

Kuujuaq, Nunavik Airport

Nunavik, Quebec



Planning a new airport terminal located well north of the frosty 55th Parallel, the Juujuaq, Nunavik Airport had several cultural, environmental, and logistical considerations that made it a challenging project. Situated in a Kuujuaq Inuit Village in northern Quebec, the airport serves as a very important symbol for the Inuit community. Because airplanes are the only year-round connection to the outside world – as well as the sole means of contact with thirteen other Inuit communities in the region – the airport was specially designed to respect and reflect the Inuit culture. Designed in the likeness of a traditional kayak, the new terminal illustrates the importance of symbolism in the Inuit culture.

Despite the remoteness of the location, the Nunavik airport is the third most important airport in Quebec due to its designation as a hub for the entire arctic region of the province. Because of high construction costs associated with the frigid and icy climate, functionality and efficiency relative to size was a necessity, as well as smooth integration of the project with the existing facilities.

Furthermore, the project needed to comply with the latest standards for far northern construction. Because the owner wanted to obtain the silver LEED certification, the project incorporated all of the latest sustainable development standards. Galvanizing, in addition to saving the waste and expense of corrosion maintenance and repair, is also recyclable, making it an environmentally friendly choice directly in line with the owner's intentions.

Local hiring quotas, combined with a very limited and unskilled local population, required the project be completed over two summer seasons. This made galvanizing the preferred corrosion protection system because of the rapidity and flexibility the process allows during onsite construction. Galvanizing was an excellent fit, as it accommodated the unique cultural and labor needs of the region by allowing the incomplete structure to be left exposed throughout the arctic winter without damage. Using galvanizing to support the environmentally friendly airport was the best choice, given the sustainability of the process, the superior corrosion protection in extreme environments, and the low-maintenance quality of galvanized steel.



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