

Last of Us: Level 1 Brief

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The level takes place in Pittsburgh, based on the original story of the Last of Us. Situated between Bill's Town and the Suburbs, the setting primarily takes place in downtown Pittsburgh.

We have recently concluded from a survey that Pittsburgh is underappreciated by many players, who describe it as being "too repetitive and intense action-focused." We attribute this symptom to the sequence of constant enemy encounters and battles, and believe that inserting more memorable, slow-paced moments of exploration and environmental storytelling will help in improving the gameplay pacing as well as add more character to the environments' cultural heritage.

It is envisioned that the level will center around one of Pittsburgh's funiculars - an inclined railroad - that connects the hillside neighbourhood of Mount Washington and downtown. The overall goal of the level is to secure a medicine from a pharmacy located on Mount Washington, hence the incline should act as the center arena both as the mode of transportation as well as obstacles that present challenges to the player.

Key Emotional Goals

- Feeling of **Suspense** in being chased by the enemy
- Feeling of **Relief** in escaping from the enemy
- Feeling of **Curiosity** in the environment's history
- Feeling of **Wonder** in lookouts / scenery

Key Gameplay Goals

- **Exploration** of environments iconic to Pittsburgh
- Environmental **puzzle solving** involving cooperation
- **Light Enemy Encounters** with options for stealth playstyle.

Key Environmental Narrative Goals

- Convey **atrocities** and **greediness** of the Hunters (storage facility?)
- Convey **historical events** leading up to the present
- Capture cultural + **industrial heritage** of Pittsburgh
- Convey the **beauty** of Pittsburgh's scenery along the River(?)

To do List for Level 1

- Draw level pacing chart
- Draw interaction flow chart
- Collect Location photo slides
- Collect Art style reference slides
- Draw a map on gridded paper
- Greybox level geometry and navigation mesh in Unreal.
- Third person character camera work + controls.
- Edit perspective compositions in the level geometry.
- Add basic lighting (GI + Static)
- Script basic traversal mechanics (jumping, crouching, climbing)
- Script basic puzzle functionalities
- Script basic enemy AI patrol paths.
- Script basic combat mechanics (shooting)
- Modularize environmental assets (furnitures, pickups)