Becoming a
“Washington Insider”

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Overview of Washington, DC

• Founded in 1793 to be the capital of the US.
• Designed by Pierre Charles L’Enfant.
• Not located in a U.S. state – land for the District of Columbia was ceded by two states: Maryland and Virginia – Virginia later took back its land.
• Resident population of 591,833; population rises to over 1 million during the work week.
• Known as “The District,” “D.C.,” or even just “the City.”
The District from Above
D.C. Street Names

• The streets in D.C. are named for numbers, letters, and U.S. states. Numbers run north-south; letters run east-west; and states are diagonal across the others. (There are other street names, but they are less common.)

• After the street name comes the quadrant abbreviation. For example,
  – M Street NW is where Georgetown is located
  – 1st Street SE is where Nationals Park is located

• You may hear people referring to their neighborhood according to the quadrant or the area. For example,
  – “I live in Northwest.”
  – “I live in Columbia Heights.”
The Streets of D.C.
“Inside the Beltway”

• The Beltway is the highway encircling D.C. and some of its suburbs in Virginia and Maryland. College Park and the University of Maryland are inside the Beltway.