

## Technical Reports

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BC Coastal Forest Sector Hem-Fir Initiative

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### Architectural Element\* Trends in North American Non-residential Construction

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\* **Architectural elements** are defined here as solid wood heavy timbers, glue-laminated and other engineered beams or posts, which are visually exposed. These members can be structural or non-structural.

#### Abstract

This report presents the results of web survey that was completed by 250 architects in North America that specialize in non-residential building design. Over a third of the respondents were chosen because they have utilized architectural elements in their designs. Architectural elements are defined here as solid wood heavy timbers, glue-laminated and other engineered beams or posts, which are visually exposed. These members can be structural or non-structural.

Results showed that these visual wood products are used in virtually all types on non-residential buildings, and are growing in popularity. This coincides with an overall growth in popularity for wood interior finish in these buildings. It was also found that there is a link between the two in terms of a desire to match species, color and character. For BC Coastal species, the popularity of Douglas fir was confirmed, and opportunities for Hemlock and Amabilis fir were explored. This included the fact that these species lend themselves to stain, and have desirable strength characteristics. For the latter, it was discovered that there may be an opportunity for developing and promoting timber strength ratings, much like what is presently done for Japan.

**Keywords:** architectural elements, timbers, glue-laminated timbers, engineered wood products, architects, non-residential construction, North America.

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