

# City of Saratoga Springs



## Saratoga Springs' Businesses, Residents and Tourists are Safer with Milestone Video

### The Challenge

Every summer, the Saratoga Race Course brings thousands of visitors to the City of Saratoga Springs, NY. The revenue generated during the racing season boosts the city's economy for the rest of the year. Prior to beginning the 2013 season, Saratoga Springs city administrators sought to significantly update city surveillance, both in City Hall and on city streets. The camera coverage then consisted of mainly interior spaces with limited visibility of areas outside City Hall. The existing system was installed without a post-installation maintenance contract so the city was operating without vendor support.

### The Solution

Saratoga Springs' Safety Committee helped to secure capital budget monies for these projects along with seed money from the city's risk and safety budget. After deliberation, the committee engaged Digital Surveillance Solutions (DSS) as their security integrator for this project. DSS was chosen from the New York State Office of General Services Security Contractors List. The DSS objective was to make the best use of allotted budget while at the same time achieving a robust and reliable system that would require minimal maintenance. After a detailed site survey, DSS presented the city with a comprehensive design and implementation plan. The first phase was deployed with the installation of six cameras on the city streets

#### Organization

City of Saratoga Springs

#### Location

New York, USA

#### Industry Segment

City Surveillance

#### System Integrator

Digital Surveillance Solutions

#### Milestone Partners

Axis

#### Solution

XProtect® Corporate  
XProtect® Essential

#### Number of cameras

57

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utilizing a wireless network and a centralized video recording server at City Hall. In July 2015, an additional camera was added to the city streets' wireless network with several more camera additions inside and outside City Hall and the Police Department.

The software platform for the video server is Milestone XProtect Corporate 2014. The camera feeds are streamed into the Milestone system and are monitored by the Saratoga Springs Police Department. Subsequent to the initial deployment, independent Milestone XProtect Essential systems have been deployed to historic Congress Park and various city departments. Each remote system provides local administration, monitoring, and recording. There are 15 cameras in Congress Park, nine at the Department of Public Works, 16 at the recreation center, seven on various downtown streets and 10 at the Woodlawn parking garage. The recreation center now includes Axis network cameras as well as Bosch and American Dynamics analog cameras digitally converted by an Axis video encoder. The other locations feature a mix of Axis, IQeye and Mobotix cameras.

Utilizing the Milestone Interconnect feature set, all of the remote Milestone XProtect Essential video systems are monitored on demand and centrally administered by the Milestone XProtect Corporate platform from the Police Department.

## Advantages

Milestone now serves as the heartbeat of an expandable security system. Milestone Interconnect makes it easy and cost efficient to add more Axis cameras in other locations of the city. The Saratoga Springs Police Department can centrally control the cameras across the city from its base in City Hall.

Marilyn Rivers, Director of Risk and Safety for the City of Saratoga Springs, says: "What makes the Milestone option so attractive is that it allows the city to invest in a system that's ready to use and can also handle scalable expansion in conjunction with the city's growth." She added that the Milestone solution was tremendously cost efficient, which is a critical advantage for a mid-sized city with a limited security budget.

## Historic City with Big Seasonal Events

The City of Saratoga Springs, New York, is an upstate community with a year-round population of 37,000 that can triple during public events including the Saratoga Race Course season. Steeped in history, Saratoga's Travers' Race in August is considered the fourth race of the Triple Crown. The city assists in sponsoring many festivals and special events that bring acclaim and attention to its historic properties and cultural diversity. In addition to the historic Saratoga Race Track, the city's major attractions include the famous Spirit of Life Statue forged by Daniel Chester French (the sculptor of Abraham Lincoln), the Saratoga Performing Arts Center (SPAC), Saratoga Springs Casino and Raceway, First Night on New Year's Eve, February's Chowderfest, multiple road races and Arts in Congress Park.



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Marilyn Rivers  
Director of Risk and Safety  
City of Saratoga Springs



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## The Power of Choice with Open Platform Technology

DSS has a decade of experience working with Milestone software and they were honored as Milestone Partner of Year in 2009. Mike Blumenson, CEO of DSS, says they recommend it almost exclusively to customers, in part because of the freedom of choice that comes with the open architecture support of nearly 5,000 hardware devices from more than 150 manufacturer brands.

“The open platform is a key selling point to a customer that hasn’t worked with us or with Milestone,” Blumenson says. “If for some reason our relationship is ever discontinued, the customer still has a product that works with everyone else’s products. It’s future proof.”

Mike Ruthman works on strategic sales for DSS and was involved with drafting their proposal to Saratoga Springs. He adds that bringing in Milestone did not require that DSS get rid of the existing system.

“One of the best features of the open platform is that we could keep the existing cameras that were in place in the city without disruption,” Ruthman says. “We had Axis cameras in City Hall already. Instead of having to remove these cameras, it was just a matter of putting in Milestone as the recording platform without additional investment. Unifying all cameras to the Milestone platform eliminated the need to maintain and monitor multiple, independent systems from several manufacturers. New Axis network cameras and the Milestone management software layer were added seamlessly. Additionally, as legacy cameras run their lifespan, new cameras are added and Milestone is the perfect platform for replacement and expansion of these systems.”

In addition to City Hall, the Saratoga Recreation Center has 16 cameras running Milestone. John Hirliman is the Administrative Director of Recreation for Saratoga Springs. Eight of the cameras are part of Saratoga’s previous security system, but they all now run through Milestone via the Axis video encoder.

“We had an incident where we had the theft of a camera in the gymnasium,” Hirliman says. “With Milestone, we were able to track the individual from the moment he took it and quickly apprehend him, resolving the incident quickly and efficiently.”

## Axis and Milestone Easy to Use, Hassle-free

Hirliman emphasizes how easy Milestone was for him and his staff to learn.

“The desktop version is really simple,” Hirliman says. “The freeze frame and zoom tabs are great for incident management. We also have a PTZ camera out on the rec field that we can rotate and zoom in close to see everything that’s going on.”



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Mike Blumenson  
Chief Executive Officer  
Digital Surveillance Solutions



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Blumenson reports that the training process with Milestone is always hassle-free.

"Milestone has become our default system for a reason," says Blumenson. "We're so comfortable because we know that the end user always has a great experience with it. In this case, we knew once police dispatch began operating with Milestone, they were going to love the ease of use and the features, which is exactly what has happened."

## Milestone Interconnect Unifies Operations, Crowd Monitoring

Blumenson and Ruthman say that using Milestone Interconnect has been a key component to the successful deployment in Saratoga Springs.

"The city is using Milestone in a variety of locations," Blumenson says. "It's essential that every location's cameras stream back in to central command at the Police Department through Milestone Interconnect."

Rivers says that Milestone helps Saratoga Springs control the big population surge it receives in the summer months and during special events.

"Saratoga is a destination," Rivers says. "We have a racetrack that brings tens of thousands of visitors, and many great restaurants and historical attractions. Milestone allows us to monitor crowds and their activities, to proactively manage the city's risks and take action as may be needed."

Rivers says the benefits of the Axis cameras and Milestone open platform go beyond monetary savings.

"You can't really put a dollar amount on it but I think of it as a peace-of-mind factor," Rivers says. "The City of Saratoga Springs is rooted in friendliness and hospitality. We love to open our arms and show visitors the best of what our city has to offer. With Axis, Milestone and DSS, we can do that safely and securely while also assisting our local business owners and constituents."



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Milestone Systems is a global industry leader in open platform IP video management software, founded in 1998 and now operating as a stand-alone company in the Canon Group. Milestone technology is easy to manage, reliable and proven in thousands of customer installations, providing flexible choices in network hardware and integrations with other systems. Sold through partners in more than 100 countries, Milestone solutions help organizations to manage risks, protect people and assets, optimize processes and reduce costs.

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