The Geography of Support for Open-Space Initiatives: A Case Study of New Jersey’s 1998 Ballot Measure*

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Objectives. By a two to one margin, New Jersey voters in 1998 approved a ballot measure authorizing a 10-year, 1-billion dollar open-space acquisition program. This article’s principal objectives are to investigate and explain the spatial character of that vote. Methods. Our methods consists of regression and principal components analyses; we use municipal-level data to define statewide patterns of voter support and participation in relation to a series of socioeconomic, political, and environmental variables. Results. The analyses yielded two major findings: (1) support for the ballot measure was widespread, but exceptionally strong in the “wealth belt” area of north-central New Jersey, and (2) voter participation, defined as those voting on the measure as a proportion of all who voted, lagged in the core urban areas. Conclusions. Our conclusions point critically to the importance of socioeconomic status, urban residence, and presence of existing open-space regulations—as well as rapid changes in the overall sociopolitical landscape—in explaining voter behavior.

In November 1998, New Jersey voters resoundingly approved a ballot measure authorizing 1 billion dollars in funding for a 10-year open-space acquisition program. However, this broadly positive outcome masks a series of complex and interesting issues. In this article, we first describe the national- and state-level contexts for public support for open-space protection, and then examine the 1998 ballot question, seeking to explain the geography of support through a statistical analysis of key demographic and land-use variables.

National- and State-Level Contexts

In recent years, open-space protection and growth management have become prominent policy issues (Burchell et al., 1998; Leo et al., 1998;
Squires, 2002). Although public concern is widespread, it appears to be highly uneven and tends to be most intense in and near metropolitan areas experiencing rapid land conversion, loss of farmland and open space, and severe traffic congestion (Baldassare, 1990; Sorensen, Greene, and Russ, 1997; Belden, Russonello, and Stewart, 2000; Pew Center for Civic Journalism, 2000). In other words, these are places suffering from classic symptoms of urban sprawl.1

Limited national attention to sprawl has come in the form of “smart growth” incentives, which are meant to promote urban revitalization, brownfields redevelopment, infill growth in already settled areas, promotion of new suburban growth that is space efficient, and public transportation enhancements (Livable Communities, 2003; Natural Resources Defense Council, 2003; Smart Growth America, 2003). At the state and local levels, policy responses to sprawl are in greatest evidence in and near the major megalopolitan population concentrations in the Northeast, West Coast, and Great Lakes regions, as well as in rapidly growing Sun Belt locales. State-level responses include funding and incentives for land acquisition and protection, as well as policies that direct growth toward areas that already have substantial infrastructure and development. At the local level, land acquisition and protection—and, to a lesser extent, development restrictions and growth boundaries—are the favored instruments. Our focus in this article is within the general category of voter-approved land acquisition and conservation easement programs.

Nationally, local- and state-level open-space ballot measures have enjoyed considerable support over the past several years, with rates of approval between 70 and 90 percent. Greatest activity has been in the southern New England and Middle Atlantic regions, Colorado, and California; New Jersey and Massachusetts passed the greatest numbers of local measures in 2002 (Myers, 2000; Trust for Public Land, 2000–2003). Land acquisition was a common priority for funding measures, but financing also was approved for such things as recreation facilities, trail and greenway development, and habitat management. Regulatory measures only rarely were put to the voters. Because of the focus on open-space acquisition, ballot measures should not

1The “sprawl” phenomenon eludes straightforward definition or description. Low-density development—and particularly expanding residential and commercial development at low density—is a central element (Ewing, Pendall, and Chen, 2002; Romero and Liserio, 2002). Based on a comprehensive literature review, Burchell et al. (1998) produce a working definition with these elements: low density, unlimited and noncontiguous (leapfrog) development, combination of residential and nonresidential development, segregation of land uses, consumption of exurban agricultural and other sensitive lands, and reliance on the automobile. Clearly, the negative impacts of sprawl are spread widely and unevenly and in some cases may be experienced most keenly in the areas surrounding low-density residential enclaves, rather than within the housing developments themselves. As a consequence, precise spatial characterization of sprawl is elusive; it seems more appropriate to define broad regions within which significant sprawl is occurring.
be seen as comprehensive growth-management strategies, but rather as a very particular and directed response to the impacts of sprawled development.

The New Jersey Ballot Question

Over the past four decades, New Jersey’s legislature has been quite active in bringing open-space acquisition questions before voters. The Green Acres Program was initiated in 1961, with passage of a $60-million bond issue, two-thirds of which was allocated to state land acquisition and the remainder to a 50-50 cost-sharing program to support local-level acquisition (Foresta, 1981). In succeeding years, eight more ballot questions were approved and a total of $1.42 billion in funds was authorized. By the mid-1990s, open-space protection had become a signature issue for Governor Christine Todd Whitman, and the Sierra Club (1999) recently ranked New Jersey’s open-space protection efforts second in the nation behind Maryland’s. Still, like its counterparts in many other states, the New Jersey Legislature is reluctant to consider or approve measures that might be seen as too intrusive in local affairs. Open-space acquisition is a relatively safe haven: it establishes credibility among constituents who are concerned about growth, yet does not offend too many of those who are wary of new regulatory programs.

Governor Whitman began to rally support for a major new open-space acquisition program in the mid-1990s. She initially called for legislation to directly approve funding, but after this failed, she and allies in the legislature took the case to the voters. In November 1998, New Jersey voters, by a two to one margin, approved an amendment to the New Jersey Constitution that dedicates nearly a billion dollars for preservation of open space, farmland, wetlands, and historic sites over the next 10 years. The legislature was thus compelled to raise the necessary funds and has done so by earmarking a portion of state tax revenues.

Expectations Regarding Spatial Character of Vote

Based on our review of the relevant literature, as well as political, economic, and demographic factors specific to New Jersey, we have developed two sets of propositions. They are focused, respectively, on the level of support for the ballot question and level of voting on the question.

Level of Support for the Ballot Question

1: Municipalities with a higher proportion of wealthy, well-educated professionals will be more supportive of the ballot question.
In general, support for referenda involving greater taxes or expenditures increases as socioeconomic status increases (Hahn and Kamieniecki, 1987). But with respect to environmental and land-use issues specifically, the relationship is rather less clear (Donovan and Nieman, 1992). Van Liere and Dunlap (1980) found that relationships between socioeconomic status and support for environmental protection generally are positive, but rather weakly so. In terms of support for growth management, Connerly and Frank (1986) found that the social class hypothesis is only partially supported, while Neiman and Loveridge’s (1981) work supports it in those cases where the issues are specific, real, and contested. Baldassare and Wilson’s (1996) study in Orange County, California revealed that high incomes were a predictor of growth-control support in the early 1980s, but this was no longer the case in the early 1990s. Baldassare and Protash (1982) found that occupational status is a better predictor of attitudes toward growth management than are social homogeneity and income status.

We are examining votes on expenditures for open-space acquisition rather than reactions to new regulations that seek to limit growth; therefore, we expect responses generally to be more positive. In their nationwide analysis of 1998 and 1999 open-space ballot questions, Romero and Liserio (2002) found that income and percent white population are indeed positively associated with the frequency with which open-space questions appear on the ballot (though income fell slightly short of being statistically significant)—and once the measure is on the ballot, the likelihood of approval is fairly high.

Because the New Jersey ballot question involved only expenditures, the question of home rule, raised by Anglin (1990), was not at issue. Wealthier areas can readily afford to support acquisition measures, whereas regulatory measures might encounter considerable resistance in locales that tend toward the socially conservative. Assuming that preservation funds would flow toward less-densely settled areas and thus help sustain existing patterns of low-density development interspersed with open space, a positive vote can be broadly interpreted as an act of self-interest. Although the role of self-interest in voting behavior has been the subject of considerable debate (Wilson and Banfield, 1964; Hahn and Kamieniecki, 1987), we would expect it to be of some significance in this instance. As Figure 1 indicates, New Jersey’s “wealth belt” (i.e., the arc of counties ranging across the north-central region of the state (Hughes and Seneca, 2000)) includes counties experiencing rapid population growth and sprawled patterns of development. But as Romero and Liserio (2002) caution, the use of open-space ballot measures in these types of locales may reflect general dissatisfaction with growth, rather than a specific reaction to sprawl. Indeed, they may reflect self-serving exclusionary tendencies—but this is not a question that our data will allow us to test for or speculate upon.

2: Municipalities that have experienced rapid residential and commercial growth, as well as land conversion, will be more supportive of the ballot question.
Place-based politics seem to matter a great deal. Several researchers (Connerly and Frank, 1986; Bollens, 1990; Baldassare, 1990; Baladassare and Wilson, 1996) have concluded that location and closeness to the issues (i.e., experiencing the impact of sprawl) are important predictors of attitudes toward growth management. Anglin’s (1990) research in New Jersey indicates high levels of support generally for growth management and that
most respondents even show willingness to give up some home rule in order to achieve more orderly future growth.

The literature shows that urbanization, in New Jersey and elsewhere, tends to be associated with stronger support for environmental protection (Van Liere and Dunlap, 1980; Cutter, Holcomb, and Shatin, 1986; Cutter et al., 1987; Greenberg and Amer, 1989). However, these studies deal with pollution, hazardous-waste sites, and nuclear threats. Our expectation is that large-scale, open-space acquisition is likely to be less of a priority in urban areas—and especially in the most highly urbanized, built-out areas—since there is comparatively little remaining undeveloped land to protect. Indeed, the case can be made that in order to secure needed statewide support, there is the implicit assumption that land acquisition funds will flow disproportionately to areas outside the urban centers. New Jersey’s most rapid recent growth, shown in Figure 1, has occurred in the “wealth belt” region. Our expectation is that strongest support would come from this part of the state.

3: In municipalities where there is extensive open space that provides regional or statement benefits, but incurs local fiscal and/or regulatory costs that may be perceived as unfair burdens, support for the ballot question will be lower.

This expectation is rooted in New Jersey’s considerable unevenness with respect to political influence and land-use regulations. We have included in our variable list those municipalities with lands in the Pinelands National Reserve of southern New Jersey (Mason, 1992; Solecki, 1998), as well as the northern Hackensack Meadowlands and the area under the jurisdiction of the Coastal Areas Facility Review Act (CAFRA) (Figure 1). Each of these regions—and particularly the Pinelands and CAFRA areas—are in some measure politically marginalized (Stansfield, 1983; Mason, 1992). Each region is also subject to special land-use regulations that may result in significant opposition to additional land-use related measures. Press (1999), in studying open-space preservation in California, found that higher acreages of federal lands were negatively associated with favorable votes on open-space questions. In New Jersey, this “anti-government” sentiment is not likely to be strong enough to produce a fatal backlash against the ballot measure in the regions we have singled out, but support may be expected to be at least somewhat weaker.

Level of Voting on the Ballot Question

1: Municipalities that are high-density urban communities and have a higher percentage of minority residents will be less likely to vote on the ballot question.

Typically, a significant proportion of those who cast their votes for political offices opt to ignore ballot questions (Clubb and Traugott, 1972; Magleby, 1984). But because the 1998 ballot in most New Jersey municipalities was not especially lengthy or cumbersome and the open-space
question was only one of three ballot questions, we would expect dropoff to result more from lack of knowledge and/or interest in the issue than from ballot “fatigue.” Clubb and Traugott (1972:146), in a comprehensive national analysis of statewide referenda in 1968, found that the “decisions on public policy made through statewide referenda disproportionately reflected the views of residents of the suburbs and small cities, of the highly educated, and of those of relatively high incomes and of higher social class in terms of their own self-classification.” This was especially the case for “popular” questions, in this instance defined as those for which there was relatively high voter turnout overall and for which the contest was not close. Thus, poorer urban residents (i.e., typically minority populations in New Jersey) and those of low educational attainment were less likely to use the referendum as a means for expressing their political will.

We would expect that inner-city residents, particularly, would display the highest rates of nonvoting on the ballot question. Core urban areas in New Jersey include the cities of Newark, Jersey City, Paterson, Elizabeth, Camden, and Trenton. Our expectation is additionally supported by our belief that interest groups made the greatest efforts to promote the ballot issue in suburban locales as opposed to core urban areas. Though we do not have specific data on this, we are aware that as a general rule, environmental NGOs in New Jersey and other states tend to be most active outside economically disadvantaged central cities.

2: Municipalities that have experienced rapid growth and land conversion will be more likely to vote on the ballot question.

Again, this is a matter of self-interest. We would expect higher levels of voter interest in areas where the issue more directly affects voters. Even if we do not see the support for growth management corresponding with findings by Neiman and Loveridge (1981), Baldassare (1990), and Baldassare and Wilson (1996), we would at least expect that local circumstances will influence voter awareness and participation regarding open space, making it less likely that voters in rapid-growth locales would skip over the open-space question.

3: Municipalities that have a higher percentage of land already protected as open space will be more likely to vote on the ballot question.

Again, this is a matter of self-interest. We expect that voters in these municipalities are more likely to be concerned about open-space issues, whichever way they choose to vote.

Findings

Support for the ballot question was strong. Overall, 66.2 percent of those voting on the question voted in favor. Only eight out of a total of 566
municipalities did not vote in favor of the question, and 11.8 percent voted more than 75 percent in favor. Although strong support was widespread, the highest levels of support were in northern and central New Jersey, and more specifically in areas known to be experiencing greater than average growth. In general, support was lowest in older urban areas and in communities in the southeastern part of the state (see Figure 2).

The spatial pattern of those who voted on the ballot question, as a percent of all votes cast, is quite striking (see Figure 3). Overall, western parts of the state, both in the north and south, recorded a higher level of voter participation. The lowest levels of voter participation were evident in more densely populated urban areas, particularly in cities and their older suburbs. This was especially notable for Newark, Jersey City, Camden, and Atlantic City.
The following research protocol was designed to statistically test our two sets of propositions. Regression analyses were utilized to test the two defined dependent variables. The first analysis focused on factors associated with the level of support for the ballot question. The second analysis tested for factors associated with the level of voter participation, as defined by the percent of the total number of individuals voting that voted specifically on the ballot question. Two sets of partially overlapping independent variables were defined for the analyses (Table 1). To lessen the contribution of variable multicollinearity in the analysis results, principal components analyses of independent variable sets were performed. The resulting factor scores for each analysis were then utilized as transformed independent variables.

![Map of Percent of Votes for Referendum as Percent of Total Votes Cast](image)

**Statistical Analysis**

FIGURE 3

Map of Percent of Votes for Referendum as Percent of Total Votes Cast
In the first analysis, the level of support for the ballot question was proposed to be the result of three sets of variables associated with socio-economic status, community development and change, and regional environmental planning. Specifically, the variables included median family income, percent of residents with a college degree or more education, percent population change from 1990 to 2000, change in number of housing units from 1990 to 2000, location within the recently defined “wealth belt” counties, percent of land designated as state and federal conservation lands (e.g., state forest), presence of conservation or protection areas, and whether

### TABLE 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables Created for New Jersey Municipalities (n = 566)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dependent Variables</td>
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<tr>
<td>Voting “yes” for referendum (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting for referendum (yes and no) (%)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Independent Variables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Population change 1990–2000 (%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Population density 2000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Race/Ethnicity</td>
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<tr>
<td>African American 2000 (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic 2000 (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socioeconomic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median family income 2000 (US$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree or more education (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak language other than English at home (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Located in the New Jersey “wealth belt”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total housing units change 1990–2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land-use change 1986–1995 (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protected open-space land (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protected open-space land in municipality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Located in Pinelands Management Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Located in Hackensack Meadowlands Management Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Located in CAFRA Area</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In the first analysis, the level of support for the ballot question was proposed to be the result of three sets of variables associated with socio-economic status, community development and change, and regional environmental planning. Specifically, the variables included median family income, percent of residents with a college degree or more education, percent population change from 1990 to 2000, change in number of housing units from 1990 to 2000, location within the recently defined “wealth belt” counties, percent of land designated as state and federal conservation lands (e.g., state forest), presence of conservation or protection areas, and whether
the municipality is within the state’s CAFRA (Coastal Area Facilities Review Act), Pinelands, or Hackensack Meadowlands management areas.

The principal components analysis produced four components that together explained 62.3 percent of the total variation among the variables. Each component (based on loading values greater than 0.500) defined a distinct group of communities. The first group could be defined as the wealthy and developing towns. These are communities with higher percentages of educationally achieving and high-income residents, and large increases in the number of housing units. These communities often are located in the wealth belt counties. The second group defined communities in which protected/conservation lands are present; often, these communities are located in the Pinelands National Reserve. The third group is most associated with CAFRA communities, which are focused on coastal environment protection. The final group describes communities where there has been considerable recent rural-to-urban land conversion.

The component-associated municipal-level factor loadings were then used as inputs into an OLS regression model. The dependent variable was the percent of voters that voted “yes” on the ballot question. The regression analysis proved to be fairly successful. The adjusted $r^2$ of the analysis was 0.394. The dependent variable was defined to be significantly associated with each of the four factors at the 0.001 level (see Table 2). The most predictive variable was Factor 1 ($t = 16.925$), indicating that strong support was driven by high-income, rapidly developing “wealth belt” communities. The significance of Factor 3 also illustrates that support levels were strongly positively correlated with location within a CAFRA-designated area. This result was not initially predicted. Detailed municipal-by-municipal analysis of CAFRA-designated communities, however, reveals a great heterogeneity among the region’s communities; many of these communities have socioeconomic conditions that are appreciably above the state average. Furthermore, many of the CAFRA communities, situated in relatively wealthy and influential coastal areas, could be deemed less politically marginalized than the Pinelands communities.

The presence of a large amount of protected land, particularly within the Pinelands planning area, was a driver of lower support for the ballot question. Lower support also was correlated with a set of towns where there was a significant amount of rural-to-urban land-use change. Although this seems somewhat counterintuitive with respect to the initial hypotheses, evaluation of case-by-case factor loadings illustrates that a set of consistently pro-development and pro-growth communities comprised this factor.

In testing the second set of hypotheses, the level of voter participation also was proposed to be the result of three sets of variables. These were associated with level of urbanization, environmental land protection, minority population levels, and rate of community change. Specifically, the variables included population density (2000), percent of land designated as state and federal conservation lands (e.g., state forests, national recreational areas), the
The principal components analysis produced three components (based on loading values greater than 0.500) that together explained 64.3 percent of the total variation among the variables. Group 1 defines a set of high-density, Hispanic-dominated communities in which a large percent of individuals do not speak English at home. The second group is composed of high-growth communities (i.e., significant population change, increase in the number of housing units, and rural-to-urban land-use change) that include protected conservation land. The third group includes a large amount of protected conservation land as a percent of total land area. As in the first analysis, the municipal-level factor loadings for each component were used as independent variables in an OLS regression model. The dependent variable in this case was the percent of total number of voters that voted on the ballot question.

Again, the regression analysis proved to be successful. The adjusted $r^2$ of the analysis was 0.611. The dependent variable was defined to be significantly associated with two of the factors (see Table 3). The most predictive variable was Factor 1 ($t = -27.328$). Hispanic and non-English speaking populations in high-density communities were strongly correlated with lower levels of voter participation. Somewhat surprisingly, communities with a high percentage of open-space conservation land also were correlated with low voter participation. Factor 2, associated with high-growth communities, was positively correlated with voter participation; however, this was not at the 0.05 significance level, but rather at the 0.076 level.

### TABLE 2

Support for the Ballot Question—Regression Results
(Independent variable = percent of voters that voted “yes” on the ballot question)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>$B$</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>$t$</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>66.232</td>
<td>0.290</td>
<td></td>
<td>228.607</td>
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<tr>
<td>Factor Score 1</td>
<td>4.908</td>
<td>0.290</td>
<td>0.583</td>
<td>16.925</td>
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<tr>
<td>Factor Score 2</td>
<td>−1.027</td>
<td>0.290</td>
<td>−0.122</td>
<td>−3.541</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor Score 3</td>
<td>1.031</td>
<td>0.290</td>
<td>0.122</td>
<td>3.556</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor Score 4</td>
<td>−1.446</td>
<td>0.290</td>
<td>−0.172</td>
<td>−4.988</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Factor 1: Developing towns often in the wealth belt with highly educated, wealthy residents.
Factor 2: Communities in which conservation land was present, often Pinelands towns.
Factor 3: CAFRA communities.
Factor 4: Towns with large amounts of rural-to-urban land conversion.
The statistical results indicate that the propositions put forward in the analysis were largely valid. It appears that voter interest in and support for open-space acquisition is strongly correlated with higher socioeconomic status areas of New Jersey, and lower support is correlated with the presence of existing open-space protection programs such as the Pinelands National Reserve. The results illustrating lower voter interest in core urban areas are quite striking. The results raise a set of issues that are briefly explored below.

Our findings cannot indicate the extent to which the falloff in voting in urban areas is due to general disinterest, voter “fatigue,” or a specific rejection of the open-space issue itself. Additional research—in New Jersey and other states with large urban agglomerations—would prove valuable in exploring these motivations. It would also be fruitful to study actual spending patterns as the open-space monies are disbursed. If considerable portions of the funds go toward urban parks and recreation, then it might be argued that voters in urban areas do have a considerable stake in the open-space ballot question. But if—as expected—expenditures are overwhelmingly on the urban fringe (as was the case with the New Jersey’s Green Acres program in the past, see Foresta, 1981), then it might be argued that the disinterest on the part of urban voters is not entirely unjustified. Additional questions can be raised, given the contexts of limited state and federal financial resources, about the extent to which the smart growth agenda is promoted in the suburbs—in the form of open-space protection—to the potential neglect of such items as urban reinvestment, brownfields redevelopment, and enhancement of public transportation.

More research on the motivations of voters in well-to-do areas facing considerable development pressures—in this case New Jersey’s “wealth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>83.565</td>
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<td>Factor Score 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Factor Score 2</td>
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<td>Factor Score 3</td>
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<td>0.316</td>
<td>-0.207</td>
<td>-7.497</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Factor 1: High-density, Hispanic-dominated communities in which a large percent of residents do not speak English at home.

Factor 2: High-growth communities that include protected conservation land.

Factor 3: Communities in which protected conservation land makes up a large percent of the total land area.

Discussion and Conclusions

The statistical results indicate that the propositions put forward in the analysis were largely valid. It appears that voter interest in and support for open-space acquisition is strongly correlated with higher socioeconomic status areas of New Jersey, and lower support is correlated with the presence of existing open-space protection programs such as the Pinelands National Reserve. The results illustrating lower voter interest in core urban areas are quite striking. The results raise a set of issues that are briefly explored below.
belt”—also is called for. Are voters motivated mainly by self-interest? To what extent are exclusionary tendencies a factor in voting behavior in these locales? More research also is needed in order to begin to sort out the complex role that sprawled patterns of development play in affecting voting behavior. The question remains whether sprawl itself may not motivate these voters as much as dissatisfaction with growth in general. More work needs to be done to better understand the dynamics of voter behavior in these locales.

Why do voters in areas with substantial amounts of protected land—under such regulatory programs as the Pinelands and Hackensack Meadowlands programs—tend to show less interest and somewhat lower support for open-space protection? More targeted research into voter motivation might inform us of the significance of anti-government and anti-planning sentiment in these regions, and inform us about the degree to which the New Jersey experience is typical elsewhere.

Finally, these patterns of support and participation are of particular relevance to proponents of open-space preservation. Romero and Liserio (2002) call for more research addressing how proponents worked to ensure passage of open-space ballot questions. It may well be that open-space advocates underplay the importance of urban regions. In close contests, in particular, the urban vote may mean the difference between passage or defeat of a measure. In the current climate of escalating fiscal stress, the spatial and socioeconomic aspects of voting behavior become ever more important considerations in the crafting and promotion of statewide open-space ballot questions.

REFERENCES


