In May 1854, the Judges of the Inferior Court purchased 100 acres of land in what is now Hartwell and laid the property off into streets, squares, and lots. Officially incorporated as a city by the Georgia legislature on February 26, 1856, Hartwell is the county seat of Hart County. The city was named for Nancy Hart, a local heroine of the Revolutionary War who served as spy and captured a group of Tories who threatened her home.

The 1860 census listed a total population of 235 inhabitants with real estate valued at $54,000.00. Hartwell’s economic base was rooted in agriculture, primarily cotton. During the 1860s, the city suffered with the rest of the South through the Civil War and Reconstruction. In 1870, 26,182 people were counted as the population nearly doubled between 1850 and 1860. Industry continued to expand with local textile and apparel plants and the decade-long construction of the Hartwell Dam. With the completion of the dam project and creation of Lake Hartwell in 1963, a new era of growth began for the city and county.

The post-World War II prosperity of the 1950s ushered in a period of immense growth for Hartwell. The city’s population nearly doubled between 1950 and 1960. Industry continued to expand with local textile and apparel plants and the decade-long construction of the Hartwell Dam. With the completion of the dam project and creation of Lake Hartwell in 1963, a new era of growth began for the city and county.

With increasing emphasis on the arts, historic preservation, and a balanced economic mix of agriculture, industry, and tourism, the City of Hartwell continues to thrive. We pride ourselves on being an accredited Georgia Department of Community Affairs Main Street City since 1997. While visiting our community, we invite you to experience our southern hospitality while enjoying downtown shopping and antiques shops, cultural arts, great golf, boating and fishing on Lake Hartwell, and food fixed right.
Teasley-Holland House

This venerable brick house was a home to a prominent family in the heart of Hart County, and it boasts a rich history. It was built in 1879, from Hartwell to Bowersville. In Bowersville, it connects with lights. The station is the terminus of a 10-mile rail line, completed in 1884. It is situated on a plot of land that was once owned by the original building owner. The depot was used by the Hartwell Railway. Note the train schedule and horse trader and farrier, and distributor of wagons, buggies, harness, and other items. Above the storefronts were

Hart County Community Theatre

Originally built as a grand warehouse and home to Weatherly Furniture Company, FTC bought it in 1986 and renovated it. The Theatre was awarded the Space Award for the renovation efforts in 1987 and 1988. The interior of the building has undergone renovations to improve the acoustics of the performance hall and backstage areas. The service garage extended behind the showroom storefront and the office building. The service garage extended behind the showroom storefront and the office building.

Cleveland Ford Dealership and Service

This building has been a part of the community for over 70 years, offering a range of services to local residents. It originally housed the Cleveland Ford dealership, and later became a service center for vehicles. The building is now home to a variety of businesses, including an insurance agency and a repair shop.

Hailey's Corner

This is the site of the old El Dorado Baptist Church, which was an integral part of the community. The church served the community from its founding in 1879 until its closure in 1964. It was a hub of religious and social activity for generations, and many local traditions were born and lived out in its halls.

Ira 'Doc' Adams House

Adams was a prominent doctor in the community and his house served as a center for social and community events. The house was once a nurses' residence and also served as a hospital. It was later transformed into a private residence and still stands as a testament to its historical significance.

Hartwell First United Methodist Church

Prior to the building’s construction, a small church was located on the corner of Main and Franklin Streets. The new church was built in 1884 and was designed by local architect J.H. Hines. The building’s location ensured easy access for the community, and its architecture reflected the Gothic Revival style.

The Corner

This site has a rich history, as it was the birthplace of a prominent local family. The house was originally a wooden structure, and it was later replaced by a brick building. The house was occupied by several generations of family members, and it has been a part of the community for over 150 years.

Hartwell Train Depot

The historic Hartwell Train Depot is a symbol of the town’s past and present. It was built in 1905 to accommodate the growing population and the need for transportation. The depot served as a central hub for local residents, connecting them to other parts of the country.

The Skelton House

This house, originally built for Mr. John Benson, was later used as a police station. It has served as a home for police officers and as a community center, providing a space for local events and gatherings. Today, it is a museum that provides insights into the history of the town and its people.

24 Bowers Flooring

This building was originally the site of a horse boarding and stabling operation. It later became a flooring store, offering a wide selection of materials to local homeowners and contractors.