

The background is a detailed architectural site plan of the Shadow Complex. It features various building footprints, roads, and landscaping elements like trees. Handwritten annotations in blue ink are visible, including a grid labeled A-D and E-H in the upper right, and the words 'COMMAND & CONTROL' with an arrow pointing to a specific building in the upper left. The plan is rendered in a light, sketchy style with various colors like purple, blue, and yellow used for different areas.

# DESIGNING SHADOW COMPLEX

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# EMBRACE THE “LIMITATIONS”

- Turn the limitations to your advantage
  - Genre, Budget, Tech, Team, Memory
- People don't want a *cheap* version of their favorite retail title; they want a *unique game experience*
- Find what a “small” game can do that a big budget retail game *wont* do

# PLANNING AND GESTURAL PROTOTYPING

- Plan, but plan smart
  - Don't write lengthy documents – create gameplay
- Know the end from the beginning
  - Your game will not do everything, so find your core and stick to it
  - All features must support the core
- Gesture it *all* in
  - Get the *whole game* up and running FAST!
  - Focus on the core loop
  - Once core is fun you can make smart cuts

# FIND THE FUN

- Boil it down to the pure essence of fun
  - Memory restrictions forced us to take a hard look at every single asset going into the game – this taught us to focus on the fun.
  - Once fun, we could more *effectively* layer on polish and production value
- Cut early, cut deep
  - It's critical to identify smart cuts early before you invest significant time or resources
- The fully integrated experience
  - How does every feature loop into the core fun?
  - How does every feature interact with or enhance every other feature?



# CONCLUSION AND QUESTIONS

- Don't compete with retail games – offer something original and unique
- Thoughtful planning and early prototyping are key to ensuring great pacing and a rewarding experience
- Every bit of effort *now* yields dividends *later*! Push to get your entire game playable as fast as possible!
- Questions