



Skywalk Memorial Foundation, Inc.  
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**For immediate release**  
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## **Kansas City Parks and Recreation Commission Approves Skywalk Memorial at Hospital Hill**

*Parks Commission votes unanimously to approve Skywalk Memorial which will honor those killed, injured and rescue providers in Hyatt disaster.*

Kansas City, MO (May 26, 2009) The Kansas City Parks and Recreation Commission voted unanimously to approve the Skywalk Memorial at Hospital Hill, 22<sup>nd</sup> and Gillham, in Kansas City, Missouri. The vote comes two months before the 28<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the collapse of the walkway at the Hyatt Regency Hotel during a tea dance in Kansas City, July 17, 1981. It remains the deadliest structural collapse in U.S. history other than the World Trade Center. 114 people were killed, 200 were injured and countless lives were changed forever by the unprecedented disaster.

“The Skywalk Memorial Foundation would like to thank the Kansas City Parks and Recreation Commissioners and staff for the consideration and approval of a memorial in Hospital Hill Park,” said Frank Freeman, president of the Skywalk Memorial Foundation. “We would like to thank Children’s Mercy Hospital and the community for their cooperation. This is the right time and place to honor those who lost their lives, those who were injured and the rescue workers who so bravely responded to this event in Kansas City’s history. We look forward to the next phase of our project and bringing our vision of this memorial to fruition.”

### **The concept**

The Skywalk Memorial will be part of a larger park being developed by Children’s Mercy Hospital. Visitors to the Skywalk Memorial will find a 36 foot plaza area illuminated by pinpoint lights. The pinpoint lights will symbolize the victims, rescuers and the ripple effect the tragedy has had on the community. The memorial will include a seating area surrounded by lush plants.

The Skywalk Memorial Foundation has hired Bowman Bowman Novick, a well-known Kansas City area architectural firm, with experience in designing some of Kansas City’s

best known landmarks. They include the Loose Park Fountain, KC Zoo Gardens Entrance, Fairway City Park and the landscape architecture for the Stowers Institute.

Our goal is singular and simple: to plan, design and build a one-of-a kind memorial that will respectfully pay tribute to the victims and emergency workers including medical, police, firefighters, public servants and others who responded to the disaster. We plan to do so in a professional and caring manner that permanently respects and honors the memories of all affected by this tragic event.

### **About the Skywalk Memorial Foundation:**

The Skywalk Memorial Foundation is a non-profit corporation consisting of a board of directors and numerous others who have volunteered their time and resources to this worthy and much needed cause. The current five board members were all personally affected by the skywalk tragedy. John Sullivan and Brent Wright lost their mothers; Frank Freeman was injured and lost his significant other; David Chavez lost his aunt, a member of the all female mariachi band there to perform; and Vincent Ortega was the first police officer who responded that fateful evening.

For information on how to get involved, to contact us, or to share your thoughts on this important project, please go to the Skywalk Memorial Foundation's website at [www.skywalkmemorial.org](http://www.skywalkmemorial.org). You may also e-mail us at [info@skywalkmemorial.org](mailto:info@skywalkmemorial.org) or leave a voice message at (877) 527-5992 (toll free).

The respected law firm of Polsinelli Shughart PC is serving as the Foundation's local legal counsel.