

Maintaining Pedestrian & Wheelchair-Friendly Sidewalk Access During Urban Gas Works

Supporting safe access and community continuity in Kansas City



AT A GLANCE CUSTOMER IMPACT



700

plates deployed
in and around the city



0

permit overstay penalties
since adoption



2+ Years

with zero sidewalk
access complaints



Access maintained

Continuous pedestrian and wheelchair-
friendly access maintained



Manual installation

by two operatives
without lifting equipment



Location:

Kansas City, Missouri

The Customer

Mears is a leading North American energy infrastructure provider specializing in the construction, maintenance, and integrity of gas distribution and pipeline systems. Operating across multiple states, the company manages large-scale urban utility programs where public safety, schedule certainty, and strict regulatory compliance are central to every project.

The Challenge

Executing sidewalk gas works in Kansas City is complicated by strict ADA enforcement, which bans steel road plates on pedestrian routes.

Mears previously left excavations open with fencing and barriers, a method that was labor-intensive, disruptive to local businesses, and unpopular with residents.

A tight 14-day permit window from excavation to restoration increased the risk of costly overruns.

As the program expanded, Mears needed a more efficient, non-invasive solution to maintain safe, accessible sidewalk routes and improve schedule flexibility.

Traditional options such as plywood boards or ground excavation carried significant risks and costs, including:

- ✘ **Increased labor and management demands**
- ✘ **Disrupted pedestrian access and public perception**
- ✘ **Greater risk of fines and overruns**
- ✘ **Permit deadlines**





The Solution

LowPro 23/05 Composite Road Plates

Mears adopted the Oxford Plastics LowPro 23/05 system to safely cover sidewalk excavations while works remained ongoing. This allowed crews to “dig once” and delay final reinstatement until all gas activities were complete.

Benefits

- > Interlocking panels enabled coverage over long, active sidewalk trenches.
- > No heavy plant or lifting equipment required.
- > Provided a stable, pedestrian and wheelchair-friendly surface throughout works.
- > Plates were easily adjusted as works progressed through different phases

- ✓ Interlocking trench coverage
- ✓ No heavy lifting
- ✓ Stable pedestrian surface
- ✓ Flexible phased adjustment

The Outcome

Compliance, Efficiency and Zero Regulatory Risk

The combined solution delivered measurable value across the project:

- > **Zero permit overstay penalties:**
Since adopting the LowPro 23/05 system, Mears has avoided all fixed penalty notices.
- > **Faster project cycles:**
The permit clock effectively delayed until panels were removed, ensuring consistent completion within 14-day limits.
- > **Improved community relations:**
Continuous pedestrian and wheelchair-friendly access meant no sidewalk access complaints were recorded for over two years.
- > **Operational productivity:**
Reduced labor hours associated with managing fencing, barriers, and pedestrian routing.
- > **High-quality site standards:**
Maintained a stable, flush surface suitable for high-footfall urban environments.

Why This Matters?

This case demonstrates how modern, composite-based temporary works systems can replace invasive traditional methods and provide:

- > **Reduced Risk:**
Eliminates the hazards of open excavations and the financial risk of permit overruns.
- > **Reduced Cost:**
Lowers labor requirements and removes the expense of fixed penalty notices.
- > **Reduced Time:**
Enables rapid manual installation and keeps projects moving without the need for heavy lifting equipment

“By using the interlocking composite panels, we’re able to keep sidewalks open safe and accessible, which is widely accepted by local authorities as a practical solution for maintaining pedestrian access during works.

The permit clock doesn’t really start until we remove the panels to reinstate, which has delivered major savings on permits and penalties — and we haven’t had a single sidewalk complaint in two years.”

**Ronald Young, Superintendent,
Mears Group Inc. | Utility
Construction Division**

Benefit-driven:

Save time and stay compliant.
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