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## Local crews and equipment install safer Algonquin Modular Bridge System to reconnect Iqaluit communities

Apex (Inuktitut Niaqunngut) is a small community outside the City of Iqaluit on Baffin Island in Nunavut.

The spirit and history of the Apex Bridge that spans the Niaqunguk River (often referred to as the Apex River) exudes a do-it-yourself work ethic. In 1955, to replace a precarious wooden foot bridge, the people of Apex built their single-lane WWII-era Bailey Bridge alongside members of the US Army Corps of Engineers.

That community-led tradition has carried on with its replacement almost 70 years later in 2024. Their new Algonquin Modular Panel Bridge became a reality thanks to significant community involvement and the proven expertise of local contractor, Tower Arctic Ltd.

Residents are very happy about their new, safer bridge, which is two lanes wide and features epoxy-aggregate-coated steel deck panels and an external pedestrian walkway for increased safety.

### Project at a glance:

**Project Name:** Apex Bridge Replacement

**Location:** Iqaluit, Nunavut

**Owner:** City of Iqaluit

**Consultant:** Dillon

**Contractor:** Tower Arctic Ltd.

**Sector:** Transportation

**Application:** Stream Crossing

**Product:** Algonquin Modular Bridge System

**Dimensions:** Span 36.6 m, Width 7.4 m

**Installation Time:** Two weeks

Once the contract was awarded in the spring, time was of the essence. The components had to get to the shipping port on time, otherwise the construction could not have happened that summer. The bridge was installed over a focused construction period, with overall project work taking place from summer through November 2024, in line with Arctic construction conditions and seasonal constraints. We used a combination of in-stock and new parts to minimize fabrication time and ensure the bridge would ship on schedule.

We were happy to partner with Tower, whose 80 years of experience in “Building the North” added significant value to the project. We worked closely with them and the consultant, Dillon, during the component packaging at our plant to ensure the shipment would meet regulations. Our logistics support avoided the cost and delay of using an intermediary shipping company which usually re-bundles and tags all materials.

We provided launch rollers and guidelines to help Tower safely de-launch the existing bridge, and we were on site for seven days to offer installation assistance.

In keeping with the spirit of the community, an unofficial opening party was held in November of 2024. The new bridge was decorated with balloons carrying the names of community members’ loved ones. Later, in the local school, a special cake was cut by Apex resident and guest of honour, Martha Tikivik, who remembers crossing the old wooden foot bridge on her way to the Hudson Bay store in the early 1950s. She commented on the new bridge through an interpreter: “I’m very happy with the outcome.”

Apex resident, Anne Crawford, lives next to the bridge site and knows a great deal of the bridge’s history. “The old bridge had one lane, which pedestrians would walk in the middle of to cross,” Crawford said. “People have been really enthusiastic about this design. I think they will come just to see the pedestrian walkway.”



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