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Shelton Haynes: Building a Resilient and Sustainable Future for Roosevelt Island

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In the face of climate challenges and with a commitment to environmental sustainability, Shelton J. Haynes, President and CEO of the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (RIOC), is spearheading transformative projects that ensure a resilient and sustainable future for Roosevelt Island.

Superstorm Sandy in 2012 was a stark reminder of the devastating impact of climate change. In response, Haynes and his team undertook the Southpoint Park Shoreline Restoration Project, an \$11 million initiative to expand and improve the waterfront promenades within Southpoint Park. This visionary project not only enhanced the island's lookout points with pathways and native vegetation but also strengthened the shoreline to protect against future storm damage.

Shelton Haynes Is Investing In The Community

As a result of these forward-thinking mitigation efforts, Southpoint Park has been transformed into a holistic waterfront oasis. Visitors and residents can now enjoy a safer and more sustainable park that offers stunning views of the surrounding area while effectively safeguarding the island against the impacts of extreme weather.

Haynes [continues to invest in projects](#) prioritizing sustainability and environmental consciousness. The Lighthouse Park Reconstruction/Expansion, a \$10 million capital improvement, will repurpose parking lots into active park spaces. This transformation will make the park usable and align with modern environmental standards. The bike lane project on the East promenade of Roosevelt Island will promote sustainable transportation options and improve the quality of life for island residents.

Holistic Approach To Sustainability

Beyond the physical infrastructure, Haynes has embraced a holistic approach to sustainability. As part of the Tram Elevator Project, an all-glass elevator with improved functionality and energy efficiency has been installed. This upgrade enhances passenger visibility and reduces energy consumption, aligning with Haynes' vision of a greener and more sustainable future for Roosevelt Island.

In collaboration with New York Gov. Kathy Hochul, Haynes, and RIOC are proactively working to build resilience against climate threats. Gov. Hochul commended the efforts of [Haynes and his team](#), acknowledging the importance of strengthening resiliency to safeguard communities against

the impacts of climate change.

Haynes also seeks to create a seamless transportation network for Roosevelt Island as part of his vision for a sustainable future. The Roadway and Paved Surfaces Rehabilitation project is set to improve signage and repave all streets on the island, ensuring a smooth and safe traffic flow. As technology advances and modality options expand, these infrastructure enhancements will cater to the growing demands of the island's residents and visitors.

Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation Youth Center

Furthermore, Haynes is driven by public works that directly and positively impact the Roosevelt Island community. He emphasizes the Roosevelt Island Youth Center (RIYC), where youth can engage in various recreational and educational programs. The RIYC's upcoming School Age Child Care (SACC) license will allow RIOC to expand its services and seek additional funding, further enriching the lives of the island's young residents.

Haynes and his team have also streamlined the grant funding process for community-focused projects through the Roosevelt Island Public Purpose Fund. This fund, administered in partnership with The New York Community Trust, supports nonprofits working to benefit Roosevelt Island residents and enhance their quality of life. The grants promote projects ranging from educational opportunities for older adults to orchestral concerts, fostering a vibrant and connected community.

Shelton Haynes' commitment to building a resilient and sustainable future for Roosevelt Island is evident in the transformative projects undertaken during his tenure. From strengthening shorelines to promoting green initiatives and supporting youth development, [Haynes' vision and leadership](#) pave the way for a thriving and sustainable community on Roosevelt Island. As the island continues to evolve and grow, Haynes' legacy of environmental stewardship and community empowerment will remain an enduring testament to the island's bright future.

Image via RIOC.com

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