To: Michael K, McGovern, Town Manager

From: Mark Russell, Chair

 Fort Williams Advisory Commission (FWAC)

Date: April 29, 2016

**Re: FWP Capital Project Prioritization – FY 2017 – FY 2019**

On behalf of the members of the Fort Williams Advisory Commission, I would like to submit the following projects for future consideration by the Town Council. The FWAC has been working for the past several weeks on developing a proposal for the FY 2017 budget. Admittedly, our primary focus has been on the planning efforts associated with the Amphitheater project for the past two years. It has consumed countless hours of discussion by our members. Over that time period, we have worked with consultants, held workshops and gathered information in an attempt to present a comprehensive plan to both the Town Council and the citizens. We plan to continue that effort in the weeks ahead before submitting a final proposal to the Town Council for their consideration.

We completely understand the need to communicate our long-term capital needs to the Town Council. We started that dialogue within the commission at our meeting on March 17th and finalized the list at our meeting on April 28th. The projects are circulation and safety-oriented. They are listed in order of priority developed via a consensus of the commission. Some of the projects have estimates that are intended as placeholders, since they might require further study and programming to fully develop an accurate estimate.

**FY 2017**

**Misc. Projects TBD by the FWAC (4006) - $15,000**

This appropriation request is both a contingency and an account for minor projects that are not specifically funded. There are over 80 small improvement projects that were proposed in the 2011 update of the Master Plan. The commission is requesting that we be given the opportunity to fund some of those out of this account, since many are minor enhancements related to the Park’s infrastructure. In addition, this account may also provide funding for opportunities that are not known at the time of this submittal.

**Cliff Walk Safety Improvements - $15,000**

Addressing pedestrian safety on sections of the Cliff Walk was noted by several respondents in the survey that was done as part of the Master Plan Update in 2012.It was recommended in the Master Plan that, “alternatives for aesthetically pleasing edge restraints or other safety options should be evaluated”. Projects have been undertaken in the last four fiscal years to install railings on various segments along the Cliff Walk. For FY 2017, it is proposed to continue that program on a segment near the Portland Head Light. The amount budgeted should allow the installation of approximately 80 feet of railing.

**Amphitheatre – Engineering & Design - $440,000**

The Parade Ground bleacher area has been a focus of work undertaken by the commission since 2011 and it has been its primary focus since June of 2014. Last year, the commission recommended, and the Town Council authorized, the demolition of all but the eastern-most section of the bleachers. The proposed Mitchell & Associates design contemplates the installation of a 350 capacity semi-circular amphitheater consisting of grass and granite curbing, some of which may be salvaged from Ship Cove – and creates an inviting gateway to the Children’s Garden. The proposed amphitheater will provide a unique outdoor space for community gatherings, theatrical and musical performances and school graduations. The commission will work with the Town Council to seek public input regarding this proposal and will develop a more detailed proposal to share with the Town Council in the coming months. If approved, we would envision construction starting in the Spring/Summer of 2017.

**FY 2018**

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**Upper Tennis/Basketball Court Improvements - $50,000 - $150,000**

The pavement condition on the basketball portion of the complex is in poor condition. There are several cracks that could pose a safety issue to anyone using the courts. There is also a problem with the perimeter fencing being too close to the playing area of the tennis courts. Though this is desirable to novice players, it poses a challenge for more experience players who need more space on the periphery of the court.

 Initially, it was proposed to reconstruct the basketball court portion. This would involve removing the existing pavement, replacing the base gravel as needed and then re-paving the court. Once re-paved, the court could be converted to a tennis court and a half-court basketball court could be located somewhere else in the Park. It could also accommodate lines for a new and up-coming sport called “Pickelball”. There has also been some discussions that the courts could be widened, which adds considerable cost to the original scope ($50,000). The FWAC would like to await a recommendation from the ad-hoc committee that is studying the needs of both tennis and Pickelball in the community before making a final proposal on the courts.

**Accessibility Improvements to Kitty’s Point - $60,000**

In 2008, illustrative display panels were installed at Kitty’s Point, which is located across from Battery Knoll. Kitty’s Point was named for Katherine Davis, who was a long-time resident and member of the Cape Elizabeth Garden Club. She spent many hours in the Park, having resided on Old Fort Road.

The current access to Kitty’s Point from Battery Knoll and the Picnic Shelter Parking Lot is challenging. Pedestrians must traverse over a steep incline with embedded rocks to access the interpretative display panels. A second phase of the project recommended creating a pedestrian path from Battery Knoll and the Parade Field to safely access the Point. Since that project was never undertaken, the FWAC is now proposing that access to the Point be improved to provide a safer access that meets ADA requirements. The FWAC worked with a consultant back in 2008 to develop a conceptual plan and project estimate. It was also noted in the 2011 Master Plan Update. The amount budgeted has been updated and adjusted for inflation.

**FY 2019**

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**Projects for Consideration for FY 2019 or FY 2020 (Based on Prioritization):**

**Old Main Gate Improvements - $125,000**

The completion of the Children’s Garden in the summer of 2016 will place greater demands on limited parking area in front of the former main entrance. Prior to the concept of the Children’s Garden, this area was identified in the 2011 Master Plan Update (Project 7.1). A conceptual half-circle design was shown depicting additional parking spaces along with an “island” in the middle. The conceptual design adds 6 more parking spaces and improves circulation and safety. The amount budgeted was developed by a consultant at the request of the Director of Public Works.

**Circulation & Parking Improvements Adjacent to the Park Maintenance Buildings - $140,000**

This project was identified as “Priority #8” in the 2011 Master Plan Update. The project would reconfigure circulation and parking areas in the vicinity of the maintenance buildings to provide usable parking and maintain access to the maintenance facilities. The amount budgeted was developed by a consultant at the request of the Director of Public Works.

**Replacement of Perimeter Park Fencing - $35,000**

Much of the wire fabric perimeter fencing along Shore Road has been replaced with a fabricated aluminum fence. It is more aesthetically pleasing and has enhanced the Park’s appearance, especially at the main entrance. It is proposed to continue the replacement from the current terminus just north of the main entrance to the rear of the Surf Road properties. The funds proposed would also replace the two gates at the Chapel Road entrance.