# **William B. Hartsfield (1890-1971)**

When you help guide a city through a depression and then, later, guide it through the civil rights era...when you are responsible for Atlanta’s becoming the aviation capital that it is…then it’s fair to say you’ve had an impact. William Hartsfield was mayor of Atlanta longer than any other person. The youngest of three sons, William Berry Hartsfield was born March 1, 1890, to Charles Green Hartsfield and Victoria Dagnall Hartsfield in Atlanta. He was educated in the Atlanta [public school system](http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/education/public-education-prek-12) but did not finish high school or attend college He began his long political career on the city council in 1922. He also led the move to lease Candler Speedway in Hapeville for a landing field in 1925 -- the beginning of his longtime promotion of commercial aviation. Hartsfield became mayor in 1936 and served a total of 23 years. He built biracial coalitions and his steady leadership navigated Atlanta through the civil rights movement, avoiding the violence that plagued cities like Birmingham. After more than thirty years of public service, on June 7, 1961, Hartsfield announced he would not seek reelection. Following his retirement, he was named mayor emeritus of Atlanta. He became a consultant for the Coca-Cola Company, the Trust Company of Georgia, and the [Georgia Power Company](http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/business-economy/georgia-power-companysouthern-company). For a brief time he was also an editorial commentator on WSB television. In 1962 he was chosen president of the Southeastern Fair Association. Hartsfield died on February 22, 1971 After his death in 1971, Atlanta named the airport in his honor.

**Ivan Allen (1911-2003)**

Ivan Allen, Jr., grew up as the only son of businessman Ivan Allen, Sr. and Irene Beaumont Allen. He graduated from all-white Boys High School in Atlanta, majored in business administration at the Georgia Institute of Technology (1929-1933), and married Louise Richardson in 1936. After serving in the Army during World War II, Allen briefly served as executive secretary to Georgia Governor Ellis. In 1946, Allen took over the family's business, the Ivan Allen Company, a successful office supply firm. In the 1960s, former staunch segregationist Ivan Allen, Jr. became a moderate on racial issues and began to work quietly to help end segregation. Soon after becoming head of the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce in 1960, Allen led negotiations between white merchants and black civil rights activists protesting segregated businesses in Atlanta. He personally ended Jim Crow practices in the City Hall cafeteria when he sat down at a table with a black attorney. In December 1962, Mayor Allen shocked his African-American supporters when he yielded to pressure from white constituents and ordered the erection of a barricade to block integration of a white, middle class neighborhood. In the wake of national criticism, he ordered the wall removed. Then, in July 1963, Mayor Allen made amends for "the Atlanta Wall" fiasco when he risked his political career to support President John Kennedy's efforts to end segregation throughout the nation. Allen testified in favor of the Civil Rights bill before a Senate Committee in Washington, D.C. He was the only southern elected official to endorse the bill, which became the 1964 Civil Rights Act. During Allen's administration, Atlanta was dubbed "the City Too Busy To Hate." In 1981, Coretta Scott awarded Ivan Allen, Jr. the Martin Luther King, Jr. Nonviolent Peace Prize.