

Public Opinion on the Future of the Town Square Property

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The Question & Approach

- What do the residents of Black Mountain think about the Town Square Property?
- Why systematic measures of public opinion matter.
- We assess public opinion, we cannot (nor do we want to, nor do you want us to) tell you what to do with the property.

The Strategy Stage 1: Focus Group

- Goal: To help us understand the situation and write questions.
- The process
 - Steering Committee gave us names from a variety of groups.
 - We called everyone on the list, asked them to come, promised confidentiality.
 - 12 people attended.
 - Transcribed the transcripts.
 - Analyzed the results by looking for patterns in the data.

The Strategy Stage 2: Survey

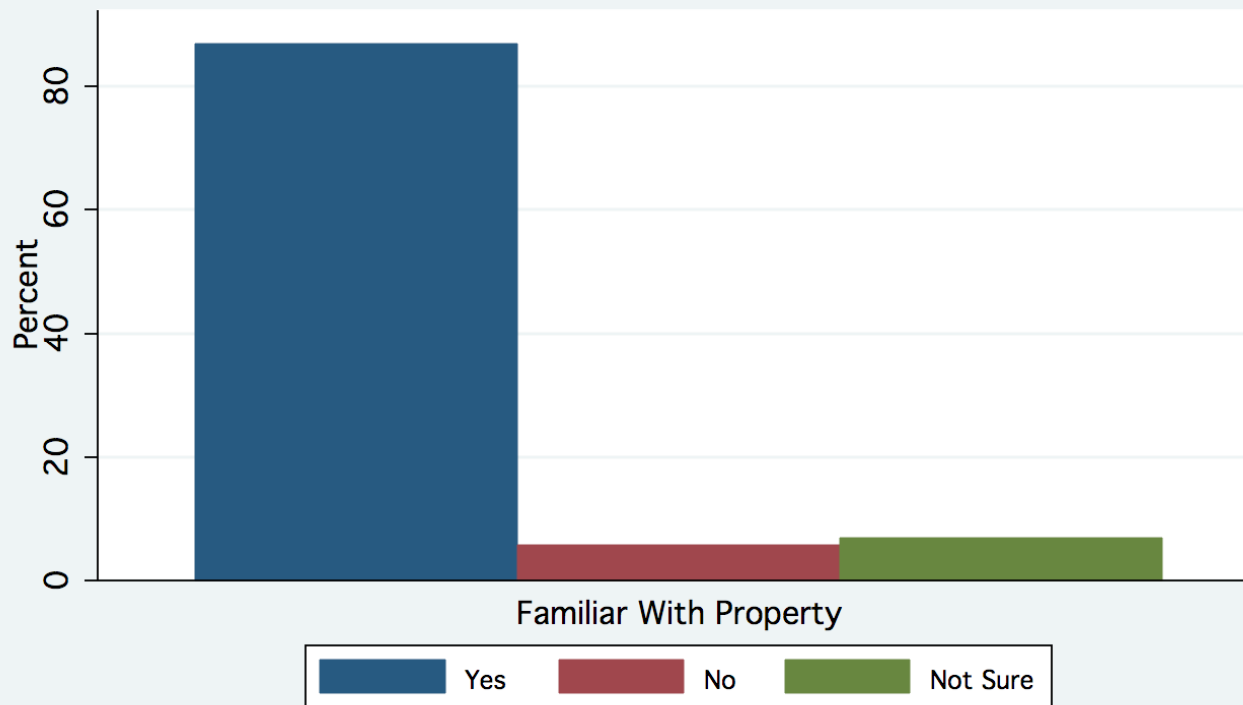
- Goal: To obtain a representative view of public opinion about the town square property.
- The process
 - With information from focus group and in consultation with the Steering Committee, wrote 11 questions.
 - Called 2,516 Black Mountain registered voters, using robo-calls
 - Each person was called until they answered (max: 5 times).
 - 18.5% response rate.
 - 467 completed responses.
 - Analyzed data

The Strategy Stage 3: Focus Group

- Goal: To help us contextualize the results and understand *why* people answered the way they did.
- The process
 - Steering Committee gave us names from a variety of groups.
 - We called everyone on the list, asked them to come, promised confidentiality.
 - 12 people attended.
 - Transcribed the transcripts.
 - Analyzed the results by looking for patterns in the data.

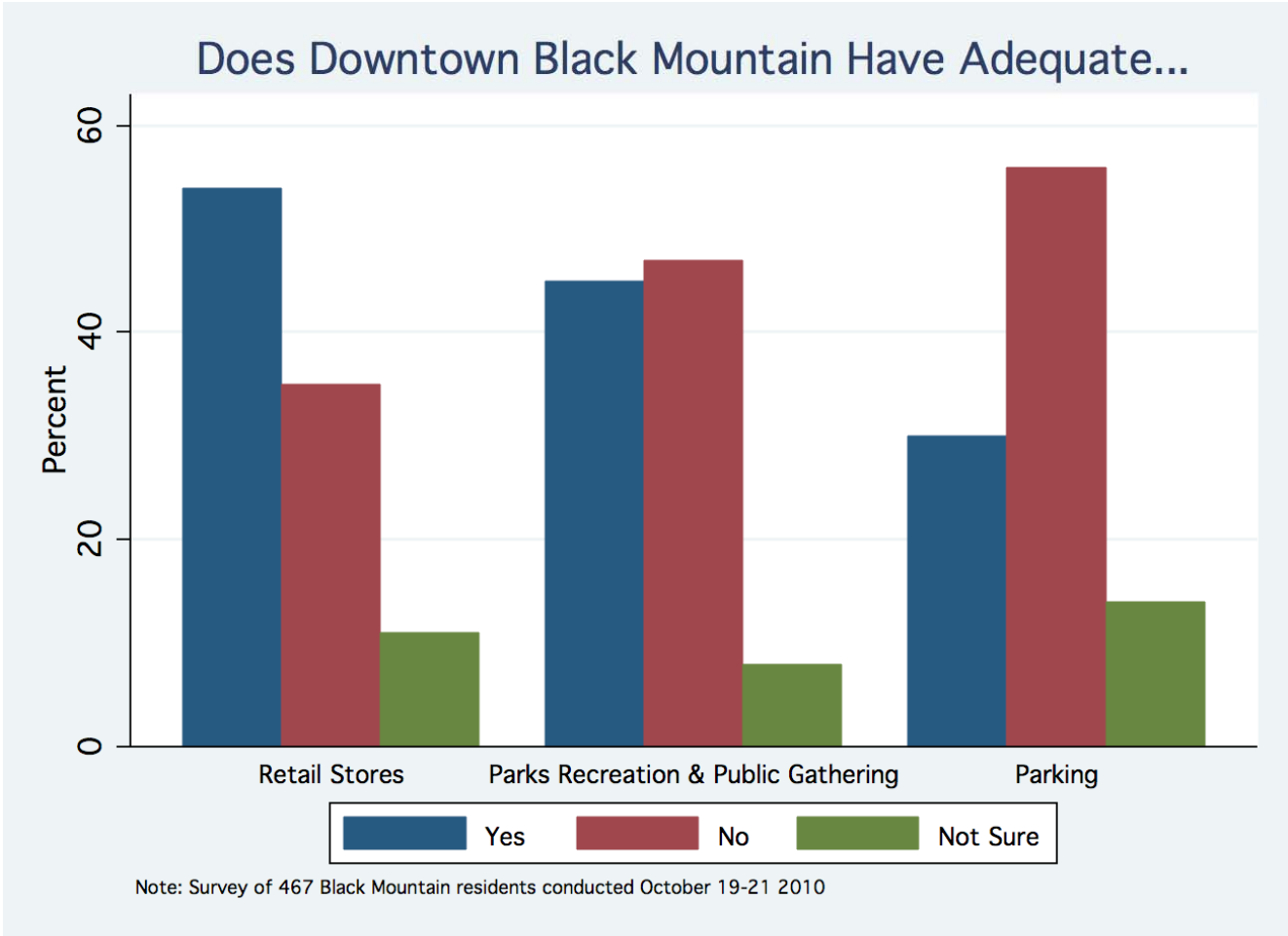
Familiarity with the Property

Are You Familiar with the 1.4 Acre Town-Owned Property at the Corner of Montreat Rd And State Street Commonly Known as the Town Square Property?



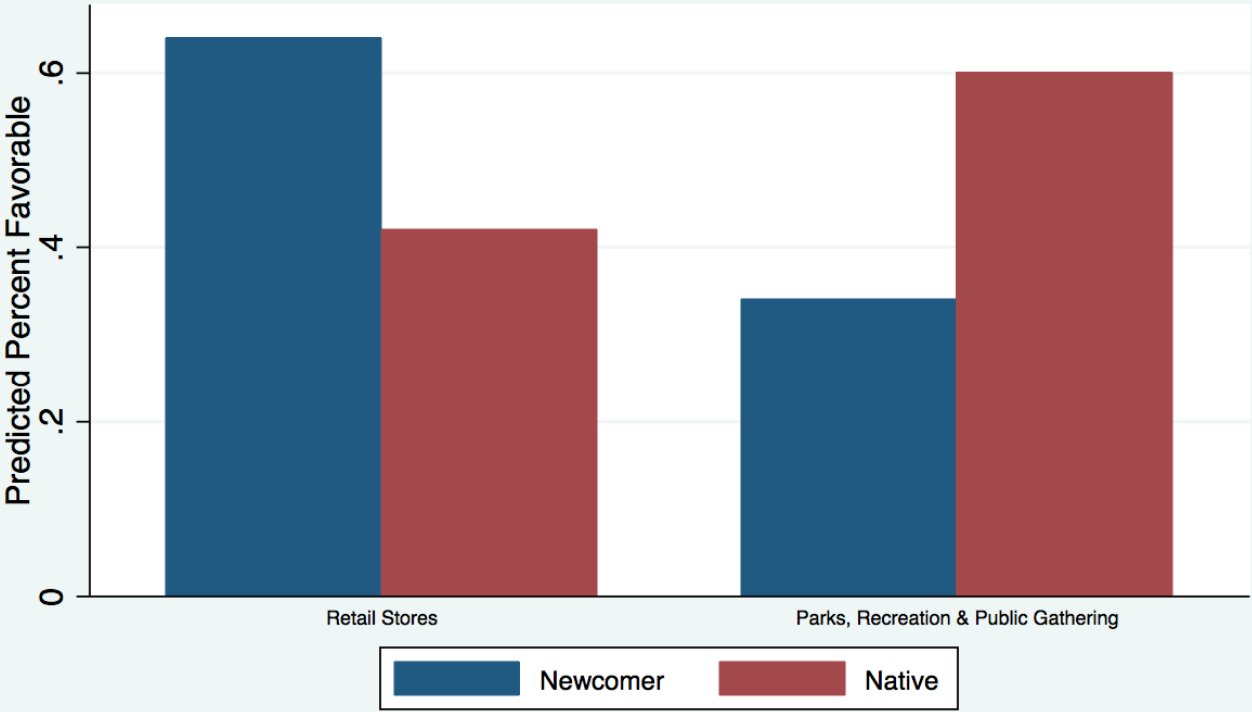
Note: Survey of 467 Black Mountain residents conducted October 19-21 2010

Current Conditions in Black Mountain



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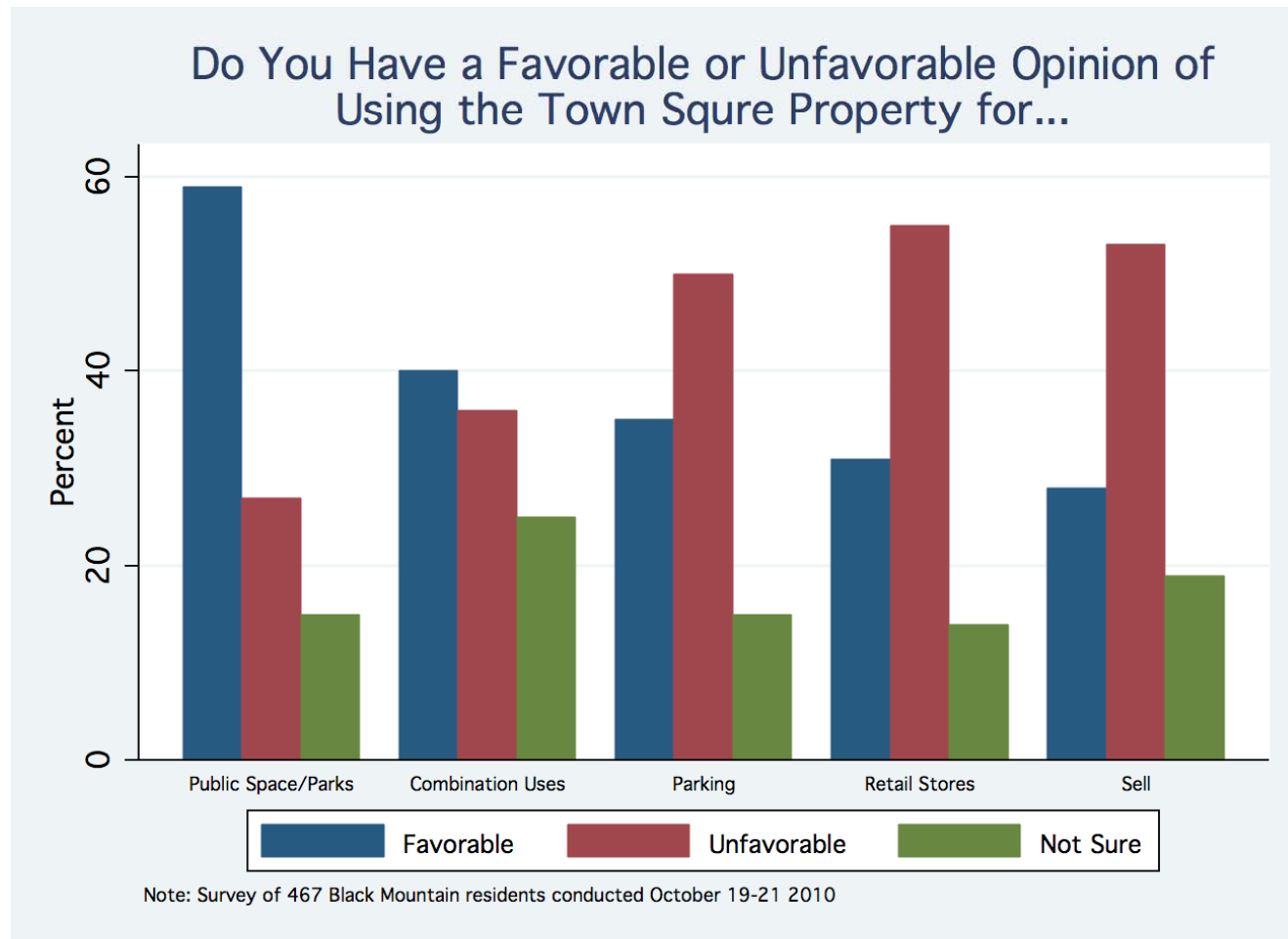
Comparing Opinions of Newcomers and Natives About Whether Downtown Has Adequate...



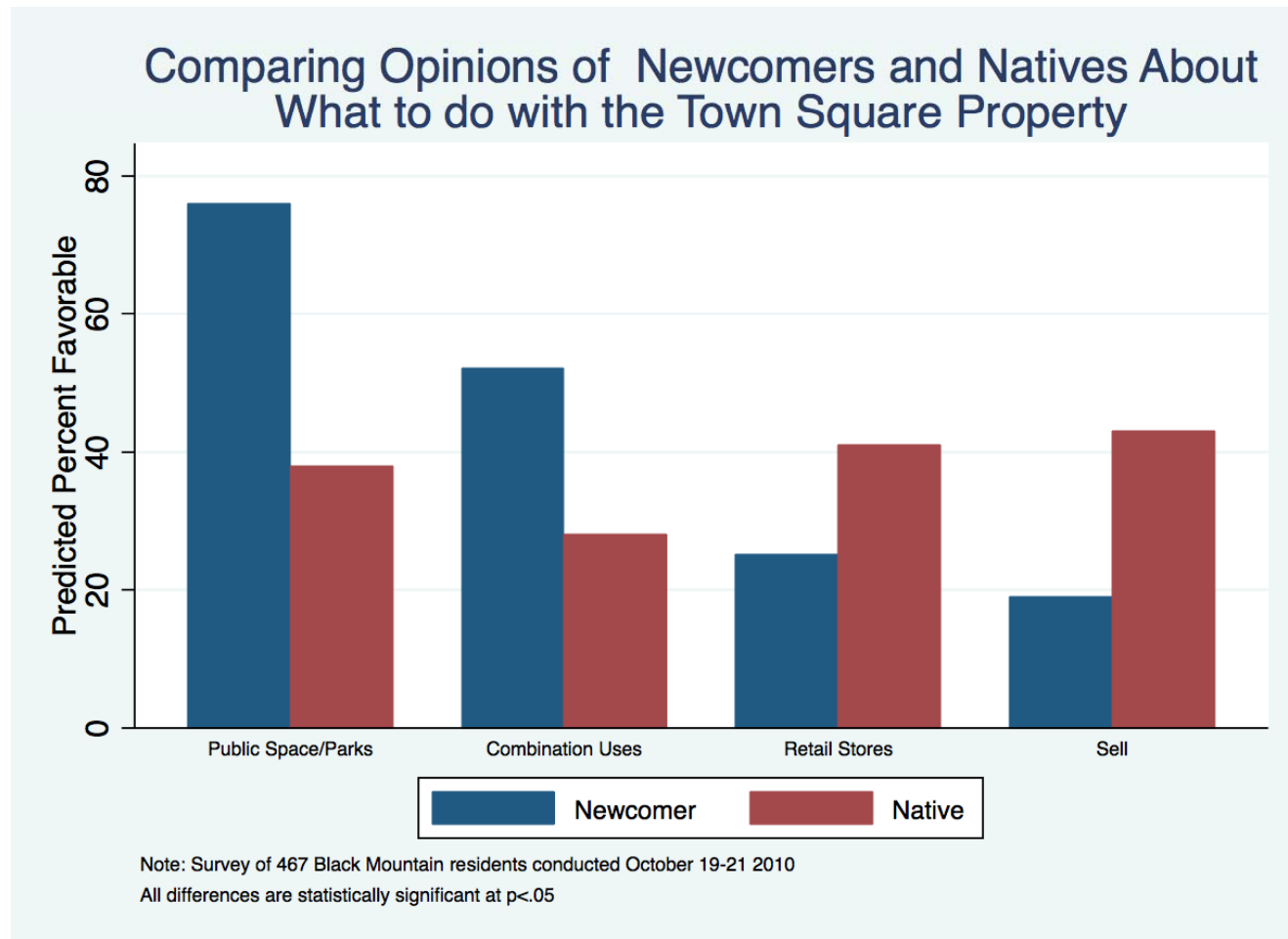
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All differences are statistically significant at $p < .05$

Possibilities for Black Mountain



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Conclusions

- There is comparatively little support for using the space for retail.
- There is comparatively little support for selling the property.
- The strongest support seems to be for using the property for public space of some variety.

Conclusions

- There are some divisions between natives and newcomers.
- There is a strong desire to use local and volunteer labor to transform the Town Square Property.
- There is a sense of urgency surrounding the property.