



CUSTOMER STORY – CITIES

Small town feel with world-class security.

The town of Billerica, Mass., leverages network security technology from Axis Communications in municipal buildings and facilities to protect citizens, property, and individuals in custody.

ORGANIZATION
TOWN OF BILLERICA

LOCATION
BILLERICA, MA, USA

CUSTOMER NEED
PUBLIC SAFETY, EVIDENCE DOCUMENTATION

Protecting the suburbs

Sitting about 20 miles northwest of Boston, the suburban town of Billerica, Massachusetts, is home to roughly 45,000 residents. With a selection of public venues and service facilities, the Billerica Police Department (BPD) requires network security solutions to help guide their way for more rapid responses to emergencies and incidents.

The BPD was first introduced to Axis products by the Billerica Public Schools that were already using network cameras. "When we went to upgrade our system, they recommended the Axis products," recalled Greg Katz, Lieutenant Commander, Communications & IT Manager with the Billerica Police Department.

Throughout the municipality in places like the town hall building, library, public safety building, water department, and wastewater treatment facility a variety of different Axis cameras act as both a deterrent and a reactive tool. In fact, the cameras were specified for use when the town drew up plans for the new Peggy Hannon-Rizza Recreation Complex.

A new system is built

Before the BPD made the upgrade to Axis network cameras, they were using an old analog system. One of their first major projects was to arm the police dispatch area with the tools needed to monitor alerts that require immediate action around town.

AXIS P33 Network Camera Series was deployed in the lobby and stairwells of the safety complex while 4K, 180-degree view cameras were mounted on each side of the building for detailed coverage over a wide area. Corner-mounted stainless steel Axis cameras were installed in and around the holding cells.

Additionally, Katz and his team ripped out an old access control system to implement Axis network door controllers and readers at both the BPD station and the Town Hall. Ruled by settings on AXIS Entry Manager, BPD's door security solution "has been very good; very reliable and very easy to use," Lt. Katz asserts.

Visible cameras at recreational areas such as the skate park, basketball courts and playground provide a reminder to those gathered that BPD will not tolerate illegal activity on their grounds. The exterior models of the AXIS P33 Network Camera Series function in a variety of weather and act as a deterrent for general problems like drug activity and vandalism. Axis Lightfinder technology enables the cameras to produce full color images in near complete darkness which comes in especially helpful for officers responding to nighttime activity.

“One of the things I love about Axis is that I buy the camera hardware and the software, but don’t have to deal with an annual bill. Likewise, if I have a problem I call and it’s a breath of fresh air to get the support when I need it without having to pay extra.”

Greg Katz, Lieutenant Commander, Communications & IT Manager with the Billerica Police Department.

Reliably reactive

BPD does not focus on live monitoring the video feeds, but rather uses surveillance reactively by responding to system-activated alerts or retrieving evidence for investigations. To process and use the footage, the town relies on AXIS Camera Station video management software. The town has six servers in all; three managed by the school and three managed by BPD. The BPD Communications Center, however, is able to see the video feeds from all the servers and cameras.

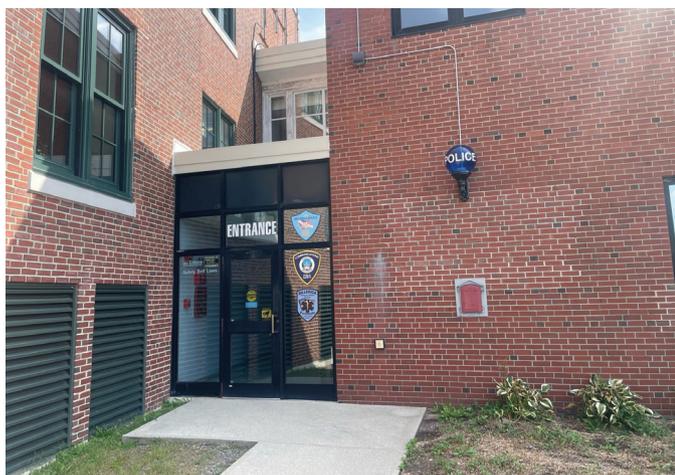
“One of the things I love about Axis is that I buy the camera hardware and the software, but don’t have to deal with an annual bill,” enthuses Katz. “Likewise, if I have a problem I call and it’s a breath of fresh air to get the support when I need it without having to pay extra.”

When the Peggy Hannon-Rizza Recreation Complex (PHR) was recently renovated there were limited cameras to protect the town’s \$11 million investment. Additional surveillance cameras were included in the cost of the project. The license plate recognition (LPR) solution built into Axis cameras came in use tracking down the people responsible for a costly act of vandalism that broke the bleachers alongside a field. Katz says of the LPR, “the image at night is pretty amazing; it’s clear as day.”

“The cost of replacing equipment, the manpower to do the work, and the time associated with filing insurance claim paperwork becomes so exorbitant that we’ve started including cameras into all new construction projects,” says Katz. “The visual evidence that the cameras provide is a clear return on investment for incidents like this.”

Expanding their solutions

Both the Billerica fire department and the restored Howe school building that now serves as the home for Billerica Access Television (BATV) have coupled an Axis ceiling speaker with an Axis network video door station for an access control solution.

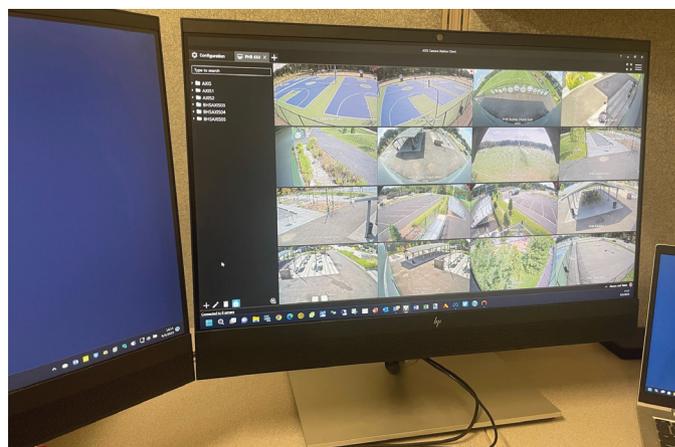


When visitors buzz the door station panel from the outside the audio notification is broadcast through the interior ceiling speaker to alert personnel. Personnel inside can then see, talk to, and remotely open the door using the video door station. BATV also uses Axis pan-tilt-zoom, dome, and panoramic cameras to monitor their equipment and AXIS Camera Station video management system on their PCs to view the video feeds.

Managing liability

As with other law enforcement agencies around the country, BPD faces a great deal of liability for individuals held in custody. “We’re responsible for the well-being of those people” Lt. Katz explained. “It’s our duty to supervise them and make sure they don’t hurt themselves.”

The station has policies in place to have personnel monitor the individual in the holding cell every 15 minutes. To quickly provide a log of these wellness checks, Lt. Katz pulls a report from AXIS Entry Manager in seconds that shows each time the identification card was read in that cell block. The log is helpful for state inspections.



A proactive approach all over town

Future endeavors for the BPD are to upgrade their ten network door controllers at various facilities and then integrate them with AXIS Camera Station Secure Entry to create an all-in-one video and access control solution.

Billerica has also made steady investment in its private fiber network for over a decade now. Owning their own fiber cables has provided more flexibility and capacity when it comes to security cameras and access management.

With improvements like these, Katz hopes the department will be able to pivot from a reactive to a real time approach in policing. "Every police officer wants to catch criminals in the act, not take a report on it after the fact" concluded Lt. Katz. "That's really where I want to head to so officers can be proactive, know when something is going on, respond and address the situation before any damage might happen."



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"The visual evidence that the Axis cameras provide is a clear return on investment for vandalism incidents at new construction sites."

Greg Katz, Lieutenant Commander, Communications & IT Manager with the Billerica Police Department.

About Axis Communications

Axis enables a smarter and safer world by creating solutions for improving security and business performance. As a network technology company and industry leader, Axis offers solutions in video surveillance, access control, intercom, and audio systems. They are enhanced by intelligent analytics applications and supported by high-quality training.

Axis has around 4,000 dedicated employees in over 50 countries and collaborates with technology and system integration partners worldwide to deliver customer solutions. Axis was founded in 1984, and the headquarters are in Lund, Sweden.