

SimCity coming down from the "cloud"

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A large screen shows the video game "Simcity" at the E3 gaming conference on June 5, 2012 in Los Angeles, California

Hugely popular SimCity will be coming down from the cloud, letting fans play the rich world simulation game without needing to be connected to the Internet.

Electronic Art's Maxis studio in Northern California put out word Monday that the eagerly-awaited modification to the game will be part of a free software update.

"SimCity offline is coming," Maxis general manager Patrick Buechner said in a blog post. "I've wanted to say those words for quite some time."

Buechner did not reveal when the update would be released, but did say it was in a final phase of testing with a selected group of hardcore players.

California-based Electronic Arts is eager to please fans of the game and avoid the kind of stumble that marred the SimCity launch in March of last year.

The game was designed to be played online, but Electronic Arts servers hosting SimCity play were overwhelmed after the game was released. The problem was eventually resolved, but players were quick to voice their discontent.

The coming update will feature a new "single-player mode" for people who want to enjoy the game offline, according to Buechner.

A 10-year wait ended on March 5 with the arrival of 'SimCity,' a computer game that challenges players to build thriving cities in the face of conditions such as limited funds and climate change.

The sequel to the city-building computer [game](#) that factors in real-world consequences of energy choices, urban plans, and policy decisions debuted in the United States for \$60 a copy.

Millions of people have played SimCity since the [computer game](#) designed by Will Wright was first released in 1989.

The original title won a broad, devoted following and led to a successful line of "Sims" strategy games in which players manipulate worlds and animated characters in simulations of real life.

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