

## Smooth Streets in Kansas City

**T**raditional design manhole covers or other street castings can contribute to problems such as bumpy streets, impacting the quality of life in cities for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicle occupants. The Selflevel access assembly by EJ is a solution that features easy installation, providing infrastructure coverage that remains aligned with the finished road surface over time.

The city of Kansas City, Mo., has the Selflevel specified to be used whenever an existing manhole is being repaired as part of its Smooth Streets Initiative. Any and all utilities with a manhole in the street are required to do the same, including Kansas City Power & Light, AT&T, Time-Warner and Qwest/CenturyLink. The Selflevel is viewed as meeting two key criteria of the initiative: It provides a solution for the effects of heavyweight vehicles in traffic and for varying pavement slope resulting from the crown of the road.

As pavement conditions change or degrade, traditional design castings may rest significantly higher or lower than the street surface. Causal factors can include heaving/uplift due to ground frost, settling of the entire manhole structure, site deterioration, cracking of concrete or asphalt,

and inclined street surfaces. The Selflevel's configuration consists of a below-ground guide frame and an upper frame that allows for movement in position, so that a cover or grate will "float" or remain level with the surface.



Selflevel responds well to heavy traffic and meets AASHTO loading. Many are located in Kansas City bus lanes, with no failures reported. Cost benefits are based not only on road life and pavement integrity, but also on labor and material for a minimum of one to three manhole adjustments with future pavement overlays/restoration. The optional Infra-Riser further reduces traffic vibration. **SWS**

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