New Amsterdam was explored by Giovanni da Verrazzano for France in 1524, Henry Hudson for the Netherlands in 1609 and finally settled by the Dutch West India Company in 1625.

The next year, Peter Minuit, the first Director-General of New Netherland, purchased Manhattan Island from the Indians. New Amsterdam was renamed New York after the Dutch surrendered to the British in 1664. New York City served as the capital of the United States from 1785 to 1790.

The first great wave of immigration to New York City began in the 1840s, launching an unprecedented expansion in the city population, which reached one million persons in 1860. The five boroughs of New York City were formally consolidated in 1898. In 1961, Community Planning Boards and Districts were created to provide the borough presidents and city agencies with planning and service issues. This map shows neighborhood areas, as well as the Community District boundaries as revised in 1992.