

Foreword

For a while now, I have read a number of threads on the WitE forums regarding how best to defend Leningrad. I have read a large number of suggestions, some of which seems contradictory. For that reason, I have decided to write a word document detailing how I have prepared the defenses and how the battle for Leningrad progress.

I will write the document turn by turn as the game progress, and then publish it once the Germans reach the outskirts of Leningrad. So even if you read it with a delay, the stuff written was written "real time".

If this can spark some debate on how best to defend the city, then all is well.

Turn one

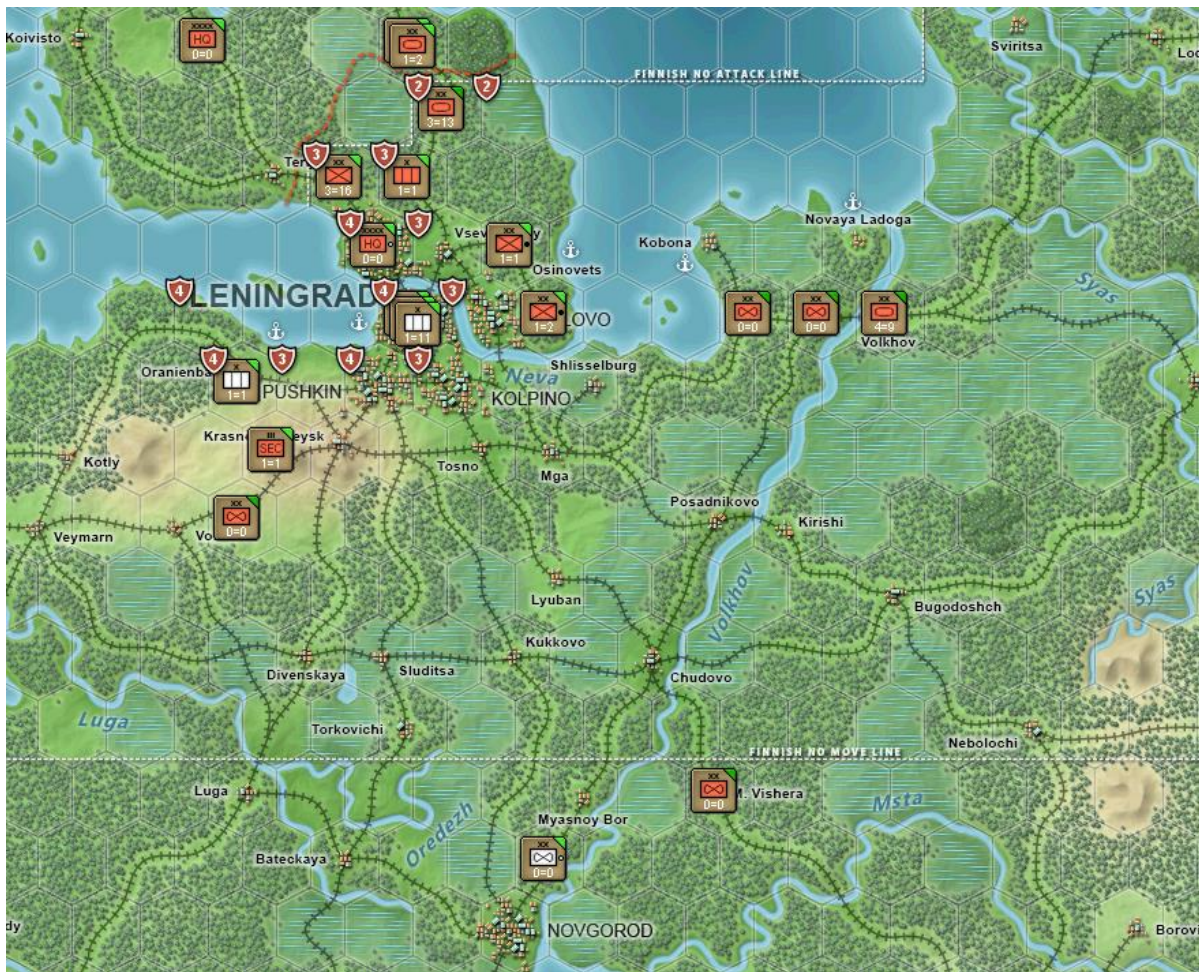
At this point in time, I believe the first and foremost concern in preparing the defenses of Leningrad is to gather as many construction units as possible for building fortifications. The key, I believe, is to look at the sapper support units, which may be deployed to help build fortifications should a leader pass his Admin check.

For this reason, I have railed the 16th Army HQ north assigned it to the Northern Front and assigned Vasilevsky to command it. Come next turn, this army will reach Leningrad and from then on Vasilevsky with his nine Admin rating will have 90% chance of assigning sapper regiments to help in construction. As far as I can tell, the same sapper regiment may even be assigned to several digging jobs each turn, so this should help a lot with the construction.

I have also pulled the three Sapper Regiments in Hango back to the northern Front, and from here they will be pushed down to the 16th Army next turn.

I have railed two Northern Front divisions into Osinovets and the River hex east of Leningrad respectively, and have also evacuated a single Northwestern Front brigade to Leningrad to help digging. Finally, one Security regiment is moving towards Krasnogvardeysk and the units of the 10th Mechanized Corps has been set to “Refit”.

At the end of the turn, Leningrad and surrounding area look like this:



Turn two

As the 16th army under Vasilevsky arrive in Leningrad, I reassign the local diggers to this army and also assign four Sapper Regiments to the army. Those sappers will probably not be able to dig during the German phase of turn three, as they have just been assigned. But as of next turn, they will have a 90% chance of being assigned to digging tasks. Those four Sapper Regiments now have fortification values of six, seven, eleven and eleven.

Digging focus is still on the river crossing and Osinovets. I believe Osinovets is a somewhat overlooked defensive position. Unless the Germans tackle the Leningrad city before the city is encircled, they will have to take Osinovets and there is only one hex they can attack from. This means an effective lessening of their attack CV, meaning the Osinovets is a good place to defend.

The Schlisselburg position is fortified as it needs to be taken before the Germans can mount an effective attack across the Neva river.

The German lines are visible in the far southwest of the image. The German advance is now within 25 hexes, so civilian population should now begin helping with the construction of fortifications within eight hexes of Leningrad. I am not sure however, if that construction help will tend to flow towards the Finnish front for now.

Below is an image of the Leningrad defenses, as I give the turn to Hermann.



Turn Three

With the arrival of many new divisions in the Leningrad area, I have remodeled my 16th Army, so it now contains only units occupied with digging at Leningrad. I have more units than those assigned to the 16th Army at Leningrad. The reason for this is that I do not wish to “overload” the army making assignment of the sapper Regiments harder to achieve.

Those four Sapper Regiments now have construction values of 8, 8, 13 and 13 respectively and I expect them to kick in fully and help digging in the upcoming turn. At the Neva river hex, I have one division with 11 CP and one with 23.

The situation looks like this, as I give the turn to Hermann (with the blue outlining on some divisions showing those belonging to the 16th Army:



Turn four

In Leningrad, my defenders are getting ever better at digging. The four Sapper Regiments assigned to the 16th Army for example, are now at 9, 9, 14 and 14 construction points.

I have not really done any additions to the force assigned to defend Leningrad this turn.

The situation looks like this:



Turn Five

The defenders of Leningrad are apparently not digging. I do not realize why. At the Neva defense hex, I came out of the last turn with a level one fortification. This turn, I am at level one with 10% progress to level two. The troops in the hex have a total of 39 construction Points, did not move last turn and were at "Ready" status. I assume the lack of digging is either due to a rule I am unaware of or otherwise an error in the game programme.

However, I have placed the entire 16th Army into "Refit" mode for one turn, hoping to build up their construction points and fighting ability some more before the Germans arrive.

The four Sapper Regiments are now at 9, 10, 14 and 14 construction points. The gain in construction compared to last turn is negligible.

The situation in Leningrad looks like this:



Turn six

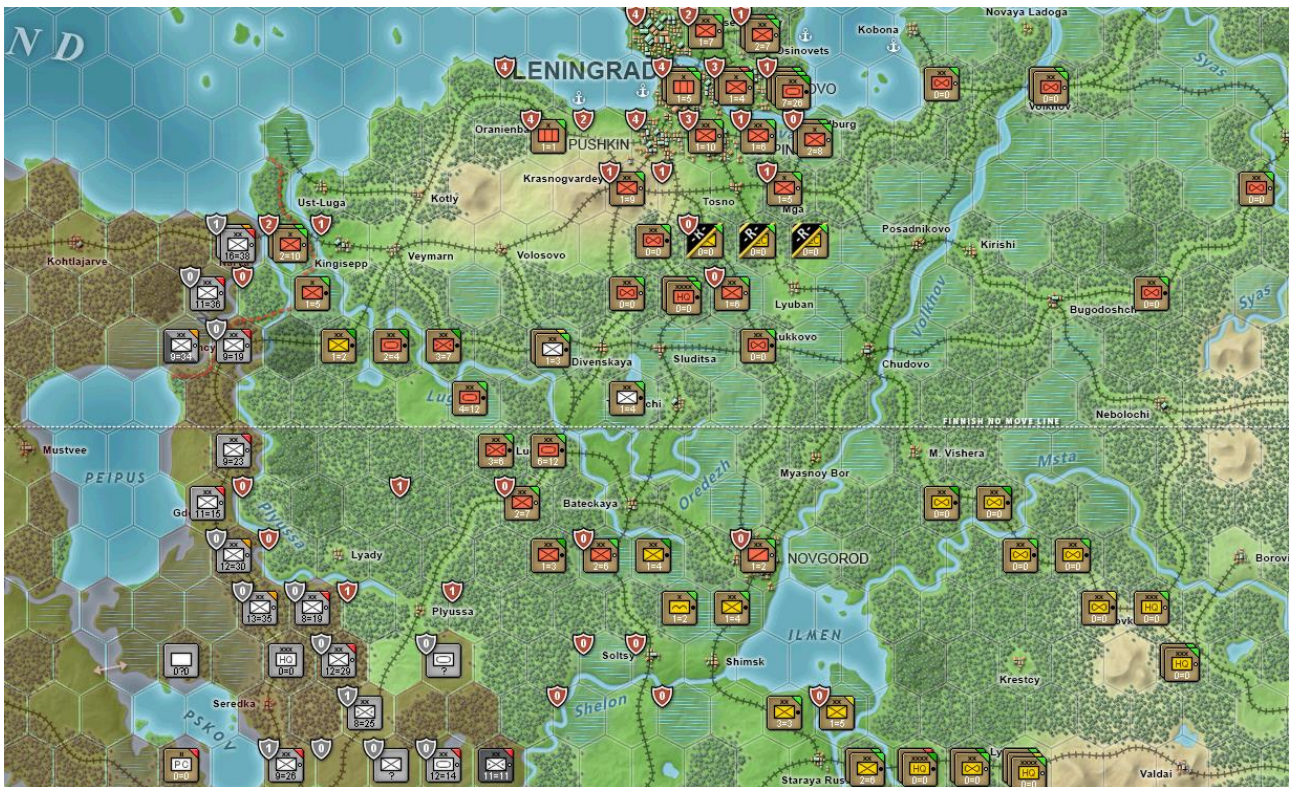
With my 16th Army on “Refit” little building work has been done on my defenses this turn. With the Germans closing in, the army is now back on active (ie digging) duty. The four Sapper Regiments have slowed their construction progress to a crawl, and are now at 10, 10, 15 and 15 construction points. However, with the Germans ever closing in, I hope the civilians of Leningrad will start to provide some real fortification bonuses.

As Pavlovo hex is now at level 3 with 10% progress towards level four, I have constructed a fortified region in the hex, so that it may keep building over the next turns.

At the Neva river hex, I have taken the consequence of some poor digging progress over a few turns. The units there now have more than 50 Construction Points themselves, which is the max that can be given to any defensive works.

I just hope they get started on digging again, or the city will surely be lost.

Leningrad looks like this, as I give the turn to Hermann:



Turn Seven

This turn, I have pulled the defenders of the Karelian isthmus back to Leningrad, in order to bolster the efforts of the 'Leningrad diggers'.

The divisions in the city are slowly gaining strength, so they are getting more and more adept at fortifying the city, but as defensive levels rise, so does the requirements for building each new level of fortifications.

The city looks like this, as I give the turn to Hermann:



Turn 8

As the Germans are now flying recon missions over Leningrad, I have decided to end this small document detailing how I have built up the defenses of Leningrad.

I am very surprised that there were several turns where it seemed my local troops did no fortification work, even if they were supposed to. Once turn eight is published in the AAR, I might well do a post on the support forum regarding this.

Also, it is my hope that this post may spark some debate on how best to build the Leningrad defenses from turn one until the Germans arrive.