

The Museum of the City of New York's  
Frederick A. O. Schwarz Children's Center



## EDUCATOR GUIDE:

### *America's Mayor: John V. Lindsay and the Reinvention of New York*



*John Lindsay campaigning for mayor in Jamaica, 1965  
Photography by Katrina Thomas; courtesy of photographer*

## **Introduction**

This guide is intended to be used as a resource for teachers visiting the Museum of the City of New York's *America's Mayor: John V. Lindsay and the Reinvention of New York* exhibition during self-guided gallery visits. This guide examines the controversial tenure (1966-1973) and dramatic times of New York's 103<sup>rd</sup> mayor. In particular, a self-guided visit to the exhibition encourages students to reflect on John V. Lindsay's efforts to lead a city that was undergoing radical changes and that was at the center of the upheavals of the 1960s and 1970s.

The information and activities in this guide may be taught before, during and/or after a self-guided visit to the Museum. Teachers are encouraged to adapt the information to the grade level and ability of their students. For further information or to schedule a self-guided visit to the Museum of the City of New York, please contact the Frederick A.O. Schwarz Children's Center at (212) 534-1672, ext. 3334 or [schoolprograms@mcny.org](mailto:schoolprograms@mcny.org).

### **Included in this guide:**

- **Curriculum connections**
- **Background information**
- **Suggested activities**
- **Key terms**
- **Sample gallery visit lesson plan for elementary audiences**
- **Discussion questions for middle and high school audiences**

## Curriculum Connections

Educational activities in the *America's Mayor: John V. Lindsay and the Reinvention of New York* exhibition connect to your school curriculum in the following ways:

- **Visual Literacy and the Arts**  
Students learn to identify and interpret visual elements in campaign materials, photographs, and publications through guided observation and reflective analysis of objects on display in the exhibition.
- **Social Studies**  
Students use images and objects to understand context and time period. Students develop skills in historical and geographical analysis by exploring the range of primary and secondary sources relating to the 1960s and 1970s.
- **English Language Literacy**  
Students develop their skills in reading and writing as they respond to the exhibition verbally, in both analytical and creative writing, and in conversation with peers.

## Background Information

Three decades before Rudolph Giuliani was dubbed “America’s Mayor,” John V. Lindsay was, for a time, the urban leader to whom the whole nation looked. Young, energetic, and idealistic, he campaigned on a platform of change and optimism. Lindsay’s agenda included many of the signature liberal policies of the day – support for civil rights, the war on poverty, mobilization of the power of government to build a better society. Even more, he envisioned a new kind of city life, asserting that the American future depended on sustaining urban ideals of diversity, density, and creativity.

Eight years later, many thought that dream was dead. After almost losing his reelection bid in 1969, after a failed Presidential run in 1972, after a series of paralyzing strikes, after years of rising budgets that outstripped the city’s resources, after growing polarization within the city, after a series of indisputable missteps but also striking successes in advancing a new vision of city life – and in keeping calm in New York when other cities went up in flames – Lindsay’s record was deeply disputed. He was a hero to anti-war activists and had gained the trust of many in the black and Latino communities, but he also left a city in many ways worse than he had found it – dirtier, more divided, more crime-ridden, and nearly broke. Observers disagreed as to whether these changes happened because of Lindsay or in spite of him. His mayoralty became a Rorschach test for those who were debating the viability of urban activism itself.

The “Lindsay years” corresponded almost precisely with the height of the national tumult over the Vietnam War, civil rights, liberation politics, and the counterculture, and John Lindsay became a protagonist in many of these dramas. But even more, behind those dynamics were fundamental questions about what kind of city New York was becoming and what it would take to govern it. John Lindsay was mayor of a city experiencing the birth pangs of a new era – a post-industrial, multiracial, post-Tammany Hall New York, one in which political alignments were volatile, in which expectations were growing and resources shrinking, in which people were vying to influence what the city would be. Whether that city could be reshaped by political ideals and reinvented by government was the defining question of the day.

## Suggested Activities

The following activities may be completed before, during and/or after a self-guided visit to the *America's Mayor: John V. Lindsay and the Reinvention of New York*.

### 1. Interview

The exhibition explores John Lindsay's tenure in office and his responses to local and national issues. Whether it was because of the hot button circumstances surrounding his mayoralty or his own actions in relation to them, people across the city and even across the nation formed very clear opinions of Lindsay and his administration. As a class, students can create an interview template for their use when interviewing a family member or friend living in New York City during Lindsay's administration. Students should also brainstorm a list of interviewing "dos and don'ts," for example avoiding questions that can be answered with a yes or no. Students will then share their interviewees' reflections and discuss the range of opinions that serve to illustrate the debate surrounding Lindsay's legacy.

### 2. Debate it!

The Lindsay era's legacy in New York is still debated. In his second term, the mayor could not pay for his program of expansive urban government. Massive borrowing laid the groundwork for the fiscal crisis of 1975-76, whose impact was felt for many years after. Lindsay's own vision succumbed not only to fiscal problems, but to new politics polarized by racial, ethnic, and class resentments, and conflicts over busing, abortion, and women's and gay rights. The dream of reinventing the city to vanquish poverty, racism, and crime proved unattainable.

Yet Lindsay's mayoralty was also a moment of innovation and hope that left its mark on New York. Lindsay's willingness to walk the streets in angry times, his faith in participatory democracy, his efforts to bring the poor into the mainstream, and his commitment to a more livable cityscape all represented the high tide of 1960s urban liberalism. Lindsay made the easing of racial inequalities, and the use of government to aid the less fortunate, top priorities in the face of poverty and social division.

Divide students into two teams and have them create an argument for both stances. Each team will present their opening remarks followed by counter arguments. The debate should continue based on this format. Following the debate, both teams will come together to discuss issues and questions that arose.

### 3. Campaigning for Mayor

John V. Lindsay's campaign rhetoric caught the imagination of many idealistic students and young professionals. Some 25,000 Lindsay volunteers manned phones and staffed 122 storefront campaign offices throughout the city. Using the media to his advantage, Lindsay capitalized off the 1960s call for change as illustrated by Murray Kempton's "He is fresh everyone else is tired." Have students imagine they are running for mayor of New York City in 2010. As a class, create a list of issues facing the city. Next, consider the mediums through which candidates appeal to their constituents today and how they effectively communicate a

campaign message. Have students create their own campaign poster, commercial, or button addressing one of the problems facing the city. Students should think about slogans, targeted demographic, and overall composition as well as their own stance on the selected issue.

#### **4. Create a Timeline**

*America's Mayor: John V. Lindsay and the Reinvention of New York* is organized thematically rather than chronologically. Each area of the exhibition represents either an issue Lindsay and his administration faced and Lindsay's solution or an initiative undertaken by the Lindsay administration. Create a timeline beginning with the Vietnam War in 1955 and ending with Lindsay's campaign for president in 1972. As a class, brainstorm national and local historic events, notable people, and social, political, and economic movements. Discuss the historical contexts as they relate to Lindsay's mayoralty. What issues did his administration face nationally and how were they reflected in local events?

#### **5. Letter to Lindsay**

Have students imagine they were living in New York City in the 1960s. After reflecting on Mayor Lindsay's many successes and challenges, students can draft a letter that addresses a specific issue, concern, or success. Students should use historical context as they write the content of their letter.

## Key Terms

Students may benefit from an explanation of the following terms that relate to the *America's Mayor: John V. Lindsay and the Reinvention of New York* exhibition.

### Terms

- Mayor / Mayoralty
- Candidate
- Campaign
- Election
- Inauguration
- Tenure
- Strike
- Policy
- Political Parties: Republican, Liberal, Democrat, Conservative, Independent
- Demonstration
- Union
- Economy
- Urban
- Municipal
- Counterculture
- Fiscal crisis/debt

### Notable Figures

- Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Bella Abzug
- Richard Wagner
- Nelson Rockefeller
- Otto Kerner
- Lyndon B Johnson
- Albert Shanker
- Mike Quill
- Comptroller Abe Beame
- Abbie Hoffman
- Allen Ginsberg
- Golda Meir

### Relevant Organizations, Agencies, and Departments:

- Transportation Workers Union (TWU)
- United Federation of Teachers (UFT)
- Board of Education
- Kerner Commission
- Department of Sanitation

## Timeline

**1955-1975**

Vietnam War

**1966**

J.V.L. becomes 103<sup>rd</sup> Mayor of New York City  
Transit Strike

**1967**

The Jefferson Market Courthouse reopens as the Jefferson Market Public Library

**1968**

Assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.  
Teacher's Strike  
Sanitation Strike  
Columbia Student Protests

**1969**

February snowstorm  
J.V.L. runs for reelection

**1970**

Kent State Shootings  
Hard Hat Riots  
Earth Day  
J.V.L. begins second term

**1972**

J.V.L. runs for President

**1973**

J.V.L. leaves office

## Sample Gallery Visit Lesson Plan for Elementary Audiences

### *America's Mayor: John V Lindsay and the Reinvention of New York*

#### CHALLENGES AND COMPROMISES: RUNNING THE CITY

**Time:** 1 hour

#### **Lesson Goals:**

- Students will view campaign materials to develop an understanding of the campaigning process
- Students will explore iconic images from the time period to understand the challenges facing New Yorkers
- Students will analyze graphs to understand New York City's budget during Lindsay's mayoralty
- Students will reflect on Mayor Lindsay's solutions to the social and political issues facing both New York City and the nation at large.

#### **Lesson Objectives:**

- Students will be able to discuss the challenges Mayor Lindsay faced governing New York City and will debate his solutions.
- Students will be able to identify the various needs of different communities in the city.
- Students will be able to discuss the various points of view demonstrated in the exhibition, for example, unions, student protesters, and government officials.
- Students will be able to connect many of New York City's challenges to national issues.
- Students will use the exhibition to reflect on the challenges urban areas face today.

#### **Materials:**

- Clipboards
  - Pencils
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#### **Lesson Introduction**

Exhibitions at the Museum of the City of New York explore the past, present and future of New York City and celebrate its heritage of diversity, opportunity and perpetual transformation. Today you will explore the exhibition **America's Mayor: John V Lindsay and the Reinvention of New York** to reflect on how the decades of the '60s and '70s shaped our modern city.

Using New York City as a case study for government on a local level, we will look at many different scenarios in which Mayor Lindsay had to come up with a **solution** or a

**compromise.** During each scenario/stop, we will discuss the problem, the solution, and find images that illustrate multiple perspectives. The stops will include: a transportation strike, a teacher's strike, the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., civil servant strikes, environmental concerns, balancing a budget, enhancing the cultural life of the city, and designing the city.

### **Stop 1: Intro Panel (Image of Lindsay overlooking New York City)**

Discuss the title of the exhibition.

- What information can we learn from the words "America's Mayor"?
- What information can we learn from the words "Reinvention of New York City"?

Look at the image.

- What and who is depicted in the photograph?
- Based on the photograph, what do you think is the main idea of the exhibition?

This exhibition looks at New York City fifty years ago during the 1960s and 1970s. Students will discuss specific urban issues as well as national events affecting the city, such as the Vietnam War and civil rights.

Review: Discuss with the students what they know about the time period. Make a list of events or movements they might expect to see throughout the discussion.

### **Stop 2: Campaign Materials**

Image: Subway poster "He Is Fresh and Everyone Else Is Tired"

*Mayoral subway car campaign poster, 1965*

*Courtesy Jay L. Kriegel*

Background Information:

On May 13, 1965, John V. Lindsay, 43-year-old Republican congressman from Manhattan, announced he would seek the mayoralty. Lindsay brought to the race his congressional record as a civil rights lawmaker and a supporter of President Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty. He also brought an Upper East Side upbringing, a Yale education, youthful vitality, and charismatic good looks to the contest. Lindsay argued that fresh ideas and energy could solve the city's crises, proclaiming that he would "make the people of New York City the partners of their city government, not its adversaries." Lindsay won the Republican nomination and also the endorsement of New York's Liberal Party.

New York City was and is a diverse community. John Lindsay and his staff would have used various technologies and materials to reach out to New Yorkers during his campaign.

Find three different objects or images that people could have read, could have worn, or could have watched during his campaign.

Review: What can you find that indicates the diverse communities Lindsay was targeting through his advertisements?

**Transition:** January 1, 1966 was Mayor Lindsay's first day as well as his first challenge.

### **Stop 3: Welcome to City Hall**

Images: Background Image/Wallpaper

#### **Background Information:**

A confrontation with a powerful municipal union was brewing even before Lindsay became mayor on January 1, 1966. The Transport Workers Union, which represented subway workers and bus drivers, was threatening to go on strike for higher wages. Lindsay, who had no experience with labor negotiations and lacked his predecessor's close relationships with the city's union leaders, had vowed to hold down city costs.

Transit workers walked out on New Year's Day – the day of Lindsay's inauguration - in New York's first city-wide transit strike since 1916. The strike did not end until 12 days later, when the Lindsay administration offered workers a generous wage and pension package, one that met virtually all the TWU demands. The increases cost twice as much as those in the previous agreement three years earlier. A poll showed that 75% of New Yorkers approved of Lindsay's handling of the crisis. But the settlement cost the city at least \$43 million over two years, foreshadowing a host of expensive future contracts with teachers, sanitation workers, policemen, and other municipal workers.

List the various forms of transportation we use in New York City today. Subways and buses were as popular fifty years ago as they are today. Imagine if the subways and buses were not running. How would we get to work? To school?

In 1966, the Transit Workers Union led by Mike Quill called a strike for higher wages. Lindsay had campaigned under the promise to keep costs down. How do you think Lindsay's decision affected New York City? Why didn't Lindsay give in to their demands at first?

Begin with the image of the CUNY students trying to hitch a ride. Ask a student to read aloud their signs. How are they trying to get to school? Look at the image of commuters lining up at Grand Central Terminal. Why is the line so long? Why do you think the Lindsay administration agreed to a wage increase after 12 days?

Look at the TWU flyer stating "We Won." What information does this flyer give you?

Review: What was the problem? What was the solution or compromise? Do you agree?

#### Stop 4: Keeping the City Cool

Image: *Lindsay with aides and community members on 125th Street, Harlem, April 4, 1968, UPI Photo (large panel).*

##### Background Information:

Early in his administration, Lindsay earned a reputation for his willingness to walk the streets to communicate with black and Latino New Yorkers. He helped to quell racially charged riots in Brooklyn in July 1966 and in East Harlem in July 1967 by personally appearing there to appeal for calm and peace. In 1967, his record earned him appointment to the National Commission on Civil Disturbances, known as the Kerner Commission. On the night of April 4, 1968, Lindsay was at a Broadway play when he learned of the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. in Memphis. He and his aides quickly drove to Harlem, where he mingled with the crowds, expressing his sorrow and seeking to dissuade enraged young people from acts of violence. At one point, as crowds grew, aides rushed him from the scene, but he returned later that night. Fires, looting, and vandalism did break out in Harlem and Bedford-Stuyvesant, and two people were killed, but Lindsay's forays were widely credited with helping to calm the situation. In contrast, full-scale riots tore through Washington, D.C., Baltimore, and 120 other cities following the assassination, leaving the cities burnt, looted, and traumatized.

On April 4, 1968 Lindsay and his wife were sitting in a New York City theater watching a play. One of his aides rushed down the aisle and whispered something in his ear.

Immediately, Lindsay got up from his seat.

The aide had whispered that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. had just been assassinated. Lindsay had to decide: would he go into his office or would he go to the people gathering in the streets?

Lindsay drove to Harlem and got out of his car and walked through the streets most of the night.

Review: Why do you think Lindsay chose to walk through the streets? What was he trying to do?

**Transition:** Two years after the transportation strike, Mayor Lindsay faced a new problem. This one was not about transportation, but was about education.

#### Stop 5: Oceanhill- Brownsville

Image: *Makeshift classroom, Lower East Side, 1968, AP Images*

##### Background Information:

In his first term, John Lindsay began an experiment in school decentralization that quickly mushroomed into a major racial, ideological, and political battle that led to a contentious series of teachers' strikes and further fragmented his already fragile coalition. By the time Lindsay took office, many black activists and parents, frustrated by the failure of their drive to integrate the schools, were pressing instead for community control of "inner city" schools. In 1967, Lindsay appointed a panel on school reform, headed by McGeorge Bundy of the

Ford Foundation and with no representatives from the teachers' union or the school board. The Bundy report recommended a new "community control system" of largely autonomous local districts, and in 1967 – 68, the Board of Education permitted three experimental districts to be run by locally elected boards in East Harlem, the Lower East Side, and Ocean Hill-Brownsville in Brooklyn.

In May 1968, the Ocean Hill-Brownsville board transferred 17 white teachers and administrators, one Latino teacher, and one black teacher out of the district, citing their "inability to work with people in this community." In protest, the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) launched a series of three strikes in the fall of 1968 that shut down the public school system for over seven weeks. The issue split Lindsay's liberal constituents into warring camps and kept a million children out of school. A strike settlement on November 17, largely conforming to UFT demands, ended community control. Lindsay later called the second half of 1968 "the worst of my public life."

Look at the photograph of the teacher teaching her students outside. What scenarios can you come up with explaining the need for this outside classroom?

In 1968, this teacher was teaching outside because, like the transit workers, the teachers were striking. They were protesting in support of 19 teachers and administrators whom they felt were unfairly fired. The community school district members were also upset because they felt they had the right to make their own decisions. They felt they should be able to decide who and what should be taught in their own communities. After over two months of over a million students out of school, the teachers on strike won and were allowed to go back to the community schools. Lindsay had supported the schools and felt that they should have been able to make their own decisions.

Review: What was the problem? What was the solution or compromise? Do you agree? Why or why not?

### **Stop 6: Strike City**

Images:

*Sweep, Spring 1968 Courtesy Department of Sanitation, City of New York*

*U.S. soldiers sorting mail in a New York post office, March 24, 1970 © Bettman/Corbis*

Background Information:

John Lindsay's tenure had begun with a transit strike the day of his inauguration, and confrontations with municipal unions accelerated during his first term. His tenure was filled with strikes, slowdowns, and "sickouts" not only by transit workers and teachers, but by sanitation workers, fire fighters, police, bridge tenders, sewage plant workers, doctors, nurses, and garage workers. Continual disruptions in municipal services became a symbol of the tumultuous city.

Review what a strike is.

During Lindsay's mayoralty, numerous groups of workers went on strike.

Have the students infer what strikes were occurring based on the photographs. Ask them to think about how we use these services every day. How would this disrupt our lives now?

Review: Why were the strikes a problem? How do you think the people on strike felt about Mayor Lindsay? What big problem did this pose for him?

### **Stop 7: The Second Toughest Job in America: 1969**

Object: *Letter to Mayor Lindsay from the "Children of the Neighborhood Playhouse" 1969*  
*Courtesy New York Municipal Archives*

Background Information:

Mayor Lindsay faced an uphill battle for a second term in 1969. The sanitation and teachers' strikes had aroused thousands of union members against him, and Ocean Hill-Brownsville had proved a political quagmire. The crime rate was still rising, and many felt that city services were deteriorating. Particularly outside of Manhattan, many Catholics and Jews saw the mayor as out of touch with the daily hardships of middle-class life and disrespectful of their needs and priorities.

On top of this, a poorly handled blizzard in early 1969 focused the rage of Queens residents against Lindsay. Whether the result of poor preparation by City Hall, or of sanitation men who raised their plows out of anger at Lindsay's actions during their 1968 strike, whole streets and neighborhoods remained untouched by plows for days. Queens residents were stranded; half of the 42 deaths attributed to the storm were in that borough. The residents blamed Lindsay, accusing him of neglecting middle-class white neighborhoods, and they greeted him with jeers when he toured the areas worst affected.

Remind the group what his first campaign slogan was ("Lindsay Is Fresh and Everyone Else Is Tired"). Read the second campaign slogan: *Second Toughest Job in America*. What is different about each slogan? Reflect on the challenges Mayor Lindsay has faced so far. What is making his job the second toughest one in America?

In response to the blizzard of 1969, teachers sent Mayor Lindsay a letter. Read the letter to the group and ask them to identify the tone. Why were they writing the letter? What were they asking for? Why were they angry?

In the end, Mayor Lindsay won the second term but without a great majority.

Review: How did Mayor Lindsay begin his first term? How did he end it? What were some successes so far? What were some challenges? How do you think he is doing at this point?

### **Stop 8: Vietnam**

Image: *Anti-Vietnam-War Demonstration, New York, 1970*

*Photograph by Benedict J. Fernandez*

*Courtesy of the photographer*

In New York City, many people felt differently about the Vietnam War. Some were in favor and some were not. During this time, people took to the streets either to protest or to voice support. During one particular protest, three different groups of people found themselves in one area.

Direct the students to the small image of the Hard Hat Riot and the image of the construction workers next to it. Ask them to identify what they think is happening. Is this a calm gathering? A heated one? How do you know? What objects do you see? What people are seen? Review to make sure the students notice the American flag, the business man with his briefcase, and the construction workers holding signs.

On May 8, 1970 a group of students gathered downtown to protest the war. In counter protest a group of construction workers gathered. While the police attempted to maintain calm, the arguing turned physical and businessmen working in the area attempted to protect the students.

Review: Why did people in New York City feel so strongly about this issue? Mayor Lindsay stated that “New York City was a prisoner of war.” What side do you think he was on? When he was running for re-election, do you think that helped or hurt him?

### **Stop 9: Environmental Protection**

Images/Object:

*Lindsay on a terrace of the Statler Hilton Hotel, January 4, 1967*

*Robert Walker/The New York Times*

*Trash can, 1966*

*Courtesy Department of Sanitation, City of New York*

*Children participate in the first Earth Day cleanliness campaign in Union Square, April 22, 1970 © Bettmann/CORBIS*

#### **Background Information**

In January 1968, Mayor Lindsay signed into law the Environmental Protection Administration, the first in a major American city. The superagency’s job, as one newspaper put it, was “to coordinate all the city’s efforts to clean up its air, its water, its streets—even the elimination of noise pollution.”

What were some pollution problems New York City was facing? Use the images and objects to figure it out. Why are the students holding brooms? How were New Yorkers encouraged to be more responsible?

Review: Look at the image of Mayor Lindsay on the roof of the Statler Hotel. What does he see? What was his challenge? What were his solutions?

### **Stop 10: A Costly City**

Objects: Graphs

Background Information

When he ran for mayor in 1965, John Lindsay vowed to cut the spending and borrowing that had brought the city to the edge of bankruptcy under Mayor Wagner. He balanced the city budget in his first term, helped by a booming economy that increased tax revenues. After a tough political fight, he also got Albany to pass a commuter tax and a personal income tax for New York City, measures to help pay the city's bills.

But during his second term, as a sharp recession and inflation hit the economy, city spending increasingly outran local, state, and federal funding. The city budget in 1967 had been \$4.6 billion; by 1971, spending on union contracts, welfare, housing, hospitals, the city university system, and other services swelled the budget to \$7.8 billion—a remarkable 70% rise in just four years. In the early 1970s, Lindsay and Comptroller Abe Beame turned to short-term borrowing and one-time financial “gimmicks” to keep the city afloat, tactics that candidate Lindsay had criticized the Wagner administration for using. The resulting municipal debt helped trigger a fiscal crisis that brought the city to the verge of bankruptcy less than two years after Lindsay left office.

Students should look at the graphs and notice what they all have in common. Discuss the graph entitled “Municipal Labor Costs.” What has the group been talking about so far that would provide such a costly increase? This was one example of a steep incline in expenditures.

**Transition:** Up until this point, the group has been discussing the people with whom Mayor Lindsay interacted. For the next few stops, the discussion will focus on challenges and solutions in the built environment.

### **Stop 11: Parks and Public Culture**

Images:

*“Sound Blast ’66” dance contest, Naumburg Bandshell, April 23, 1966*

*Courtesy New York City Parks Photo Archive*

*Lindsay (center) and Parks Commissioner Heckscher (center right) lead a bicycle brigade to Central Park, April 1, 1968*

*Vest-pocket park, Manhattan, July 13, 1968*

*Courtesy New York City Parks Photo Archive*

Background Information:

The Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs Administration was one of the most innovative of Lindsay's superagencies. Lindsay's first Parks Commissioner, Thomas Hoving, pioneered

new ways to open the city's parks to New Yorkers. "Hoving Happenings" enticed people into Central Park to paint, fly kites, dance, and watch meteor showers. Under Hoving's successor, August Heckscher, the parks welcomed Be-Ins, Love-Ins, and eventually Gay-Ins.

Meanwhile, the agency brought musicians to neighborhood block parties, installed modern art in public spaces, and built small "vest-pocket" parks. Not everyone was pleased with the results. Bronx Republican leader Paul Fino complained that Lindsay was giving "the city's punks, Vietniks and banana-sniffers, flag burning rights in Central Park." By Lindsay's second term, rising maintenance costs outstripped available funds, the physical condition of the parks deteriorated, and crime was on the rise.

Ask the students to take a moment to look at all the images in this section. What do all of these images have in common? Some images show events in Central Park, other in vest pocket parks. Direct the students to the images of Central Park. Ask them to describe the various forms of entertainment they can find, such as cycling and music.

Direct the students' attention to the smaller parks. How are they different from Central Park? Ask the students to look at the background: what do they see surrounding the vest pocket parks? In what way are they "pockets"?

Review: Discuss why both types of parks might be important to New York City, and why Lindsay championed them.

## **Stop 12: Renewing the Streetscape, City by Design, and Reimagining the Core: Lower East Side**

Images/Objects:

*Joseph Farris in The New Yorker, July 25, 1970/ Courtesy of Katharine Lindsay Lake*  
*Cartoon by Joseph Farris for The New Yorker, July 25, 1970*

*Rector Place in Battery Park City, showing visual corridors leading to the water* *Reproduction*  
*Courtesy Terrance R. Williams, FAIA*

Background Information:

The Lindsay administration's approach to city planning was a radical departure from previous planning strategies. Part and parcel of creating the "24-hour city" was a reinvigorated streetscape, alive with pedestrians, retail commerce, and greenery as crucial to the city's social and economic health. Lindsay's urban designers also visualized a city less congested and polluted by automotive traffic. They proposed pedestrian malls and mid-block passageways, some of which were implemented, and re-envisioned often desolate public plazas, in pursuit of a more "walkable" and livable city.

Discuss with the group what it means to be an urban planner. Why is this an important job? To Mayor Lindsay's administration it was important for a number of different reasons and took on numerous forms. Direct the class to the cartoon in the section "Renewing the Streetscape" stating, "I'll bet Lindsay never dreamed this would happen."

What in the cartoon do you think the speaker is referring to? How is it different from an average New York City street? Do you think a pedestrian walkway is important in New York City?

Move the class to the image in “Reimagining the Core” showing the visual corridor in Battery Park City. Ask them to determine what is innovative about this plan. Have them assume the role of an urban planner to determine why a visual corridor is important. Think about aesthetics, health, and enjoyment.

**Stop: End of an Era**

Images:

*Lindsay commutes to work on his last day in office, December 31, 1973*

*Joyce Dopkeen/The New York Times*

*Lindsay, leaving the Mayor’s office, City Hall, December 31, 1973*

© *New York Daily News, L.P. Used with permission.*

Direct the class’s attention to the large portrait of John Lindsay published in the New York Times. Recount to the students that Lindsay attempted to run for President and when he didn’t succeed, he left public office. Debate with the class the legacy of Mayor Lindsay. What did he accomplish? What were his challenges? Do we face any of the same challenges today?

Review: Recount with the class the main challenges and solutions of Lindsay’s mayoralty using some of the ‘lines’ of the Lindsay portrait as a guide.

## Discussion Questions for Middle and High School Audiences

### *America's Mayor: John V. Lindsay and the Reinvention of New York*

The following questions may be used in discussion with students in the *America's Mayor: John V. Lindsay and the Reinvention of New York* exhibition before, during, and/or after a self-guided visit.

1. As a candidate, John Lindsay had pledged that he would overhaul the system of reviewing complaints against policemen, and in May, 1966 he fulfilled that promise by adding four civilian slots to the formerly all-police three-member review board. The new policy proved highly divisive. On November 8, 1966, New Yorkers repealed the new Board by a landslide, 63% to 37% -- a stinging rebuke to the mayor. Did Lindsay undermine the review board by attempting to add civilian slots? Why or why not? Do you think the Civilian Complaint Review Board needed the civilian voice to be fair? Why or why not? Find documentation from the exhibition to prove your point.
2. In 1967, Lindsay appointed a panel on school reform, headed by McGeorge Bundy of the Ford Foundation and with no representatives from the teachers' union or the school board. The Bundy report recommended a new "community control system" of largely autonomous local districts, and in 1967-68, the Board of Education permitted three experimental districts to be run by locally elected boards in East Harlem, the Lower East Side, and Ocean Hill-Brownsville in Brooklyn. In May 1968, the Ocean Hill-Brownsville board transferred 17 white teachers and administrators, one Latino teacher, and one black teacher out of the district, citing their "inability to work with people in this community." In protest, the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) launched a series of three strikes in the fall of 1968 that shut down the public school system for over seven weeks. Should the community schools have had the right to decide who would teach in their schools? Why or why not? Do you think the UFT was correct to strike in protest of the transferred teachers? Why or why not?
3. Consider the different forms of advertisement used to elect John Lindsay. Compare the slogans from Lindsay's two mayoral campaigns. In 1965 Lindsay campaigned under the slogan "He is fresh, and everyone else is tired." For his re-election campaign, the Lindsay administration campaigned under the slogan "The second toughest job in America." How are these slogans different? How did his message change and to what events is his campaign alluding to?
4. Since its creation in the 1850s, Central Park has been a site for recreation and leisure. From temporary shelters during the Great Depression to a site for athletic play, Central Park has evolved, undergoing physical changes and taking on different roles for New Yorkers. Beginning in the 1960s, what social role did Central Park play and how did Lindsay effect this change? How did New Yorkers use Central Park during Lindsay's mayoralty? How did Mayor Lindsay help to shape our modern understanding of public spaces?

5. In 1969 the City Planning Commission reported in their Plan for New York City, “Fine old buildings have been torn down—theaters, stores, restaurants—and in their stead have gone up huge new buildings, often brutal and graceless...” Discuss the strategy of adaptive reuse (new uses for older sites keeping or maintaining their historic exteriors). Why is historic preservation important? Can you think of any sites we can visit today that speak to a historic event? How do these sites encourage us to remember New York City’s history?
  
6. Lindsay’s legacy is debated even today. In what ways do you think Lindsay was successful as a mayor? In what ways do you think he failed? If you were to write an account of his mayoralty what would you include as his greatest achievements? What were his challenges?