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Counting Owner Votes in Historic Districts

The Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) counts objections to (and support for) historic district nominations in accordance with federal procedures and with state (Department of Justice) guidance. Under those federal and state guidelines, each property is allowed a certain number of “votes.” This is based on the type of ownership as well as the number of owners or ownership entities on the deed. The following is a summary of the counting guidelines:

- Property owners only get to vote once, regardless of how many properties they own.
- Public entities such as cities, state agencies, and so forth are not allowed to object.
- Lack of response from a property owner implies support.
- Trusts, corporations, partnerships, LLCs, etc. are allowed only one vote.
- Tenants-in-Common ownerships are allowed as many votes as there are individuals listed on the deed.
- Tenants-in-Entirety ownerships are allowed only one vote. Objections are valid only if a majority of the individuals object. This means that in the case of couples, both parties must object in order to achieve that majority and have the objection be valid.
- Right-of-Survivorship ownerships are allowed only one vote.
- The “voting” is open until the National Register office makes its decision (45-days from when it receives the nomination).
- Property owners may change their mind and “re-vote” any time prior to National Register final determination.
- A majority must object in order to prevent historic district nominations from going forward.