



Hartford Whalers Booster Club Bring Back the NHL Fact Sheet

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- The Market - Hartford is at the center of New England's Knowledge Corridor region (Metro Hartford/Springfield/New Haven), the 2nd largest market in New England.
- Hartford's bi-state Knowledge Corridor market has a population of 2,927,681 in 164 communities spanning 4,413 square miles, currently making it the nation's 19th largest market after Tampa-St. Petersburg.
- Of the nation's top 50 markets, Hartford's is larger than 31, in descending order: Denver, Baltimore, St. Louis, Charlotte, Orlando, San Antonio, Portland, Pittsburgh, Sacramento, Las Vegas, Cincinnati, Kansas City, Austin, Columbus, Cleveland, Indianapolis, San Jose, Nashville, Virginia Beach, Providence,

Milwaukee, Jacksonville, Oklahoma City, Memphis, Raleigh, Richmond, Louisville, New Orleans, Salt Lake City, Birmingham, and Buffalo.

- Of the ten largest markets in Canada, only Toronto and Montreal are larger. Hartford's market is thus larger than, in descending order, Vancouver, Calgary, Ottawa, Edmonton, Quebec, Winnipeg, Hamilton, and Kitchener. The Knowledge Corridor also has 2.1 million more residents than either of two Canadian markets often mentioned as excellent NHL expansion markets - Quebec City and Hamilton.
- And just how do we compare to the NHL's 31 current markets (24 in the USA/7 in Canada), based on 2017 Census estimates and the 2016 Canadian Census? If added to the league, Hartford would be the 16th largest market, and larger than sixteen current NHL markets, as follows, in descending order, with the market population first, and our population difference second: Denver (2,888,227/+39,454); Nassau County (2,862,467/+65,214); St. Louis (2,807,338/+120,343); Newark (2,529,734/+397,947); Vancouver (2,463,431/+464,250); Pittsburgh (2,333,367/+594,314); Las Vegas (2,204,079/+723,602); Columbus (2,078,725/+848,956); San Jose (1,998,463/+929,218); Nashville (1,903,045/+1,024,636); Raleigh/Durham

(1,902,507/+1,025,174); Calgary
(1,392,609/+1,535,072); Ottawa
(1,323,783/+1,603,898); Edmonton
(1,321,426/+1,606,255); Buffalo
(1,136,856/+1,790,825); and Winnipeg
(778,489/+2,149,192.)

- We define the Knowledge Corridor following the lead of the New England Knowledge Corridor Partnership, which defines it as the three counties around Springfield, three around Hartford, and New Haven County. But to these seven counties we add in twelve communities in the immediate Hartford Metro area which are in abutting counties, e.g., Torrington in Litchfield County and Willimantic in Windham County, resulting in a population of just over 2.9 million people.
- Historical Perspective - The city's original pro hockey franchise, the New England Whalers, was part of the World Hockey Association, having relocated here from Boston in 1975 to play in the new Hartford Civic Center coliseum with a seating capacity of 10,507. In 1979 the Whalers and three other WHA franchises (Edmonton, Quebec City and Winnipeg) were invited to join the NHL. Hartford thus joined the league in 1979 after reconstructing and expanding the Hartford Civic Center coliseum to a seating capacity of 15,635 for hockey and 16,294 for basketball. Since

2007 the building has been called the XL Center. The NHL Hartford Whalers franchise was in Hartford for 18 seasons, eventually departing for Raleigh in 1997. Its final game was on April 13, and they played in front of a sold out building.

- The Capital Region Development Authority recently retained the NHL's architect of record, SCI, to develop a plan to renovate and expand the 44-year-old XL Center to a state-of-the-art NHL facility. SCI estimates the project cost at \$250 million, a relative bargain compared to the cost of a new building, which generally cost between \$500 million and \$1 billion. A related CRDA study indicated that there are 3.1 million residents within a 60-mile radius of the coliseum on Trumbull Street. A renovated and expanded XL Center will continue to accommodate UConn men's and women's basketball games and UConn men's hockey games (UConn has the third highest attendance in Hockey East, behind Boston University and Boston College), plus other entertainment. A renovated and expanded XL Center, also with a NHL franchise, if privately owned and operated, would be profitable on day one and would no longer require a \$3 million+/- annual state subsidy. The XL Center could then be added to the City of Hartford's taxable grand list.

- The Knowledge Corridor supports four Division One college hockey teams (UMass-Amherst, Yale, Quinnipiac & UConn), three of which have been in the Frozen Four national championship game in recent years. The region also supports two AHL hockey franchises, in Hartford and Springfield. This indeed is hockey country!
- The Hartford Whalers Booster Club remains one of 22 booster clubs sanctioned by the National Hockey League and an official NHL Booster Club since 1979.
- NHL Hartford Whalers merchandise continues to sell well, some 22 years since its last game in this market, in part due to the large fan base and the iconic blue and green Hartford Whaler logo. New area minor league franchises, including the AA Hartford Yard Goats baseball club (they lead the league in attendance) and the new USL Hartford Athletic soccer club, have adopted the Whaler colors in their respective logos and merchandise as well as Brass Bonanza in their stadiums.
- Hartford's 400 year old bi-state Knowledge Corridor market, has a workforce of over 1.2 million, 215,000 college students in 41 colleges and universities (e.g., main campuses of UMass, UConn & Yale), and is home to many international and national corporations

(e.g., ESPN, Stanley Black & Decker, MassMutual, SS&C, The Hartford, UTC, Cigna, and Travelers).

- Hartford's Knowledge Corridor market is, by far, the nation's largest market without a major pro sports team (NHL, MLS, NBA, MLB or NFL).
- In June of 2018, Hartford's Knowledge Corridor commenced operations of the 62-mile "Hartford Line" commuter rail system from New Haven through Hartford to Springfield, with 17 daily round trip trains, expected to grow to 23 trains as demand increases. Previously, the Knowledge Corridor launched an 11 station, 9.3-mile dedicated bus rapid transit line into Hartford averaging over three million riders in each of its first three years of operations. Thousands of fans will travel to NHL games via these two new transit systems - from New Britain on the CTFastrak BRT line, and from New Haven and Springfield via the new and wildly popular Hartford Line.
- Forty-five nights a year of 18,000+/- hungry and thirsty NHL Hartford Whaler fans will boost Downtown Hartford's restaurants, hotels, parking facilities and bars, and add to its renaissance, while creating hundreds of jobs for city residents.

- Adding a NHL franchise to the Knowledge Corridor region will make it easier for human resources and recruitment professionals to both attract and retain the young workforce needed to address the demographic tsunami, as well as for the region's 41 colleges and universities to increase admission applications and acceptance levels.
- The return of the Hartford Whalers will increase demand, already strong, for apartments, condos, restaurants and hotels in the city's vibrant downtown and adjoining neighborhoods.
- "Whaler Ale" was launched this spring to an enthusiastic reception.

For further information, contact Matthew Greene, Director of Media Relations of the Hartford Whalers Booster Club at mgreene@whalersbc.org or contact Peter DeMallie at pdemallie@designprofessionalsinc.com.

