



Community Services Staff Report

REPORT NO: CS-2026-14
TO: Committee of the Whole, Monday, May 4, 2026
SUBMITTED BY: Chris Catania, Director of Community Services
PREPARED BY: Amber Schenck, Project Coordinator
REVIEWED BY: Jeff Willmer, Chief Administrative Officer
DATE: April 23, 2026
SUBJECT: Level III Structural Assessment – New Hamburg Arena Timber Roof

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report CS-2026-14 Level III Structural Assessment – New Hamburg Arena Timber Roof System be received for information; and,

THAT Council approve award to Wood Research and Development (WRD) in the amount of \$89,556 excluding HST to complete a Level III Structural Assessment of the New Hamburg Arena Timber Roof.

SUMMARY:

Staff are seeking Council approval to proceed with a sole source procurement to retain a highly specialized engineering firm to complete a Level III Structural Assessment of the New Hamburg Arena timber roof system. This work represents the next critical phase in the lifecycle management of the facility, advancing beyond visual inspections to a comprehensive, data-driven evaluation of structural integrity. The recommended approach aligns with the Township's Procurement By-law by leveraging unique expertise, minimizing risk, and ensuring best value in the assessment of this aging community asset.

BACKGROUND:

The New Hamburg Arena was constructed in 1947 as a 'natural ice' facility. Ice-making refrigeration equipment was added in 1949. The arena portion of the building was not heated or cooled. It served the residents of the Township of Wilmot as their sole ice facility for six decades until being decommissioned in 2007 following the opening of the Wilmot Recreation Complex. During its peak usage, the arena operated at full capacity with daily practices, games and weekend tournaments earning a strong reputation within the community. The arena remains a significant community asset, with deep-rooted community value and continued use for annual events such as Moparfest, the New Hamburg Fall Fair, Mennonite Relief Sale, and productions by The Community Players.

Since being decommissioned as an ice facility, the arena's use has transitioned from intensive daily ice operations to community programming and major events. While this shift has reduced day-to-day operational demands, it has increased the importance of planned, proactive preservation efforts. These efforts include undertaking comprehensive assessments of key building systems to ensure their ongoing structural integrity and safety until such a time as a major rehabilitation or redevelopment of the facility may occur.

The arena's barrel-vault timber roof system has been subject to periodic visual assessments, typically conducted at five-year intervals. These reviews have informed maintenance and repair tasks where deficiencies have become visible; however, they are limited in their ability to detect or predict concealed deterioration within the timber members.

As the New Hamburg Arena approaches its eightieth year of operation, the Community Services department is advancing the 2026 structural assessment beyond visual review toward a more comprehensive, data-driven understanding of the roof system's current structural condition. This assessment represents a continuation of the lifecycle management process as recommended in the 2020 Building Condition Assessments (BCAs). A Level III Structural Assessment incorporating advanced non-destructive testing, laboratory analysis, and structural modelling will provide the necessary information to confirm the condition of the structural members, identify any concealed deterioration, and support decision-making for future capital planning and long-term preservation of the facility.

REPORT:

Requirement for Sole Source Award

Staff are recommending approval of a sole-source procurement to retain Wood Research and Development (WRD) to complete a Level III Structural Assessment of the New Hamburg Arena timber roof system. In accordance with the Township's Procurement By-Law (2021-43), under section 71, "The Purchasing Agent may under the following conditions negotiate directly with one or more Bidders and in such cases the requirement for inviting tenders and quotations is waived, where there is only one source of supply for the goods or services." This sole source procurement can be permitted where specific conditions exist, including where services are available from a limited number of suppliers, where specialized expertise is required, and/or where a particular supplier demonstrates unique qualifications that provided best value and reduced project risk.

Engineering Firm Specializes in Legacy Timber Roof Systems

The scope of work for the Level III Structural Assessment requires highly specialized knowledge in long-span timber roof systems, including the use of advanced non-destructive testing methods, laboratory analysis, and timber-specific structural modelling. This level of expertise is not available among general structural engineering firms. Wood Research and Development has extensive experience in the inspection and rehabilitation of legacy timber structures, including arena facilities and long-span systems comparable to the New Hamburg Arena. Their team is led by a globally recognized expert with a PhD in timber engineering, 45 years of experience, and more than 1,300 completed projects world-wide. This depth of experience supports a high-level of confidence in both the methodology and the reliability of WRD's findings.

Given the age of the structure and the known risks associated with concealed deterioration in timber systems, selecting a highly specialized firm reduces the likelihood of an incomplete assessment, misinterpretation of structural conditions, or unforeseen failures. This approach represents best value to the Township by prioritizing accuracy, safety, and long-term planning.

The proposed assessment will include a three-day on-site inspection utilizing specialized diagnostic equipment, non-destructive testing and selective core sampling, laboratory analysis of timber samples, structural analysis under current loading conditions (snow, wind, and dead-load), preparation of a comprehensive Level III inspection report, and development of a prioritized five-year asset management plan with cost projections which will provide both immediate verification of structural integrity and a clear roadmap for future maintenance and capital investment.

ALIGNMENT WITH THE TOWNSHIP OF WILMOT STRATEGIC PLAN:

Financial Stability

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Council approved a 2026 Capital Budget request of \$90,000 to complete a structural condition assessment of the New Hamburg Arena roof and to prepare a long-term maintenance and capital plan for its ongoing maintenance and repairs. Staff recommend Council approve the sole source award to Wood Research and Development in the amount of \$89,556.00 excluding taxes for this specialized structural assessment, which is within the approved 2026 capital budget.

The following table provides a breakdown of the budget costs being funded through the Infrastructure Renewal Reserve Fund.

Budget and Funding Sources (Amounts listed exclude taxes)

New Hamburg Arena Barrel Roof Level III Structural Assessment	
2026-17 Capital Budget (Approved)	\$90,000
Award Sole Source (Infrastructure Renewal Reserve Fund)	\$89,556

ATTACHMENTS:

N/A