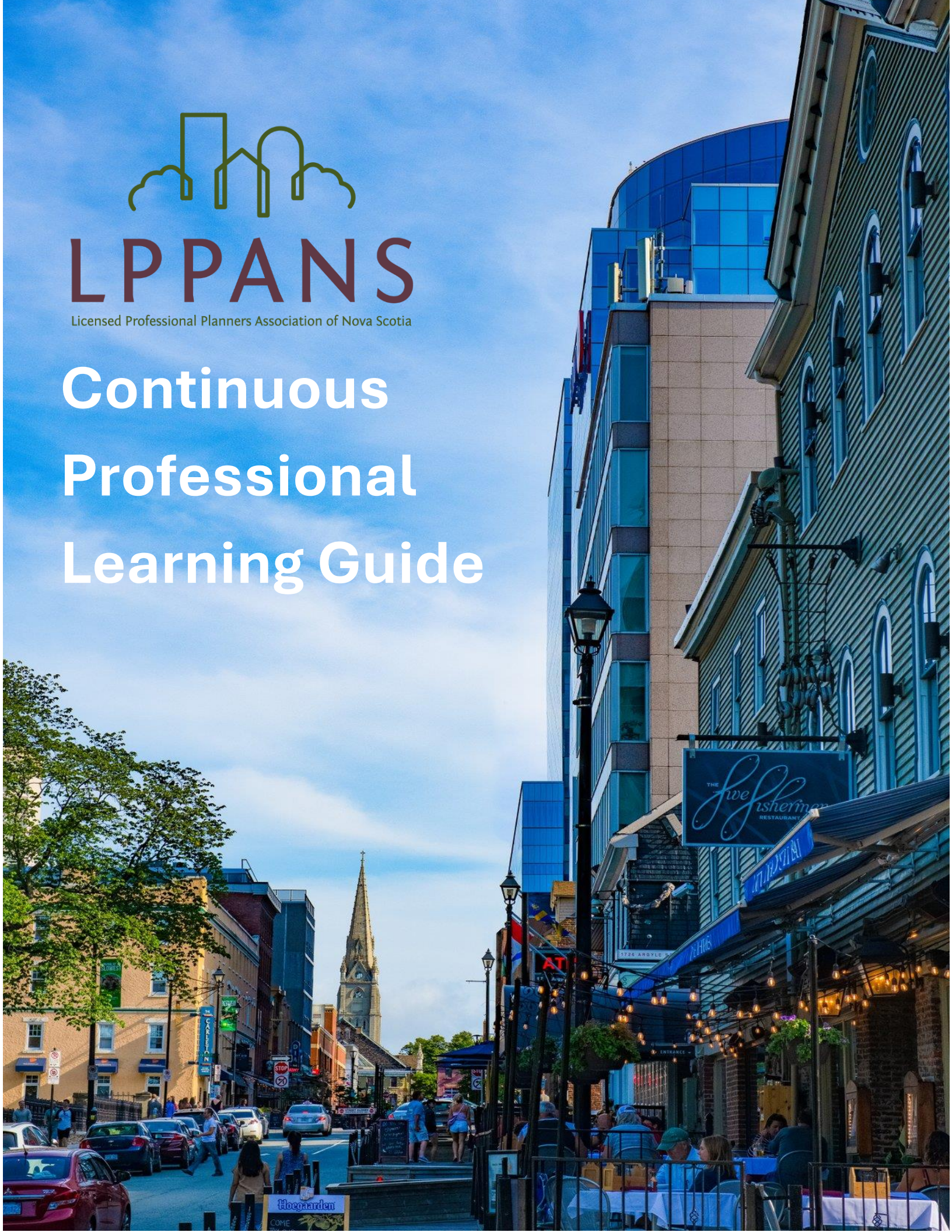




# LPPANS

Licensed Professional Planners Association of Nova Scotia

## Continuous Professional Learning Guide



# LPPANS Continuous Professional Learning Guide

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## 1. A Program for Professional Planners

### 1.1 Key Program Information

The National CPL Standard for the Planning Profession in Canada sets and summarizes the minimum CPL standard that professional members must adhere to and that each PTIA must maintain and uphold. Building on the national program, below is a list of the essential information professional planners need to know regarding LPPANS's CPL program:

- The CPL reporting requirements apply to all active professional members of LPPANS. That includes all Certified members (Licensed Professional Planners or LPP), all practicing Fellows (FCIPs), and all practicing Candidate members. Non-professional members (such as student members, pre-candidates, retired members, honorary members, etc.) are exempt from the CPL requirements and are not required to report.
- CPL reporting periods are aligned on an annual calendar year basis (January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>). **The annual CPL reporting deadline is December 31<sup>st</sup> of each year.** Members are encouraged to report their CPL activities through the year, as they complete activities, and are required to complete and submit all required CPL reports by the deadline each year.
- Two types of learning activities are recognized within the CPL program:
  - Organized and Structured activities: Those more formally structured learning opportunities typically organized and delivered by an external provider.
  - Independent and Self-Directed activities: Those are less formal learning opportunities personally pursued by members themselves.
- CPL activities are measured using Learning Units (LU). The **total required number of LUs to be undertaken and reported by members for each reporting period is 18.0 LUs, including a minimum of 9.0 LUs of Organized and Structured learning activities** (as defined elsewhere in this guide). Members can also only receive credit for a maximum of 9.0 LUs of Independent and Self-Directed learning activities per year.
- In recognition that members' access to organized activities may vary from year to year, they may carry up to 9 excess LUs for Organized & Structured activities forward for credit in the next subsequent year. Members may not carry forward excess LUs for organized & structured activities for more than one year. Members may also not carry any LUs forward for Independent & Self-Directed activities.
- Learning activities (Organized & Structured and Independent & Self-Directed) do not need to be reviewed in advance or pre-approved by LPPANS to count for credit. Members are expected to use their independent, professional judgment to determine whether an activity is reasonably relevant to the day-to-day work of a professional planner, or to professional planning (broadly conceived). Please see Table A with information on eligible CPL activities.
- Professional Planners engage in diverse and different sectors of planning work. As such, learning activities do not necessarily need to be directly related to traditional land-use planning to count as acceptable CPL activities that can be reported for credit.

## 1.2 LPPANS Continuous Professional Learning Program

Professional development or learning is typically a requirement and widely considered a best practice for most professional associations across Canada, including amongst the Provincial or Territorial Institutes or Associations (PTIAs) and the Licensed Professional Planners Association of Nova Scotia (LPPANS or Association). To achieve this best practice, the Standards Committee (SC) of the Professional Standards Board's (PSB) established the Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) program, known as the National Continuous Professional Learning Standard for the Planning Profession in Canada. This work will be carried forward and continue to improve through the Standards Advisory Committee (SAC). The intent of the program is to ensure that all practicing professional planners remain current with contemporary theory, methods, skills, and knowledge within their profession. **It is mandated by PSB for all practicing Full and Candidate members.** LPPANS' CPL program meets the needs of planning professionals in Nova Scotia, while ensuring and maintaining consistency with the national CPL standards.

This program is the 1<sup>st</sup> edition of the LPPANS CPL Guide, and it describes the structure, requirements, and reporting procedures of the CPL program. It is a resource for Full and Candidate members to better understand their responsibilities in meeting the program's requirements. The model of this system is similar to programs instituted by other PTIAs and professions. It has been modified and improved based on members' feedback and experience to date. Planners are encouraged to contribute ideas, recommendations, and suggestions to improve and evolve our understanding of the planning profession and its development. The requirement for LPPANS members to participate in the CPL program was considered and adopted as a new By-law by the LPPANS Board on November 30, 2022.

Through the PSB's national SAC, LPPANS works with PSB and the PTIAs to maintain a consistent approach to CPL for all professional planners across Canada.

Within Nova Scotia, the CPL program is administered and supported by the LPPANS Board and sub-committees. Should members have any questions related to CPL or have ideas or suggestions for how to improve the effectiveness of professional development for Planners, please contact LPPANS at [admin@lppans.ca](mailto:admin@lppans.ca)

## 1.3 CPL National and Provincial Roles and Responsibilities

The LPPANS Board has the ultimate authority for the CPL program, and is responsible for any program changes, including allocation of learning units and disciplinary action. The Board is committed to ensuring that the CPL program provides value, is pragmatic and achievable, and that it meets the needs of LPPANS members, regardless of where they practice or their area of specialty.

PTIAs for the planning profession across Canada have developed a framework that serves as a national standard for professional learning. From this framework, they have created programs for professional learning consistent with the national standard. As such, the Board will work with its national counterparts (PTIAs) to ensure consistency and portability of its CPL program across the country.

## 1.4 LPPANS Professional Code of Practice and Enabling By-law

LPPANS' Professional Planners Act of Nova Scotia requires the members to attain and maintain a high standard of professional competence. This requirement is also contained in the LPPANS By-law No. 1, which requires members to report their CPL activities on an annual basis.

## **2. All About LUs: Professional Learning Activities and Learning Units**

### **2.1 Learning Units (LU)**

CPL credits for activities undertaken are recorded and reported as numeric Learning Units (LUs). For most CPL activities, one LU is equivalent to one full hour (60 minutes) of active engagement in appropriate/acceptable professional learning activity. Please note that the LU is measured and rounded to the nearest quarter hour increment, 0.25 LU.

In cases where measuring active learning time is not straightforward or feasible (such as self-guided tours, reading, independent research, volunteer work, etc.), approximate equivalent values and guidelines will apply. Refer to Table A in this guide for more detailed information and examples of how to report LUs for these types of activities.

Table A includes a list of activities that have been assigned Learning Unit values, and then adopted by LPPANS and other planning institutes. This list may be updated annually or as necessary. If completing a learning activity, where the length of activity is not necessarily proportional to hours spent, but it is not assigned a learning value in Table A, members are responsible for making their best judgment on the value when reporting.

### **2.2 Professional Learning Activities**

The purpose of the CPL program is to engage members in furthering their knowledge, understanding, skills and abilities relevant to the theory, methods, and practice of planning. It is expected that members will actively engage in all manner of professional learning activities and be able to contemplate and reflect upon the new knowledge, skills, or abilities gained from each activity. The CPL program is also intended to accommodate members' diverse professional interests and provide flexibility and acknowledge a range of professional development opportunities.

To achieve this, the CPL program includes two broad categories of learning activities:

#### **a) Organized and Structured Activities:**

Organized and structured activities include structured courses, presentations, seminars, workshops, webinars, and guided tours that are provided by LPPANS, other PTIAs, CIP, or by an external provider or group. These would also include different forms of structured, distance education activities, as well as in-house workshops, relevant courses, or “lunch & learn” sessions offered at workplaces. LPPANS encourages employers and workplaces to recognize and promote their employees' CPL needs as well as share opportunities for professional development with the planning network wherever possible

#### **b) Independent and Self-Directed Activities:**

Independent and self-directed activities are deliberate and educational, provide new knowledge for the individual member, and should apply to the practice of planning. They are generally not organized by a provider, nor do they have any structured delivery or requirements. For example, civic or professional committees, teaching, reading, watching webinars, listening to podcasts, and self-designed learning experiences. To bring awareness of the resources available, including recorded webinars, books, articles, podcasts, etc. LPPANS is in the process of creating a CPL Resource hub whereby members can contribute to and find inspiration within. For more information, regularly check LPPANS website and socials.

Members are reminded that they should use their professional judgment and integrity to report only CPL activities that are meaningful and reflect a concerted effort to enhance skills and knowledge.

*Although this is not part of the formal requirement, LPPANS encourages its members to undertake an appropriate mix of CPL activities regarding both the functional competencies (theoretical knowledge) and the enabling competencies (practical skills). Members should also make sure to regularly refresh their knowledge of the core topics of professionalism, ethics, and the public interest. Members are also encouraged to look into new and emerging trends and areas of planning knowledge and practice that arise from time to time.*

### **2.3 Exceptions & Activities that Cannot Be Reported**

Activities that are part of a member's day-to-day work duties cannot be reported for credit. This includes working on projects, organizing and attending community engagement meetings for associated projects, etc. However, some reading or research that is triggered by work duties or projects may result in genuine professional learning of much more general applicability, and therefore qualify as legitimate independent & self-directed CPL.

### **2.4 Professional Learning & Requirements for Planners in Academia**

The CPLs for LPPANS members working in academic positions must be undertaken and reported in the same manner for all other professional members, as outlined in this guide.

Activities that are part of an academic member's day-to-day work (i.e., regularly scheduled lecturing, teaching regular courses, academic administration, etc.) cannot be reported for credit. However, presentations, conferences, seminars, workshops, volunteer work and other activities that are not part of an academic member's day-to-day work may be reported for CPL credit.

Unpaid lecturing, studio work, and advising in an academic setting, as well as student mentoring, undertaken by members who are not in academic positions may be reported for credit.

### **2.5 Professional Learning Topic Areas**

To qualify for Learning Units, the professional learning activity must encompass any topic areas that relate to members' varied and wide-ranging day-to-day professional planning responsibilities. The following is an alphabetical list of potential subjects and topics areas that qualify as LPPANS CPL program Learning Units:

- Accessibility
- Agriculture & land use
- Climate change
- Communication
- Community engagement and public processes
- Community planning and development
- Conflict resolution and mediation
- Cultural and social planning
- Data collection and analysis
- Demographics and statistics
- Development and Growth
- Diversity, inclusion, equity and social justice
- Energy and sustainability
- Environmental planning (impact, development, and resource management)
- Environmental law, regulation and policy

- Ethics and professionalism
- Financial literacy – budgets, capital planning, etc.
- Government regulation and legislation
- Health and the built environment
- Heritage conservation
- Housing
- Indigenous cultural awareness, history, and planning
- Infrastructure and asset management planning
- Land development economics
- Mapping, GIS, AutoCAD, or any other technical drafting
- Municipal planning policies and land use regulations
- Planning law, legislation, regulation and policy
- Project management
- Parkland planning, and any topic relation to landscape architecture
- Regional planning
- Rural planning
- Site planning, design and analysis
- Sustainability (Ecological)
- Technology
- Tourism & recreation management/planning
- Transportation planning and mobility
- Urban planning, design, and placemaking
- Workplace skills training/learning (e.g., communication, public speaking, leadership, facilitation, change management, succession planning, specialized technology or software)
- Zoning and land use
- *and any other relevant topic areas.*

**Table A: Assigned Learning Units**

<b>Organized and Structured Activities (LUs)</b>	
Attending an organized lecture, workshop, seminar, conference session, or webinar (in-person, virtual, or pre-recorded)	1.0 per hour
Watching a live or recorded webinar on a planning related topic	1.0 per hour
Attending a guided tour, field study or guided excursion:	
• Full Day	4.0
• Half Day	2.0
• Less than one Half Day	1.0
Leading a guided tour, field study, or guided excursions	
• Full Day	5.0
• Half Day	3.0
• Less than one Half Day	2.0
Preparation of material for an organized lecture, workshop, webinar, seminar, presentation, or conference session	1 per hour up to 4.0
Researching and writing a professional or academic article for review and organized publication	1 per hour up to 6.0
Researching and writing a professional or academic book or text for review and organized publication	1 per hour up to 12.0

<b>Independent and Self-directed Activities (LUs)</b>	
Participation on relevant advisory boards and committees, or other professional, civic or community volunteerism (outside regular work duties) for one calendar year:	
• Less than <b>5 hours</b> of meetings/work per year	2.0
• Between <b>5 and 20 hours</b> of meetings/work per year	3.5
• More than <b>20 hours</b> of meetings/work per year	5.0
Participation on CIP Council, LPPANS Board, LPPANS branches, committees, or task forces with <b>more than 20 hours</b> of meetings/work per year	9.0
Critical reading/review of an academic or professional book/text	3.0
Critical reading/review of a journal, academic or professional article	1.0
Listening a planning related podcasts	1.0 per hour up to 6.0
Volunteering as a mentor to a more junior planner or student	1.0 per hour of meeting
Researching and writing a professional or academic article for review and publication	1.5

Independent and Self-directed Activities (LUs)	
Researching and writing a professional or academic book or text for review and publication	5.0
Undertaking a Self-Directed <b>full day</b> guided tour, field study or mobile workshop	2.0
Undertaking a Self-Directed <b>half day</b> guided tour, field study or mobile workshop	1.0

### 3. Reporting CPL Activities

#### 3.1 CPL Reporting Requirements

All Full and Candidate members are required to earn and report a minimum of 18 Learning Units (LUs) annually, within the calendar year (January 1 to December 31) in which they were earned, recognized as the reporting year. Of the minimum number of LUs required, all 18 can be of the organized & structured variety. However, only half the required LUs, or a maximum of 9, may be reported as independent & self-directed in any reporting period. Table A provides details about the assigned learning units.

The Learning Units are summarized as follows:

- 18 LUs Annual Requirement (minimum total)
- 9 LUs Organized & Structured Activities (minimum)
- 9 LUs Independent & Self-Directed Activities (maximum)

Should members report LUs more than the required 18, they may carry forward a maximum of 9 excess organized & structured LUs to the following reporting year. Members may not carry over any independent & self-directed LUs and may not “bank” or carry forward excess organized & structured LUs for more than one year.

#### 3.2 Online Reporting

Members report their CPL activities online, on <https://members.atlanticplanners.org/>. The online reporting format allows members to enter LUs as organized & structured or as independent & self-directed activities. Additionally, members can check their CPL progress in any given year by logging into their Members-Only Area.

Members report the appropriate information, including the date the activity was undertaken, the title of the activity (i.e., name of session, presentation, or course; name of book written or read, etc.), the provider (i.e., LPPANS, CIP, other organization) if applicable, and the number of LUs calculated or assigned to that activity.

#### Recommendation:

Members are encouraged to:

- report their Learning Units over the course of the reporting year, rather than waiting until the December 31<sup>st</sup> deadline. This will make recalling learning activities easier and will ensure that activities are reported correctly;

- plan their CPL activities ahead of time. It is considered a best practice to keep a written log of any learning activities a member has participated in if they are unable to record them immediately after participation; and
- keep accurate back-up documentation of activities they attended to help ensure there is no discrepancy in the recording process.

### 3.3 Compliance and Exemptions

In accordance with LPPANS By-laws, all Full and Candidate members are required to comply with the Continuous Professional Learning and reporting requirements on an annual basis. Only in certain exceptional circumstances may members have the requirements waived by the Association. These include:

- Members who are exempt from CPL by virtue of their membership category, including Student, Pre-Candidate, Retired or Lifetime members.
- Non-Practicing Full and Non-Practicing Candidate Members are exempt from the CPL requirement for a maximum of 12 months, with an additional 12 months extension. For any time spent in the Non-Practicing category beyond this point, the member is expected to adhere to the requirements of the CPL program in effect at that time. Non-Practicing membership is available to any Full or Candidate Member not currently practicing planning for financial gain for reasons including, but not limited to, parental leave, medical leave, or working in a field outside of planning. Requests to move into Non-Practicing membership may be brought to the Registrar.
- For any other requests to be waived from the CPL requirement, members may contact the Registrar to discuss their circumstances and determine if a waiver is warranted.

Further to the Professional Code of Practice, Members should undertake and record CPL continually while they are practicing. Therefore, members who are practicing for only part of a year should generally meet a *pro-rated* or reduced CPL requirement for that year. For instance, a member on parental leave from July to the next June should do approximately half of the CPL requirement for each of those years, and preferably 1.5 unit per month.

Although Non-Practicing members are not subject to the CPL requirement, if they will or may return to practice, then LPPANS strongly encourages them to undertake CPL activities, even if they cannot count or carry forward those Learning Units.

If a member obtains excess organized & structured LUs in Year 1 but then is exempt from the CPL requirement in Year 2 (e.g., they are non-practicing), if they return to practice in Year 3, they **cannot** carry forward to Year 3 those LUs from Year 1.

If a member is not required to meet the CPL requirement in Year 1 (e.g., they became a member partway through the year), even if they do record organized & structured LUs, they cannot carry forward any of those as “excess” LUs to Year 2.

LPPANS retains the authority to audit members' CPL submissions, request additional information, or contest entries based on their merit or accuracy. As outlined in section 3.10 of the Canadian Institute of Planners' Professional Code of Conduct, members are required to “comply with any reasonable request of the Institute for information or for the cooperation of the member in pursuit of any Institute objective.

### 3.4 Reporting Assessment

Learning Units should be claimed and reported by members based on their professional judgment and the contents of this CPL guide. As a general rule, LPPANS will accept those claims in good faith.

## 4. Definitions

- **Continuous Professional Learning (CPL)** is a mandatory program for all Candidate and Full members of LPPANS that responds to the profession's commitment to maintaining competency on a continuous basis, as well as the public's growing need for assurance that many professionals—planners included—remain current with contemporary theory, methods, and practice within their profession.
- **Learning Unit (LU)** is a way of quantifying learning activity by LPPANS members each year, where one hour of learning activity is equivalent to one learning unit. Members participating in the CPL program are required to claim a minimum of 18 learning units each year.
- **Learning Units, Independent & Self-Directed** are activities that are deliberate and educational, yield new knowledge for the individual member and should apply to the practice of planning. They are generally not organized by a provider, nor do they have any structured delivery or requirements. Examples are civic or professional committees, teaching, reading, and self- designed learning experiences. Participating members may claim up to 9 independent & self-directed Learning Units per year.
- **Learning Units, Organized & Structured** are activities that include structured courses, presentations, seminars, workshops, webinars, and guided tours that are provided by LPPANS, other planning institutes, CIP, or an external provider or group. These would also include different forms of structured, distance education activities, as well as in-house workshops, relevant courses, or “lunch & learn” sessions offered at workplaces. The fact that an employer pays for or provides the activity or allows it to be done in paid time does not disqualify it as CPL. LPPANS encourages employers and workplaces to recognize and promote their employees' CPL needs. Participating members must claim a minimum of 9 organized & structured Learning Units per year.
- **Licensed Professional Planner (LPP)** is a member who has completed the certification process of the Professional Standards Board (PSB). RPPs are required to adhere to the Professional Code of Practice and are also subject to the annual CPL requirement.
- **Licensed Professional Planners Association of Nova Scotia (LPPANS)** is the recognized Provincial or Territorial Institutes or Associations for the Planning profession in Nova Scotia with diverse members who work in government, private practice, institutions and universities, and not-for-profit organizations in the fields of urban and rural development, community and urban design, environmental planning, transportation, health and social services, community engagement, heritage conservation, housing, and economic development. Our student members attend accredited undergraduate and graduate planning programs at Dalhousie University. Members must meet quality practice requirements and are accountable to LPPANS and the public to practice ethically and to abide by a Professional Code of Practice.
- **LPPANS By-law** is a set of rules established by the LPPANS Board and amended from time to time by the LPPANS Board and membership, which among other things, includes all membership categories and enables the CPL program.

- **Member, Candidate** is a member who is currently undertaking the process to become certified as an LPP. Candidate members, like Full members, are required to complete the annual CPL requirement.
- **Member, Full** is a member who has obtained their certification as an LPP. Only Full LPPANS members are authorized by the Professional Planners Act of Nova Scotia, 2005, to use the title Licensed Professional Planner (or LPP).
- **Member, Non-Practicing** is any Candidate or Full member of LPPANS, who is not currently practicing planning for gain. Reasons may include parental leave, medical leave, working in a non-planning capacity, and more. A member must contact LPPANS to be moved to Non-Practicing membership category. Non-Practicing members of LPPANS are exempt from the annual CPL requirement for up to five years
- **Member, Retired** is a Full member who is not engaged in the activity of planning for gain, who has applied to be placed on the retired list, and who has been accepted in writing as retired by the Registrar. Retired members are entitled to use the designation LPP (Retired) and are exempt from the CPL requirement.
- **Professional Standard Board (PSB)** is the Planning Profession in Canada (PSB) in Canada, was established in 2014 to administer the certification process of professional planners on behalf of the Provincial and Territorial Institutes and Associations (PTIAs), which regulate the planning profession across Canada, and CIP.
- **Standards Advisory Committee (SAC)** is a standing committee established by PSB in 2024. It is responsible for making recommendations on the standards for the planning profession in Canada. SAC consults broadly within and outside of the profession to develop and recommend to the PSB Board consistent national pathways, standards, metrics, and codes that could be universally adopted by the PTIA's and CIP.
- **Standards Committee (SC)** for the Planning Profession in Canada was established in 2012 to serve as a joint policy-making body with responsibility to set standards as well as the oversight, maintenance, and revision for the planning profession's certification, accreditation, and ethical standards. SC was a volunteer-based committee, comprising of one professional member from each of the Signatory Parties. The Signatory Parties are the Provincial and Territorial Institutes and Associations (PTIAs) (except OUQ) and CIP. PSB dissolved the SC in 2024.