Neverwinter Nights Game Mechanics

Neverwinter Nights is a fantasy roleplaying computer game developed by BioWare. The game is mostly played in real-time, although the player is able to press the spacebar to pause and resume the game at any time. In the game, the player controls only a single character which the camera is always focused on. The player is able to gain companions that they add to their adventuring party, but these companions act as independently thinking creatures that will take some general commands from the player, but are not able to be controlled absolutely (For instance, the player is able to tell the companion to fight using ranged attacks from the backline, but they cannot directly command them to move to a location).

The mechanics of this game mimic the game's source material, the tabletop pen-and-paper roleplaying game of Dungeons & Dragons 3rd Edition, pretty closely. The game starts with requiring the player to create a character. The player gets to choose a race and class for their player, which will change the attribute bonuses and the abilities that the player starts with. The player starts at first level, and will increase their hitpoints, attributes, and gain new abilities as they level up by defeating enemies and completing quests.

Different player classes specialize in different abilities and playstyles. For instance, a player of the Barbarian class is excellent at pure brute strength, and excels in straightforward confrontations with enemies. Meanwhile, players of the Rogue class excel in sneaking around enemies, picking locks, and disabling traps. Players of the Wizard class get access to a wide variety of powerful and versatile spells with a variety of effects, but are particularly low in health in combat.

The outcomes of many actions in the game are decided by a "d20 check." When the player makes a d20 check, a random number between 1-20 is chosen, and then some amount is added or detracted from the roll based on the player's attributes and abilities. For instance, a player with high strength would add a large bonus to a d20 check they make to determine whether they hit an enemy. If the result of the dice roll with the bonus/malus is equal to or higher than a specified number, the player is successful in that check; If the result is below that number, then the player fails that check.

In combat, the player can target an enemy by clicking on them. After clicking on an enemy, the player's character will move up to the enemy and start automatically attacking them periodically. Whether an attack deals damage depends on whether the attack hits, which is decided by a d20 check with a bonus based on the player's attributes. The damage of the attack itself is also decided by a dice roll with a bonus from the player's attributes, with the type of dice rolled depending on the weapon. The game has a lot of options for how the player can handle combat - including a large number of weapons which deal different amounts of damage, many abilities that influence combat such as a cleave ability that lets the player make a free attack after defeating an enemy, and magical spells that increase a player's attributes or deal a large amount of damage, such as a fireball spell that deals a large amount of damage to enemies in an area.

However, while the game has a lot of options for how the player can handle combat, the game also has a lot of non-combat aspects. These include being able to sneak around enemies, picking locks, disabling traps, and making persuasion checks to convince NPCs of your

intentions. A lot of the time, these aspects open alternate routes that allow the player to avoid combat in certain sections entirely.

The game also has an alignment system. The player chooses an alignment out of nine potential alignments when creating a character (the alignments being represented by two axes, those axes being good vs. evil and lawful vs. chaotic). The alignment of the player may unlock new options in terms of dialog or items they can wield. However, certain dialog options and actions the player takes can result in a shift in their alignment, causing the player to be careful in their choice of action and ensuring that it aligns with their chosen alignments.
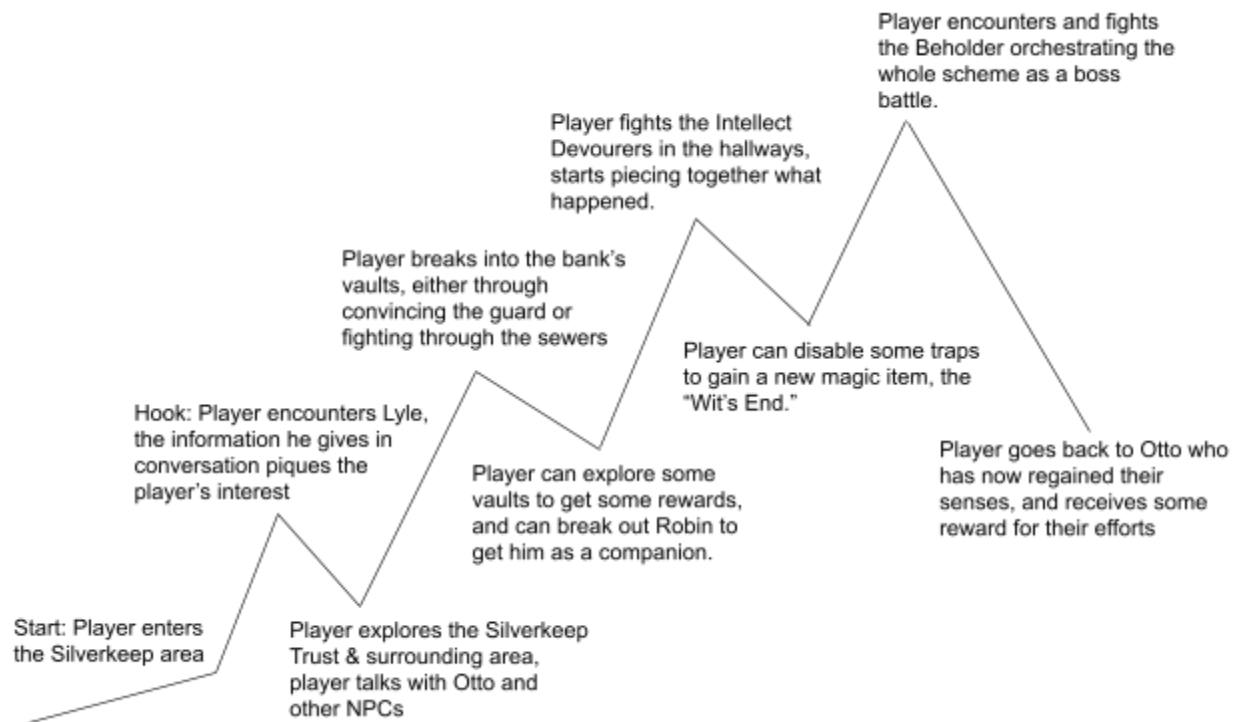
Design of Neverwinter Nights Level

Quest Name: "Intellectually Bankrupt"
- The name is still a work in progress. Other options include:
    - Deposits of Doom
    - A Penny for Your Thoughts
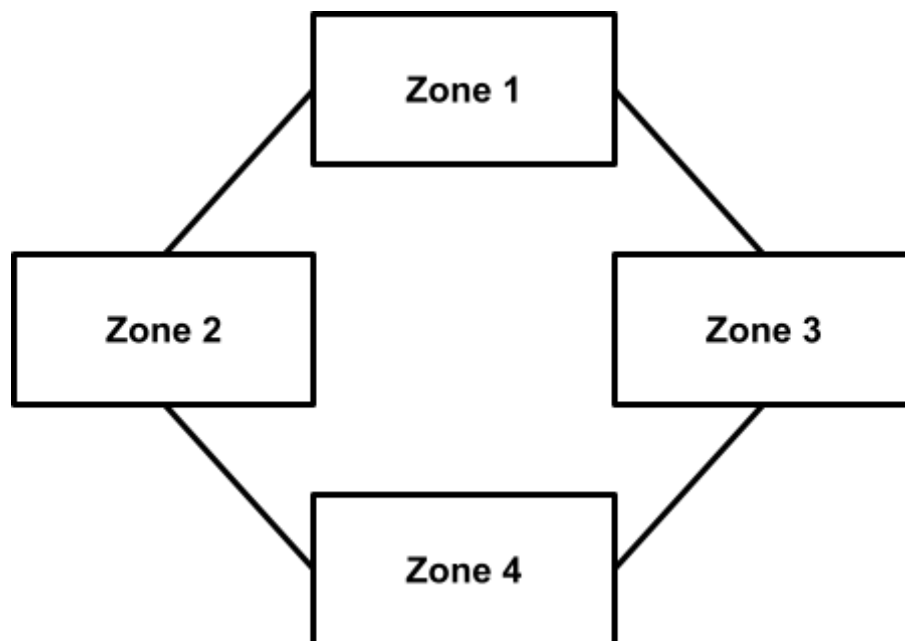   - Mind Over Money

Level overview:
1. The player will encounter Lyle Lastcoin, who tells the player that the people at the Silverkeep Trust bank are acting particularly dim-witted. He encourages the player to investigate.
2. The player will meet with Otto Loanmore, the teller at the Silverkeep Trust. Talking with Otto will confirm to the player that Otto is acting unexpectedly feebleminded. The player will be encouraged to find the source of the bank teller's change in intelligence.
3. The player will break into the bank's lower floor, which holds all of their vaults. The player will do this by either entering through the sewers (where they will have to fight past some slimes) or by convincing the bank guard to let them go down the stairs.
4. Player will encounter a halfling rogue called Robin DeBanks locked in a vault downstairs. The player can pick the lock on the door or find the key to the door to free Robin. Upon freeing Robin, they can recruit Robin as a companion for the rest of the quest.
5. On exploring the vaults some more, the player will encounter some Intellect Devourers in the hallway. This is a clue to what happened in this place; Intellect Devourers have been feeding off of the workers at this bank!
6. The player will come across a particularly large vault, which is protected by some traps. However, they can use their new companion (Robin) to disable these traps if they cannot themselves. Past all of the traps, the player will find a new magic weapon, called the "Wit's End." This item is a spear that deals extra damage to intelligent creatures.
7. At the end of the hallways, the player will encounter a large Beholder, who has been orchestrating the whole scheme to put the bank out of business. The player will be able to fight the Beholder, and also use their new magic item in the fight, since the Beholder is a very intelligent opponent.
8. After defeating the Beholder, the player can go back to Otto, who has now regained their senses. The player will receive some reward for defeating the Beholder and freeing Otto and the other bank workers from its mind-numbing scheme.

Engagement Curve:

Player encounters and fights the Beholder orchestrating the whole scheme as a boss battle.

Player fights the Intellect Devourers in the hallways, starts piecing together what happened.

Player breaks into the bank's vaults, either through convincing the guard or fighting through the sewers

Player can disable some traps to gain a new magic item, the "Wit's End."

Hook: Player encounters Lyle, the information he gives in conversation piques the player's interest

Player can explore some vaults to get some rewards, and can break out Robin to get him as a companion.

Player goes back to Otto who has now regained their senses, and receives some reward for their efforts

Start: Player enters the Silverkeep area

Player explores the Silverkeep Trust & surrounding area, player talks with Otto and other NPCs

Level molecules

Zone Map:

```
          ┌──────────┐
          │  Zone 1  │
          └──────────┘
         /            \
┌──────────┐        ┌──────────┐
│  Zone 2  │        │  Zone 3  │
└──────────┘        └──────────┘
         \            /
          ┌──────────┐
          │  Zone 4  │
          └──────────┘
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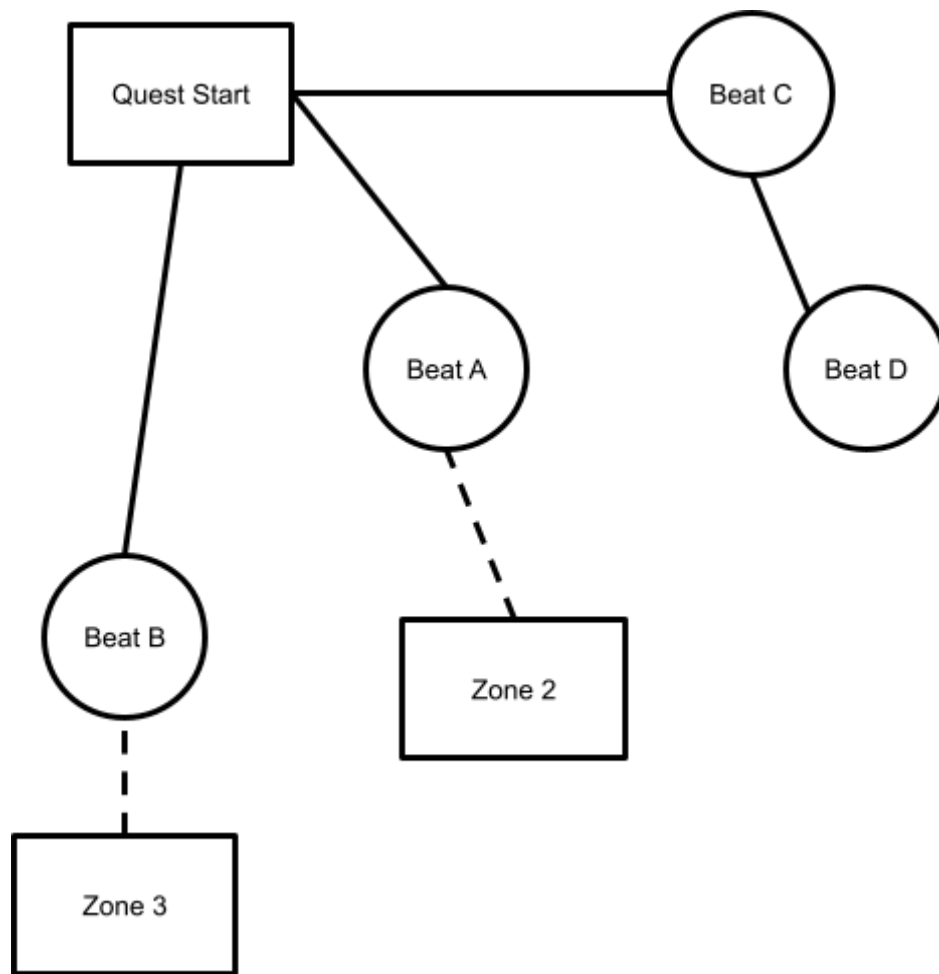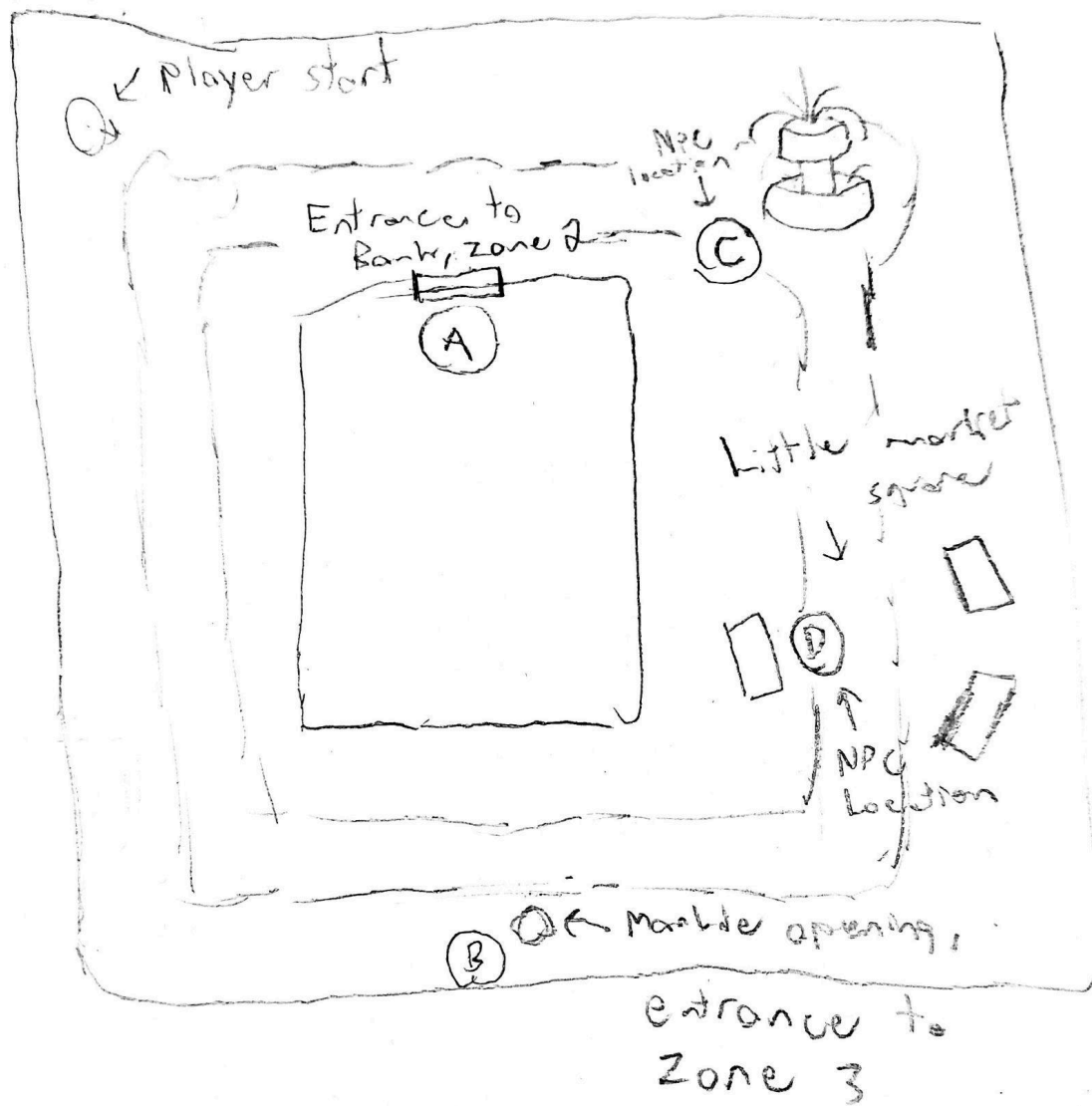
Zone 1: Silverkeep Outdoors

- An outdoors urban zone somewhere in the middle of Neverwinter, in a district called Silverkeep. In the middle of the map is a large structure named The Silverkeep Trust, which is a local bank. Around this bank are many houses that act as set dressing.
- The quest is given by a man named Lyle Lastcoin, who runs up to the player as soon as the player enters this zone.
- Quest Start:
    - A man named Lyle Lastcoin runs up to the player, telling them that something about the bank is really suspicious. When Lyle went to the bank last week, they threatened to break his kneecaps if he didn't make good on his loan payments; But when he went in just earlier today, he was able to get another loan of 100gp with only a 2% interest rate. It's practically free money! The teller was acting far more dim-witted than usual, but he isn't going to complain; He suggests that the player take advantage of the bank's generosity as well.
- Beat A:
    - A large set of doors leads into the grand building of The Silverkeep Trust. Moving through these doors will transition the player to Zone 2.
- Beat B:
    - An open manhole leads straight into the sewers from the side of the road. Moving through this manhole will transition the player to Zone 3.
- Beat C:
    - A human woman is trying to wrangle her four young children, who are all playing around a fountain. The player can ask this woman for her name, which will reveal her name to be "Hattie Hustleby."
- Beat D:
    - A dwarven man sells fruit outside of a market-stall. The player can ask this dwarf for his name, which will reveal his name to be "Grimbald Applecrusher."

Zone 1 Beat Map:

Zone 1 Napkin Sketch:

Zone 1

Player start

Entrance to
Bank, Zone 2

A

NPC
location

C

Little market
space

D

NPC
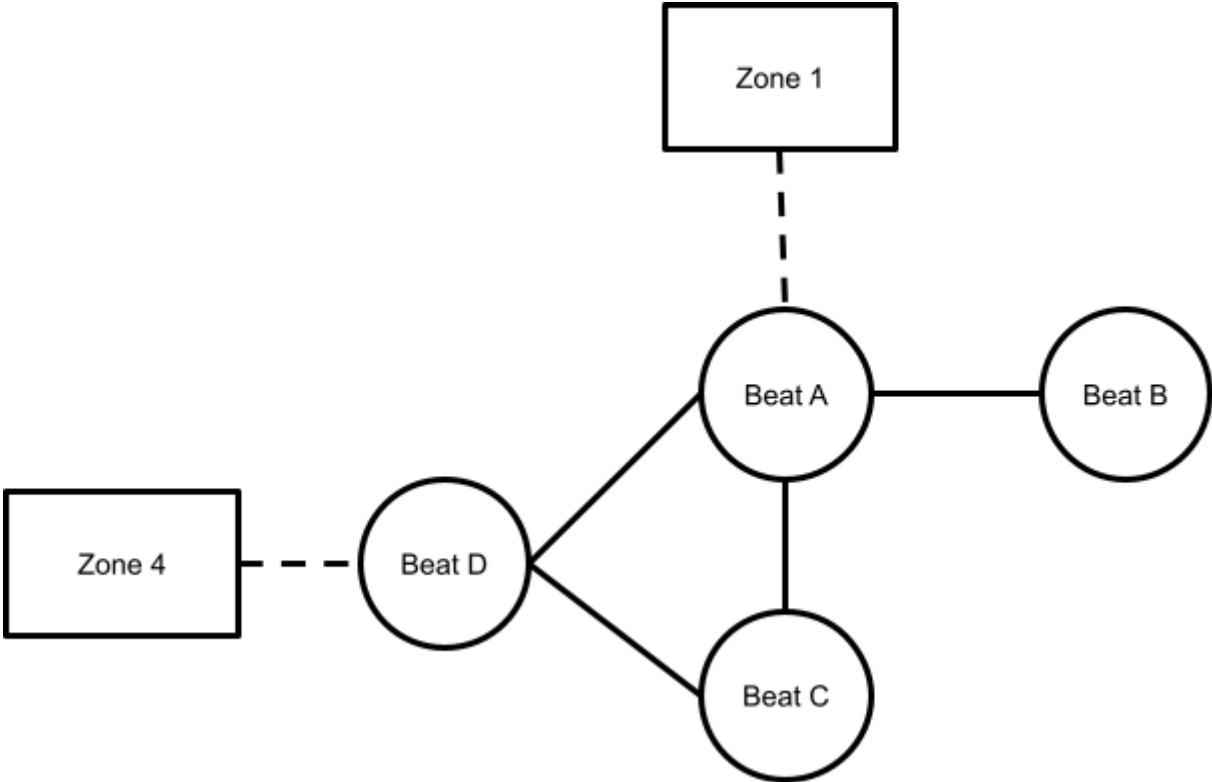Location

B

Marble opening,
entrance to
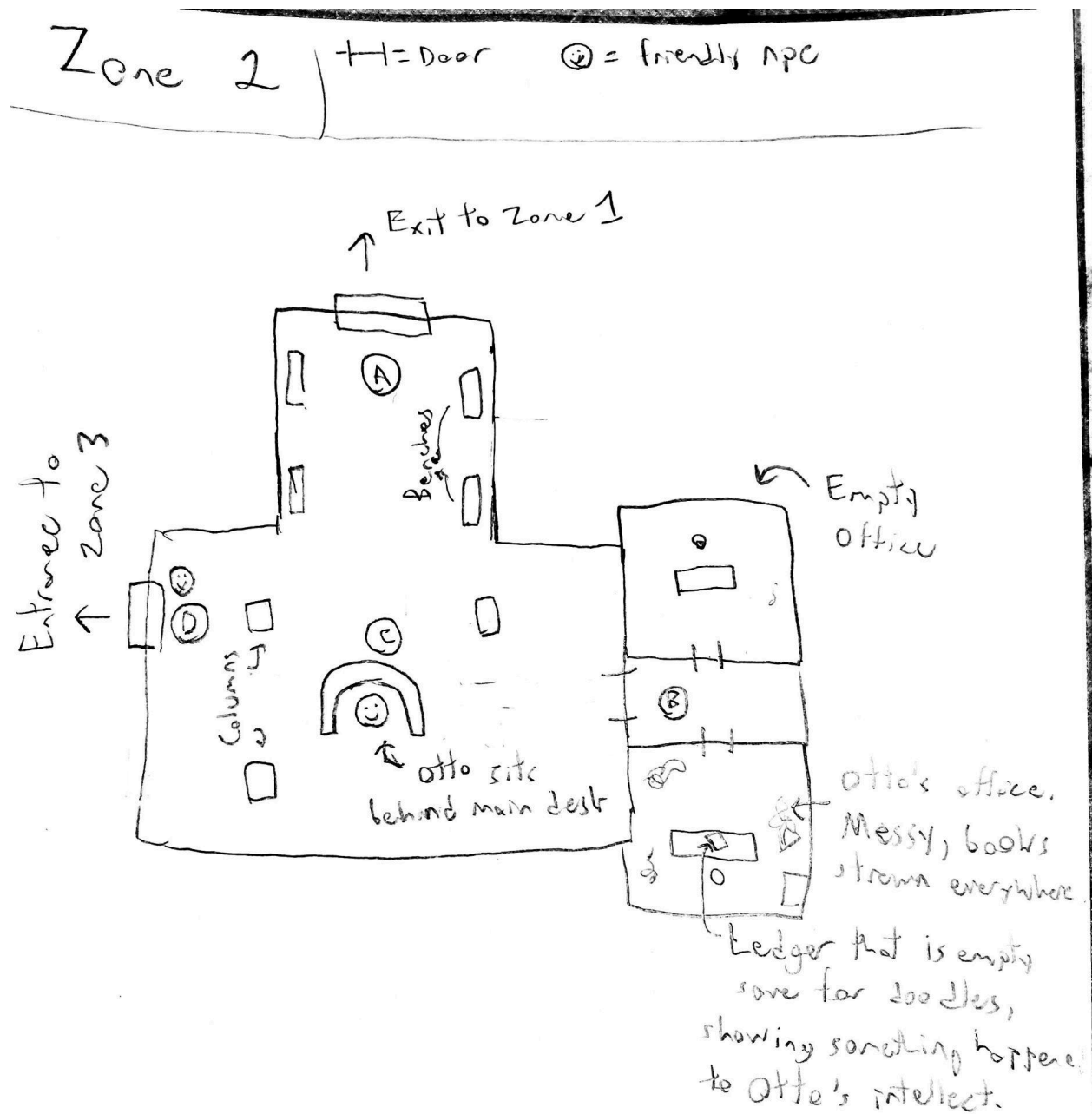Zone 3

Zone 2: Silverkeep Trust Foyer

- Beat A:
    - The main doors lead into the large and pristine foyer of the Silverkeep Trust. Going back out through these main doors takes the player to Zone 1.
- Beat B:
    - A hallway leads into a few open offices to the side. The offices are very messy, and one has an open ledger on top of their desk which the player can examine. On examination, the player notices that the ledger is completely empty, except for some mindless doodles.
- Beat C:
    - There is a goblin teller towards the front of the bank who goes by the name, "Otto Loanmore." On talking with this bank teller, it is quickly made obvious to the player that the teller is acting unnaturally dim-witted. This information is added to the player's journal, and the player is told that it may be good to further investigate the bank.
        - The player can impersonate different people that they meet around this zone, by simply telling the bank teller that their name is one that belongs to another individual, like "Hattie Hustleby" or "Grimbald Applecrusher." After impersonating a person, the player is asked if they want to take all of the money from that person's account. If the player accepts, then they gain some gold coins, but their alignment also shifts towards evil.
        - The player can take advantage of a special first-time loan offer from the teller, which is clearly only being offered because of their dull stupor. The offer is for a 100gp loan with 0% interest rate that never needs to be paid back! If the player takes the offer, their alignment shifts a little towards chaotic.
- Beat D:
    - There is a door to the lower floors of the bank, which is locked and protected by a guard. The guard is also acting very dumb, and the player can do a simple persuasion check to convince the guard that they are allowed to go downstairs. If the player succeeds, then the door is opened for them and they are allowed through. This door leads to Zone 4.
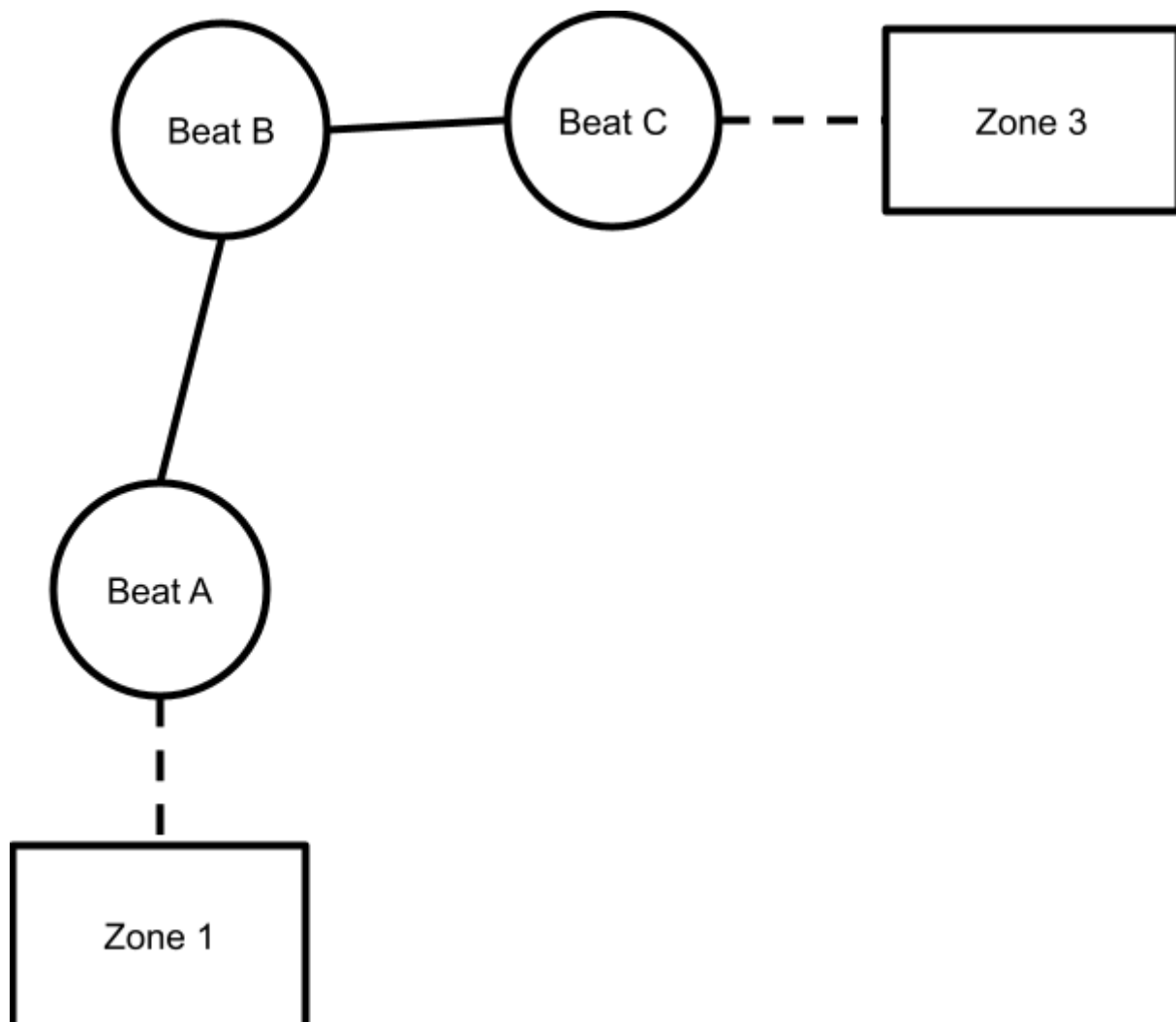
Zone 2 Beat Map:

Zone 2 Napkin Sketch:

Zone 2   ++ = Door   ☺ = friendly npc

↑ Exit to Zone 1

Ⓐ

Benches

Empty Office

Entrance to Zone 3 ↑

Ⓓ ☺

Columns

Ⓒ ☺
↖ otto sits behind main desk

Ⓑ

++

++

Otto's office. Messy, books strown everywhere.

Ledger that is empty save for doodles, showing something happened to Otto's intellect.
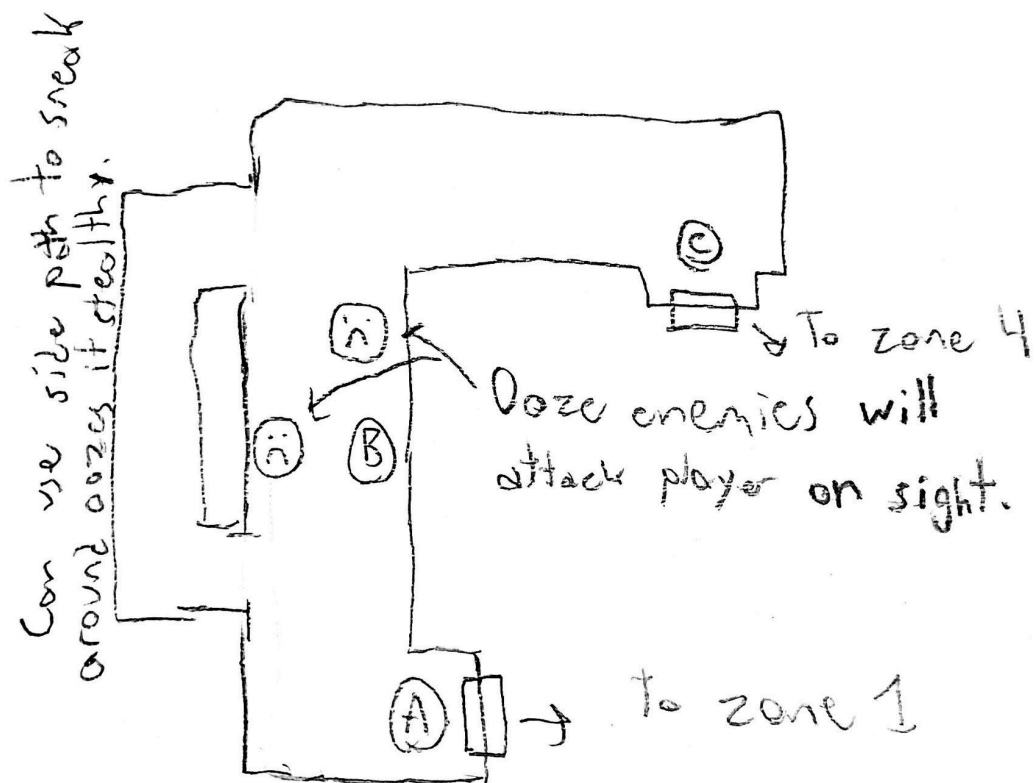
Zone 3: Silverkeep Sewers

- This is a very small zone, representing a portion of the underground sewers of Neverwinter. There are some waterways that trail off towards other parts of the city, but these waterways are blocked by fences.
- Beat A:
    - This manhole entrance will usually be the way in which the player enters the sewers. Going back through this manhole entrance will take the player to Zone 1.
- Beat B:
    - A few oozes block the player's path. The player must fight or sneak past these oozes in order to continue down the sewer.
- Beat C:
    - A broken portion of sewer wall opens directly into the lower floor of the Silverkeep Trust. Moving through this entrance will take the player to Zone 4.
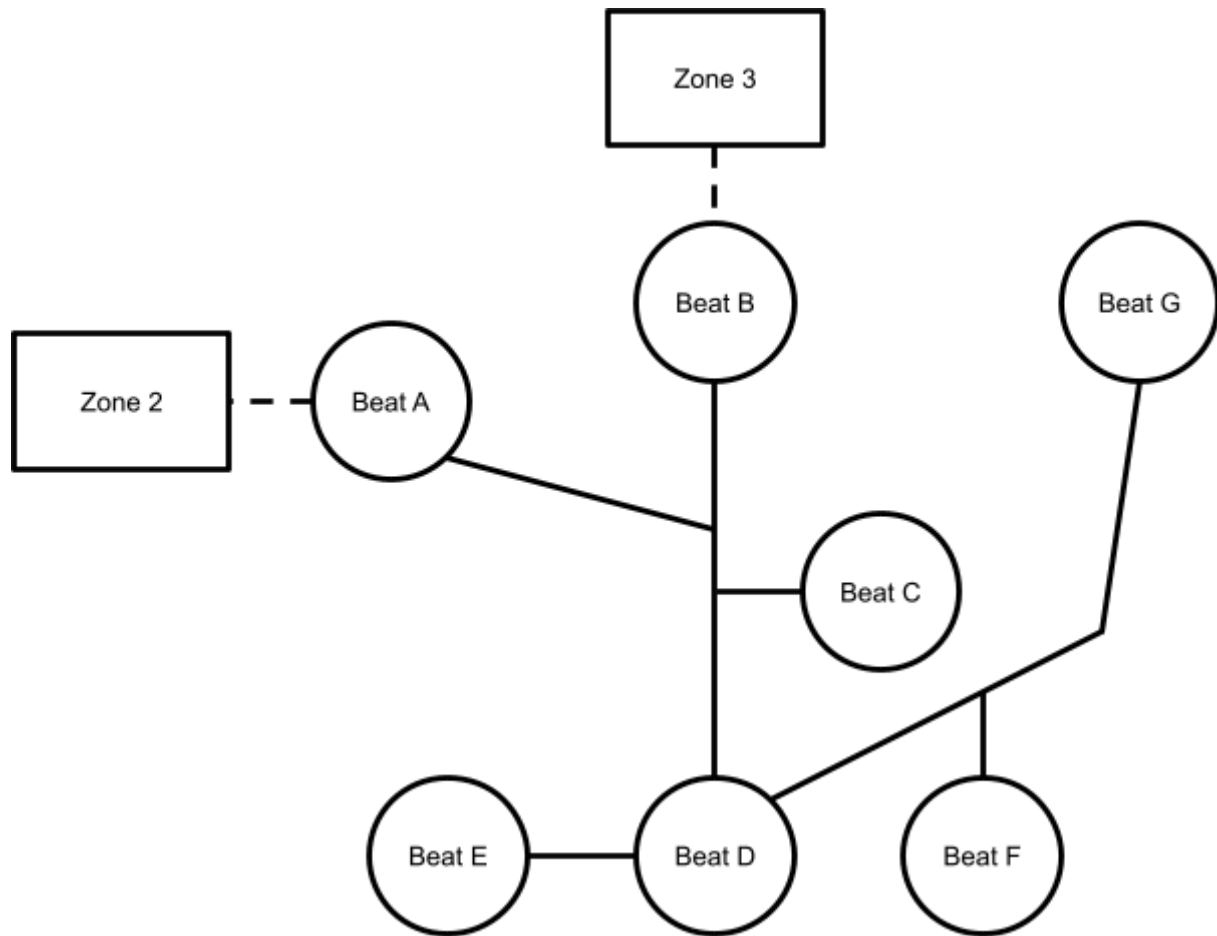
Zone 3 Beat Map:

Zone 3 Napkin Sketch:

Zone 3 | (ⁿ) = Hostile NPC (enemy)

Can use side path to sneak around oozes if stealthy.

©

↳ To zone 4

Ooze enemies will attack player on sight.

B

A → to zone 1

Zone 4: Silverkeep Trust Vaults

- Beat A:
    - A staircase leads up to a door which exits back into the Silverkeep Trust Foyer. Moving through this entrance leads to Zone 2.
- Beat B:
    - A broken portion of the wall opens directly into the Silverkeep Sewers. Players will come to realize that this wall was broken through because of a certain bank robber, who is described in Beat C. Moving through this entrance will take the player to Zone 3.
- Beat C:
    - A halfling rogue by the name of "Robin DeBanks" has accidentally locked himself inside of his own bank vault while attempting to steal from it. He also warns the player that the vaults have been infested by "brain-beasties." He promises to join the player as a companion if the player can free him, either by picking the lock or by finding the key he left in another vault.
- Beat D:
    - The hallway is blocked by a few intellect devourers, who are hostile to the player. The player must fight these intellect devourers in order to continue exploring the vaults.
- Beat E:
    - Some small side vaults have doors that can be bashed down, or pick-locked. These small vaults have some money inside of them, rewarding players for exploration.
- Beat F:
    - One of the locked vaults is larger than the others, and is actually protected by a variety of secret traps that the player may trigger when entering the vault. However, as a rogue, the companion "Robin DeBanks" should be able to find and disable some of these traps. If the player manages to get through the traps, there will be a table with a special magic item atop of it. This magic item is an enchanted spear called "Wit's End," which deals extra damage against enemies that have a high intelligence attribute.
- Beat G:
    - At the very end of the hallway is a large hole in the wall that opens into a crypt. When the player enters this crypt, they will discover that it is actually the lair of a Beholder! The beholder has been directing this operation all along, directing Intellect Devourers to infest the bank in an attempt to take revenge upon the bank that had denied him a loan.
    - After defeating the Beholder, the player is able to go back into the Silverkeep Trust Foyer and converse with Otto Loanmore to end the quest. Otto will have recovered his senses, and will provide the player some payment as reward for defeating the Beholder.

Zone 4 Beat Map:

Zone 4 Napkin Sketch:

Zone 4

☺ = Friendly NPC
Ⓘ = Hostile Intellect Devourer
Ⓑ = Hostile Beholder

C = Chest w/ gold
M = Magic Item
L = Locked chest/door
K = Robin's Key
T = Traps
H = Door

Zone 2

Needs the key at "K" to unlock, or can be lockpicked.

Zone 3

C

Beat B

Beat C

Beat A

L ☺

player will hear banging & text saying "Help me!"

UL L LI

Beat D

B

Beat G

Ⓘ I

K Key to Robin's Vault

Beat E

Ⓘ

Ⓘ

Critical Path

UL L LI Ⓘ

Beat F

Ⓘ

L L

C

T

L L

T

M