

Pioneer Award

**KEITH HELART
2020**



The Louisville community is grateful to Keith for his tireless contributions to Louisville parks and its recreation program. The City's parks would not be what they are today if not for him.

Keith is from Louisville, and he got involved in the Parks & Recreation Board starting when the City Council first created the Board in 1965. He served as Chair from 1971 until 1978, when Louisville was growing significantly. Keith was instrumental in the establishment of a number of parks (such as Cottonwood Park) as well as Memory Square Pool, which was the City's first pool and which opened in 1974. He also worked on the restoration of the Center for the Arts building and was involved with open space land acquisitions.

Keith made frequent appearances before City Council and made budget requests of the City. He enjoyed freedom as a volunteer, but also had a tremendous amount of responsibility. His vision was to work towards a system of trails and small parks in neighborhoods. He is credited with developing unique ways of raising funds for Louisville parks at a time when there was little funding otherwise available.

The City dissolved the Parks & Recreation Board in 1978, when it established a staffed Parks & Recreation Department.

Keith is one of a handful of people for whom Louisville has named a park. Keith Helart Park opened in 1982 in the Hillsborough North neighborhood and draws visitors daily.