they are finished. Once this step is complete, no more quest proposals will be accepted, and the project will be considered beta-ready, and enter its' final round of testing.

Step 7: Alpha & Beta Testing (Ongoing starting in Step 5)

An important component of maintaining interest in a project like ours running on a long timeframe, is making content available, even prior to completion. Releasing our work to the public also gives us access to a pool of beta testers to augment our small team of developers. While all work is publicly available at any time, the CMS will automatically release master merges every 90 days. This can be programmed to be 30, 60, and 120-day release cycles depending on the amount of progress being made in the various sections. It is recommended that the project maintain at least 1-2 releases a year, just to keep people refreshed. As much as we don't want it to, public releases are still the best form of assuring people we're still active, and most new developers are attracted to them.

The direct editing of the Master File is not allowed, and all patches and bugfixes must be committed through the automated system. Doing this ensure there's no duplicate work being done to screw up the Master File. Outside regular intervals, the master file is updated when a section reaches Stage III completion. This is to facilitate additional questing in a timely manner. As relevant sections are completed, developers are permitted to submit patches that implement Morrowind's unified fast travel network, including any changes made to Vvardenfell content.

Once quests have been fully implemented into the landmass, the project moves to the Beta testing cycle, with intense 30 day monthly releases are made for a time. The game is considered in a playable state, although during this time, any final bugs are ironed out. Our bugtracking system will ensure that duplicate bugs are not submitted and patched into the Master File.

Step 8: Final Release

After a specific, predetermined beta period, the final release of Tamriel Rebuilt is mastered and released to the public. The project enters a period of extended support where patches are offered for a time. Additional content may be produced by the team as optional addons, provided there is ongoing interest to do so.

Appendices

Appendix Zero: A Caveat on Copyright & Distribution

Part of having an informed development process is understanding the final form of Tamriel Rebuilt. All members should also understand their rights when contributing to an open-source creative community such as Tamriel Rebuilt.

While the majority of Morrowind's content may eventually end up being the intellectual property of Tamriel Rebuilt, Tamriel Rebuilt, in of itself, has to deal with the unavoidable fact that it is still a derivative work of copyrighted franchise (The Elder Scrolls). Tamriel Rebuilt will inevitably always (to some extent) still rely on a good amount of assets and concepts from the vanilla creation (TESIII: Morrowind), and thus, the final work is to be seen as a joint-effort between Bethesda Game Studios and the Tamriel Rebuilt Team, and this limits our ability to levy particular claims and defend our rights with respect to the overall work.

As a contributor to Tamriel Rebuilt, you agree that you are contributing your own work, without expectation of financial compensation, and that you agree that the Tamriel Rebuilt Project has the right to release that work into the public domain, under a unified fair-use clause for all user-created assets and intellectual property. Individual contributors may not dictate their own permissions for assets contributed to Tamriel Rebuilt, although they maintain full rights to their work outside the context of Tamriel Rebuilt (excluding of course, any work that incorporates any aspect of Bethesda or Zenimax IP for obvious copyright reasons). As a derivative work, you or the TR team as a whole may also not levy claims against Bethesda Softworks or Zenimax Media should any aspect of your work make it into any official Elder Scrolls media.

Tamriel Rebuilt's final release will not be a plugin or mod that is attached to the vanilla game (TESIII: Morrowind), run either in that engine, or OpenMW. It will be released as a game platform of its' own, as a completely independent conversion. Tamriel Rebuilt will consist of a single game file, that incorporates our modified version of Vanilla, as well as the additional Mainland content, and some parts of the Tribunal expansion, running on the OpenMW engine. It must be installed in a blank directory, with no existing vanilla game files. Tamriel Rebuilt can not be run in Vanilla Morrowind's engine, or alongside any of its' files.

Since there is still a dependency on vanilla assets, the asset file for Tamriel Rebuilt will be generated during the install process. A user must have a legally licensed copy of the original game (during install only), in order for the installer file to read the Morrowind/Tribunal/Bloodmoon BSA files, and extract the relevant assets. The installer will then combine the extracted assets alongside our own TR assets into a single archive file. This archive may not be distributed under any circumstances, again due to obvious copyright reasons. TR assets may be extracted and distributed for use with credit, but if you're just modding, we recommend just a simple dependency on our main file. All user created assets are clearly defined by the TR_ prefix. Any game files with this prefix may be used and redistributed, with the appropriate credit to the Tamriel Rebuilt Team.

The Bloodmoon content is not conceptually part of the main game, and thus remains a seperate expansion. The Installer will let you convert the Bloodmoon file into a file that is readable by OpenMW. Since we do not change any major aspects of gameplay, it is also possible to backport other existing Morrowind plugins into Tamriel Rebuilt in a similar fashion, provided they do not conflict. Most of our changes to vanilla Morrowind involve characters, dialogue, and NPCs, rather than cosmetic changes. We intend on working with the authors of several popular quest/dialogue plugins to ensure their content at the very least, maintains technical compatibility with our game, if not conceptual compatibility. However, our mandate is to our creative vision, so full compatibility is not guaranteed.

Appendix 1A: Master Plan – Foundation Document [Structure]

1. Introduction

- Mission statement – *A broad outline of what the project seeks to do.*
- Vision and goals – *A detailed outline of our overall goals and visions.*

2. What is Morrowind? (the story/the world, not the game)

- Role of storytelling – *Understanding the role narrative has in our game.*
- Setting of Morrowind – *Identifying the overall setting of the game.*
- Themes of Morrowind – *Identifying the overall narrative tone of the game.*

3. Level design

- Level design approach – *Establishing the metrics of good level design.*

4. Area types

- Wilderness and dungeons – *Establishing the role wilderness areas have on gameplay and narrative, and how they are portrayed.*
 - Level zoning
 - Representation of difficulty in wilderness areas
 - Representation of difficulty in dungeons
- Settlements - *Establishing the role settlement spaces have on gameplay and narrative, and how they are portrayed.*
 - Settlement faction tropes
 - Settlement tiers
 - Exterior tilesets

5. Exploration

- Player travel – *Establishing the role player travel has on gameplay.*
- Fast travel – *Understanding how fast travel affects gameplay and perception of space.*

6. NPCs

- NPC design approach – *Establishing our approach towards character design.*
- NPC faction tropes – *Examining defining characteristics of faction-affiliated characters.*
- Race tropes – *Examining defining characteristics of what makes the world's races different, and how they are portrayed in the context of our setting.*

7. Quests

- Structural role of quests – *Examining how quests contribute to gameplay.*
- Thematic role of quests – *Examining how quest contribute to the player's perception of the overall narrative.*
- Quest distribution and balancing – *Establishing the metrics behind how quests are portrayed and distributed in our worldspace.*
- Quest types – *Establishing the various types of quests the player will encounter in our world.*
 - Single quests
 - Questlines
 - Great Houses questlines
 - Temple questline
 - Imperial Guilds questlines
 - Minor questlines
 - Mainquest

Appendix 1B: Master Plan – List of Supplementary Documents to be made

II. Faction Documents (11)

The various factions of Morrowind demonstrate the cultural and ideological variety of Morrowind's inhabitants. They come from a number of different backgrounds, and all have their different belief systems.

Tribunal Temple: The organized religion of Morrowind, focusing on the reverence of the trio of living deities known as the Tribunal. Currently troubled by the wavering faith of some, who have sought out the Dissident Priests, who have begun to question Tribunal canon.

House Hlaalu: House comprised of proto-Velothi clans in the fields and valleys of Southern Morrowind, carrying a secret unbenownst to the other Houses of Morrowind. Its' real goal is to build Veloth's dream, through the expansion of trade, infrastructure, and enterprise.

House Redoran: House of nomad warrior clans that coalesed in the defense of Morrowind's western frontier. Struggling with a sense of identity and purpose after the Armistice, and loss of War Council to Vvardenfell.

House Telvanni: House of mystics that strayed from Veloth's teachings and devoted themselves to the higher understanding of the world's mysteries in seclusion.

House Indoril: A house of pious lawmakers and clergymen. They are the House that most feverently adheres to Tribunal Law, enacting their Order. Post armistice, they have been in steady decline, and cracks have begun to open in their already fractured worldview.

House Dres (Deshaan Confederacy): A confederacy of salt-harvesting families in the Deshaan, built upon an abstract concept of mutual indebtedness. Currently struggling with a secret deal their leader made with the Hist in exchange for slaves to till the salt in the Deshaan.

Imperial Institutions: A general trope of the Imperial Legion, Imperial Cult, the East Empire Company, and the Imperial Archeological Society.

Outlander Guilds: A general trope of the major outlander guilds that have recently set up shop in Morrowind. The Fighters', Thieves' and Mages' Guilds.

Morag Tong: The Dunmer's guild of Assassins, lawfully charged with executing writs of Execution, especially between the feuding Houses.

Nail-knock Reavers: A band of Nordic outcasts, remnant of the First Empire in the East. Currently in conflict with House Redoran over territory known as the Uld Vreach (Old Hold).

Taj Eel Xa'nith: A tribe of Argonians in the recently-conquered area of Argonia. In conflict with House Dres over their obligations to the Hist.

II. Region Documents (17)

Regions represent the various diversity of Morrowind's wilderness areas. They are a visual signifier of difficulty, hostility, and sometimes even a cultural signifier. Since Vvardenfell's regions have largely already been implemented, they will not be included in this list

Armun-shapalit: Broad, pale yellow sulphuric wasteland, and a large narrow gas volcano called the Tormented Knife in the center.

Boethia's Spine: Large elevated ashplains, interrupted by spiny, narrow mountain ridges.

Deshaan Plain: A large region of salt flats and washes. Saltrice breadbasket home to the Deshaan Confederacy.

Eyn Ouad: Cool, damp, barren coastal fens and fjords with stunted parasols, and hoards of muskflies.

Fens of Xa'nith: Large, dense, and hot mangrove jungle to the south of Deshaan. Home of the Argonians of the Taj Eel.

Fields of Thirr: Low, fertile alluvial plains, with copses of corkbulb forest growing in the muddy lowlands.

Grey Meadows: Grey swamp in Western Morrowind with ash parasols, poisonous muck ponds, and giant trama roots.

Horn of Veloth: Tranquil eastern peninsula with rolling hills and rocks pointing to Necrom, with tame growth. Sombre colour palette.

Kanit Valley: The warm fertile valleys and fungal forests surrounding the Kanit River. Important to Hlaalu industry and trade.

Julan-Shar: Cold badland with jagged spire rocks, and minimal dead growth. A cool complement to the West Gash.

Resdaiyad: The terraformed ashland valley surrounding the Resdai River. Pale green grass and grey ashen-rock, with gardens of bamboo and other subtropic like plants.*

Roth Roryn: A series of foggy trenches, canyons, and highland vales, with strange spinal spore growth in between the canyons and passes.

Shipal-shin: A barren mesa badland that forms Morrowind's southwestern border with Cyrodil. A mixture of scarred Martian desert and the American Southwest.

Sundered Scar*: Barren beach of melted pumice that is sinking into the Inner Sea. Strange tendril-like plants grow in knots in between the sumps.

Telvanni Isles: A grouping of tall rocky spires and herbidean outcroppings, overgrown by twisted parasols and roots that resemble a giant bush in the open sea.

Vales of Mephala: Mountainous vales and canyons with strange vertical spinal trees in between, hiding many secrets and ruins.

Velothi Mountains: High rocky mountains of grey ash snow, volcanic tundra vents, and odd conespruce growths bordering Skyrim.

III. Settlement Spaces (15, only required for Tier I and II)

TIER 1: Tier 1 settlement spaces are the largest, most comprehensive settlement spaces portrayed in our game. They are the largest cities, and often serve as the central hubs for their respective factions. They have a good amount of services, many unique, lots of quest content, and are on the major travel routes. They are well connected and heavily populated.

Narsis: Ancient gathering place for the proto-Hlaalu, it is a massive city, and is currently the seat of the Hlaalu Council Company. Deep in the cliffs under Mount Meris, lie a network of secret tunnels harbouring a dark secret.

Baan Malur: A massive Redoran city, which has traditionally been the seat of the unified Redoran War Council, though that has changed in recent years, due to the Skar being moved back to Vvardenfell.

Vivec: Massive canton city and gathering place for the various inhabitants of Morrowind. The Temple rents out cantons to various factions in the city, with its' most notable landmarks being the High Fane of the Poet, and the Palace of Vivec himself.

Ebonheart: The Imperial capital of Morrowind. It is traditionally the seat of power for Morrowind's King and his Duchy, and has the largest population of outlanders in Morrowind. It is also the hub of Imperial naval power in the East of Tamriel.

Telvanis: The capital city of House Telvanni, formed by the conjoining of several adjacent sadriths. Needs a story.

Necrom: The ancient catacomb-city where the most prominent of Dunmer inter themselves. It is also full of shrines and temples dedicated to prominent figures in Temple canon, including the final resting place of Nerevar Indoril himself, below the Fane of the Ancestors.

Almalexia: The capital city of Morrowind, and traditionally the seat of House Indoril. It is the seat of Almalexia, who resides in the High Fane of the Mother, overlooking the Resdai River. It is divided into three major districts. The Moon and Star which is home of the Indoril and their dignitaries, the Godsreach which houses many of the Dunmer's great institutions, and the Kingsreach, once a district that also contained Indoril, but was abandoned after the Armistice. It has since become the city's de-facto Foreign Quarter, with King Helseth himself having moved from Ebonheart to make his seat there.

Dres Tyr: Outsourced facility, infamous for its' slave pits. Has a very Cassablanca-esque vibe to it. Numerous stronghold cantons. Needs a better story. Seat of the Deshaan Confederacy.

TIER 2: Tier 2 settlement spaces are the large towns and cities of Morrowind. They are often the second cities of their factions, and offer a wide array of services and quest content. They

are fairly well connected and populated, and often have a distinct purpose in the gameworld. Many also house the local branches of the various outlander guilds.

Kragen Mar: Once a Redoran clanstead, it is now one of House Hlaalu's most prosperous cities, functioning as a trade hub for goods passing between Morrowind and Cyrodiil.

Andothren: An ancient site that has gone by many names, it is now House Hlaalu's port on the Inner Sea, and competes with Ebonheart for trade in the Inner Sea.

Balmora: House Hlaalu's newest settlement, it functions as a frontier town for adventurers seeking their fortune in Vvardenfell's interior, as well as a port for the island's minerals to access the sea.

Maar Veloth: The homestead of the Ashes' March. It is sometimes referred to as the Unbroken Tower, where Vivec once turned back a host of Men with only his tongue.

Ald'rhun: House Redoran's newest settlement, which was built around the place where Hortator Venim settled the Skar, on the slopes of Red Mountain. Rather isolated from the Home Marches, most Redoran make their dwellings within the giant emperor crab, rather than the town proper.

Kartur: Built into a vale in the Roth Roryn, Kartur is the homestead of the Stones' March, and guards the southernmost extent of Redoran Territory (with the exception of Lake Coronati).

Sadrith Mora: A large telvanni sadrith town that serves as a place where the Telvanni interface with outlanders. Magister Neloth also makes his abode in the tower of Tel Naga. It has an unusual layout compared to the usual insular sadriths of the Telvanni.

TIER 3: Tier 3 settlement spaces are usually medium sized towns and strongholds, that are connected on the travel network. They offer a few basic services, and in some cases are hubs for localized questlines. Some may also house a lesser guildhall of a local branch of the Fighters' or Mages' guilds. They too have their own unique concepts, though have less prominence of the larger towns and settlements of Morrowind.

Seryn: Trader town and brewery. The nearby dam on the Kanit river means this is the furthest upriver rivergoing vessels may travel before having to go overland. Has a shrine to Saint Seryn.

Llarus: A major port town at the confluence of the Kanit and Thirr Rivers, right up on Lake Coronati. It levies tolls on all travelers going on the Narsis-Kragen Mar road.

Indas: A large trade town on the Thirr River.

Suran: A medium-sized plantation town in Vvardenfell.

Cormar: A Redoran clanstead, which also has a shrine dedicated to the place where Vivec taught the Dunmer to fish.

Verarchen: A Redoran clanstead that also acts as a trade and supply town that guards the only road that passes into the Velothi peninsula.

Yhendas: Another Redoran clanstead, built entirely under a mountain.

Gnisis: A large egg-mining town. Initially the clanstead of the Ramoran family, it is now under the de-facto protection of the Imperial Legion, after Ramoran made a deal with the Empire to protect the town's interests, in exchange for partial control of the eggmine.

Maar Gaan: A Redoran outpost that caters to Redoran patrols and other pilgrims traversing the Ashlands.

Almas Thirr: A Temple stronghold that guards the only bridge across the Thirr River.

Ranyon-rhun: I don't know. A velothi or temple town in Telvannis, that's all I know...

Salen: A Temple stronghold that serves pilgrims heading into Necrom. Since Necrom is a holy place, pilgrims often stay in Salen instead. There are also a few places devoted to Temple learning.

Molag Mar: A Temple stronghold that serves as a hostel and service centre for pilgrims traversing Vvardenfell's interior.

Othren: A velothi town west of Almalexia. Needs some kind of story.

Murha: A velothi town at the mouth of the Resdai River, consisting of fishmongrels that is known for its rather large outdoor market.

Umul: A velothi egg-mining town that also serves as a base of operations for the Fighters' and Mages' guilds in Mournhold district.

Vhul: A velothi trading hamlet, under the finger of the mysterious Syvvit Tong.

Helnim: A sizeable Imperial town on the musk-trading route, that also acts as a local base of operations for the Imperial Archeological Society, and their mission to the nearby ruins of Kemel-Ze.

Caldera: An Imperial mining town, operating under charter. A flashpoint for local Hlaalu-Redoran conflict, over the town's resources, and a hotbed for EEC corruption.

Yscad: Once a small Nordic Fishing village and wayfort, it was recently retrofitted to be the seat of the Duke of Vvardenfell. It is sometimes known as New Ebonheart.

Syrod Neen: A sizeable Imperial settlement built around Syrod Pass, near the border of Cyrodiil.

Dres Lhendal: A Dres stronghold, needs some story.

Dres Horak: A Dres stronghold and outsourced facility, that also acts as a port for the Dres to transport their saltrice into the Thirr River.

Dres Sul: Another Dres stronghold and outsourced facility, probably something to do with getting Slaves transported into the Salt Washes.

Dunkreath: The seat of the Nail-Knock reavers, a band of Nords that are remnants of the First Empire.

Taj Xa'thaxl: The old temple of the Eel-Xanith clan of Argonians.

TIER 4: Tier 4 settlement spaces are usually the smaller towns and villages of Morrowind, tucked away in the backcountry wilderness. They exist as travel nodes on the fast travel network, and add some local flavour. They usually contain very little in the way of services, save for a local cornerclub or tradehouse. They may have a quest or two to offer the player.

Idathren: A small ship-building town on the Thirr.

Uneyn: A small lumber town in the woods of the northern Kanit Valley.

Naran: An egg-mining town close to the western mesas of the Shipal-Shin.

Hlan Oek: A seedy Hlaalu port under the influence of the Comonna Tong. It is commonly used to bypass the levies at Almas Thirr.

Shipal-sharai: A small Hlaalu town guarding the road from Narsis to Syrod Neen. It is one of the few places of safety in the dangerous passes and deserts of the Shipal-Shin.

Hla Oad: A small fishing town on Vvaradenfell's western coast, with a very seedy side to it.

Gnaar Mok: Another small town on Vvaradenfell's western coast.

Arvud: Hlaalu outpost town serving travellers heading on the road between Seryn and Andothren.

Emayn Mor: A plantation town that serves as a hub for crops heading from the surrounding plantations.

Khuul: A small port town belonging to House Redoran, serving as their primary connection between the Mainland and the Vvaradenfell interior.

Ald Velothi: Another small Redoran outpost, of little note.

Rhun Huk: A small Redoran coastal village.

Mok Moor: And another small Redoran coastal village.

Gargen Huul: A small Redoran clanstead nestled in the Velothi Mountains. Acts as a frontier outpost for soldiers guarding the western front with Skyrim.

Tel Vos

Tel Varen

Tel Menaan

Tel Umayn

Tel Gnada

Tel Aruhn

Tel Branora

Tel Llothan

Tel Mora

Dondril: A small farming town in the Thirr Floodplain.

Ud Vnas: A small siltmongrel town in the Sundered Scar.

Ildrim: A fishing village in the Sundered Scar.

Mervayan: A small village in Resdaiyad.

Seitur: A small village on the road to Necrom.

Marog: A small cliff village, whose inhabitants have been scavenging the Kemel-Ze ruins.

Barammu: Small fishing village in Sheogorad, east of Dagon Fel.

Dres Hairabamun: Dres stronghold.

Dres Bashipal: Dres stronghold.

Dres Vandyalaron: Dres stronghold.

Heej Xur: Argonian village.

Yejith Kux'al: Argonian village.

Askareth: Small nordic fishing town of the northern coast of Uld Vraech.

Valenhal: Another small nordic coastal town in the Julian-shar.

Dagon Fel: And another Nordic fishing village.

Teyn: A decent-sized town with a Cenus and Excise office that is meant to levy taxes on goods traversing the Inner Sea. It is also the player's starting location.

Seyda Neen: Another small Imperial outpost on the south shore of Vvardenfell. It is often used as a transport hub for adventurers heading into the island's interior. It's most notable landmark is its lighthouse, which is said to have been built from the remnants of a Hlaalu ship.

TIER 5: Tier 5 settlement spaces are a special tier of settlement spaces, that define those settlement spaces that don't qualify as towns in the traditional sense. They are usually the closed off forts and garrisons of the Imperial Legion, and the chapels of the Indoril Elders. They offer little to the player, unless they are a part of their respective faction. Telvanni towers and such are not included because they still have some elements that make them more town-like than Tier 5 spaces.

Fort Sunmoth

Fort Ancyliis

Fort Syrod
Fort Firewatch
Fort Moonmoth
Fort Buckmoth
Yscad Hall
Wolverine Hall
Rift Pass
Dunmereth Pass
Chedyn Pass
Roa Dyr
Nadehyam
Mol Murya
Yed Neyn
Dun Senim
Romithren
Sinramen
Holamayan
Ghostgate
Erabenimsum Camp
Ahemmusa Camp
Urshilaku Camp
Zainab Camp
Mushapal Camp
Dunsharat Camp
Ibashalit Camp

Strongholds

Nav Andaram (III)

Mandul (IV)

Id Vano (V)

Tel Uvirith (VI)

Dres Yengrith (IV)

Appendix 2: List of Things to be Conceptualized

Velothi Mountains: High rocky mountains of grey ash snow, volcanic tundra vents, and odd conespruce growths.

Appendix 3: Asset Categorization