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It's time to shake it up

Open letter to Chamberlain Park Users and Supporters

Thanks to Geoff Senescall, Richard Quince and Reverend Solomona Uitime who have allowed me this opportunity to address Save Chamberlain Park members on my open spaces policy.

I was born down the road from Chamberlain Park and as a youngster – like many kids from the neighbourhood – made pocket money selling golf balls back to wayward hackers, who found the water, went out of bounds or hit the perfect drive then discover their ball nowhere to be seen. My enjoyment of the game was interrupted when my kids came along, but I haven't ever stopped loving the game, a love which I know you all share.

Chamberlain Park – the people's golf course – must stay intact. In fact facilities need to be improved, not butchered. This is not just for us, but for our kids and grandkids. They deserve to have access to the same green spaces that we had growing up. We must protect our parks and green space for future generations. These spaces are the kidneys, lungs and liver of any city.

Our open spaces policy encompasses more than Chamberlain Park. We are committed to implementing a considered, strategic and integrated strategy for stadia and open spaces in Auckland. Ratepayers and users of these facilities deserve clarity, certainty, direction and vision. Unfortunately not a lot of vision or leadership has been on display from our current leaders.

Give me the mandate as Mayor and I make these commitments to you:

1. Not one blade of grass will be carved up from Chamberlain Park, unless by agreement.
2. Speedway will remain at Western Springs until a fit for purpose alternative venue is available.
3. Eden Park will get a major upgrade to bring it in line with international stadia standards. Eden Park will host concerts and events to ensure it is an economically viable location. We can't have Aucklanders being held to ransom by a few neighbourhood nimbies, nor can we fund international stadia for every code.
4. MOTAT, the Zoo, Chamberlain Park, Western Springs and MOTAT 2 – the Sir Keith Park Memorial Aviation Display - must be seen and managed as the People's Precinct and as one large green footprint.

But back to Chamberlain Park and our course. Golf is the highest participation sport in New Zealand – especially in Auckland. That's why I'm hoping the golfing fraternity will get behind my campaign. Join my movement, go to www.jtformayor.co.nz and read about my five foundation platforms for Auckland. You can donate or become one of the team – it's your call

Regards

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