

PRODUCT

Sim City 2000

SOFTWARE HOUSE

Maxis/Mindscape

PRICE

£39.99

REQUIREMENTS

Dos 3.3 Min, 4Mb RAM, 386, EVGA (640/480 - 256 colours),
Mouse, 8Mb Hard Drive Space

SUPPORTS

Soundblaster, AdLib, Roland and
ProAudio Spectrum Sound Cards

THE LONG AWAITED FOLLOW-UP TO

by

THE ORIGINAL SIM CITY IS HERE AT

Paul

LAST, NEW CITIES AND NEW

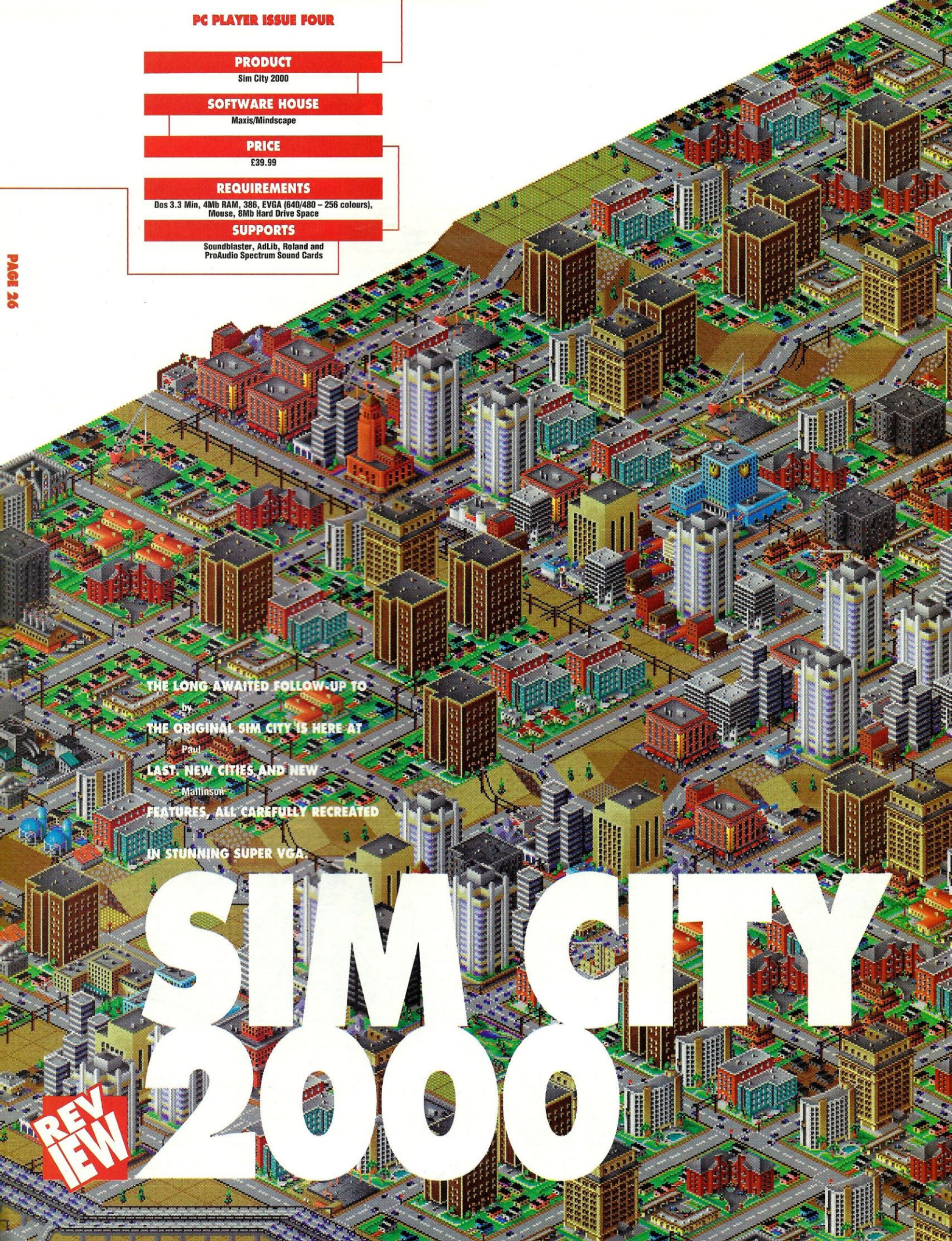
Mallinson

FEATURES, ALL CAREFULLY RECREATED

IN STUNNING SUPER VGA.

SIM CITY 2000

**REV
IEW**



FANS of Sim City will need no introduction to Maxis' new bouncing bundle of joy, Sim City 2000. The original Sim City is nearly five years old now and has sold so many units worldwide that it may well be the best-selling game of all time. In the five years since the introduction of the original its creators, Fred Haslam and Will Wright, haven't sat back to watch the cheques roll in. No, they've listened to their audience. Sim City 2000 is the result of nearly five years of listening to customer suggestions. A dream – surely not?

The basis of Sim City 2000 is still one of creation, in fact the gameplay still remains much the same as its predecessor. You are still in charge and can choose to build small, rural towns or huge, sprawling conurbations. As you design and build your cities, simulated citizens (known as sims) move in and build their homes, shops and workplaces, raise their families and invite their friends around. If your city is a nice place to live, your population will increase, but if not, your sims will leave the area. A yearly poll ensures that you know what your citizens think about you and your policies.

Success in Sim City 2000 can be attributed to balance between quality of life for your citizens, and raising funds to cover expansion and maintenance of your city. It's hard to maintain a huge city without sacrificing your sims' quality of life, and also maintaining the infrastructure of the city without raising taxes to such a point that businesses relocate is a delicate matter, as players of the original Sim City can attest.

As you can see from all this Sim City places you fairly and squarely in the hot seat as the mayor of a new city, where you face the same dilemmas that mayors all over the world are facing.

Sim City 2000 is very much a building game in the mould of many of Maxis' previous releases, however the chance to destroy also rears its head throughout the game. Bulldozers can raze anything you order them to, plus, as an option, you are also put at the mercy of more natural disasters – be they earthquakes or air crashes, they are more than capable of bringing even the most stringent of mayors to their knees. Of course it's much more challenging to create rather than destroy, and this is where Sim City has always excelled.

Before laying the foundations of your city you must first understand how your actions can influence growth – there are a number of basic rules to adhere to.

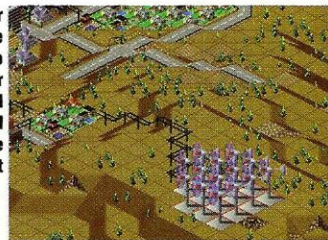
First, you must think about a place for your sims to live. These regions are called residential areas and are coloured red on the main map. Next you will need to create zones in which your citizens are able to work. These can be either commercial (blue) or industrial (yellow) zones.

GETTING STARTED

(Left) First, find a place for your power station. Somewhere quite remote, with a good water supply would do the trick. Then run powerlines towards the area you are going to build on.
(Centre) Next add residential, commercial and industrial zones (making sure that they are all powered up). Drop in a police and fire station and set up a basic transportation network.
(Right) Put in a school and tidy the place up a bit with some greenery. Expand your road and rail system, at the same time keeping the balance between all three growth zones constant.



Cities of the future, or rather, cities of the present, are able to construct alternative power generators. Wind-powered windmills are efficient and don't pollute the environment



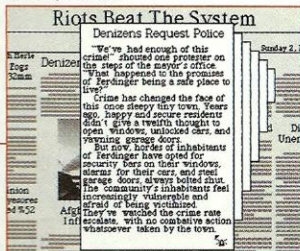
A small riot has broken out by the marina. I send a police unit in to quash the unrest...



...but the rioters blow the marina up! Fires begin to break out and police lose control of the situation



Riots beat the system! They certainly did; razing half of my city to the ground in the process



The surviving half of my city begins the rebuilding process. It may be better just to quit and start again



If you're that way inclined, you can get rid of the ornate graphics and display the play area in zonal colours only. Red areas are residential, blue are commercial, yellow are industrial and green are recreational



The yearly fiscal budget screen pops up regularly throughout the game. Here you can raise or lower taxing and funding levels. Selecting autobudget on the menu effectively allows the computer to take care of it for you

Manerick City 1904 Budget January 1904		1904	1905	
		Year End	Expense	Estimate
Property Taxes	2.7	0	0	
City Ordinances		0	0	
Bond Payments		0	0	
Police Department	2,100	-100	-100	
Fire Department	2,100	0	0	
Health & Welfare	2,100	0	0	
Education	2,100	0	0	
Transit Authority	2,100	-24	-26	
Year to Date Total		-524	-526	
Estimated End of Year		\$11,266		
Current Treasury		\$11,144		

stations, educational and recreational facilities and a whole lot more.

Placing colour-coded zones is simple. Unlike the original Sim City you can build your residential, commercial and industrial zones in any shape and to any size simply by 'painting' them onto a flat piece of land. First, place the cursor onto one of the grid squares on the map, click and hold the mouse button and pull in the desired direction to mark the land. This is the same for all three zones and once you get power to them they should start to pop up. Next comes the transportation network; roads and rail. Joining your zones up will enable your sims to get to work on time! A small graph on the toolbar called the demand indicator shows which zones you should be concentrating on.

When your population reaches

➤ A source of power, in the form of a power plant, is next on the list. Power stations vary in cost and output and, depending on the time/era that you're building in, you will be given a choice between a traditional coal-powered plant through to a fusion power station of the future. Obviously the more advanced the technology; the more choice you will have.

A power plant will need connecting to new zones in order to get them up and running, and unlike the original Sim City, powerlines are not dropped one by one, they are simply stretched over the desired area and dropped into place.

Finally, a transport network is needed so that your sims can travel between work, their homes and the shops.

Once your city has begun to grow,

"ONCE YOUR CITY HAS BEGUN TO GROW, YOU CAN THEN ADD ZONES WITH DIFFERENT DENSITY LEVELS, MULTIPLE MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION BOTH ABOVE AND BELOW GROUND, A COMPLETE WATER SYSTEM, AIRPORTS, SEAPORTS, POLICE AND FIRE STATIONS, EDUCATIONAL AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND A WHOLE LOT MORE"

you can then add zones with different density levels, multiple means of transportation both above and below ground, a complete water system, airports, seaports, police and fire

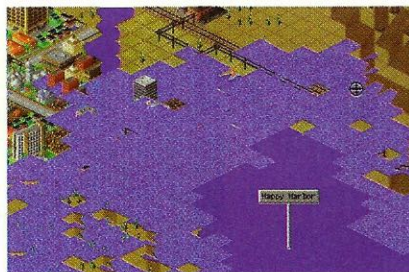
2,000, you then become a fully-fledged new town and are invited to build your own home anywhere within the city. Decide carefully where you plan to place it because your presence in a

Where would a sim game be without its disasters? Nowhere, that's where. Sim City 2000 has all the classic disasters that originated in Sim City, plus a few new



FIRE

This causes a fire to break out somewhere within the city - obvious eh? Fires are also associated with other disasters too; for example, rioters can run amok, destroying buildings and starting fires



FLOOD

Giant tidal waves swamp lowland and coastal areas - they are capable of sweeping even towerblocks aside. Anything that isn't tied down will probably be destroyed



AIR CRASH

If an airplane collides with part of the city it will destroy buildings and start fires. Containing the fire is your first priority, picking up the body bags comes next...

**REV
IEW**



Hollywood is a hotbed of industry – polluting the land all around. I'm not talking about the smoke billowing towers, but the turgid films it produces!

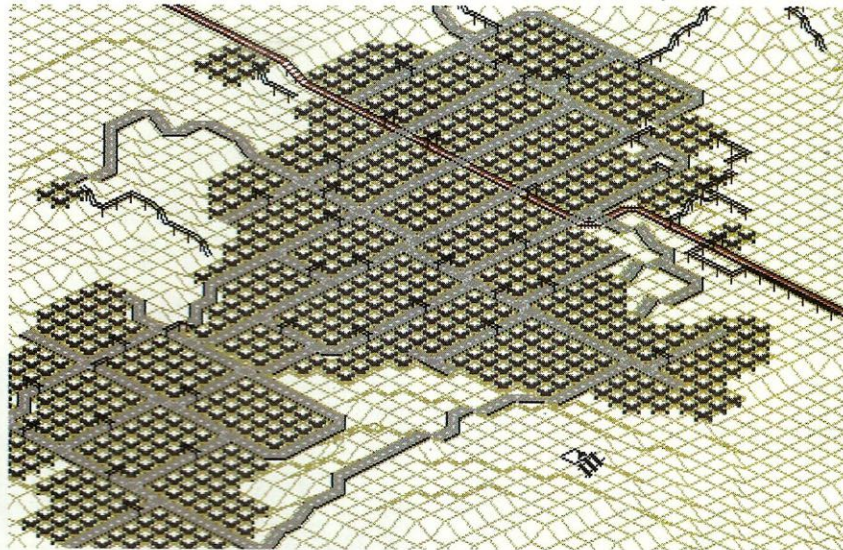
particular part of town will no doubt increase prosperity.

Less essential additions to your town can all be selected via the toolbar shown to the left of the screen (see diagram at the far right of the page for visual details). Education is an important factor to consider. Education levels are expressed as an Education Quotient, or EQ – the higher the EQ, the more educated your population is. EQs range from zero (braindead) to 150. The equivalent of a high school education is an EQ of 90 and a four year college degree is about 140.

A city with a low EQ has a higher likelihood of both unemployment and rioting, so it would probably be a good idea to drop a few schools and colleges into your city when you have the funds. With intelligence comes invention and as time passes, things are invented which give access to new technologies that you can incorporate into your city. As the technologies become available, new tools will appear in the sub-menus under the icons displayed. All new inventions are also announced in the daily newspapers.

"WHEN YOUR POPULATION REACHES 2,000, YOU THEN BECOME A FULLY-FLLEDGED NEW TOWN AND ARE INVITED TO BUILD YOUR OWN HOME ANYWHERE WITHIN THE CITY"

Without a solid police and fire service behind you, it may be time to start again. The placement of police stations will cut down on crime (if the crime is too high, then areas of the city will become ghettos), whilst the more fire stations you can fully fund, the quicker the fires are put out. An emergency icon also allows the player to deploy police and fire forces in times of emergency – useful during periods of riot. Secondary emergency services such as hospitals and prisons also help overcome social strife but are only really



feasible if your city is reasonably large.

To prevent your citizens from becoming bored you must ply them with gifts from time to time. Start small with a few parks because they clean up residential and commercial zones and

game, be it a huge condo or a scrawny little shack. Also, if the building is of relative importance (a big dam for instance) it can also be renamed with a title of your choice. Needless to say, I had a lot of fun with this.

The usual stats, graphs and budget sheets are all present – if you need to pinpoint a crime hotspot, or find out how the neighbouring cities are going (yes, you can link up to rival cities!) then the small collection of icons at the bottom of the toolbar will help you out. The various pull-down menus do much the same thing as the icons on the toolbar, plus there are other features hidden away that can be called up at any time such as game speed and terrain editor.

Sim City 2000 is a game full of hidden features. I could go for quite some time about how much depth the game has, how many options are available and how good the graphics are, but the superb manual does better than I ever could. ➤



STAR BAR
The ever-present toolbar contains all the icons needed to build your city with. This toolbar stays on-screen at all times, but can be moved around at will

PERSONAL DISASTER



TORNADO

Michael never predicted this one and it tore my city to pieces! Never trust a weatherman, but keep your eye on the weather reports just in case...



EARTHQUAKE

No one can predict them and no one can stop them. Earthquakes cause more damage than all the other disasters put together



MONSTER

Summon up a monster and you'll wish you never had! This metallic beast will crush your buildings, burn your real estate and destroy your power network

**REV
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UNDERGROUND/ OVERGROUND?

Sim City 2000 not only allows you to build above ground, but you are also put in charge of the city's many subterranean concerns, such as sewage networks and underground subways.

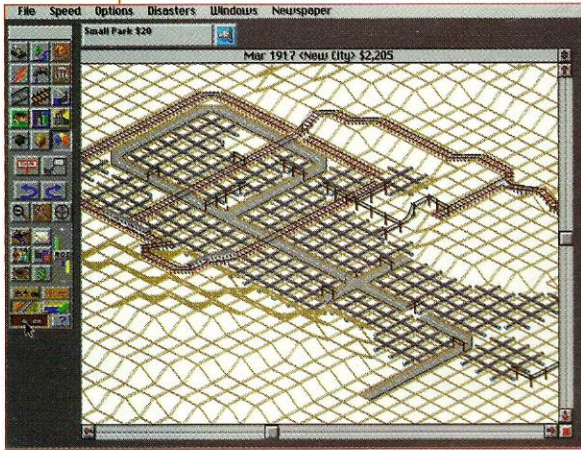
Water shortages can be a problem during dry patches and a well-

structured network of water pipes to supply your impoverished sims would help your city no end.

Clicking and holding on the Water System icon will bring up a number of options. Pipes can be 'painted' onto the landscape in the same way that powerlines are added to the map. Activating pipes automatically turns on the wireframe underground view so

that you can see your pipes being laid.

Water pumps and water towers can also be added to decrease the effects of drought. Water pumps need power to operate, but can drastically increase supply (especially if placed next to a lake). Ultimately, if your technology is advanced enough, you can also choose to spend big bucks on a desalination plant to remove salt from sea water.



➤ Players of the original Sim City will be seriously overjoyed with Sim City 2000. For a start they are provided with SVGA graphics the likes of which have never been seen in a game of this sort before. They really are incredibly detailed and stylised, even down to the tiniest of details – at least this time the houses DO look like houses and the skyscrapers DO look like skyscrapers! Of course, the penalty you pay for this is Super VGA compatibility (in fact, Sim City 2000 is ONLY compatible with VESA drivers, so be warned – you need the right video card and driver before buying this game).

The addition of relief adds another dimension to the concept. As I mentioned earlier, the landscape

resembles Populous to a certain degree and the way you can manipulate the terrain in the landscape editor is also similar in execution. Hills and slopes

a pleasant change to actually enjoy reading through a manual as thick as this (140 pages!). Congratulations go to Michael Bremer and his team for

"ONE THING I WOULD RECOMMEND TO POTENTIAL BUYERS IS THAT THEY GET THEMSELVES A GOOD MOUSE TO PLAY THE GAME WITH. LAYING DOWN POWERLINES CAN SOMETIMES BE QUITE TRICKY, ESPECIALLY IF YOU'RE BUILDING OVER SLOPES OR AROUND POXY PIECES OF WATER"

can sometimes cause few problems with object placement – dropping tracks, roads and powerlines over sloping corners can sometimes cause errors, and the fact that there is no undo option means that some mistakes can be very costly.

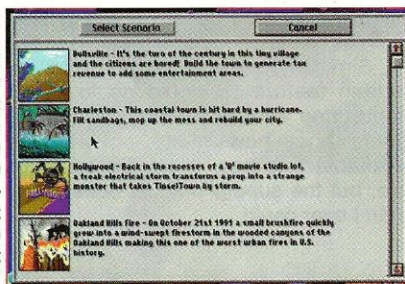
One thing I will mention (and it happens very rarely in reviews of this kind) is that the manual for Sim City 2000 is absolutely stunning. Not only is it very well written, but it is also very entertaining to read. The pages are well designed and clear to read, and it made

producing an excellent companion to the game.

Another factor little-mentioned in many game reviews is sound. Sim City 2000 has a variety of tunes that change tempo whenever something significant happens during the game. They're not too annoying (which will no doubt please many people) but remain 'bleepy' all the same. Sound effects are pretty quirky, with the usual array of daft beeps and farts used only as warnings or as indicators.

Playability-wise Sim City 2000

No one can claim to have mastered Sim City 2000 without first completing the four scenario cities that come complete with the game. These cities all have one thing in common – they're in deep shit and need your help to get out of it

**DULLVILLE**

Save a small city from dying of boredom! Stadiums, parks and other fun things wake your citizens from the apathy that is plaguing them

**CHARLESTON**

One minute Charleston has got a lovely beach area and the next minute it's transformed into a salt water lake. Get the mops out

**HOLLYWOOD**

Probably the best thing that's ever happened to Hollywood. Unfortunately, to complete the game you must save the city from disaster

Now there's a tidy-looking town if ever I saw one. Still very young but showing signs of beauty, Maverick City is well on the way to success



Marinas add style to the water's edge. Tiny boats skit across the water as traffic problems get worse due to an increase in tourism



works well. The interface is basically the same as the one used in the original Sim City, with the toolbar easily accessible to the left of the screen. The placement of zones is definitely an improvement over the original but the new method of 'painting' powerlines can sometimes be confusing.

One thing I would recommend to potential buyers is that they get themselves a good mouse to play the game with. Laying down powerlines can sometimes be quite tricky, especially if

Hollywood!

What really made Sim City for me was the amount of depth present in this new incarnation. Sim City was deep but somewhat limited – you could build a big city and use everything the program could throw at you, but then there would be little else to do apart from maintain your metropolis and slowly but surely become bored.

Sim City 2000 remedies this by adding 'invention' into the gameplay in the same way that Civilization does.

"SIM CITY, POPULOUS AND CIVILIZATION ALL ROLLED INTO ONE GAME?! UNLIKELY, BUT TRUE"

you're building over slopes or around poxy pieces of water, so a dodgy mouse (which I had to begin with!) should be replaced – it will make a hell of a difference.

Another (more important) recommendation is that you play this on a reasonably fast machine. On the whole the speed of the game is fine, but when there is a lot of activity on-screen the whole thing tends to slow down a touch, especially when confronted with one of those B-movie monsters from

The way new power stations are added to the list is great and that's not all; buses, bus depots, subway systems and highways are all there just waiting to be discovered! Sim City, Populous and Civilization all rolled into one game?! Unlikely, but true.

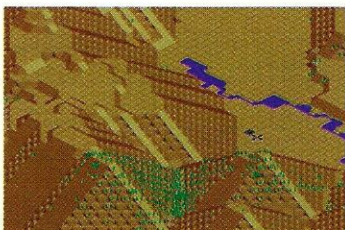
To be frank I have been looking forward to this game for months and it has lived up to all my expectations. It looks incredible, it plays superbly and, best of all, it'll keep you glued to your monitor for months. **SCORE ★★★★★**

TERRAIN EDITOR

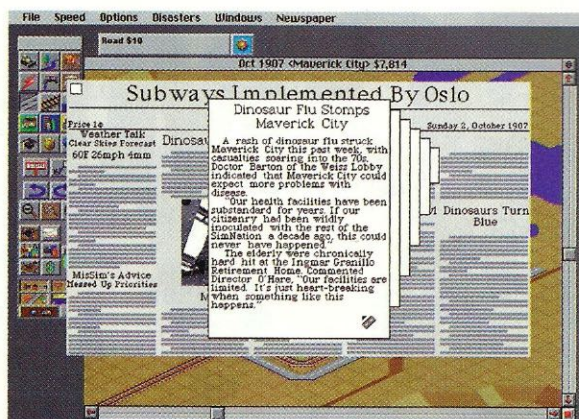
You could buy a terrain editor for the original Sim City, but Sim City 2000 comes complete with an easy-to-use terrain editor included within the packaging. Creating a stable expanse of ripe building land is more in-depth than it used to be – with the introduction of hills, mountains and relief comes a Populous-style interface that allows the player to raise and lower land at will. Mountain tops can be levelled-off, sea levels can be altered, rivers, lakes and coastlines can be added at the click of a mouse button and trees take no time at all to pop up once planted. Ah, the landscape looks so beautiful, with its blue lakes and great forests I don't think I can bring myself to build on it!



If your landscape is too hilly, you could always retire to the terrain editor and take it down a peg or two. Raising and lowering the land is very similar to the system used in Populous



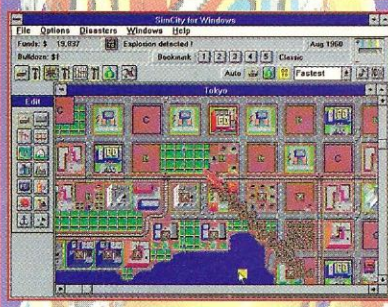
Rivers, lakes and coastlines can easily be added to the landscape at the click of a mouse button. The percentage of land covered by hills, trees and water can be changed before a map is generated



THE ORIGINAL SIM CITY

The original Sim City was designed and created by Will Wright in 1989. Although the game looked quite primitive at the time (and subsequent updates have improved upon this) it caught the imagination of games players the world over. Even today it still plays extremely well, doing reasonably well in this month's Super Test, and still has many fans. The introduction of Sim City 2000, and the fact that you can load your original Sim City save files into Sim City 2000, is bound to attract even more converts to the way of the sim.

The citizens are struck down by a dinosaur flu epidemic. I think it's about time I built a hospital – this should keep niggles like this flu under control



REV
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