Continuing Professional Development Program (CPDP)
Proposal

A proposal to update the Existing OBOA Maintenance Program

DRAFT March 8, 2016
INTRODUCTION

Continuing education and training for Building Officials is not only essential to sustaining our comprehensive knowledge base but it also demonstrates our professionalism to the construction industry. Our colleagues, and more importantly the public, expect and deserve that Building Officials remain current and demonstrate the high level of competency required to properly protect our communities.

In his Report of the Elliot Lake Commission of Inquiry, the Honourable Paul R. Belanger included two recommended standards for building officials in Ontario municipalities. The first of them relates to continuing education as follows,

*The existing standards for training and certification of building officials and inspectors under the Building Code Act should be amended to require mandatory continuing education.*

The Province has committed to acting on many of the report’s recommendations and it is anticipated that this amendment will be made to the BCA in the near future. To this extent the Ontario Building Officials Association has asked the Certification Committee to undertake a review of the current Maintenance Program.

A meaningful and relevant maintenance program is also crucial to meeting the objectives of the OBOA Strategic Plan 2012+ in several of its identified strategic priorities.

The goal of the OBOA’s certification and maintenance programs is to offer professional programs that provide assurance of building officials’ qualifications. Municipalities across Ontario rely on the CBCO certification to ensure that building departments have the best qualifications and that staff’s knowledge and competency remain current. It is intended that an enhanced Maintenance Program would remain mandatory for all OBOA Certified Building Code Officials (CBCO).

The following is a draft proposal intended to initiate discussion on the development of a continuing education program for OBOA and CBCOs.
CURRENT PROGRAM

The current Maintenance Program requires a Certified Member to acquire 30 points over a three year Maintenance Cycle. Points are based on a formula of one hour of recognized professional development being equivalent to one Maintenance point. The current Cycle is a 3 year term and ends on December 31, 2016.

On the completion of a code training course or attendance at a workshop, AMTS or seminar, the Member submits verification to the OBOA office for recognition of points earned.

It has become apparent that the current program is outdated with respect to the number of points, or credits that are required as well as the types of training that should be considered as counting towards a building officials’ continuous training and learning.

PROPOSED PROGRAM

In order to further align with the OBOA Certification Program, as well as with other professional programs in the building industry, it is proposed to revise the current Maintenance Program to a continuing education type of system. The proposed program is entitled, Continuing Professional Development Program (CPDP).

The requirements of this program over a 3 year cycle are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Member</th>
<th>Number of Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBCO/BCQ Government, Associate or Life Member</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBCO/BCQ Retired Member</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Member</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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</table>

The increase in the required number of credits from the previous system is more appropriate in terms of acquiring and maintaining the necessary knowledge base to effectively and professionally perform the requirements and responsibilities of a building official in Ontario.

One CPDP credit is equivalent to one hour of training or learning with a maximum of 6 credits allowed to be earned in a single day event. Similar to the Certification Program, credits must come from a combination of technical and occupational skills categories.
Due to the nature of the building code business with code updates, provincial initiatives, code cycles and legal precedents, a portion of these credits will also be directly targeted in specific fields of study. These will specifically be divided into three groups:

**Structured Learning Credits** – Credits earned in this category are in the form of organized training, courses or events. A minimum of 50% of the required credits must be Structured Learning Credits. These programs must be a minimum of one hour in length and proof of attendance needs to be provided such as a certificate, a diploma, or a letter of attendance from the provider.

Example of Structured Learning Credits:

- Technical Learning (OBOA education courses, college or university courses, lectures, Lunch & Learns, seminars, workshops, AMTS);
- Occupational Skills Training;
- Distance education courses/training related to the building industry; and
- Presentations & Teaching.

**Independent Learning Credits** – Credits earned in this category include learning or training activities completed or attended outside of a classroom. Official proof of independent learning credits will not be required. Members will self-track these credits on the “Activity Reporting Form” available on the OBOA website.

Examples of Independent Learning Credits include:

- Committee Meetings;
- Chapter Meetings;
- Meetings for Associations related to the Building Industry;
- Professional Writing;
- Reading;
- Site Tours;
- Mentoring.

**Occupational Skills Training Credits** – Credits earned in this category are in the form of soft skill-based courses related to job performance such as report writing, communication skills, conflict resolution, customer service, etc. A minimum of 12 credits must be Occupational Skills Training Credits and can be earned through both the Structured or Independent Learning formats.

**How Credits Are Tracked**

A member will be required to continuously track total credits earned in any reporting cycle by self-reporting on the OBOA website.
The OBOA will randomly audit 1-3% of its certified members by asking for proof of total credits earned (as outlined for each type of credit). This audit will be done by the Certification Committee by the end of February following a completed cycle.

The proposed CPDP will ensure members maintain consistently high levels of training and competency. Together with technical and ‘soft’ skills training a building official achieves a more balanced professional level of competency increasing a building officials' knowledge base that is, recognized by government, the public and employers.

The following requirements are proposed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structured Learning Credits</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Minimum/Maximum Credit Requirements</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Total Structured Credits    | All structured learning credits require proof of participation. | A minimum of 30 credits per cycle or 50% of the required credits if the cycle is prorated  
A minimum of 3 credits must be acquired through a form directed at identifying revisions to the code where a code cycle falls within a CPDP cycle, |
| OBOA/College/University Courses, ATMS, Conferences, Lectures, Seminars, Workshops | Organized educational training sessions related to the building industry. | 1 credit per hour of learning.  
Maximum 30 credits per course/conference. |
<p>| Distance Education | Webinars, courses, and online education modules. | Maximum 30 credits per course. |
| In-Person Learning | Lectures, Seminars, Workshops, OBOA, College or University Courses | Maximum 30 credits per course. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Learning Credits</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Minimum/Maximum Credit Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Independent Credits</td>
<td>Independent Learning Credits are self-reported on the OBOA “Activity Reporting Form”.</td>
<td>Maximum 30 credits per cycle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OBOA Board/Committee/Chapter Meetings</td>
<td>Attendance at OBOA related meetings.</td>
<td>Maximum 15 credit per cycle</td>
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<tr>
<td>Committee Meetings</td>
<td>Attendance at committee meetings as a member of an organized group which relates to the building industry.</td>
<td>Maximum 15 credits per cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor</td>
<td>Acting as a mentor to an intern building official.</td>
<td>Maximum 15 credits per cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Writing</td>
<td>A written article related to the building industry that has been prepared by a member and is published for the purpose of educating others.</td>
<td>Maximum 10 credits per cycle</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Includes the reading of books or journal which are related to the building industry. A summary of the reading will be required to be provided on the Individual Reporting Form.</td>
<td>Maximum 5 credits per cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentations/Teaching</td>
<td>Public speaking, teaching and/or training including speaking at OBOA Chapter Meetings or AMTS on a topic related to the building industry.</td>
<td>Maximum 30 credits per cycle.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional Tours</td>
<td>Organized and guided tours on a topic or location related to the building industry.</td>
<td>Maximum 10 credits per cycle.</td>
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**Occupational Skills Training Credits**

These credits can be earned through either the Formal or Independent Learning formats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Occupational Skill Training Credits</th>
<th>Minimum 12 credits per cycle.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Human Resources Training – conflict resolution, customer service skills, supervisory/leadership courses</td>
<td>No maximum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Safety Courses</td>
<td>No maximum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoning, Planning, Legal or Municipal Administration Courses</td>
<td>No maximum</td>
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FAQ

1. **When will the enhanced CPDP program be implemented?**

   Implementation will be January 1, 2017.
   
   The 1st CPDP cycle will begin on that date and end on December 31, 2019.

2. **Why are updates to the current CPDP program required?**

   Safety is of utmost importance to building officials in Ontario because of the dangers unsafe building present to the public. This has unfortunately been clearly demonstrated by the events surrounding Elliot Lake.

   Upon review of the current program, it was felt that the existing system does not effectively reflect the vision and commitment of the OBOA. The new program will provide assurance to the public that Ontario’s building officials are relevant, highly skilled professionals whose role is to protect the public. This can only be shown through progressive and relevant certification and maintenance of certification or, a meaningful Continuing Professional Development Program.

3. **Who does the CPDP program apply to?**

   The program applies to all Certified Building Code Officials (CBCO) and Building Code Qualified (BCQ) Government, Associate and Life Members. CBCO and BCQ Retired Members require half the credits.

4. **Who does the CPDP program not apply to?**

   It is proposed that the program not apply to CBCO and BCQ members who are student members.

   Members who are currently on maternity, parental, or medical leave or who are currently unemployed may apply for an extension on the timeline to earn their minimum credits in a current cycle.
5. Will I be required to comply with the CPDP to maintain OBOA membership?

Members who are CBCO or BCQ certified are required to comply with the CPDP to maintain their certification. Members who are not currently certified as either CBCO or BCQ will not be required to comply with the program to maintain OBOA membership but are strongly encouraged to pursue certification to provide assurance of their qualifications to the public, their employer and colleagues.

6. Will the Annual Meeting and Training Session continue to count as credits under the new system?

Certified members will no longer automatically obtain 18 credits for registering as a delegate at the AMTS. Attendance at technical sessions, the Annual General Meeting, Ministry Updates, etc. will all count as contributing towards credits and will be tracked through attendance at the individual sessions.

7. Will newly certified CBCO or BCQ members be required to earn credits in the cycle in which they become certified?

Newly certified members will no longer be exempt from complying with earning credits in the cycle in which they become certified. The requirements for the total number of credits required when a member becomes certified partway through a cycle will be prorated based when in the 3-year cycle they become certified as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certification Date</th>
<th>Credits Required</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; Year 1 – Jun 30&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; Year 1</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; Year 1 – Jun 30&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; Year 2</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; Year 2 – Jun 30&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; Year 3</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; Year 3 – Dec 31&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; Year 3</td>
<td>0</td>
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8. How do I ensure a training program/course is acceptable for credit in the CPDP?

Acceptable examples of credits can be found on the OBOA website. A member may request that the Certification Committee review a course/training program to ensure its suitability towards earning credits under the CPDP at any time.
9. What will I be required to provide as proof of training?

All OBOA administered courses, programs and code training events will automatically be recorded.

Members are expected and will continue to track credits earned, using the “Activity Reporting Form” on the OBOA website in the same manner as the old maintenance program.

For structured learning credits, a member will be required to provide proof of attendance/successful completion of courses, programs or training by way of official transcripts, receipt of payment confirming attendance by the course provider, certificate of completion/attendance, or written confirmation from their employer that they attended and passed (if applicable).

Official proof of completion for independent learning will not be required. A member will be required to personally track these credits on the “Activity Reporting Form” available on the OBOA website.

10. How will the CPDP be monitored?

It is proposed that a random sampling of 1-3% of the certified membership be audited by the Certification Committee for compliance with the requirements of the CPDP.

11. Can I carry over training/courses to the next cycle?

Certified members will be able to carry over a maximum of 10 structured credits and 10 independent credits to a subsequent cycle.

12. What happens if I don’t meet the minimum credits in a given cycle?

As a member of the OBOA who holds the CBCO or BCQ designations, it is anticipated that you will maintain the certification designation as required by the CPDP in accordance with the Association’s By-law. Certified members may be given a grace period of up to six months to obtain or provide proof of the required credits. After this grace period the member will no longer be entitled to use the CBCO or BCQ designation and may be required to re-apply for re-instatement of certification.

In extenuating situations an extension may be granted. See FAQ #13. If an extension is not applied for or not approved,
13. Will extensions be given if I don’t meet the minimum credits in a given cycle?

A member can file an application for extension to the Certification Committee prior to the end of the CPDP cycle. In extenuating situations an extension may be granted by the Committee.

If an extension is not applied for or not approved, the member will no longer be entitled to use the CBCO or BCQ designation and may be required to re-apply for re-instatement of certification.