



Challenge

Make community safety a priority and better protect City of Selma residents, workers, and visitors.

Market: Government

Location: USA

Partner: Blackbelt Technologies

Solution

The City of Selma seamlessly manages the Avigilon high-definition surveillance system using the Avigilon Control Center network video management software (NVMS) with High-Definition Stream Management™ (HDSM). The City has installed more than 30 Avigilon HD cameras ranging from 3 to 5 MP to monitor the exterior of the George Washington Carver (GWC) complex, police headquarters and the Mayor's Office at City Hall around-the-clock. The Selma Police Department installed several Avigilon Analog Video Encoders to improve the performance of its existing analog cameras.

Featured Products



ACC Software



5 MP HD Camera



3 MP HD Camera



Analog Video Encoder



Network Video Recorder

Benefits

With a city-wide high-definition surveillance system connecting the Selma Police Department and Selma Housing Authority, the City of Selma can ensure greater coverage and overall protection across the municipality. Since installing the Avigilon system, the number of criminal reports has dropped 75 percent. The Avigilon high-definition surveillance system is an open and scalable solution that allows the City of Selma to leverage its existing infrastructure and will easily grow to meet the City's evolving needs.

- **75% drop in criminal reports**

- **Leverage existing infrastructure**

- **Flexible & scalable**



City of Selma Deploys Avigilon High-Definition Surveillance System to Boost Community Safety and Reduce Criminal Activity

Home to the largest historic district in the State of Alabama, the City of Selma is the regional retail, medical, employment, and cultural center for more than 80,000 people who live in Dallas, Perry, Wilcox, and Lowndes counties. A progressive community that is proud of its history and excited about its future, the City of Selma is dedicated to providing the amenities, services, and programs required to create a comfortable and thriving community in which to live and work. Also committed to ensuring the safety of its residents, businesses, and visitors, the City of Selma has deployed the Avigilon high-definition surveillance system at its City Hall, Selma Police Department (SPD,) and Selma Housing Authority (SHA) in the first phase of its plan to improve public safety and reduce criminal activity across the region.



Community Safety Top Priority

“As a budget-driven organization, we did not want to get locked into a closed, proprietary system that would lead to costly upgrades as we continue to expand”

“Community safety is our primary goal and we are committed to doing whatever is required to help us make our city a safer place to live, work, and visit,” explained Mayor George Patrick Evans. In the past, the SDP responded to countless reports of criminal activity and civil disobedience from parts of the city, including at the SHA George Washington Carver (GWC) complex. After a preliminary review of its security environment, the City realized that more could be done to improve community safety. “By deploying the Avigilon high-definition surveillance system at police headquarters and GWC, we have taken the first steps in boosting safety and reducing criminal activity in our community.”

With the assistance of BlackBelt Technologies, a local telecommunication, security, and management services firm, the City of Selma began to look for a surveillance solution that was robust, easy to operate, scalable, and could easily integrate with the SPD’s existing analog cameras for improved performance and cost savings. “As a budget-driven organization, we did not want to get locked into a closed, proprietary system that would lead to costly upgrades as we continue to expand,” explained William Riley, Chief of Police. “With strong expertise and an excellent understanding of our needs, Blackbelt Technologies recommended the Avigilon high-definition surveillance and we have not looked back since.”



Avigilon Secures Selma

Officers and administrators at the SPD and SHA seamlessly manage the Avigilon high-definition surveillance system using Avigilon Control Center network video management software (NVMS) with High-Definition Stream Management, which was built from the ground up to manage high-definition surveillance video. To date, the City has installed more than 30 Avigilon HD cameras ranging from three to five megapixels to monitor the exterior of GWC, a 215-apartment complex with more than 500 tenants and at police headquarters to monitor the parking lot, main lobby, booking rooms, holding cells, Magistrate's Office, and Selma Municipal Court. The SPD installed several Avigilon Analog Video Encoders to create a hybrid surveillance system that dramatically and cost-effectively improves the performance of its existing analog cameras. The City has also installed an Avigilon HD camera to monitor activity at the Mayor's Office at City Hall. Storing up to 45 days of continuous surveillance video, the Avigilon high-definition surveillance system is monitored around-the-clock at both the SPD and GWC complex.



Hybrid System Improves Performance

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SPD headquarters is a very busy facility, managing the daily police work for the region and housing the Magistrate's Office, the Selma Municipal Court, and the City's parole and fine department. With such a high level of activity, ensuring staff and visitor safety was critical. “We had an analog-based surveillance system that was unreliable and could not deliver the image clarity needed or scale to meet our growing needs, but we didn't have unlimited funds to replace the system,” explained Chief Wiley. “The Avigilon high-definition surveillance system has enabled us to build a hybrid system that leverages our existing camera infrastructure for cost-savings and major performance gains and will facilitate our migration to full high definition surveillance in the future.”



City-wide Surveillance for Greater Protection

With no previous surveillance system at GWC, residents now feel much safer in their neighbourhood knowing that activity is being monitored 24x7 by staff at both the SPD and GWC. With a city-wide high-definition surveillance system connecting the two organizations, the City of Selma can ensure greater coverage and overall protection across the municipality. "Now, if the SPD receives a report from GWC, officers can review the surveillance footage in real-time to determine what resources are needed before dispatching an officer," explained Lola Rogers, director at the SHA. "The result is faster and more-effective crime management and prevention."

The City of Selma has been very impressed with the image clarity and zooming capabilities of the Avigilon high-definition surveillance system both day and night.

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Improved Manageability for Better Results

According to both Chief Wiley and Ms. Rogers, the Avigilon high-definition surveillance system is very user-friendly, making it easy to achieve maximum results. "We simply have to click and point to operate the system and find what we are looking for, and switching from camera to camera is extremely straightforward," said Rogers. SPD police officers have also found the system easy to use. "Investigators love using the Avigilon high-definition surveillance system to track an incident onsite or at GWC," confirmed Chief Wiley. "In fact, if we get a report from GWC or the surrounding area, the first thing we do now is check the footage." With its previous analog-based system, the SPD rarely reviewed surveillance footage for investigative purposes because it was not reliable – one month it would be operational, and the next two it would be down. "The Avigilon high-definition surveillance system is both one hundred percent more reliable and more functional than our previous system," added Wiley.

Because the system is so much easier to manage, maintenance costs have also been reduced. "If our former system failed, we would have to send the old CPU out for maintenance, so we would often be without the system for weeks," noted Chief Wiley. The City of Selma has been very impressed with the installation, training, and ongoing support delivered by Avigilon and BlackBelt Technologies, whose expertise and responsiveness has further enriched the system's manageability and performance. "We could not have worked with a better team," said Mayor Evans.



A 75 Percent Drop in Criminal Activity

"GWC tenants know that they are being monitored, so criminal activity has declined since we installed the Avigilon high-definition surveillance system," commented Rogers, who tracks criminal activity at GWC by the number of reports she receives each week from the SPD. "Before installing the Avigilon system, we would receive 40 reports each week. Now, we are down to less than 10 a week – a 75 percent drop in criminal activity."

In addition, SPD officers and administrative staff feel much more secure at work since the new system was deployed. "Anxiety levels have dropped, especially on court day when traffic increases, because staff know that we can easily capture and review footage if an incident does occur," said Chief Wiley.

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A Scalable Solution for a Growing City

"With Avigilon, we have the tools to accurately identify suspects and successfully convict them, reducing crime and ultimately preventing the risk of repeat offences for better overall community protection."

Looking ahead, the City will develop new resources and build new facilities to further enrich the living and tourist experience. "We plan to deploy the Avigilon high-definition surveillance system in all public places, including our new waterfront park, walking trails, downtown, and our schools to better protect and secure our entire community," confirmed Chief Wiley. The SPD is also rolling out a mobile computing platform to its 54 officers that will give them access to surveillance footage on laptops from any location. "The Avigilon high-definition surveillance system is an open and scalable solution that will easily grow with us as we continue to expand."

City of Selma residents and visitors alike understand – and appreciate – the effort the City has made to preserve their safety. "We can't eliminate the criminal element entirely," concluded Mayor Evans. "But with Avigilon, we have the tools to accurately identify suspects and successfully convict them, reducing crime and ultimately preventing the risk of repeat offences for better overall community protection."