



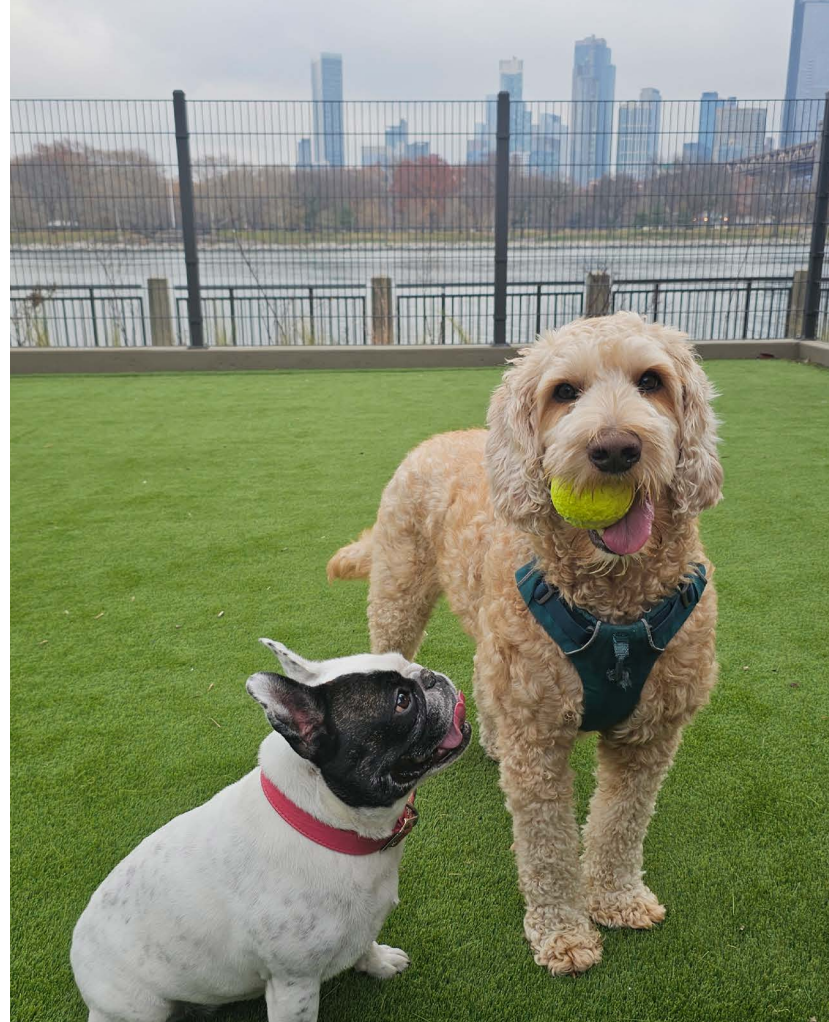
**Roosevelt Island
Operating Corporation**

RIOC **News**

Volume 9, Issue 1: January 2026

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Letter from the President & CEO

Letter from the President & CEO

Dear Roosevelt Islanders:

I'd like to wish everyone a very happy new year! 2026 is already off to a fast start following an impactful 2025. In this newsletter, we'll take a look back at some of the gains made by the RIOC team during the past year, from our community events and initiatives to operational achievements, infrastructure upgrades, safety enhancements, and more. 2025 saw the opening of a brand-new park, the first phase of our bus fleet modernization, the opening of our "RI 50" exhibit, the launch of our Cherry Blossom "Petal Protector" program, not to mention the signing of a 10-year extension of the island's Master Lease—the first such extension in the island's history. It was also another banner year for island safety, with comparatively few index crimes reported for the

entire year.

As we take stock of 2025, it's also important to look ahead to 2026, which is shaping up to be another important year for Roosevelt Island. The Master Lease extension comes with a comprehensive community engagement and planning study, which should kick off in early spring to help chart the course for the island's future. RIOC is already working closely with the Hochul and Mamdani administrations to map out that engagement process, so keep an eye out for future communications on how you can get involved.

There are other goals and action items we'd like to explore in 2026, including launching a new RIOC website, further additional bus upgrades, making necessary infrastructure improvements including finishing

the repair work to Eleanor's Pier, negotiating lease extensions with the island's buildings, improving the spotty Red Bus tracking in the Transit app, and working with the community to explore ways to improve the public realm, just to name a few. I'm also eager to hear your thoughts, so if you have ideas or suggestions, please email us at info@rioc.ny.gov.

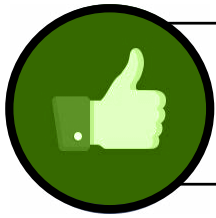
There's much to do this coming year, and I'm looking forward to working alongside our residents, partners, and colleagues to continue building a stronger, more vibrant Roosevelt Island.

Wishing you a happy, healthy, and productive year ahead.



RIOC President & CEO B.J. Jones and New York Governor Kathy Hochul at the 2026 State of the State Address.

Employee Spotlight



Employee Spotlight



Luis Ruiz

Lead Groundsman

Can you tell us a bit about your background?

My name is Luis Ruiz. I graduated from New Rochelle High School and began my career working in the horticultural industry at Almstead Tree and Shrub Care, where I learned heavy machine operation, tree pruning, tree climbing, and pesticidal work for turf, shrubs and trees.

What brought you to Roosevelt Island?

I had previously visited Roosevelt Island and admired the grounds. When I saw an opening to work on the grounds team, the position stood out as both interesting and unique.

What does a typical day look like for you?

A typical day begins with the completing morning routines such

as garbage collection and sanitizing comfort stations. After that, we focus on horticultural tasks including mowing, weeding, tree trimming, and overall landscape maintenance to keep the island well maintained.

What challenges do you face in your role?

One of the biggest challenges is

working efficiently while navigating heavy tourist traffic.

And finally, what's your favorite part about working on Roosevelt Island?

My favorite part of working on the island is mowing the grass while enjoying views of the New York City skyline.



ROOSEVELT ISLAND TREE-CYCLING

The Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation is
excited to offer Tree-Cycling to the community!

The Grounds and Horticulture team will chip all holidays trees provided and
turn them into mulch to be used to nourish the island's trees and plants.

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 26, 2025 —
SATURDAY, JANUARY 31, 2026**

**Please note that residents should remove all stands, tinsel,
lights, ornaments, and bags before disposing of trees.**

How to participate:

**1. Residents whose buildings are
participating in the program can
drop their trees at the building's
designated drop point:**

- 425 Main Street
- 480 Main Street
- 551 Main Street
- 555 Main Street
- 575 Main Street
- 595-625 Main Street

**2. Residents may drop off
their tree to the designated
area underneath the helix
on the East side.**



**Roosevelt Island
Operating Corporation**

Updates from RIOC

Update on Steam Plant Demolition

NYC Housing & Preservation Development (HPD) have been tasked with demolishing the old steam plant per orders from the city Department of Buildings. HPD is responsible for both handling the work and answering community feedback about the work through the email RIDemolition@hpd.nyc.gov. If you have any questions or concerns about this project, make sure to email them to HPD.

RIOC Public Purpose Fund Application Period Now Open

The Roosevelt Island Public Purpose Fund (The Fund) in The New York Community Trust is now accepting proposals from Roosevelt Island nonprofits that provide direct services or benefits to Roosevelt Island residents. The Fund expects to award \$260,000 through one-year grants of up to \$30,000 to nonprofits currently operating regular, ongoing programming on Roosevelt Island. Grant funds will support programs or projects that provide important services—including, but not limited to, educational opportunity, artistic and cultural enrichment, improved health, or a better environment—for the Roosevelt Island community.

A Look Back at 2025

RIOC had a busy 2025! From hosting multiple community events and purchasing new Red Buses, to completing daily maintenance repairs and grounds upkeep, installing 11 life-ring stations, protecting the island's cherry blossoms, and welcoming a new President and CEO, B.J. Jones, the year was marked by meaningful progress across the island. Take a short look back at some of the RIOC team's work in 2025, and we look forward to continuing to serve you in 2026! See the full recap on our [Instagram](#) page.

Lights On Afterschool

Celebration of afterschool programs and their important role in the lives of children, families and communities.

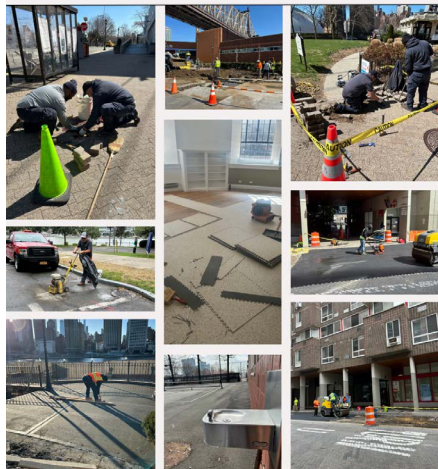
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Repairs Around the Island

The RIOC Maintenance team has made so many repairs around the Island: the Tramway Plaza, Good Shepherd Chapel, Blackwell Playground, East Promenade, AVAC line, sidewalks, Z-bricks, and more!

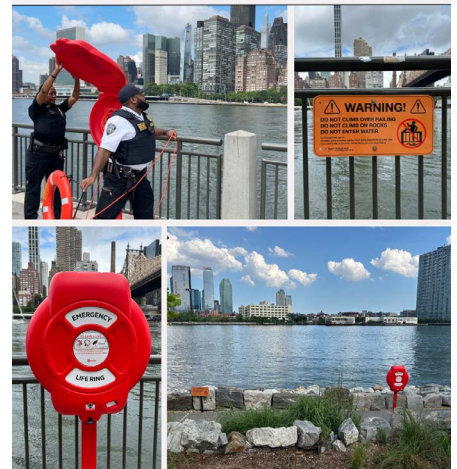
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Life Ring Stations

RIOC installed life ring stations at 11 strategic locations around the Roosevelt Island coastline to improve the safety of island residents and visitors.

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A Look Back at 2025 Continued

Back-to-School Backpack Giveaway

The Public Safety Department and Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation Disabled Association partnered for an evening of music, treats, and fun, distributing free backpacks and school supplies to island residents.



Pride Flag Raising

Celebration of island inclusivity and tolerance.



9/11 Remembrance Ceremony

We remember and honor those we lost on September 11, 2001.



Cherry Blossom Petal Protectors

Residents volunteered to patrol the island, helping to preserve these iconic trees for future generations!



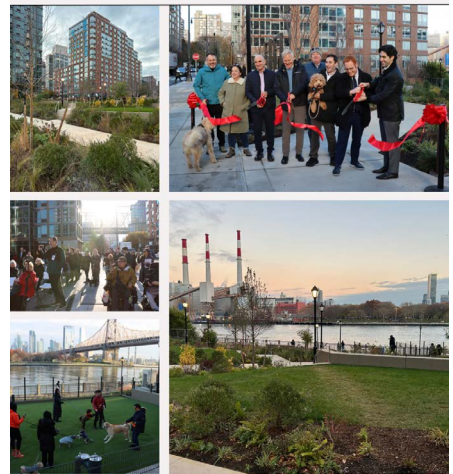
Fall For Arts Festival

Themes: Freedom from Fear & Freedom to Imagine.



Commons East Opening

The opening of Commons East marks the culmination of the Roosevelt Island's Southtown development, which began in the late 1990s as a joint venture between the Hudson and Related Companies.



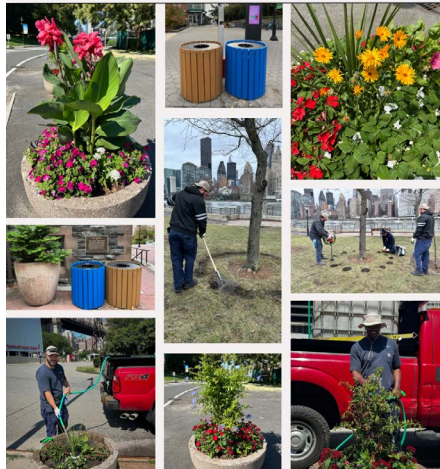
RI 50 Exhibit

Developed in partnership with Roosevelt Island Historical Society and Dylan Brown, the exhibit celebrates the 50th anniversary of residents first moving to Roosevelt Island.



Planters Around the Island

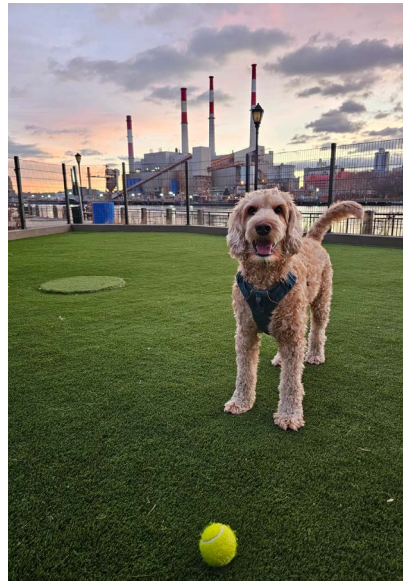
The RIOG Grounds team kept the island clean and beautiful by maintaining daily upkeep, installing spring flower plantings, conducting vertical mulching, adding new recycling bins in high-traffic areas, and more!



New Red Buses

RIOC started the year off strong with buses 250 and 251 going into operation. Both buses received tracking equipment for integration with the Transit app.





Island Pups Enjoying the New Commons East Dog Run

The new dog run in Commons East is quickly becoming a favorite hangout for our island's four-legged friends. Families are enjoying the new park day and night, with its spectacular views of Queens and the 59th Street Bridge. With the opening of the new dog run, we have now said goodbye to the temporary run that was stationed at Firefighters Field for several years. If you haven't stopped by Commons East for a puppy playdate yet, we highly encourage it!

Happy Chanukah!

The Chabad of Roosevelt Island hosted their 7th Chanukah Lighting celebration on Saturday evening, December 20th. The community came together to celebrate Jewish pride and enjoy hot latkes, hot drinks, music, dreidels, and more! The Roosevelt Island Menorah was first gifted to RIOC 20 years ago by the Chabad and marks the festival of lights every year on Meditation Lawn.

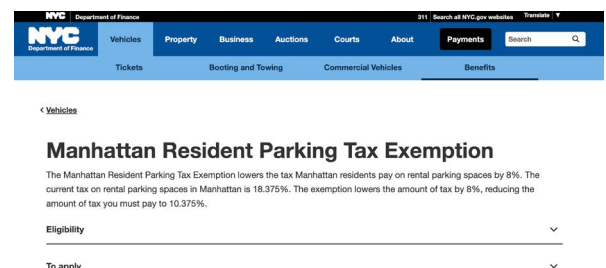


Reminder: NYC Tax Exemption for Residents Who Park in Motorgate

RIOC would like to remind residents who park in Motorgate Garage that New York City offers a parking tax exemption for Manhattan residents who park in garages. This exemption reduces the parking tax rate by 8%, lowering the overall cost residents pay.

Residents can apply online by visiting <https://www.nyc.gov/site/finance/vehicles/vehicles-manhattan-resident-parking-tax-exemption.page> (Garage License Number: 2123462), or by completing the *Manhattan Resident Parking Tax Exemption Form* and mailing it to the address listed on the form.

Once approved, residents will receive a tax exemption certificate by mail or online. To apply the exemption to your account, please drop off the bottom portion of the certificate at the Motorgate Garage office.



Thinking About Joining Sportspark? Come See What the Buzz is All About During Sportspark's Open House!

On Wednesday, February 18th Sportspark will be hosting an open house for anyone looking to learn more about what the newly renovated 44,000 sq ft recreation complex has to offer. All programs and activities scheduled for the day will be completely FREE, including free giveaways and an incredible new member offer! Activities will include:

- Free children's swim classes for ages 6 months-12 years old
- Free water aerobics class
- All afternoon Family Swim time
- Free children's basketball classes
- Family basketball, soccer, and volleyball time
- Free group fitness classes for adults and a free self defense class for kids ages 5-12
- Comped private swim lessons for any first time swim package buyers
- Any new member who joins Sportspark during the open house will receive the rest of February and all of March FREE!

WE HAVE SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

Family OPEN HOUSE

Roosevelt Island Residents Only!

Join us on Wednesday, Feb 18 from 10 am-4 pm for a FREE day of fitness and wellness. Come and experience all that Sportspark has to offer at our Winter Open House. With an exciting lineup of activities, events, and classes, from each of our departments, you'll get to sample every corner of our vibrant athletic complex!

SPECIAL FEATURES

- Basketball Shootout
- Water Aerobics
- Spin the Wheel
- Kid Swim Classes
- Family Swim
- Kid Sports Classes

Address: 250 Main St, New York, NY 10044
Phone: (212) 832-4569

Save The Date 2/18/26

Sportspark

Group Fitness

Pool

Gymnasium

Sportspark_RI

Sportspark offers discounted affordable membership rates for Roosevelt Island residents! In order to partake in the open house, please register at <https://rioc.ny.gov/691/Sportspark-Open-House>.

RIOC Grounds Team Tackles Snow Removal

Preparation for snow removal begins days in advance. Teams work to test equipment, fuel up vehicles, and ensure proper staffing is ready. The RIOC Grounds team pre-salts bus stops, crosswalks, and high-traffic pedestrian areas in advance of the snowfall, then works round the clock during and after the storm to ensure roads and sidewalks are properly plowed and maintained. We thank them for their hard work!



YC Highlights

Winter Wonderland (Cookie Design & Bake)



YC New Year Party 2026



Farewell to YC Participants Alma and Yutaka

