

Has Growth in Automobile Use Ended?

Don Pickrell

Chief Economist, Volpe Center

*Autos, People and Policies (APPs):
Addressing the Issues of the New Millennium*

University of Maryland

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The National Transportation Systems Center

Advancing transportation innovation for the public good

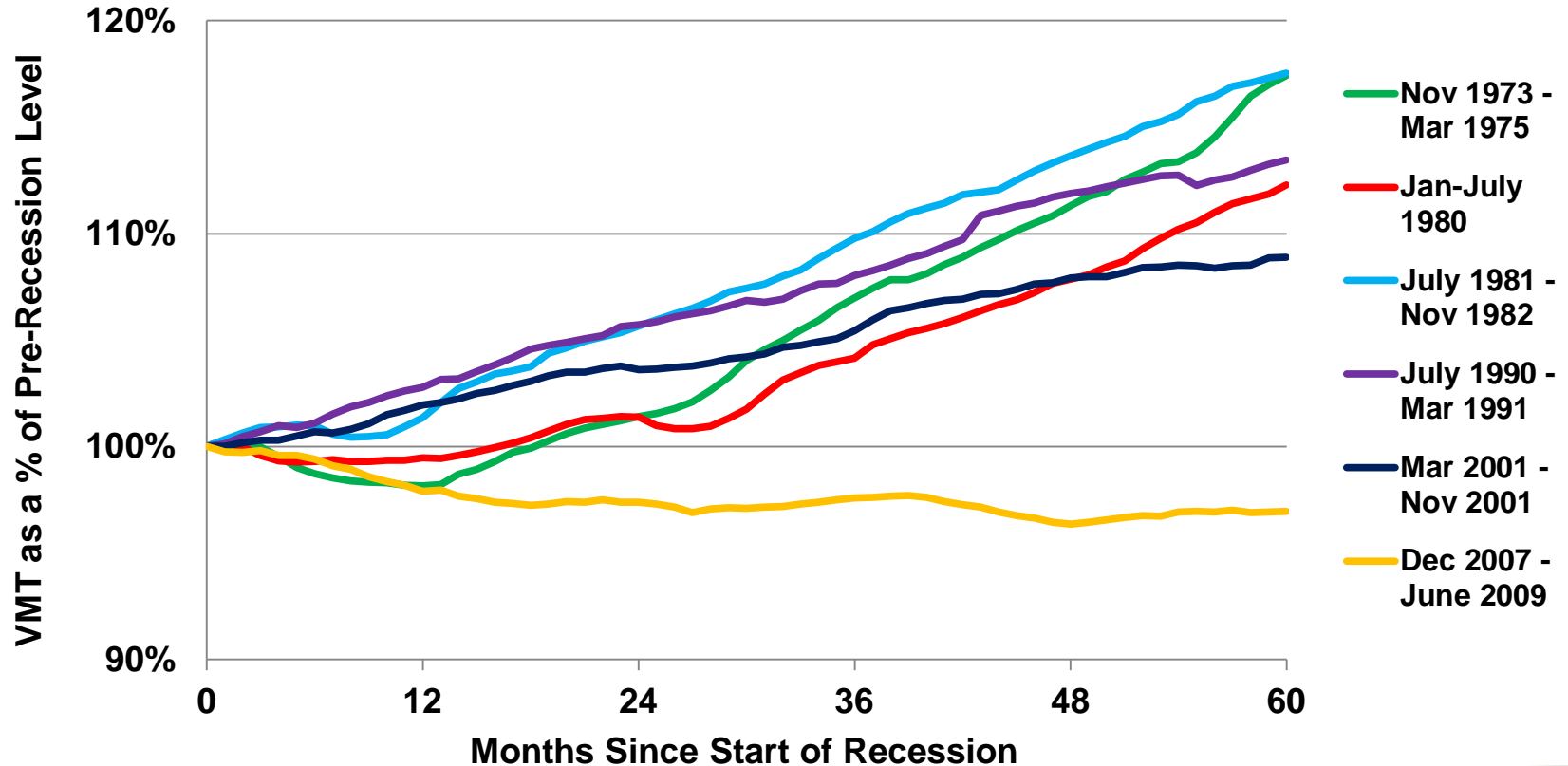


U.S. Department of Transportation

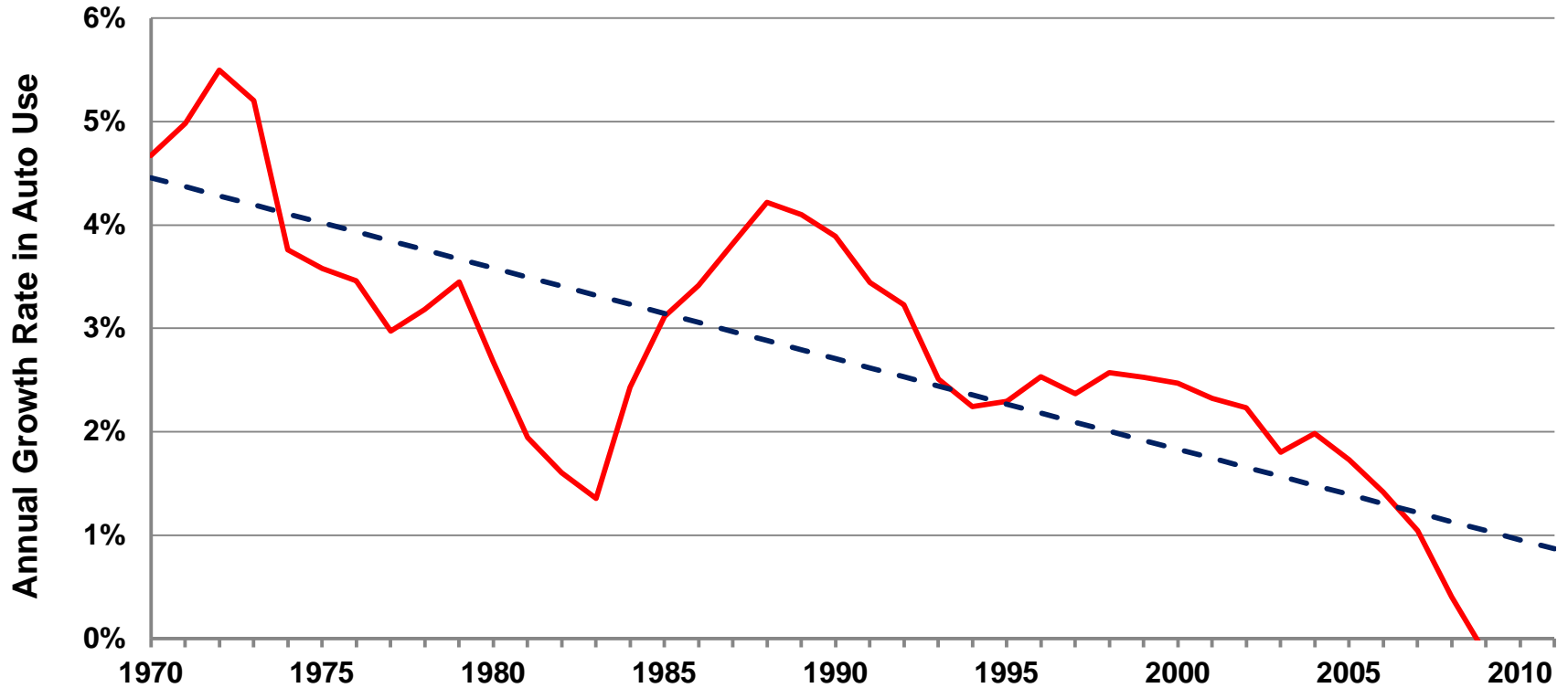
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Some Things are New...



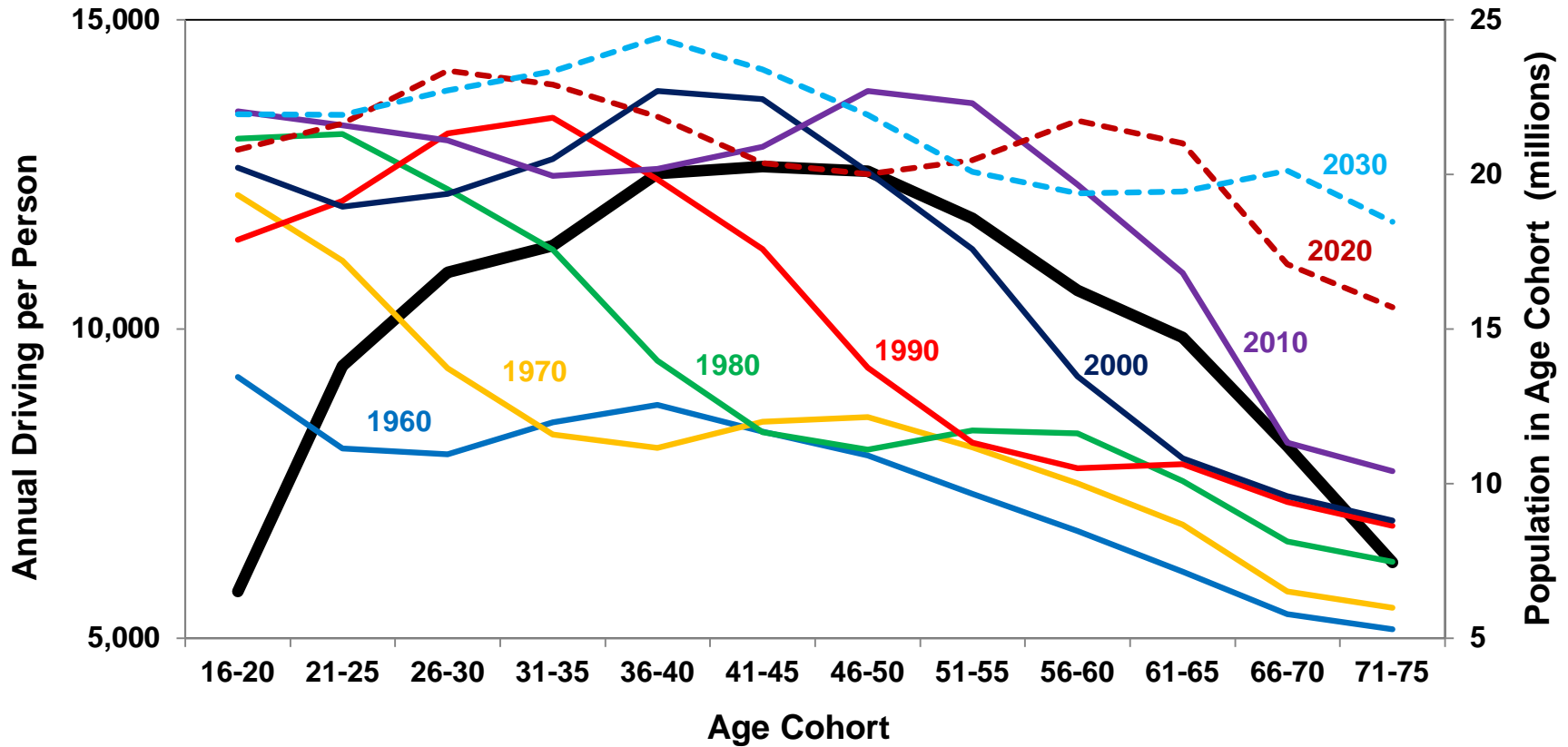
...but This Has Been a Long Time Coming



A Perfect Storm?

- ❑ Decline in vehicle use reflects the confluence of several major developments
 - Long-term demographic forces
 - Emerging economic challenges
 - Recent technological innovations
- ❑ Some of the long-term demographic trends reached critical thresholds about the turn of the 21st century
- ❑ Many economic challenges are recession-related, but others emerged well before it
- ❑ New technologies have improved enough to substitute for some travel
- ❑ More fundamental changes in behavior may also be taking hold

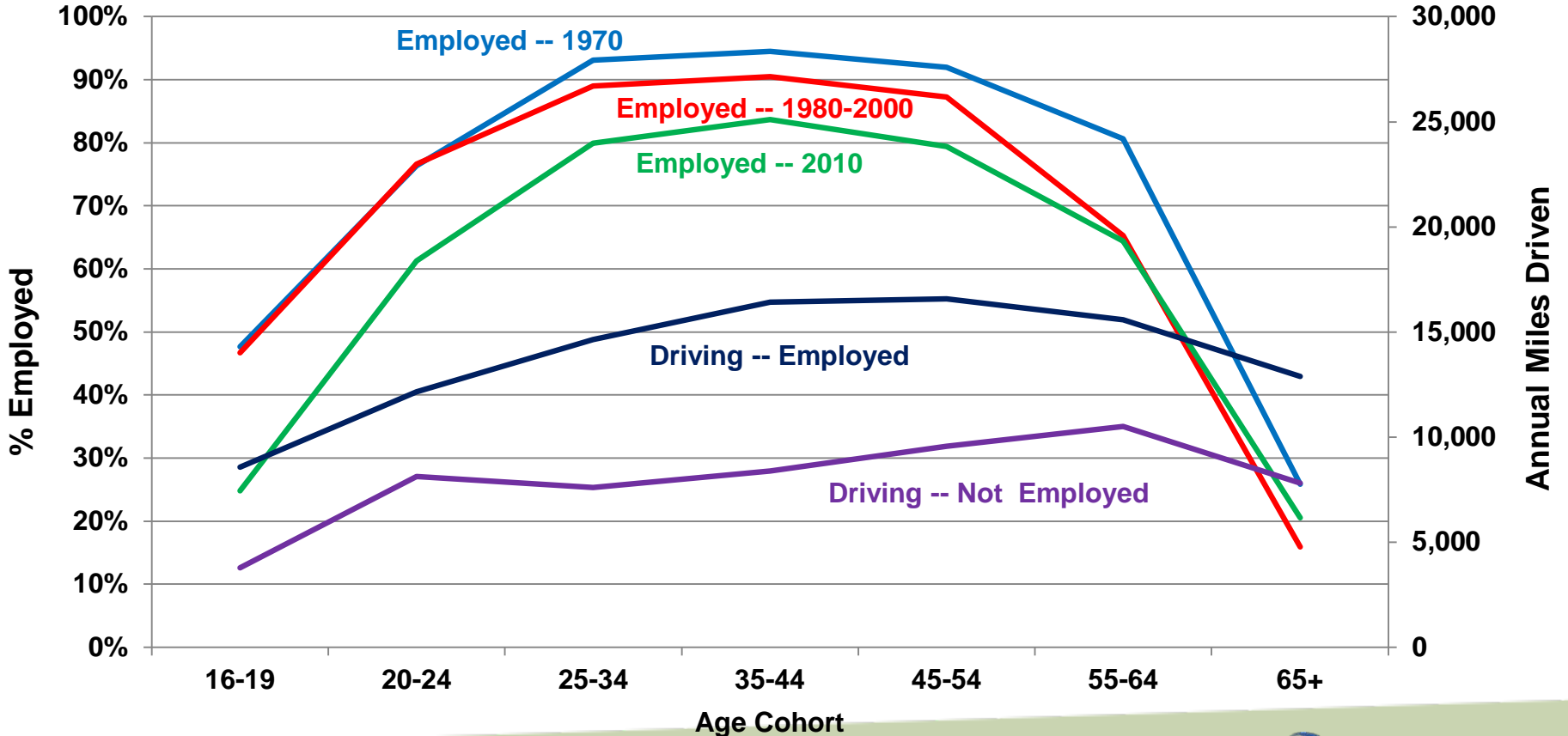
Baby Boom, Bust, and Echo



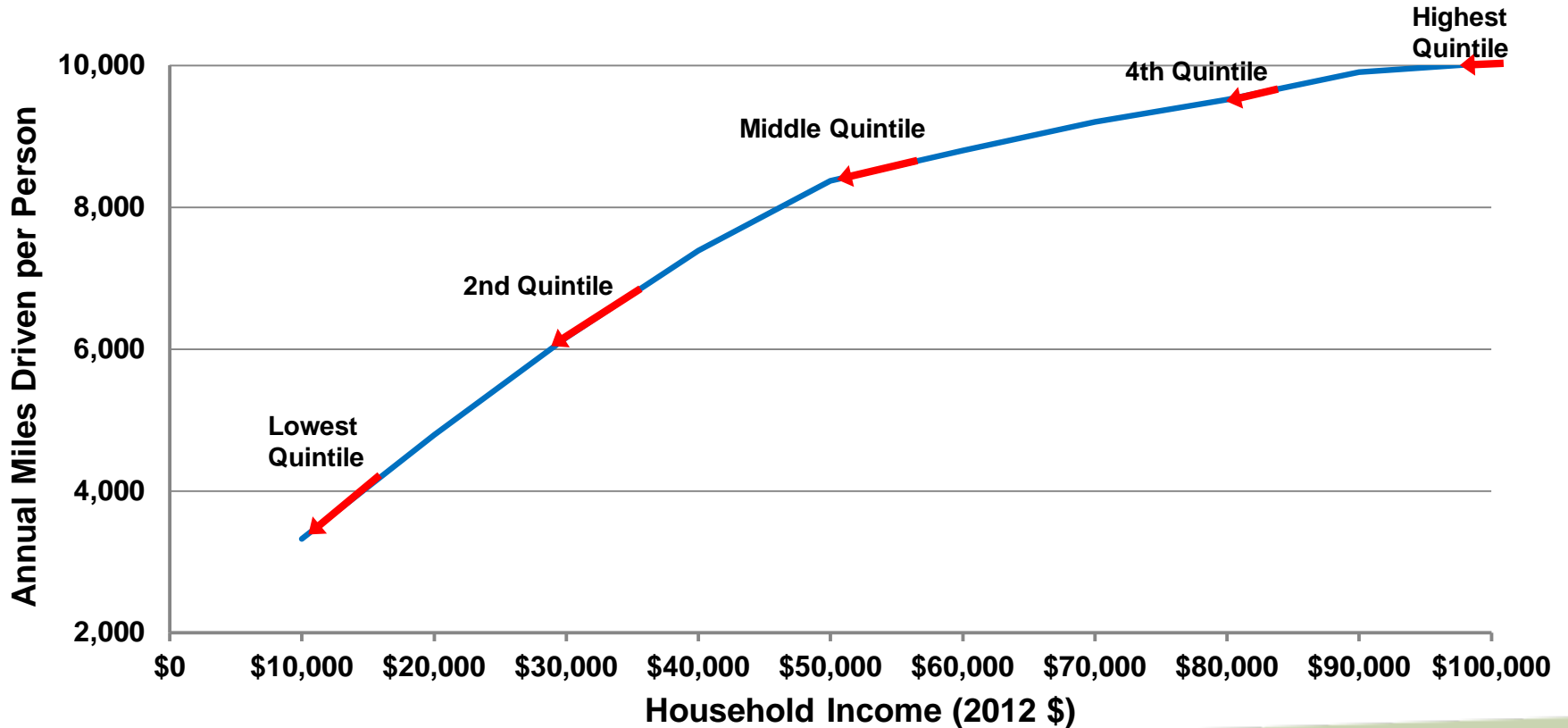
Jobs in Metropolitan Areas are “Catching Up” to Workers

Year	% of Population		% of Workers		% of Jobs	
	Central City	Suburbs	Central City	Suburbs	Central City	Suburbs
1950	58%	42%	--	--	--	--
1960	51%	49%	54%	46%	66%	34%
1970	46%	54%	46%	54%	57%	43%
1980	40%	60%	39%	61%	52%	48%
1990	33%	67%	35%	65%	51%	49%
2000	30%	70%	34%	66%	45%	55%
2010	28%	72%	30%	70%	39%	61%

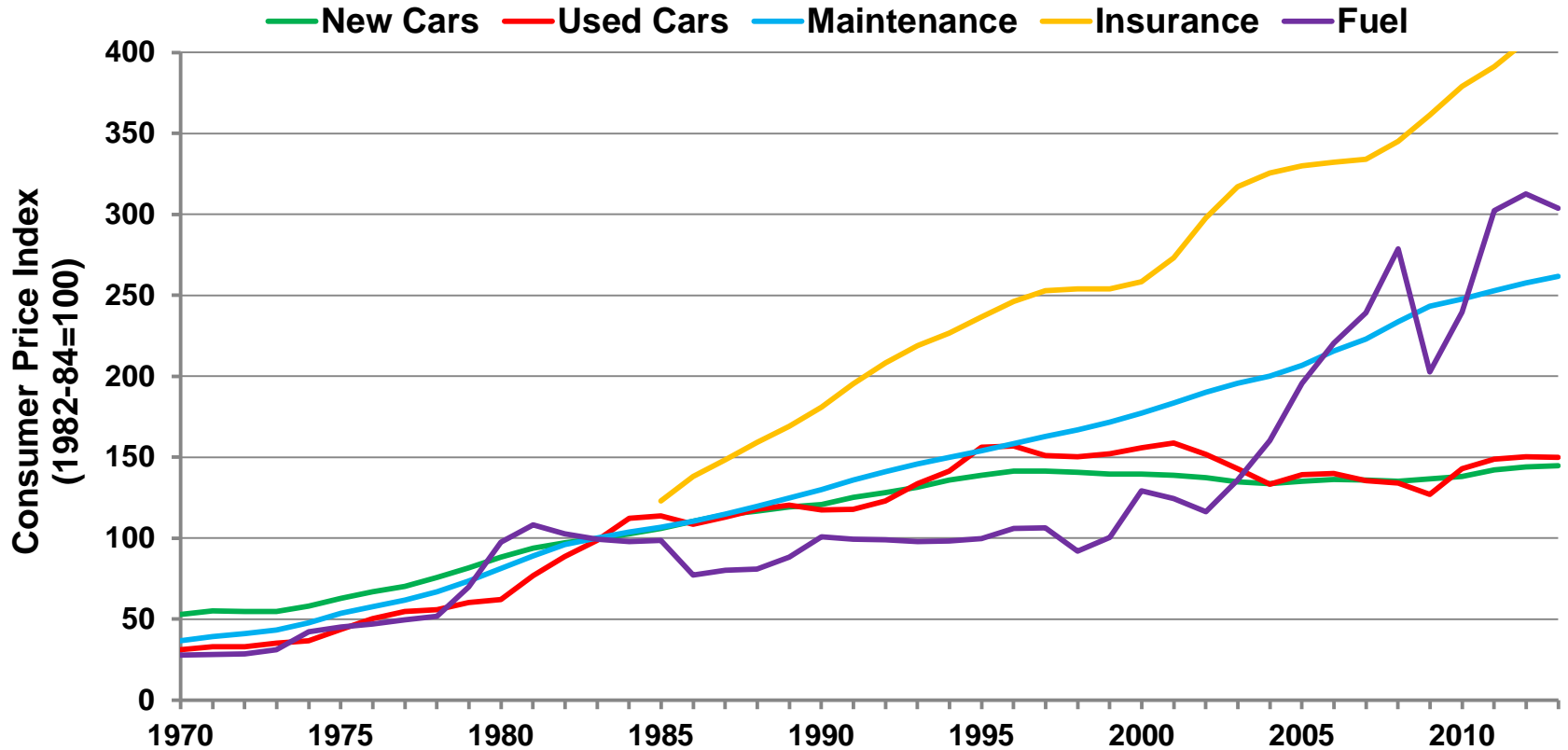
The Unemployed Aren't Driving to Work



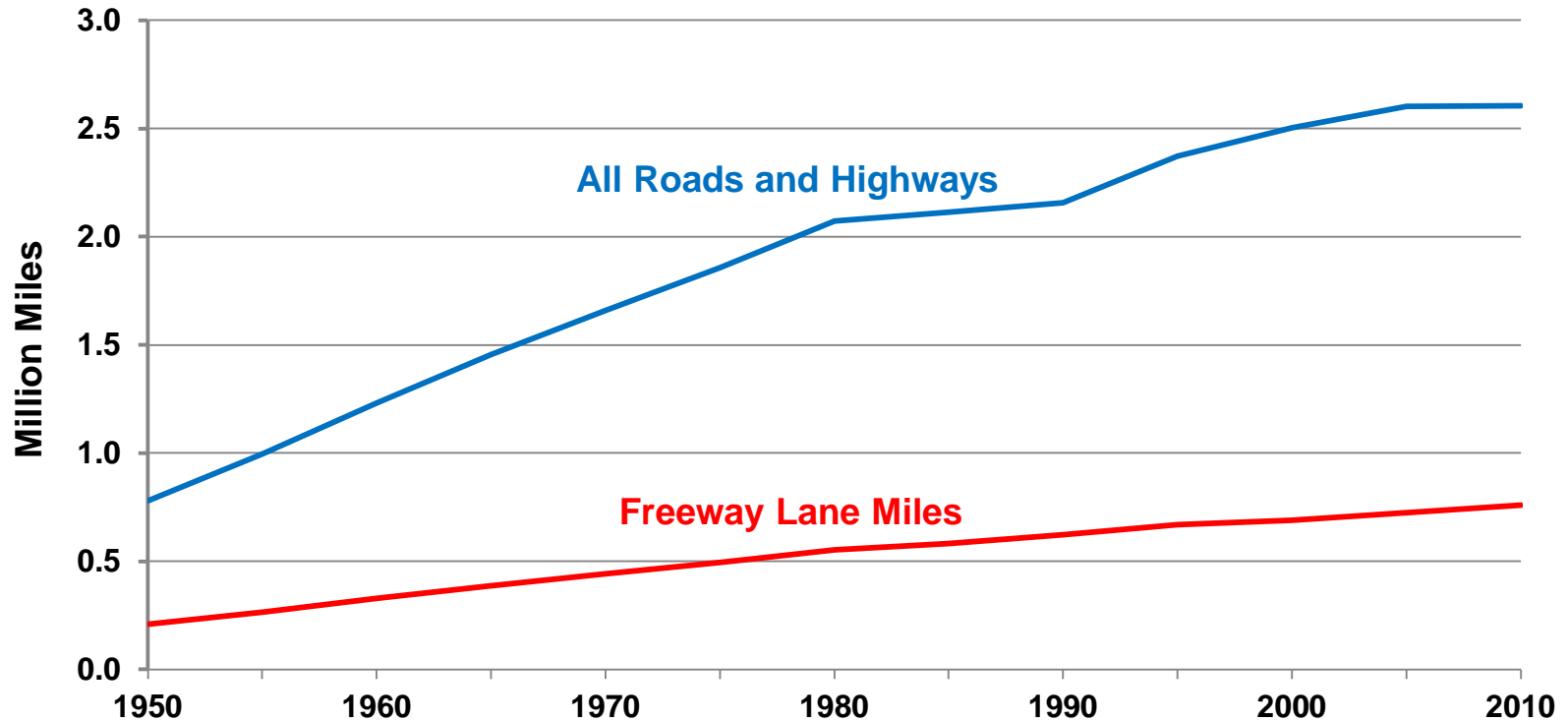
Recent Income Losses Have Hit Hard



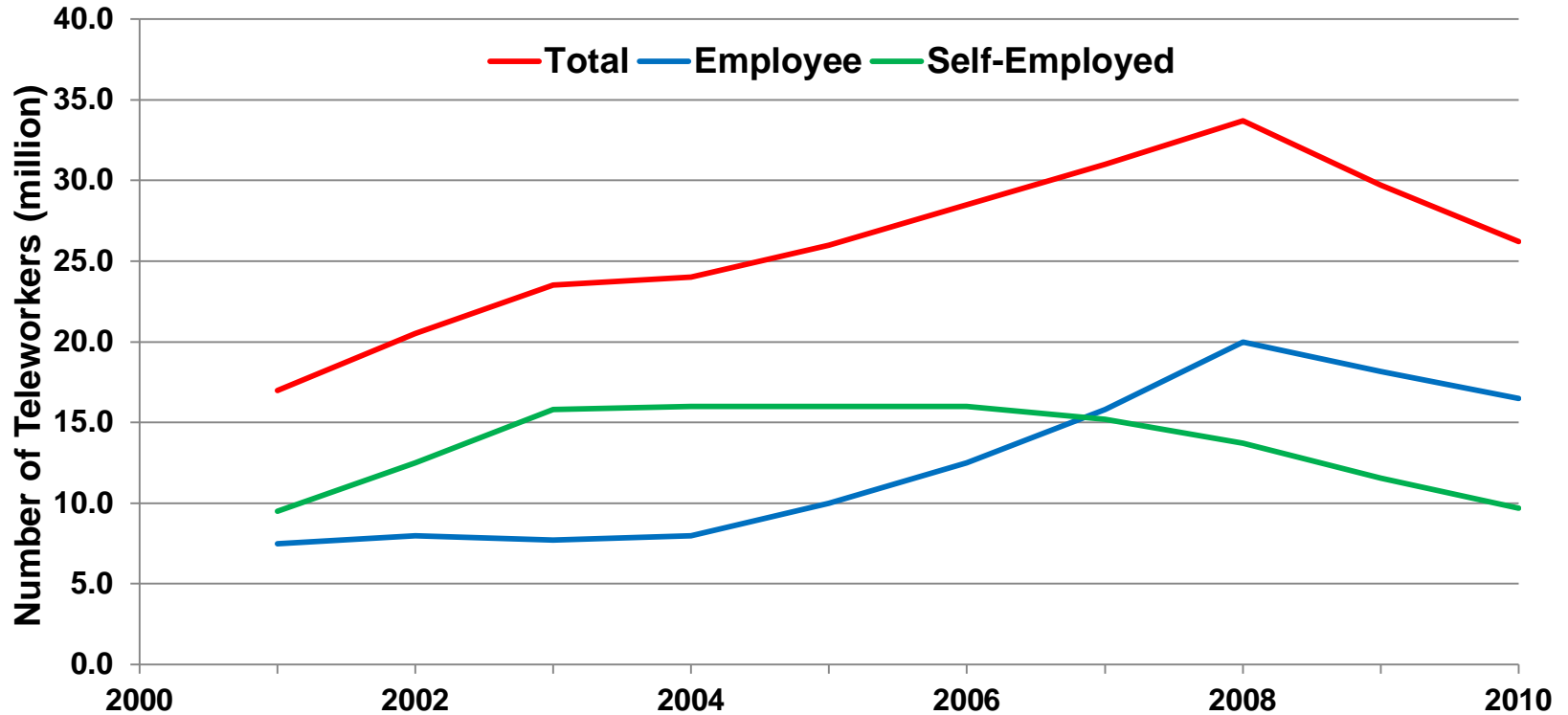
Driving is Getting Expensive



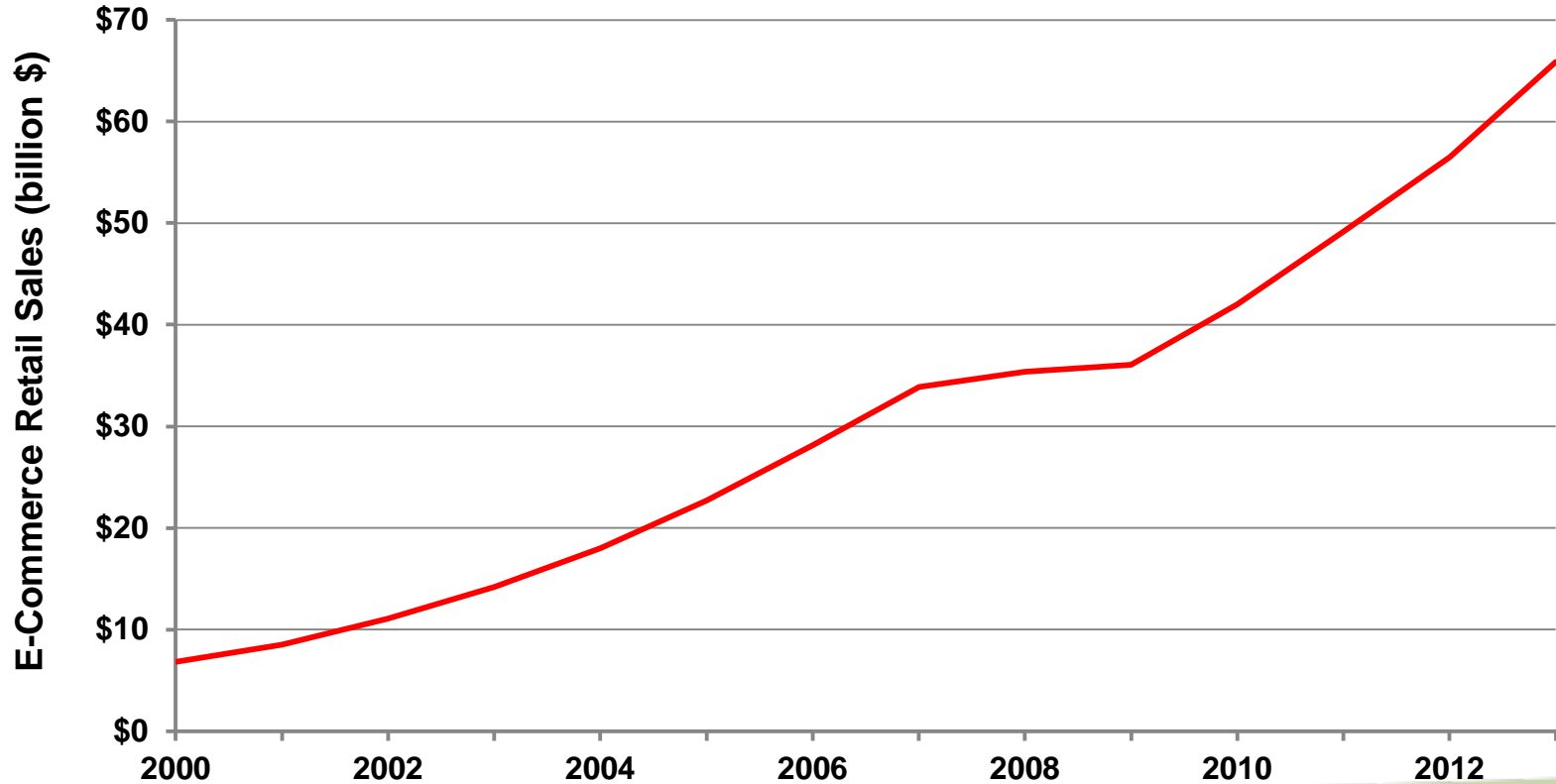
The “Highway Boom” Ended, Maybe



Teleworking Was Catching On, Until...



On-Line Shopping Still Small, but Exploding



New Travel Choices?

- ❑ Even if *all* new transit trips since automobile use peaked were formerly made by auto drivers, increase in transit use accounts for less than 1% of decline in automobile travel
- ❑ Data aren't ideal, but increases in bicycle and walk trips could account for at most another few percent of decline in driving since its peak
- ❑ Airline, Amtrak and intercity bus service are still too small to make a noticeable difference in auto use for intercity travel, except among younger travelers and within limited regions

Wild Cards

- ❑ Car sharing
- ❑ Autonomous (“self-driving”) vehicles
- ❑ Is the decline in labor force participation permanent?
- ❑ Immigration
 - How much will there be?
 - How fast will travel behavior of new immigrants adapt?