

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE FUTURE

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE...

DA approvals
for house renovations

Home modification
Services



Volunteer
Services



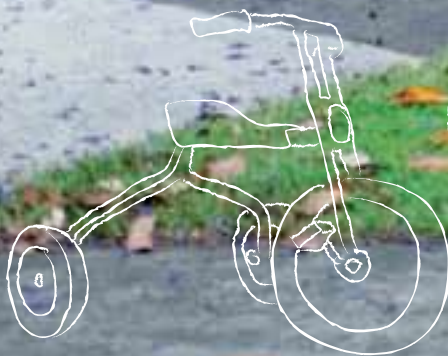
Companion
animals

Microchipping ✓
Registration ✓

Recycling ✓
Green ✓
Rubbish ✓



Library



upkeep of parks,
sporting fields and
recreation areas

Bushcare

Tree Pruning

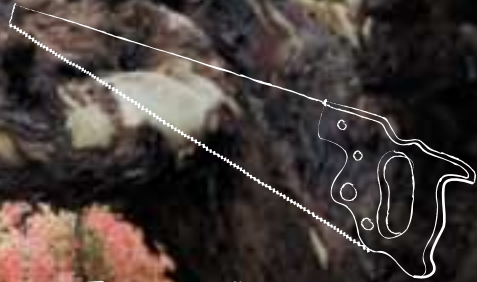
Mulching Service

Waste Collection

Immunisation

Roads and Footpaths

Stormwater construction and maintenance



INTRODUCTION

VISION

Where are we headed?

Ryde will be an innovative city, a leader in environmental, economic and social sustainability.

MISSION

What benefits will we bring to our community?

The City of Ryde will work with the community to provide essential services and to ensure Ryde is a vibrant place to live.

OUR COMMITMENT

How will we achieve this?

The City of Ryde commits to delivering a range of outcomes for the long term healthy and sustainable development of the City of Ryde. We do this through our financial, political and organisational capacity and through effective engagement with our community and key partners.

VALUES

What underpins our commitment?

Professionalism

We deliver effective services to the community with consistent decision making

Teamwork

We work together with respect and support

Leadership

We promote clear direction and encouragement

Ethics

We are honest, responsible and accountable for our actions

Pride

We have satisfaction in our work

Recognition

We acknowledge our achievements.

About this report

We report to our community and stakeholders in a number of ways.

This Annual Report focuses on the financial and operational performance of the City of Ryde in 2007/2008, documenting our performance against the Management Plan 2007–2010 and the 2007/2008 Budget.

The report includes a snapshot of our performance (both highlights and challenges) and an overview of our outlook for the future, including our plans to ensure the sustainability of our organisation, our City and the community we serve.



Our State of Environment Report (SOE) is issued alongside the Annual Report and describes our plans and performance in managing the environmental dimension of our activities.


Sustainability Report at the City of Ryde

The City of Ryde is improving its approach to sustainability reporting. This 2007/2008 report demonstrates that we are coming closer to achieving full integration of sustainability considerations in our strategies and service delivery.

Core elements of sustainability reporting include the corporate policy, strategy and objectives to achieve and maintain sustainable development, and the presentation of data and information to reflect current performance against specific environmental, economic, social and governance targets.

Our report draws on the criteria of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Guidelines and includes a quadruple bottom line approach to social, economic, environmental and governance outcomes. While Council is not yet fully compliant with the GRI, our sustainability reporting has been progressively integrated into our Management Plan and Annual Report.

To help readers, we have used the following symbols to highlight areas of this Annual Report where further information is available in the State of Environment Report (SOE) or on our website www.ryde.nsw.gov.au  

Our community and stakeholders can support the environment by choosing to receive the City of Ryde's corporate communications in electronic form. 

Audience for this report

This report is intended to provide important information to a broad range of stakeholders including City of Ryde residents and ratepayers, local businesses, non-government organisations, our partners and other government departments and agencies. It also provides our staff with information on how well we have performed over the year, how their efforts have contributed to the achieving the vision and what to expect in the coming year.

Acknowledgement

The City of Ryde acknowledges the Wallumedegal clan of the Darug people as the traditional custodians of this land.

INTRODUCTION

Changing City

A quick glance around the City of Ryde easily tells you that this is a well-balanced community – one that is thriving, hard-working and progressive.

Our landscapes and skyline are going through a subtle transformation as improvements and construction keep pace with the needs of our growing population, both residential and commercial.

Behind these physical changes, we are also changing socially and economically, and at the City of Ryde, as the level of government that most affects people's lives on a daily basis, we're constantly looking at how we can meet the needs of our diverse population, and how we can do that in an inclusive, sustainable, forward-thinking way.





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INTRODUCTION

Overview of City Vision Strategic Objectives

The principles that guide the City of Ryde as it delivers its services and programs for the community are identified through the strategic outcomes outlined in City Vision 2026: The Vision for the City of Ryde. These strategic outcomes have been grouped into the four key pillars that equate to quadruple bottom line reporting – social, environment, assets/economic and governance reporting.

The commitments to these four key pillars are:

People

The City of Ryde is committed to maintaining a socially sustainable City through community participation in our products and services

Assets/Economic

The City of Ryde is committed to the delivery and maintenance of high quality public infrastructure and facilities

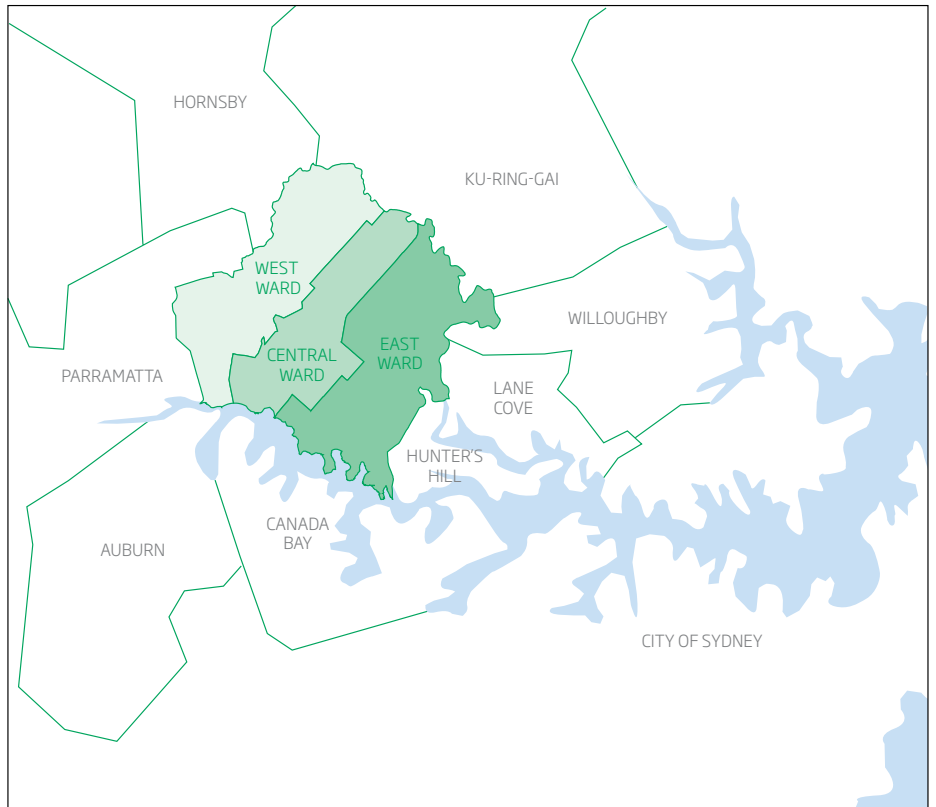
Environment

The City of Ryde is committed to maintaining an ecologically sustainable City through the management of our City's natural and physical environment.

Governance

The City of Ryde is committed to effective decision making processes that ensure transparency and involvement of its community.

Council's performance against these strategic outcomes is documented in more detail in Section 5 Our Performance.



The City of Ryde...

There are sixteen suburbs within the City of Ryde, with a mix of residential living and successful business, retail and educational centres. There is also a diverse collection of natural landscapes, beautiful parks, scenic waterways and areas of historical significance.

Where is the City of Ryde?

The City of Ryde is located 12 kilometres north west of central Sydney, set in scenic surrounds between the Parramatta and Lane Cove Rivers.

It is well connected to other parts of metropolitan Sydney via:

- major road systems, including Epping Road, M2, Lane Cove Tunnel (East West), Lane Cove Road and Ryde Road (North South) and Victoria Road (East West)

- the rail system, with the existing stations at Eastwood, Denistone, West Ryde and Meadowbank to be complemented by the three new stations at Macquarie University, Macquarie Park and North Ryde on the Chatswood to Epping rail link (due to open in 2009)
- The ferry service, with ferry wharves located at Meadowbank and Kissing Point providing easy access to the City CBD and connections to Parramatta.

Population Forecasts are now available on the City of Ryde website. This internet-based application provides forecast information at a local level. For more information go to www.ryde.nsw.gov.au

Who lives in the City of Ryde?

- 101,994 residents (2006 Census estimate), projected to rise to 108,578 by 2018
- 25–54 years make up the majority (45%) of the population
- Ageing population with increase of residents aged 55 years and older since the 2001 Census
- 37.6% of residents born overseas
- 42% speaking another language. The most commonly spoken language in 2006 was Cantonese followed by Mandarin, Italian, Korean and Armenian.

Working and learning in the City of Ryde

- Macquarie Park Corridor
- Macquarie University
- Ryde and Meadowbank Colleges of TAFE
- The City of Ryde operates five public libraries, including a home library lending service
- Twenty-four primary schools
- Five high schools
- Ryde and Macquarie Hospitals.

Doing business in the City of Ryde

The City of Ryde is part of an ever changing, dynamic global market place. Our City's support for economic development contributes significantly to the State's 'Global Economic Corridor' which is identified in the NSW Metropolitan Strategy.

Macquarie Park is the most important employment centre in the City of Ryde. Often called 'Australia's Silicon Valley', it is the location for many of Australia's 'top 100' companies in the pharmaceutical, health and IT&T sectors, as well as leading research institutions. This includes Macquarie University, CSIRO and the head offices for Optus, Siemens, Foxtel, Johnson & Johnson and Canon. The Macquarie Shopping Centre, one of the leading retail centres in Sydney, is also located in Macquarie Park.

Some interesting facts about the Ryde Local Government Area

	Ryde	Sydney SD	Australia
Area	40.5 km ²	12,142.9 km ² (as of 2007)	7,686,850 km ²
Perimeter	39.3km	Not available	27, 945 km
Length of road network	389km	53,717 km (as of 2000) ^	685,658 km (as of 2000) *
Population density	2,536 pp per km ²	357.1 pp per km ² (as of 2007)	2.6 pp per km ² (as of June 2005)
Males #	49,260 (48.3%)	2,028,729 (49.3%)	9,799,252 (49.4%)
Females #	52,734 (51.7%)	2,090,461 (50.7%)	10,056,036 (50.6%)
Indigenous population	267 (0.3%)	43,518 (1.1%)	455,031 (2.3%)
Median age	37	35	37
Total families	24,983	1,063,384	5,219,165
Median weekly individual income	\$528	\$518	\$466
Median weekly family income	\$1,486	\$1,350	\$1,171
Average household size	2.5	2.7	2.6

Based on place of usual residence

Estimated to be approximately 102,000 in total

^ urban sealed road network

* includes rural, remote and urban road network

As a specialised centre, Macquarie Park provides:

- around 66,000 jobs/students places, making it the third largest concentration of jobs/student places in NSW after Sydney CBD and North Sydney with
- 1,200,000m² of employment floor space.

When fully developed Macquarie Park will have close to 3,000,000m² of commercial floor space, with the potential for 160,000 jobs/student places by the year 2031.

Our open spaces

The City of Ryde caters for all kinds of active and passive recreation.

Within our City there are 355 hectares of local open space, of which 205 hectares is natural bushland. Lane Cove National Park is one of Sydney's favourite places for picnics, barbecues and bushwalks. In addition, there are 207 parks and reserves with numerous scenic bike paths and walkways.

Our many sporting facilities cater to those with interests in golf, soccer, rugby, cricket, tennis, squash, fitness, walking and swimming. The Ryde Aquatic Leisure Centre, constructed as a venue for the Olympic water polo events and a training facility for the Paralympic Games, is a world class swimming and sporting facility enjoyed by families and sporting enthusiasts alike.



A Message from the Mayor

It is my pleasure to present the City of Ryde 2007/2008 Annual Report. This document sets out in detail our financial, social and environment initiatives. It highlights our successes and challenges and our long term vision for building a better future for our community.

Partnering for the future

The history of Ryde and the evolution of the 16 suburbs that make up our City, mirror in many ways, the emergence of our national identity. We can reflect with some pride, that from earliest settlement days, this area has offered opportunity, hope and a sense of belonging to all who come here.

From the first pioneering families who farmed the land, to the thousands of migrant families from all corners of the globe who have since settled here; from the captains of industry plying their trades along the Parramatta River, to the national and international corporate giants who now help to drive our economy from the Macquarie Park business precinct; from these building blocks, our community has grown, prospered and matured.

All through this growth, this Council has worked in partnership with our ever evolving community, to make it stronger, more vibrant and proudly local.

Our population of around 102,000 is culturally diverse and growing. Over one third of our residents were born overseas and almost half speak another language, the most common being Cantonese, followed by Mandarin, Italian, Korean and Armenian.

Feeling 'like a local' is particularly important to this diverse population who have embraced and added to in equal portion, the unique make up of our City through commerce, culture and cuisine.

To understand the community's views and needs, communicating with you is more important than ever. For instance, our bi-annual Resident Satisfaction Survey tells us how highly valued our parks and expansive library network is to the whole community. In particular, we know how well patronised and appreciated our large foreign language collection is.

The introduction of the Ryde City View – a new fortnightly newsletter (delivered either in hard copy or electronically) works in reverse. It helps us inform the community what we do on their behalf, from public works such as footpath and park upgrades, to services like immunisation clinics and greenwaste, what's happening at the Ryde Aquatic Leisure Centre, and other community events. Feedback has been very positive with many residents expressing their surprise at the range of services provided by this Council.

Our community's support of Council's environmental sustainability programs is particularly heartening. Residents and businesses have embraced the ideas of recycling and reuse. Environmental information events are very well patronised and our schools education programs are a fertile ground of hope for the future from our youngest citizens.

Driving business forward

The City of Ryde is home to major education institutions such as Macquarie University, as well as to the Macquarie Park Corridor, the third largest CBD in NSW and the sixth largest in Australia. As this specialised business centre accelerates, understanding this community's needs and future impacts has been enhanced by the development by Council of an Economic Development Strategy, and the City of Ryde Business and Technology Expo, an initiative by Council which provides a platform for both small and large business operators to network and learn.

Opening next year this growing area will be serviced by three new railway stations – Macquarie University, Macquarie Park and North Ryde on the Chatswood to Epping rail link. Also on track is a state of the art private teaching hospital – the New Macquarie University Private Hospital due to open in 2009.

We're on track

Aerial views of the City of Ryde show a 40.5 square kilometre landmass, patterned with residential and corporate neighbourhoods, transport networks and numerous educational facilities. Fringed with blue waterways and natural bushland, crisscrossed with green corridors of open spaces, bike trails and walking tracks and parks – some 207 in total – our mix is both unique and challenging.

The 'Parks on Track for People' strategy is providing residents young and old with a wide range of quality recreation and leisure opportunities – from playgrounds to quiet corners of reflection such as the new Cenotaph in Ryde Park, which is currently undergoing a \$6 million upgrade. Our Street and Boulevard Tree Planting Program alone has seen over 1,000 trees planted throughout the City.

Local residents do love their parks and this was clearly demonstrated when hundreds turned up to celebrate the official opening of the Ryde Wharf Reserve. This beautiful new park is part of the award winning Ryde Riverwalk – a foreshore improvement project now completed and designed to return the River to the community. The Riverwalk curves along the Parramatta River between Gladesville and Melrose Park linking several foreshore parklands to form an eight kilometre long regional commuter link, cycling, walking and recreational facility. It also showcases a wealth of memorable landmarks along the River, reflecting the distinctive character of the landscape and celebrating our local history.

Environment focus

The City of Ryde is a signatory to a number of local and international environment and sustainability programs. A reduction of 53.4% of mains water consumption through more efficient equipment and water recycling in our parks, community buildings and the award winning Ryde Aquatic Leisure Centre has delivered a 4-star rating in Sydney Water's 'Every Drop Counts' Business Program. This places the City of Ryde fourth out of 46 in the local government sector and nineteenth overall out of 420 businesses across all sectors.

Recognising the environmental impact of motor vehicle traffic, the City is committed to implementing its integrated transport strategy. Conversion of our passenger vehicle fleet to a smaller and/or hybrid vehicle fleet is progressing well with over 50% already done.

Of benefit to both the community and the environment is the introduction of the Top Ryder – a free community bus and a product of a good public private partnership with the developers of the Top Ryde City shopping centre.

Facing the future together

To be successful, councils must think strategically and engage the community in identifying future directions and priorities. The State Government's Sub-Regional Metro Strategy already requires us to plan ahead for an anticipated 12,000 new dwellings in our City. This will equate to approximately 30,000 new residents. As our population increases we will be called upon to provide not only essential infrastructure but also adequate community services. To do this we will need the vision, strong workable partnerships and the community's support to take us forward.

In 2009, we will embark on the development of the Ryde 2030 Community Strategic Plan – a project that will help us forge new relationships, strengthen existing partnerships, and guide us in pulling together the resources of our community as we work towards a collective vision.

**Clr Vic Tagg
Mayor**



General Manager's Review

Introduction

In 2007/2008 the City of Ryde has shown leadership and stability in meeting the many challenges of our diverse community and growing city. We have demonstrated our ability to plan, implement and work hard to achieve our stated goals as outlined in the Management Plan and Budget.

To achieve this we have financial stability, a sound governance framework, and a motivated and skilled workforce to provide quality services to our community.

Working in partnership towards well defined goals, this 'year-in-review' snapshot sets out the City of Ryde's financial and operational undertakings. It highlights our achievements, our challenges, even our disappointments, as well as our aspirations on behalf of the community of the City of Ryde.

In commending this 2007/2008 Annual Report to you I welcome your feedback on our performance.

Our mission statement – to work with the community to provide essential services and to ensure the City of Ryde is a vibrant place to live – is the underlying principle to the content of our Management Plan and Budget upon which this Annual Report is based. These are Council's primary strategic documents used to communicate both within Council and to the broader community the activities which we will focus on in the coming four years. The Management Plan outlines the decision-making framework, key directions and supporting principles which are at the heart of what we do. The yearly Budget documents the financial and non-financial resources required to implement the key directions identified in the Management Plan.

Anyone reading through this document will quickly see this is a community driven organisation and that the decisions we make and the services we provide directly touch people's lives. Like no other arm of government, local councils deal with local issues and local people. Increasingly it falls to Council to provide leadership and cutting edge technology and practices to an increasingly sophisticated business audience.

That is why we have been working hard in recent years to set down visionary documents to ensure that we are instep or indeed ahead of community expectations. These include:

- Long Term Year Financial Strategy (20 year projections)
- Asset Management Strategy (for existing and new infrastructure)
- Environment Strategy (Greenhouse Gas Reduction, Energy Saving, Water Saving, Integrated Transport & Land Use, Sustainable Procurement)
- Social Planning Framework (Social Justice Charter, Access & Equity)
- Integrated Planning Framework (affecting our governance framework)
- Fraud & Corruption Prevention Policy
- Internal Audit Plan (internal controls, risk assessment and compliance with laws)
- Information & Technology Strategy
- Parks on Track for People 2025.

To be successful you have to think strategically and engage the community in defining future directions and priorities. These strategies are designed to provide leadership and direction.

Every decision or action taken by this Council is based on the sustainability criteria of quadruple bottom line – that is, how it relates to our People, our Assets, our Governance, and our Environment.

Our Community, Our People

Based on the State Government's Metropolitan Strategy, it is estimated that our population will grow by 20,000 people by 2030 and we are preparing for this now. We need both vision and good judgement to take the community forward with us to face the challenges of the future in partnership. Better communications, and more public consultation are delivering us a much clearer understanding of what our community wants and thinks. And while consensus cannot always be achieved, Council's role is to weigh up the options and ensure that ratepayers' money is spent in the most effective way.

We have a committed and skilled workforce of around 715 people, headed by an expert

Executive Team split into four groups: Community Life, Public Works, Environment & Planning and Corporate Services.

An internal review has led to the development of a Workforce Plan that will focus on where our future workforce needs and priorities will be. To this end we continue to invest in high levels of skills training and development as well as the necessary technology to complement these skills. Our staff attended a variety of awareness sessions or learning and development courses in the past year.

Improved internal business systems and new technology has also led to better customer service. For example the installation of RFID (radio frequency identification) and self check systems throughout our library network has maintained its number one reputation.

Delivering from a Strong Financial Position

To have the confidence and capacity to plan and achieve, a Council needs financial stability. 2007/2008 was a sound year for the City of Ryde and our financial position continued to consolidate with an independently audited 5-Star Fiscal Rating and excellent returns on investments.

With assets of over \$2.4 billion, an annual turnover of over \$100 million, investments totalling about \$100 million, and low debt of \$6 million, the City of Ryde has a solid financial platform and has made impressive headway in implementing an extensive \$170 million 4-year Capital Works Program – our largest ever.

The Capital Works Program has earmarked some 200 projects focusing on infrastructure upgrades of roads, footpaths, parks, drainage, stormwater and community buildings. In 2007/2008, \$30 million of new and replacement infrastructure was delivered, including:

- 7 kilometres of footpath paving laid in 27 locations
- public domain upgrades in four town centres (West Ryde, Ryde, Fiveways and Putney)
- 4 kilometres of cycleways
- major park upgrades including a new cenotaph in Ryde Park and the remediation and return to public use of two sites at the Field of Mars and the Parramatta River foreshore parkland to be named the Ryde Riverside Reserve.

This outcome is almost double the amount of capital works undertaken four years ago and despite prolonged wet weather the percentage of completed programs reported is impressive: Access 91%, Building 100%, Catchment 89%, Parks 75%. Operating services and maintenance were completed within 1% of the budgeted allocation.

This solid financial platform also allows us to continue our program of community events and services. These include our premier events - the Granny Smith and Cinema in the Park Festivals, our award winning Child Immunisation Service, a Home Modification and Maintenance Service for the elderly, comprehensive school holiday activity programs and a Learn to Swim Program (114 lessons and 12,000 enrolments every week) at our multi-award winning Ryde Aquatic Leisure Centre. Our community surveys tell us how valued and highly prized these services are.

Environments – both built and natural

Cutting development application approval times to an average of six weeks may not grab the headlines, but local residents who submit some 70% of all DAs, developers and other tiers of government have recognised the benefit of this City of Ryde achievement. Other Councils, as well as State and Federal Government agencies are queuing up to see how the new system can work for them. In total, Council determined 1,218 DAs totalling over \$3 billion worth of development.

We are signatories to a number of local and international environment and sustainability programs. These include Sydney Water's 'Every Drop Counts' Business Program and the ICLEI Cities for Climate Protection (CCP) Program. Council has developed a Greenhouse Gas Reduction Action Plan. One of the key actions from this plan in 2007/2008 was the production of an educational DVD to help the community understand how they can become involved in working towards these environmental programs.

Recognising the environmental impact of motor vehicle traffic, the City is committed to implement its Integrated Transport Strategy. Part of this strategy was the introduction of the Top Ryder bus service.

Awards

In the year in review, the City of Ryde has received several industry awards including two Property Institute of Australia NSW Division Excellence Awards – for the Top Ryde Shopping Centre Development Approval Framework (Excellence in Planning – Urban Design & Ideas), and an Excellence in Property Award for the Brush Farm House Restoration project.

The Ryde Integrated Transport & Land Use Strategy was awarded Sustainable Design, Planning & Building in the Local Government Excellence in the Environment Awards. And our previous Annual Report received a Bronze Award in the Australasian Reporting Awards.

Shaping a Vision of the Future

A project to develop a 20-year vision for our City – the Ryde 2030 Community Strategic Plan – is underway. This undertaking will translate the future aspirations and hopes of our community into an effective strategy that will guide Council's actions. Part of this project is the 'Your City Your Voice' initiative that provides extensive community consultation in creating this shared vision of our future. There will be many opportunities to contribute ideas and views over the coming 12 months as we commence this project.

I would like to acknowledge the Mayor and all Councillors for their leadership, and thank our senior managers and hard working staff for their efforts during the year. Meeting the demands of a growing city, the needs of our community and stakeholders and planning for the future is an ongoing challenge. I look forward to working in partnership with you all in the coming year.

Michael Whittaker
General Manager