What is claimed is:

1. A method of fabricating an optics wafer, the method comprising:

providing a wafer comprising a core region composed of a glass-reinforced epoxy, the wafer further comprising a first resin layer on a top surface of the core region and a second resin layer on a bottom surface of the core region, wherein the core region and first and second resin layers are substantially non-transparent for a specific range of the electromagnetic spectrum, the wafer further including vertical transparent regions that extend through the core region and the first and second resin layers and are composed of a solid material that is substantially transparent for the specific range of the electromagnetic spectrum;

thinning the wafer from its top surface and its bottom surface so that a resulting thickness is within a predetermined range without causing glass fibers of the core region to become exposed; and

providing respective optical structures on one or more exposed surfaces of at least some of the transparent regions.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the core region is composed of a composite material composed of woven fiberglass cloth with an epoxy resin binder.

3. The method according to claim 1 wherein the first and second resin layers are not glass-reinforced.

4. The method according to claim 1 wherein the first and second resin layers are composed of a glass-free black epoxy.

5. The method according to claim 1 wherein, following the thinning~~polishing~~, an overall thickness of the wafer is within $\pm$ 5-50 μm of a predetermined thickness across the wafer.

6. The method according to claim 1 wherein the specific range includes at least one of the infrared or near infra-red portion of the electromagnetic spectrum.

7. The method according to claim 1 wherein, following the thinning~~polishing~~, a remaining thickness of each of the first and second resin layers is in the range of 10-50% of respective initial thicknesses of the first and second resin layers.

8. The method according to claim 1 wherein the optical structures on the transparent region~~elements~~ include lenses.

9. The method according to claim 1 including using a replication process to provide the optical structures.

10. The method of claim 1 wherein the core region is composed of a composite material composed of woven fiberglass cloth with an epoxy resin binder, and the first and second resin layers are composed of a glass-free black epoxy,

wherein, following the thinning~~polishing~~, a remaining thickness of each of the first and second resin layers is in the range of 10-50% of respective initial thicknesses of the first and second resin layers, and an overall thickness of the wafer is within $\pm$ 5-50 μm of a predetermined thickness across the wafer.

11. The method according to claim 1 wherein, following the thinnning~~polishing~~, variation in overall thickness of the optics wafer is no more than 5% with respect to absolute thickness as well as with respect to variations across the wafer

12. The method according to claim 1 further including separating the optics wafer into individual optics members.

13. The method according to claim 1 further including incorporating the optics wafer into a wafer stack for forming opto-electronic modules.