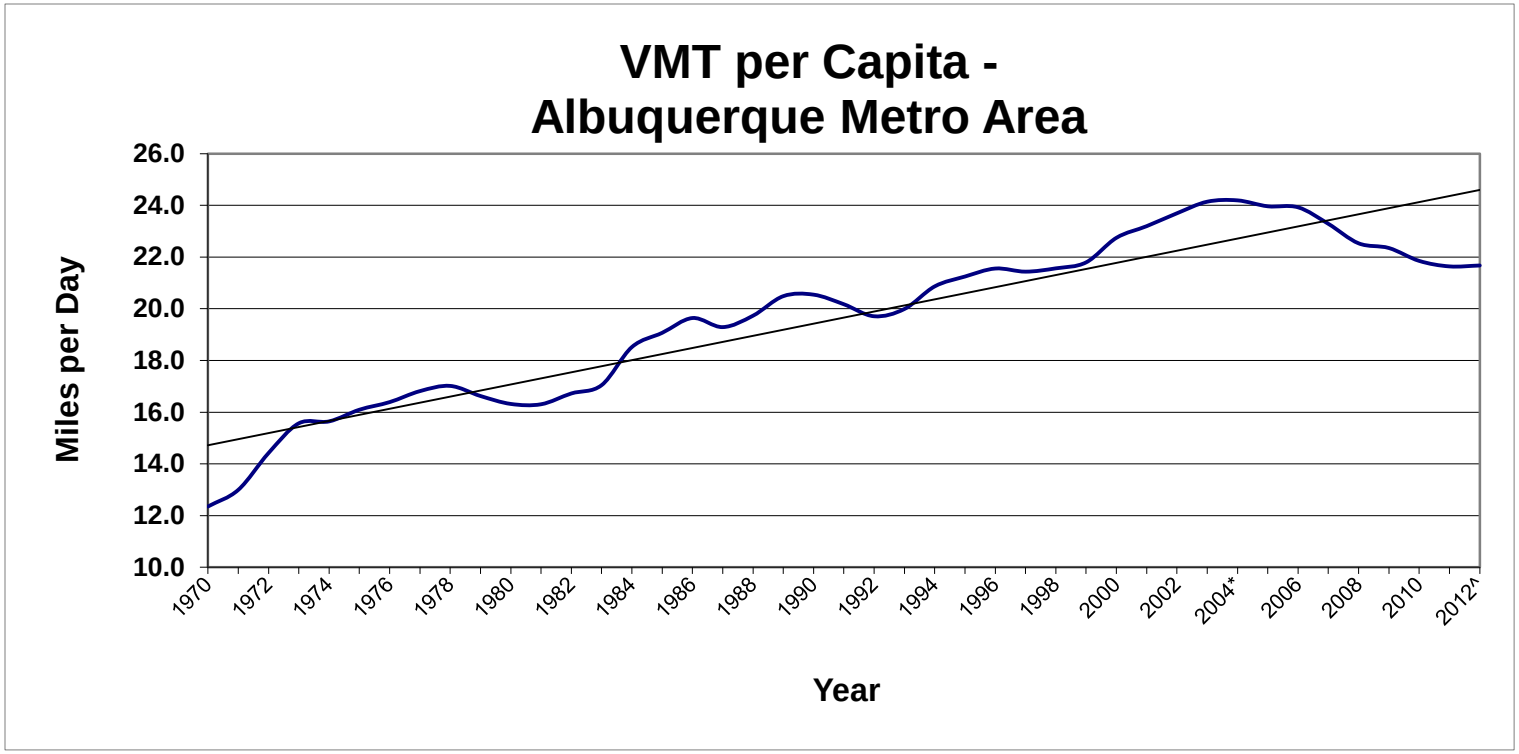
# An Examination of VMT Growth and Changing Traffic Patterns Across Bernalillo County and Rio Rancho

Congestion Management Process

September 2015

# Per Capita Vehicle Miles Traveled: Albuquerque Metropolitan Area

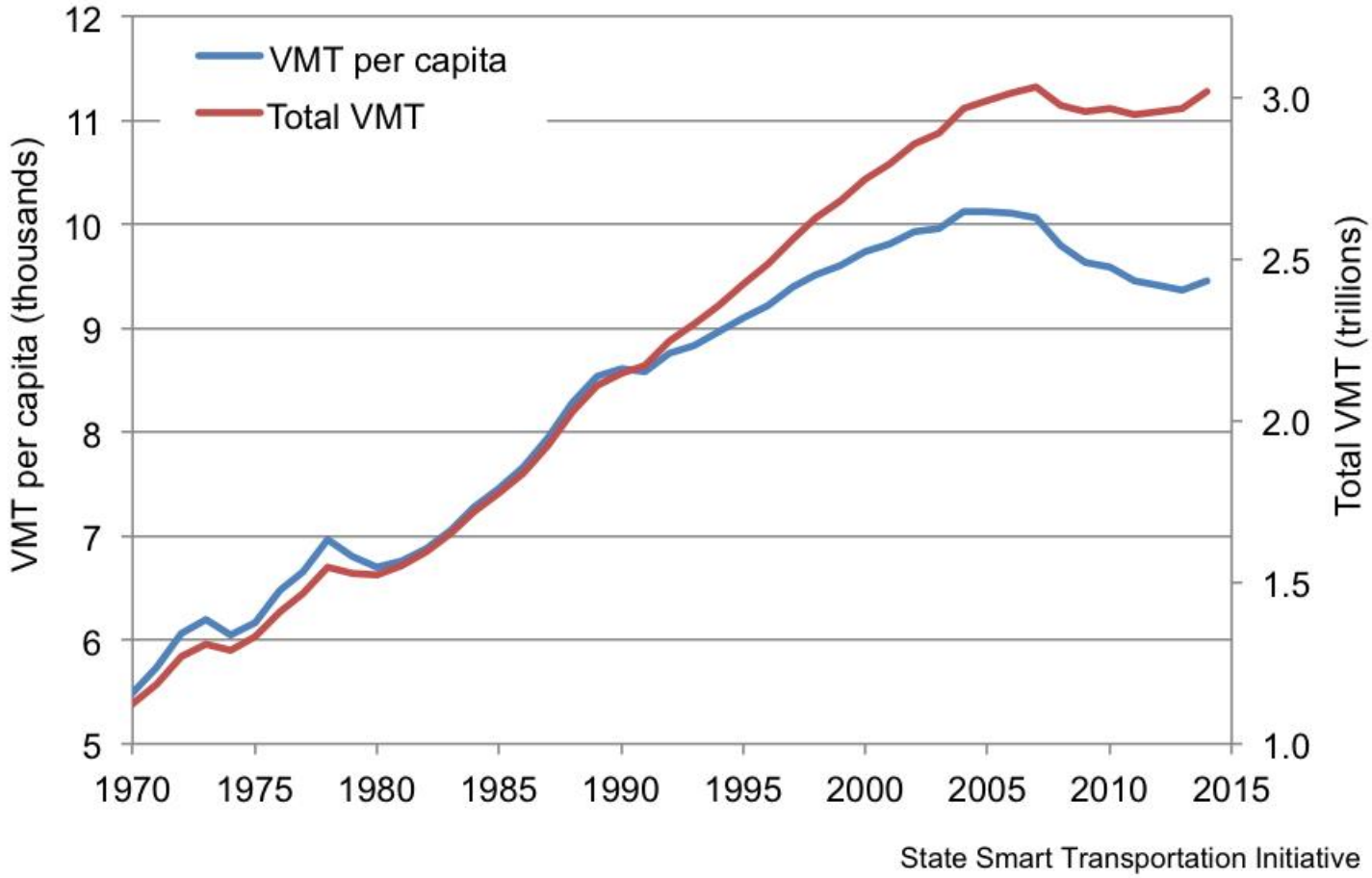



People are driving less each year

Albuquerque: Vehicle miles traveled per capita has dropped 10% since 2004

Nationally: Per capita driving has fallen every year for 9 straight years

# VMT Growth


VMT per capita
Total VMT
VMT per capita (thousands)
Total VMT (trillions)
12
11
10
9
8
7
6
5
3.0
2.5
2.0
1.5
1.0
1970
1975
1980
1985
1990
1995
2000
2005
2010
2015
State Smart Transportation Initiative

# (Really) Recent Trends

- **2013**
  - Per capita VMT declined by 0.4%
  - 9th straight year of per capita decrease
- **2014**
  - Total VMT rose by 1.7%
  - Per capita VMT rose by 0.9% in 2014
  - 4% lower gas in 2014 than 2013
  - Improved economy = more commuters
- **2015**
  - Period from July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015 have seen greatest total VMT of any 12-month period
  - 3.5% increase in year-to-date VMT compared to first half of 2014

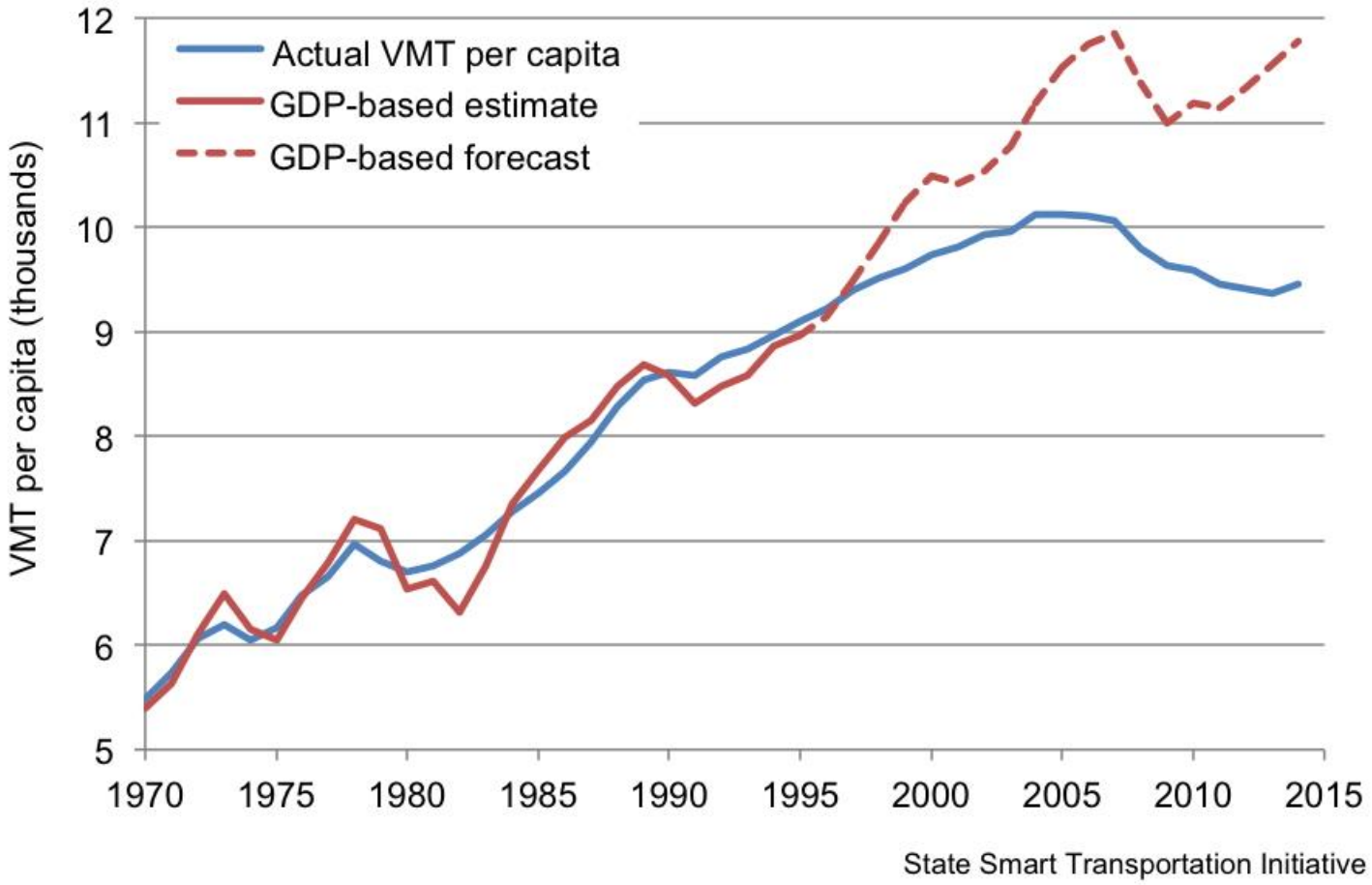
Source: FHWA, SSTI March 2015

# What Does the Future Hold?

- Nevertheless, predictions are that slow growth in VMT will continue and will not reach per capita pre-Recession levels
- Much depends on gas prices
- Weaker connection between economic expansion and driving than in the past
- In previous decades, GDP and VMT growth were highly correlated

Source: SSTI, March 2015

# GDP Growth vs VMT Growth



# Possible Explanations

- Rise of walkable places (economic growth due to lower transportation costs)
- Stagnant wages → less disposable income
- Declining car use among Millennials
- Marginal changes in commuting behavior
- Maturity of road network (connections to key employment centers already exist)

CityLab, "Driving in America Is Approaching a 'New Normal,'" 3/23/15

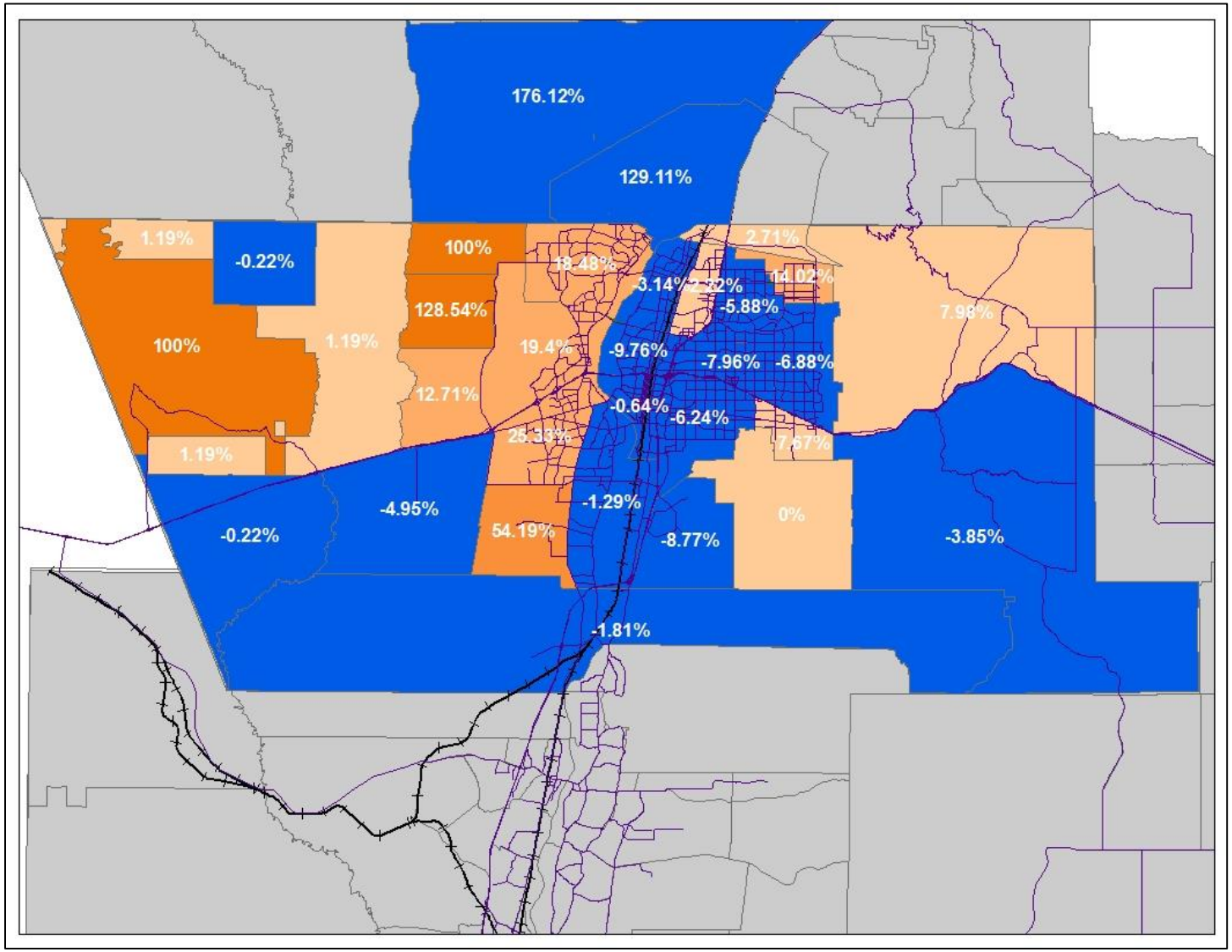
# Distribution of Change

- Where do we observe increases in VMT within the region?
- Where do we observe decreases in VMT within the region?
- Subarea analysis
  - Utilize *draft* Community Assessment Planning Areas from *draft* ABQ BC Comprehensive Plan
- Corridor-level changes

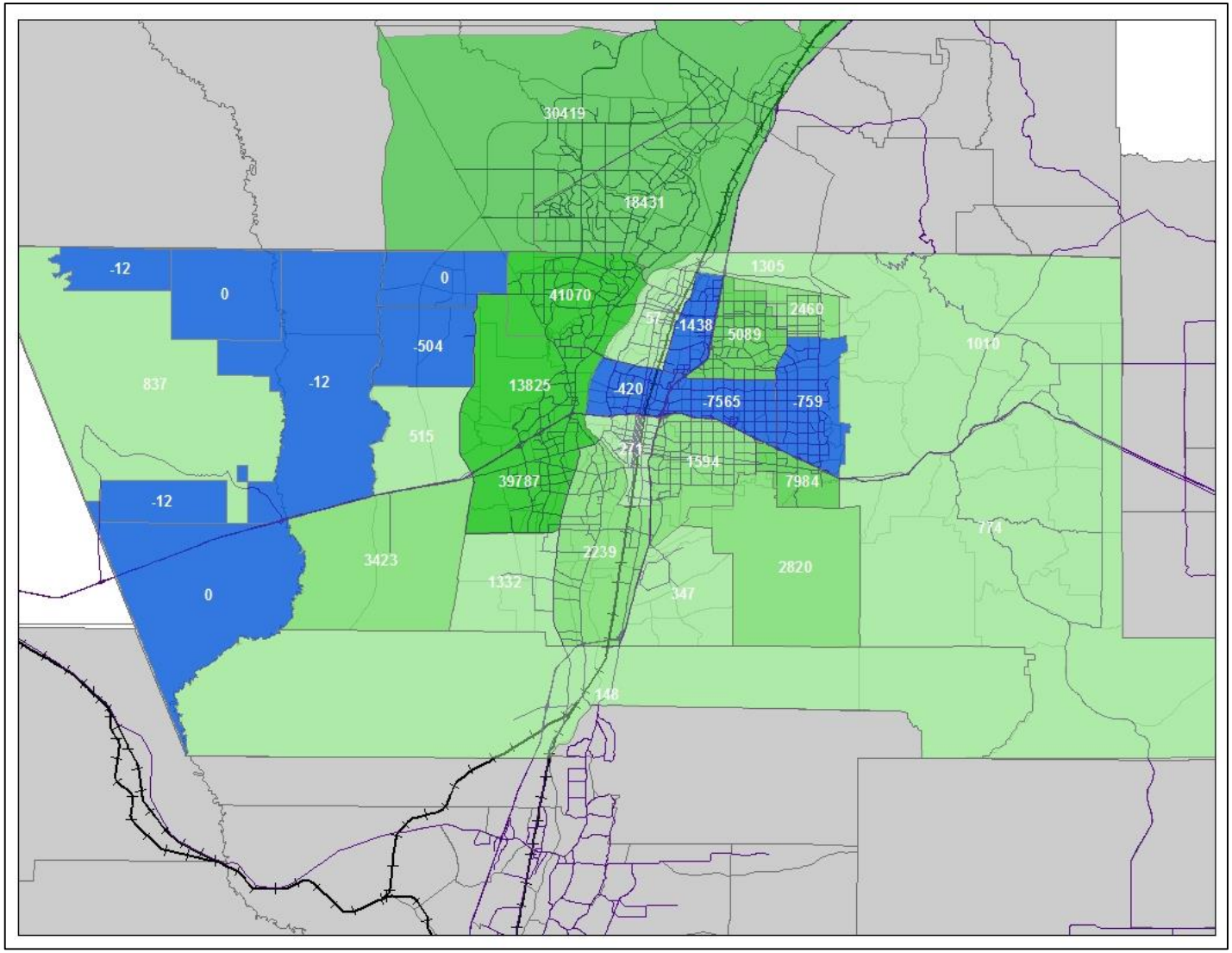
# SUBAREA GROWTH LEVELS:

# VMT AND POP/EMP

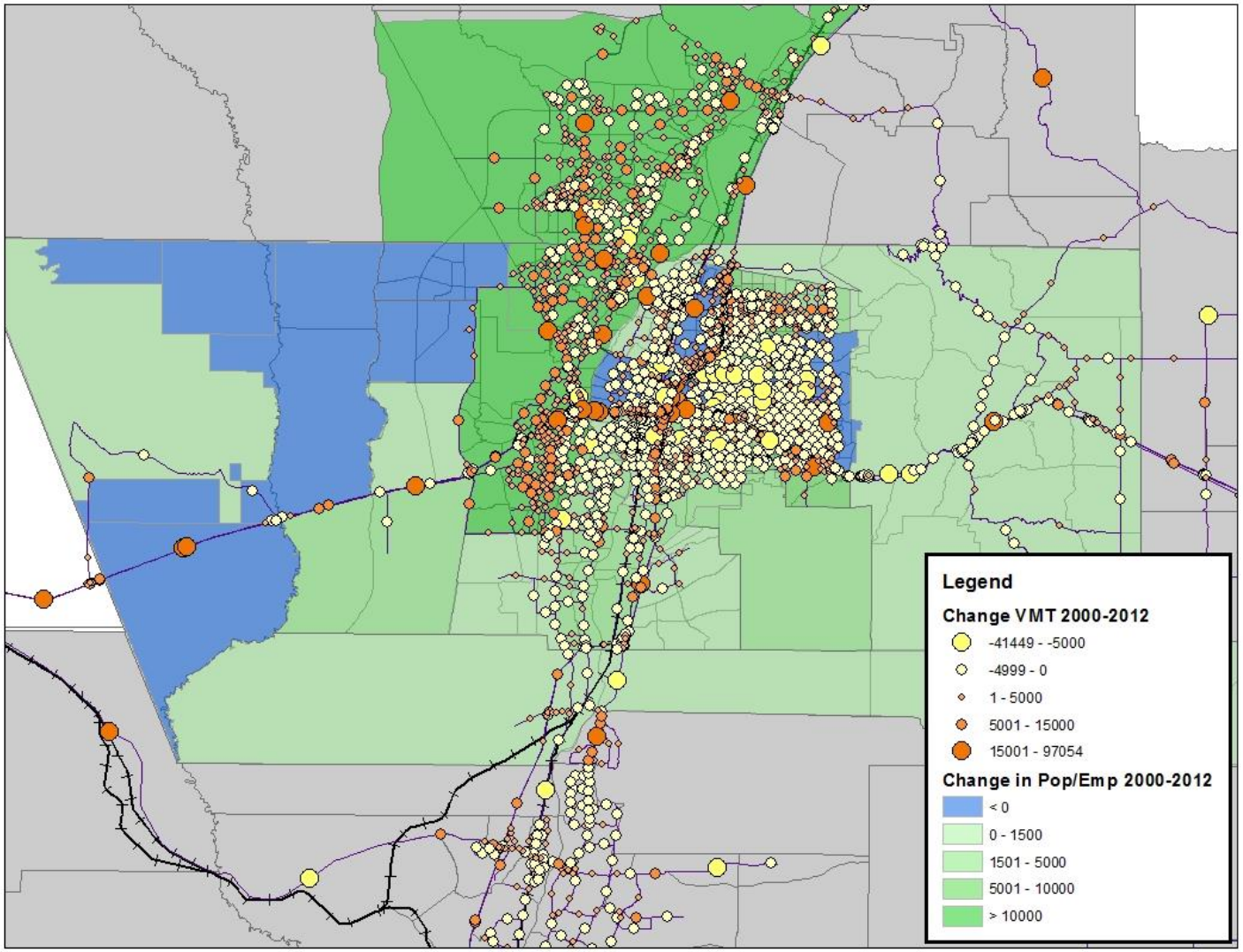
# VMT 2000-2012



# Pop + Emp 2000-2012



# VMT & Pop/Emp Change, 2000-2012



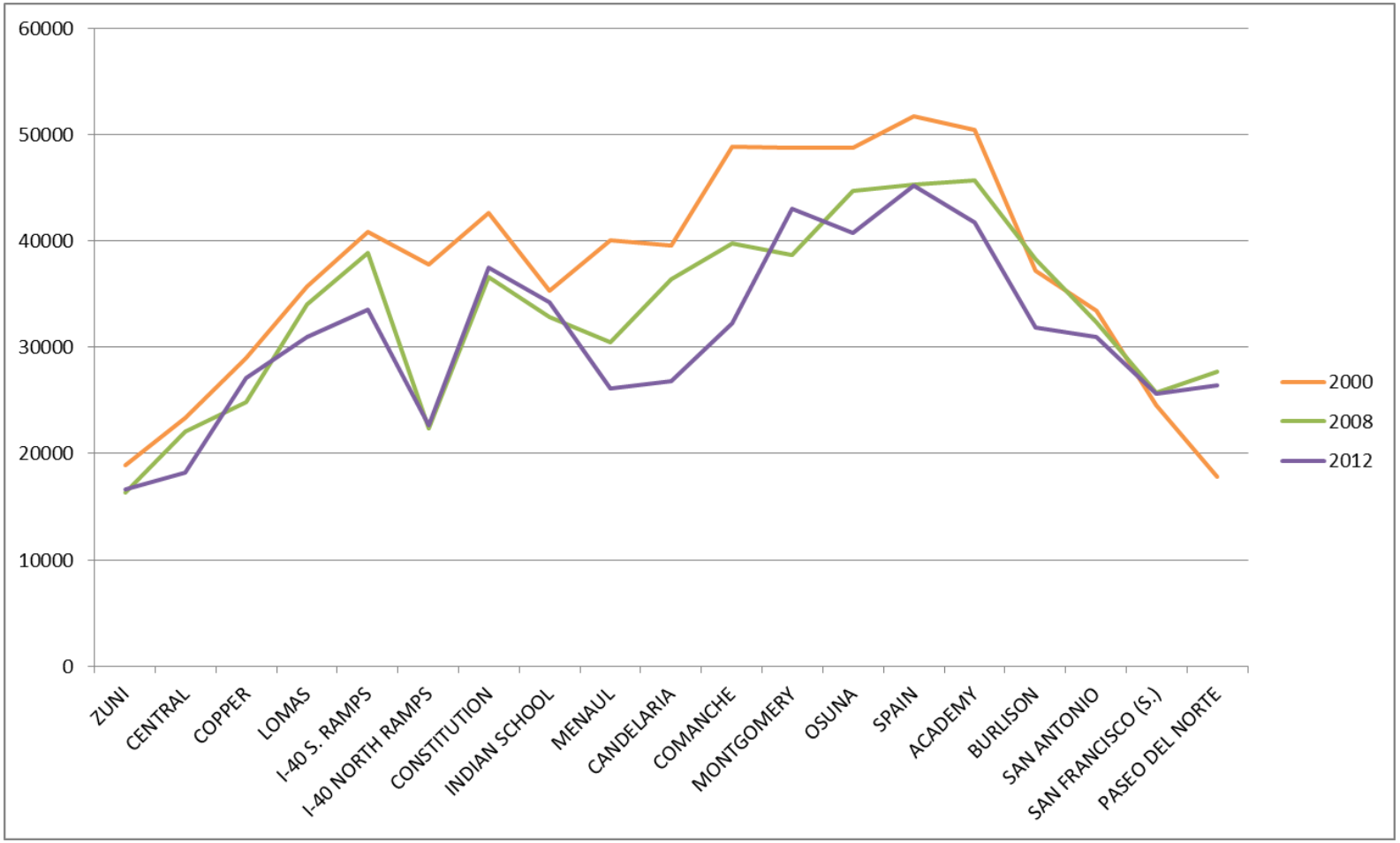
# CORRIDORS:

# AWDT BY SEGMENT BY YEAR

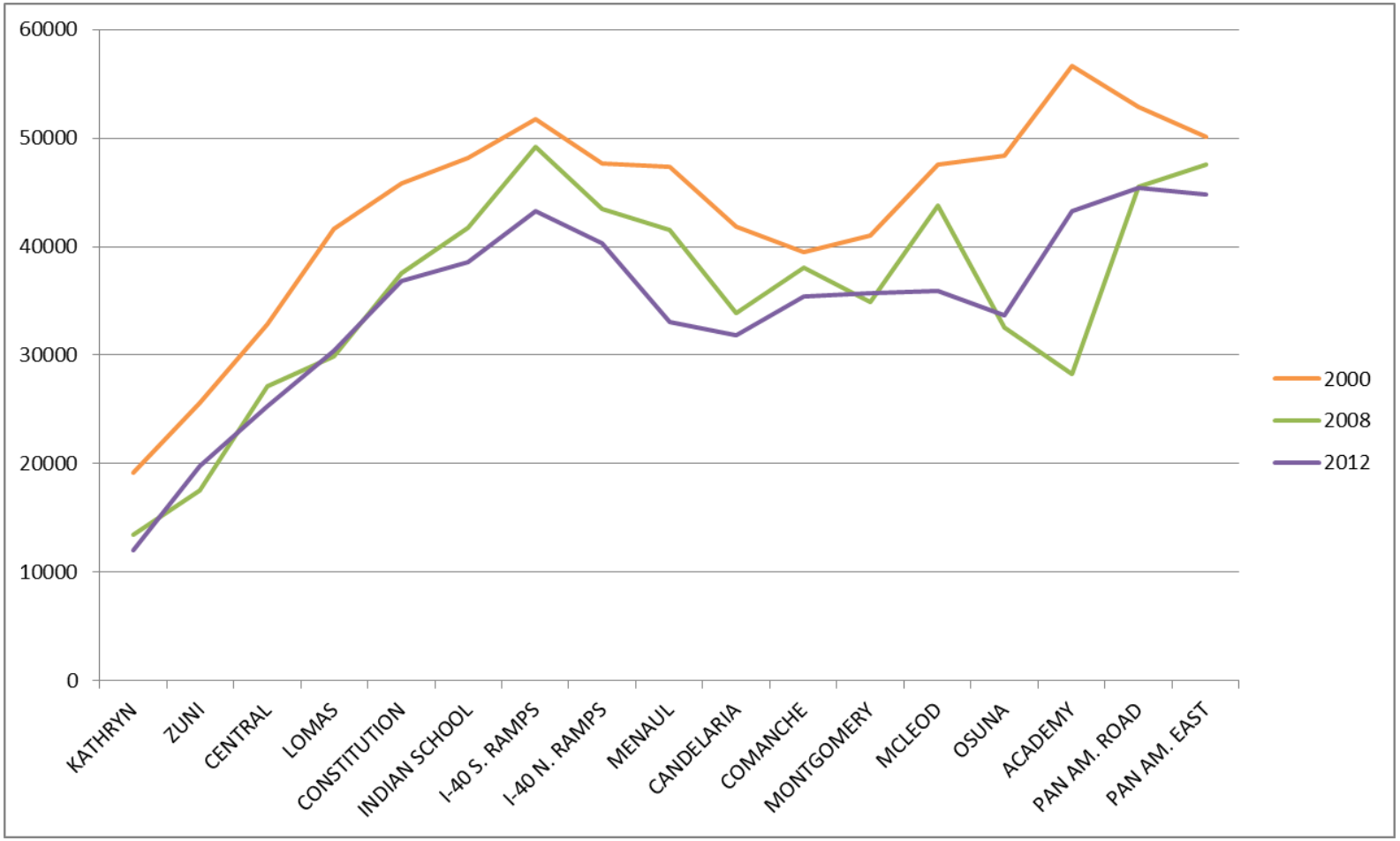
# Eubank Blvd


- Higher volumes in 2012 than 2000 south of I-40
- Lower volumes in 2012 for the rest of the corridor

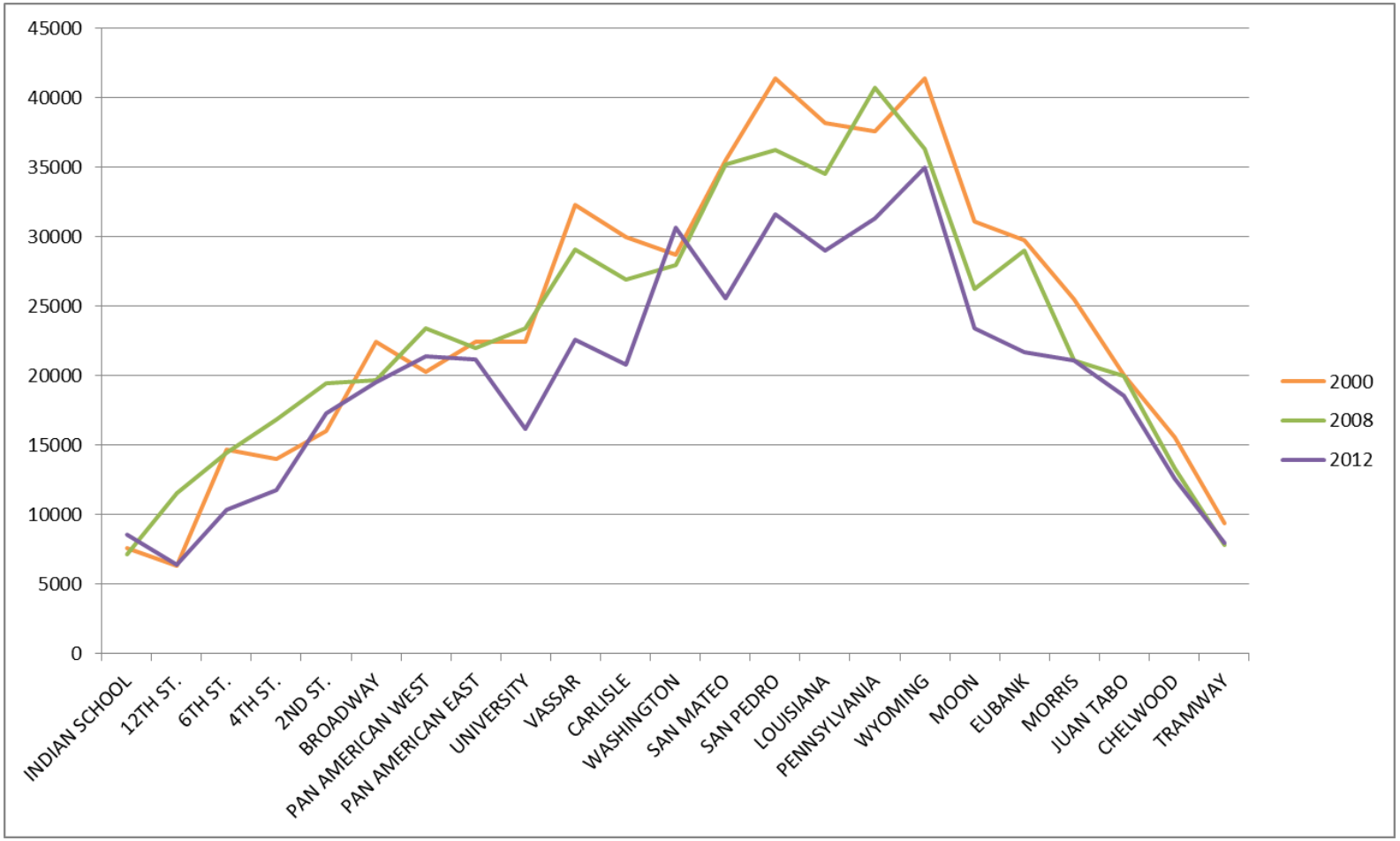
# Wyoming


60000
50000
40000
30000
20000
10000
0
ZUNI
CENTRAL
COPPER
LOMAS
I-40 S. RAMPS
I-40 NORTH RAMPS
CONSTITUTION
INDIAN SCHOOL
MENAUL
CANDELARIA
COMANCHE
MONTGOMERY
OSUNA
SPAIN
ACADEMY
BURLISON
SAN ANTONIO
SAN FRANCISCO (S.)
PASEO DEL NORTE
2000
2008
2012

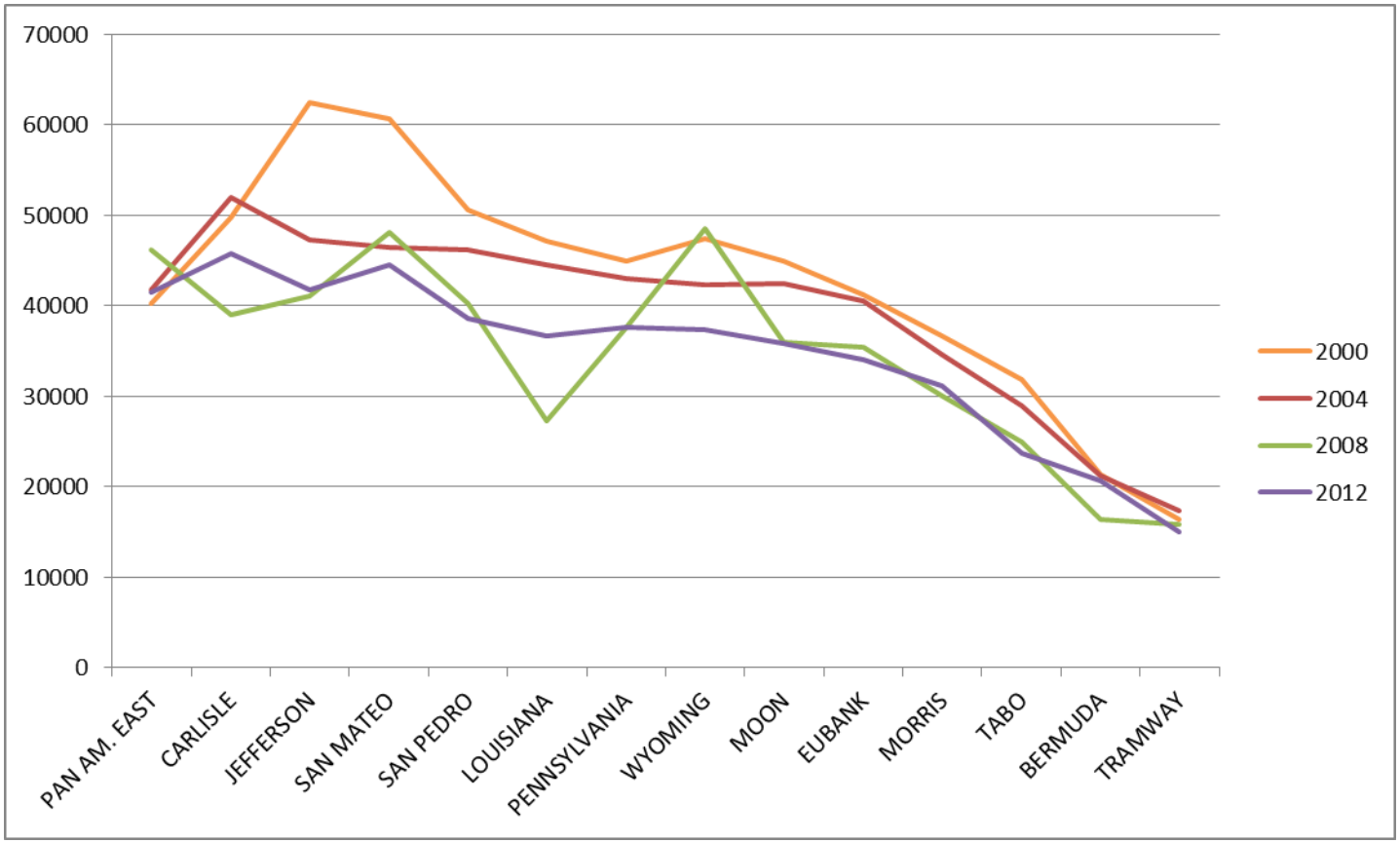
# San Mateo


60000
50000
40000
30000
20000
10000
0
KATHRYN
ZUNI
CENTRAL
LOMAS
CONSTITUTION
INDIAN SCHOOL
I-40 S. RAMPS
I-40 N. RAMPS
MENAUL
CANDELARIA
COMANCHE
MONTGOMERY
MCLEOD
OSUNA
ACADEMY
PAN AM. ROAD
PAN AM. EAST
2000
2008
2012

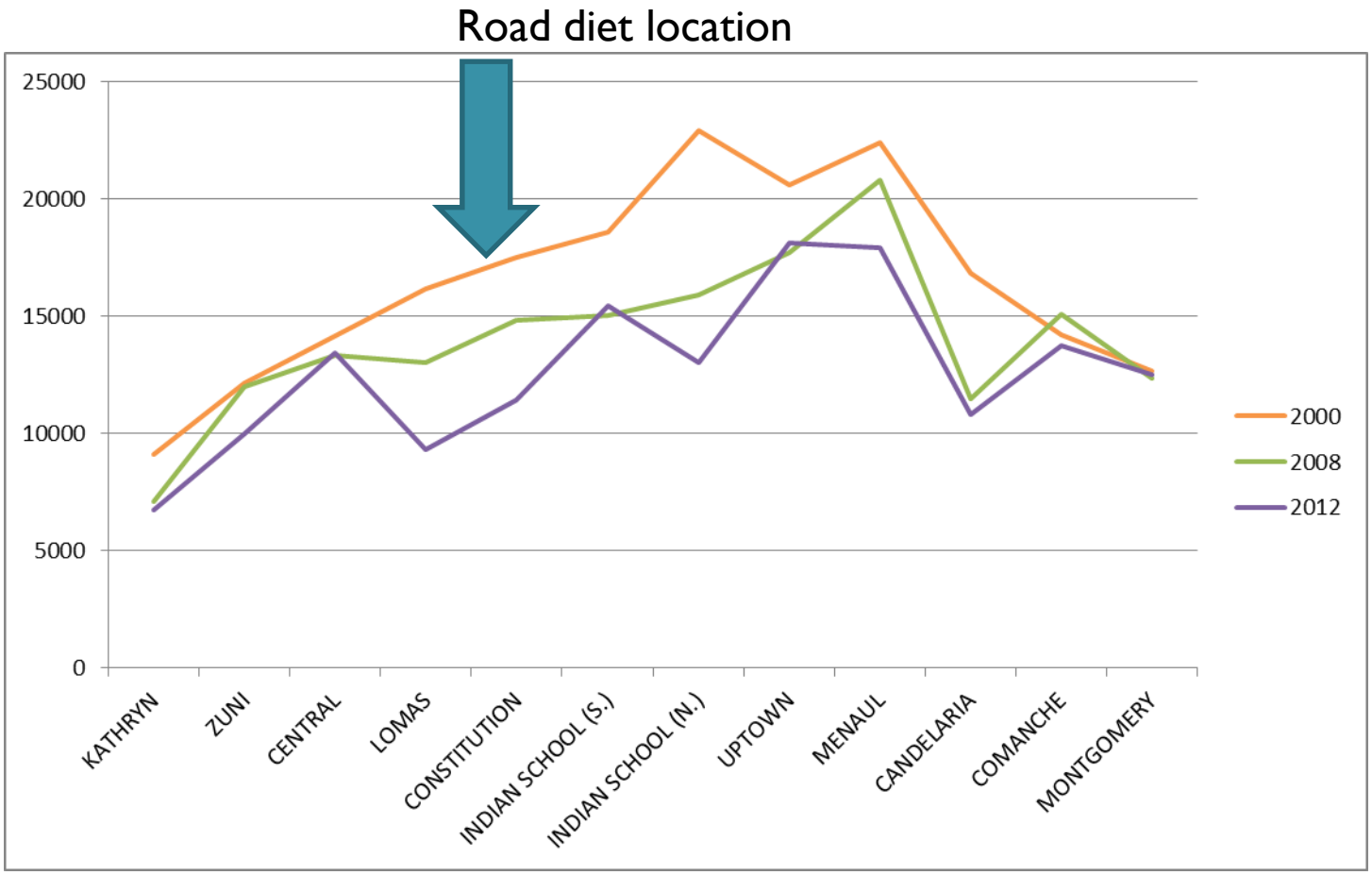
# Menaul


45000
40000
35000
30000
25000
20000
15000
10000
5000
0
INDIAN SCHOOL
12TH ST.
6TH ST.
4TH ST.
2ND ST.
BROADWAY
PAN AMERICAN WEST
PAN AMERICAN EAST
UNIVERSITY
VASSAR
CARLISLE
WASHINGTON
SAN MATEO
SAN PEDRO
LOUISIANA
PENNSYLVANIA
WYOMING
MOON
EUBANK
MORRIS
JUAN TABO
CHELWOOD
TRAMWAY
2000
2008
2012

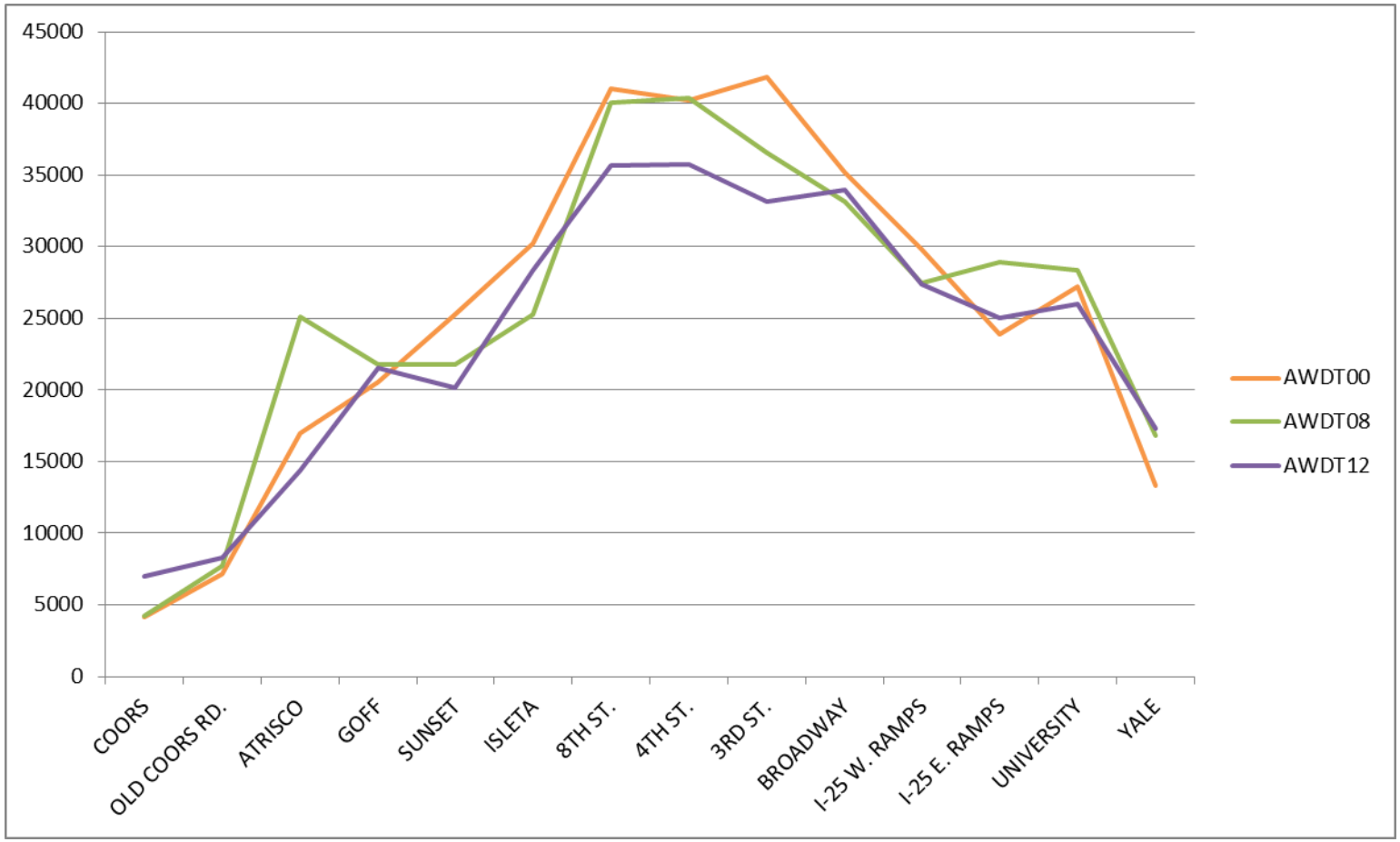
# Montgomery


70000
60000
50000
40000
30000
20000
10000
0
PAN AM. EAST
CARLISLE
JEFFERSON
SAN MATEO
SAN PEDRO
LOUISIANA
PENNSYLVANIA
WYOMING
MOON
EUBANK
MORRIS
TABO
BERMUDA
TRAMWAY
2000
2004
2008
2012

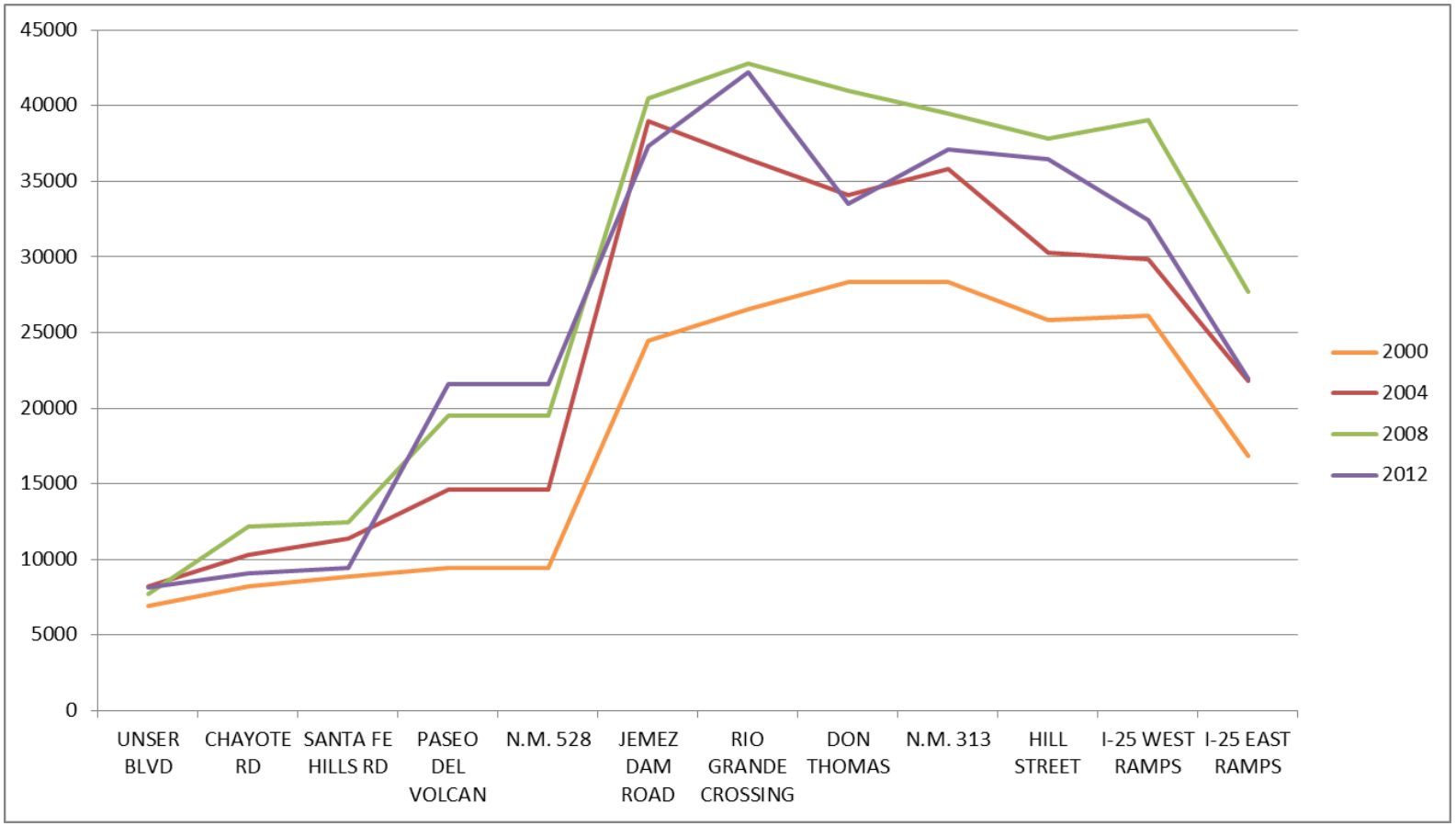
# San Pedro


Road diet location
25000
20000
15000
10000
5000
0
KATHRYN
ZUNI
CENTRAL
LOMAS
CONSTITUTION
INDIAN SCHOOL (S.)
INDIAN SCHOOL (N.)
UPTOWN
MENAUL
CANDELARIA
COMANCHE
MONTGOMERY
2000
2008
2012

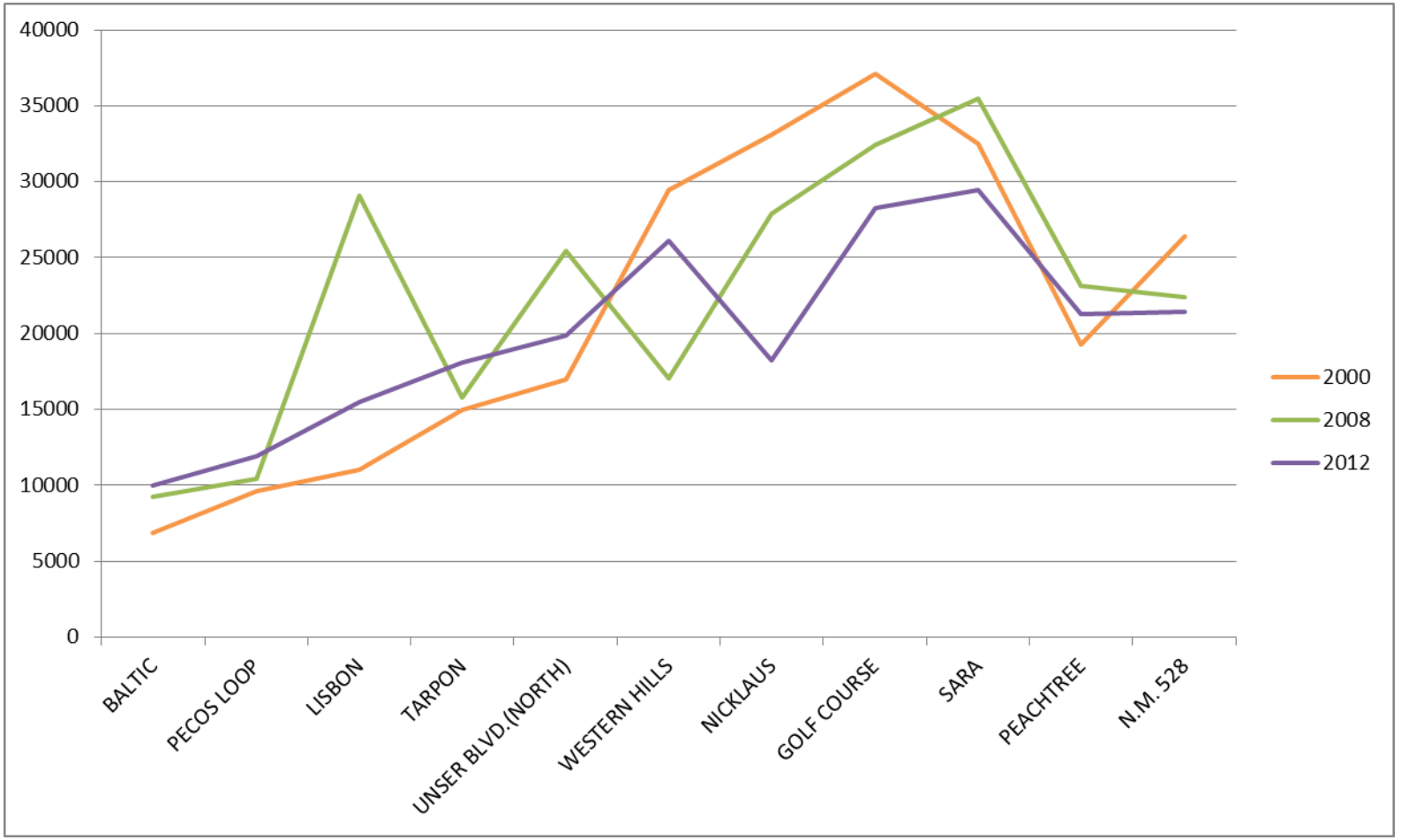
# Bridge Blvd


45000
40000
35000
30000
25000
20000
15000
10000
5000
0
COORS
OLD COORS RD.
ATRISCO
GOFF
SUNSET
ISLETA
8TH ST.
4TH ST.
3RD ST.
BROADWAY
I-25 W. RAMPS
I-25 E. RAMPS
UNIVERSITY
YALE
AWDT00
AWDT08
AWDT12

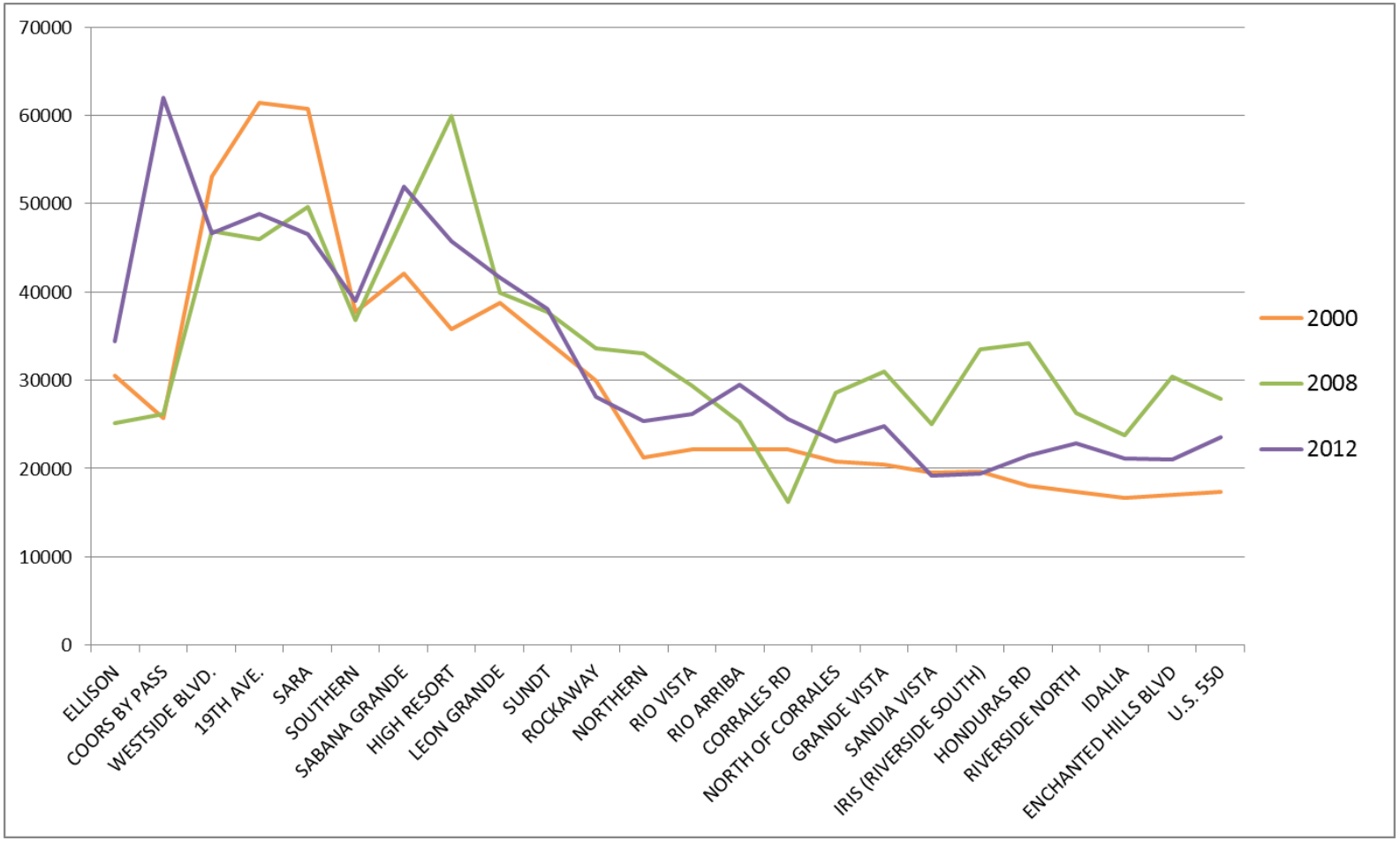
# US 550


45000
40000
35000
30000
25000
20000
15000
10000
5000
0
UNSER BLVD
CHAYOTE RD
SANTA FE HILLS RD
PASEO DEL VOLCAN
N.M. 528
JEMEZ DAM ROAD
RIO GRANDE CROSSING
DON THOMAS
N.M. 313
HILL STREET
I-25 WEST RAMPS
I-25 EAST RAMPS
2000
2004
2008
2012

# Southern Blvd

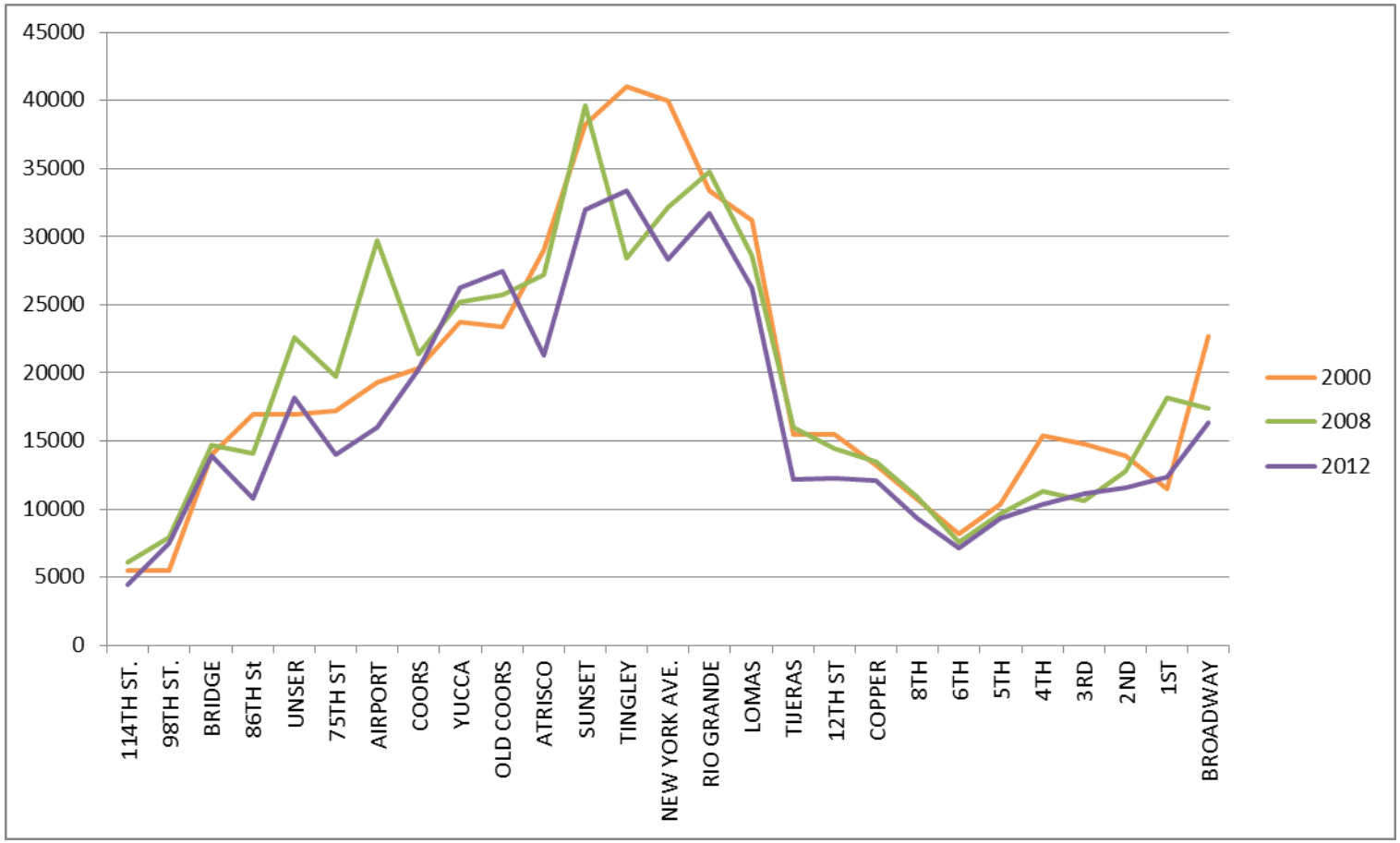


# NM 528



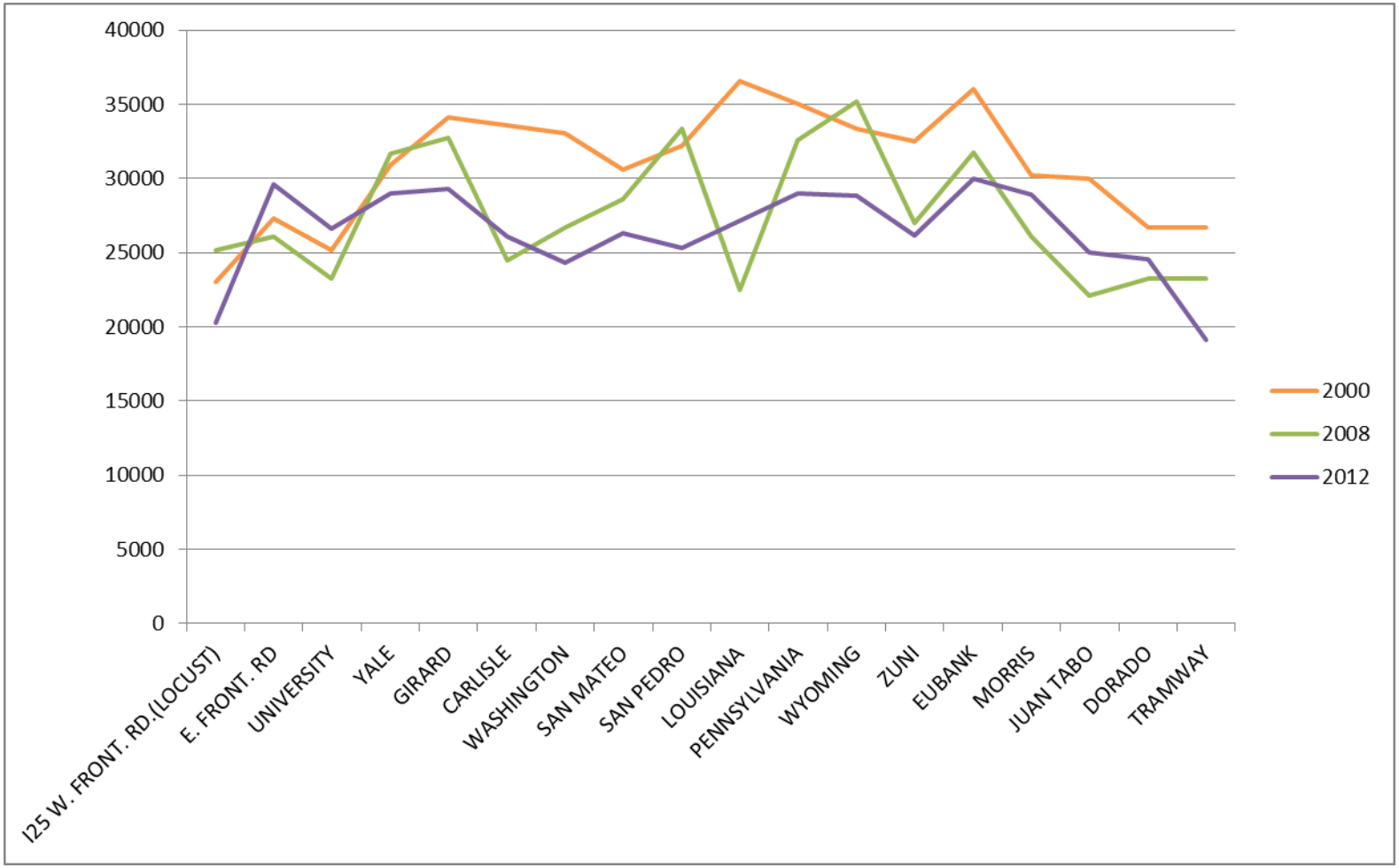

Total VMT in 2012 was 10% higher than 2000.

# West Central



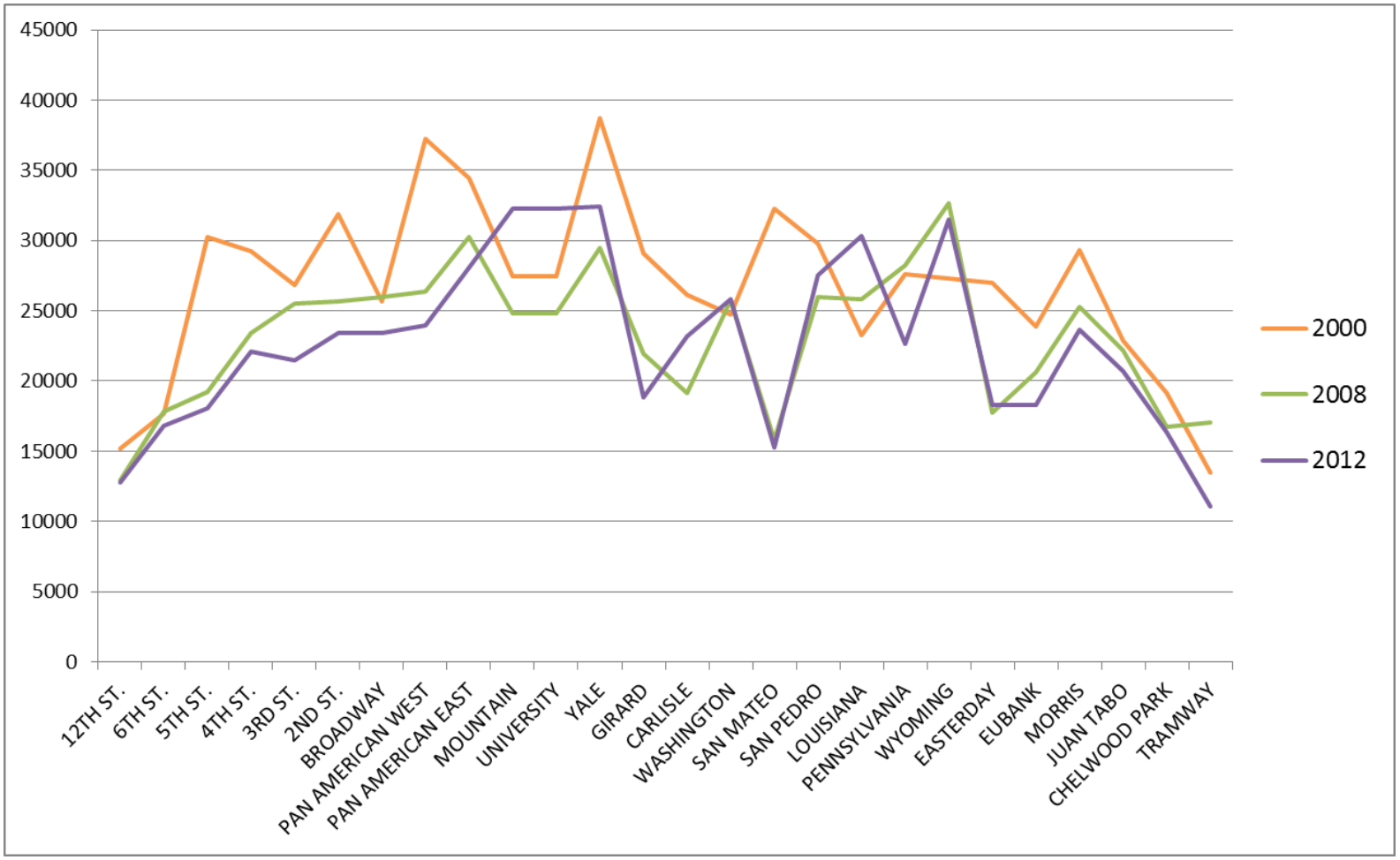

Total VMT in 2012 was 13% lower than 2000.

# East Central



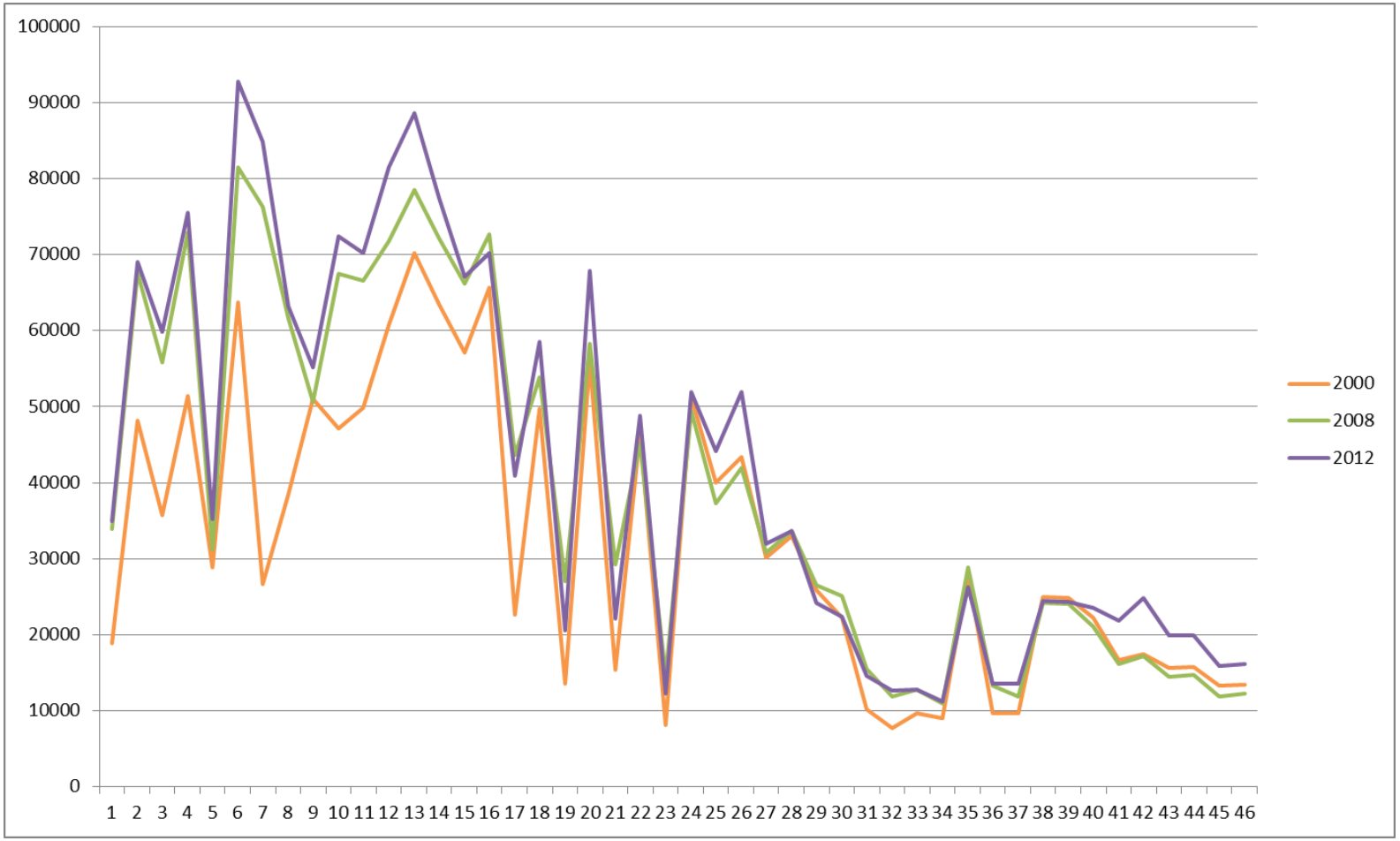

Total VMT in 2012 was 15% lower than 2000.

# Lomas Blvd

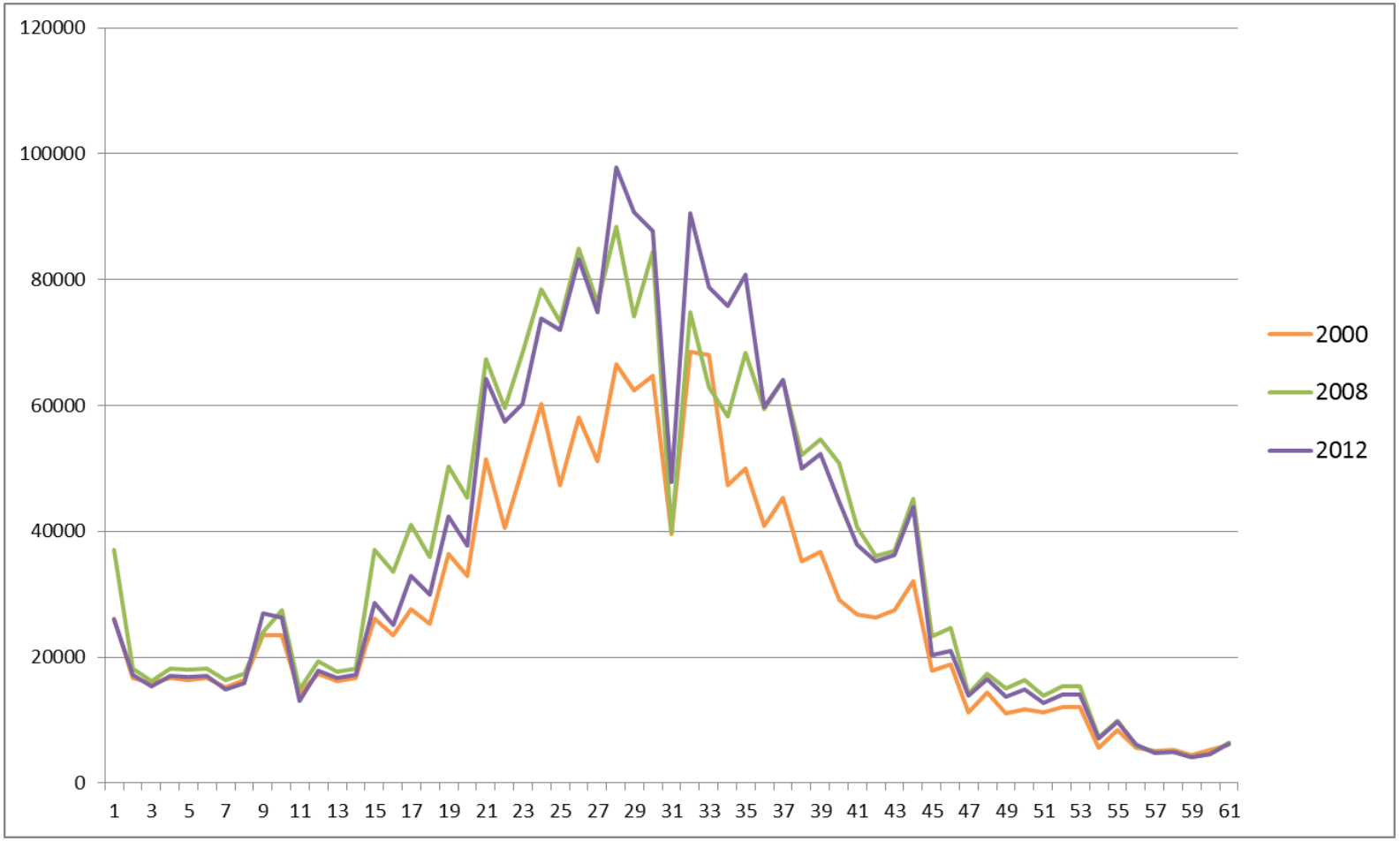



Total VMT in 2012 was 15% lower than 2000.

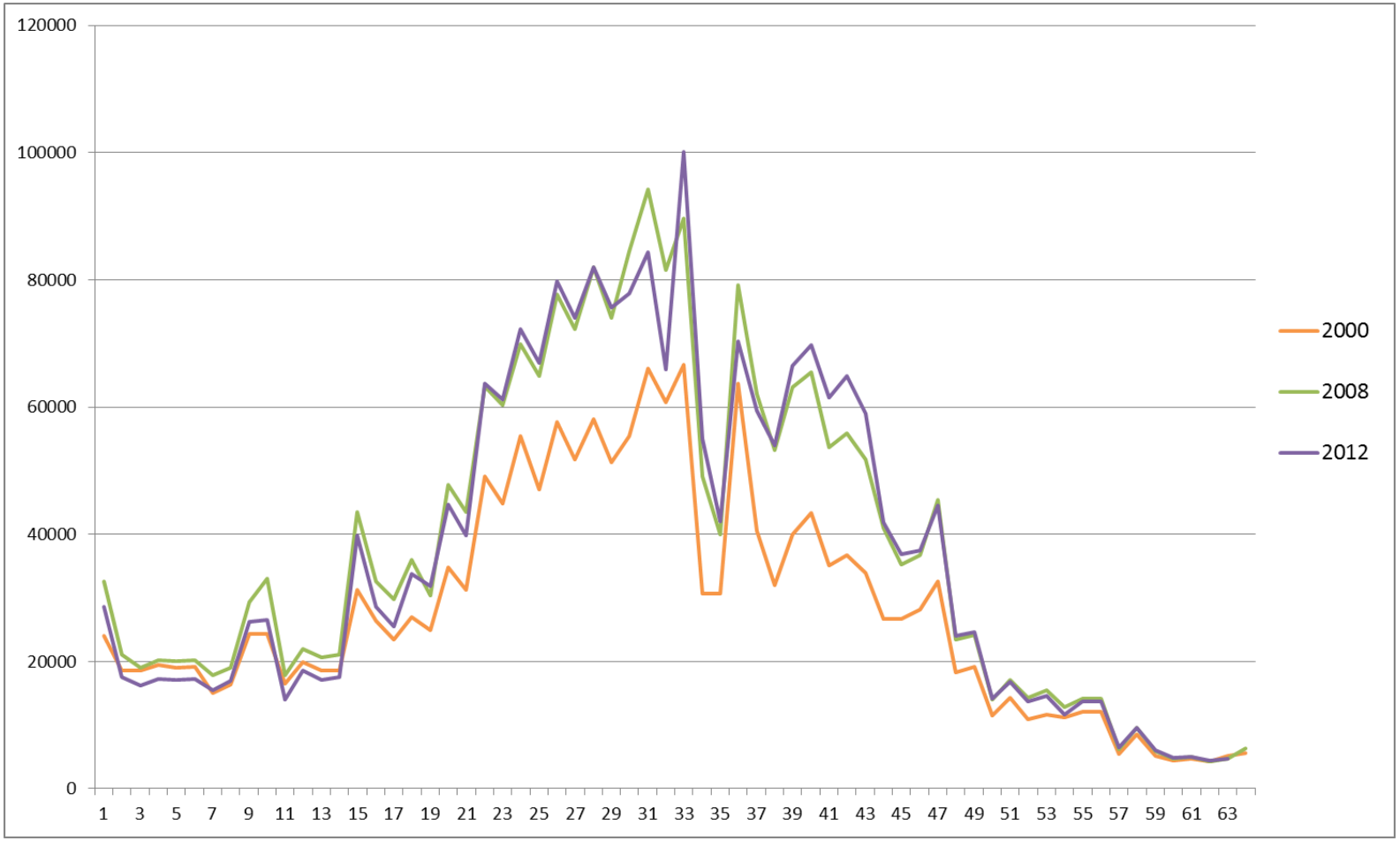
# I-40 Westbound



# I-25 Northbound



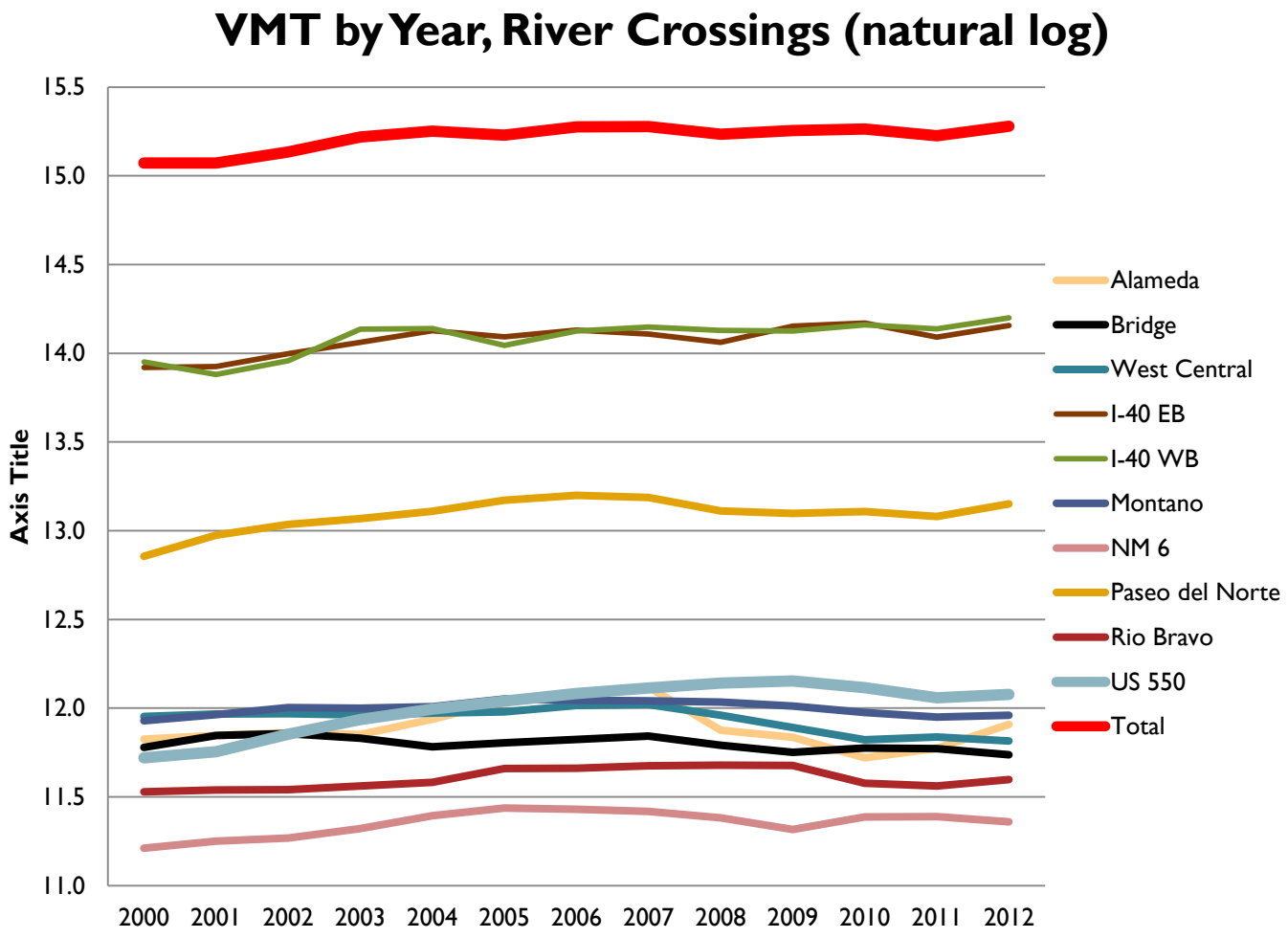
# I-25 Southbound



# CORRIDORS:

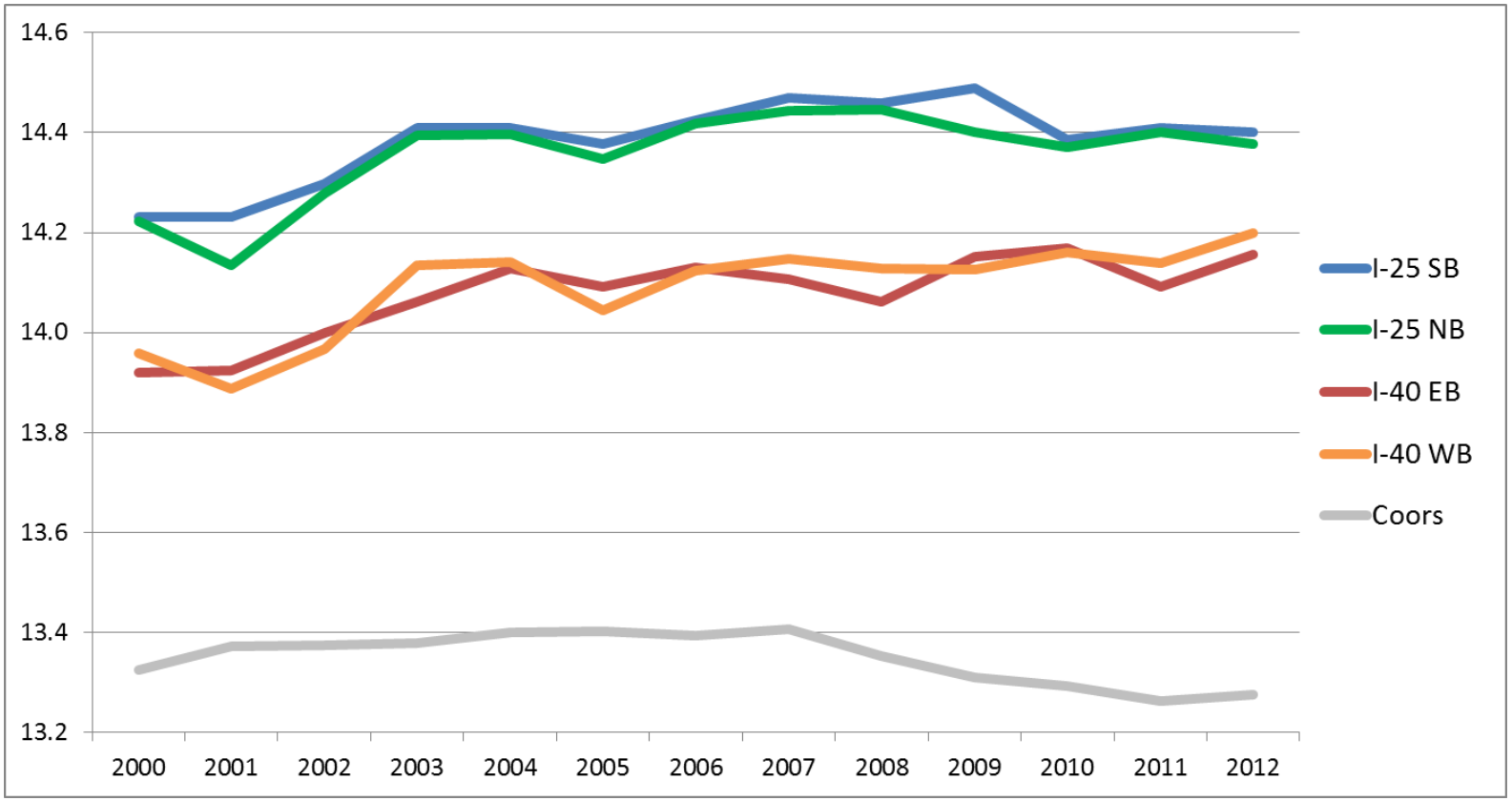
# VMT BY ROUTE BY YEAR

# River Crossings, VMT 2000-2012



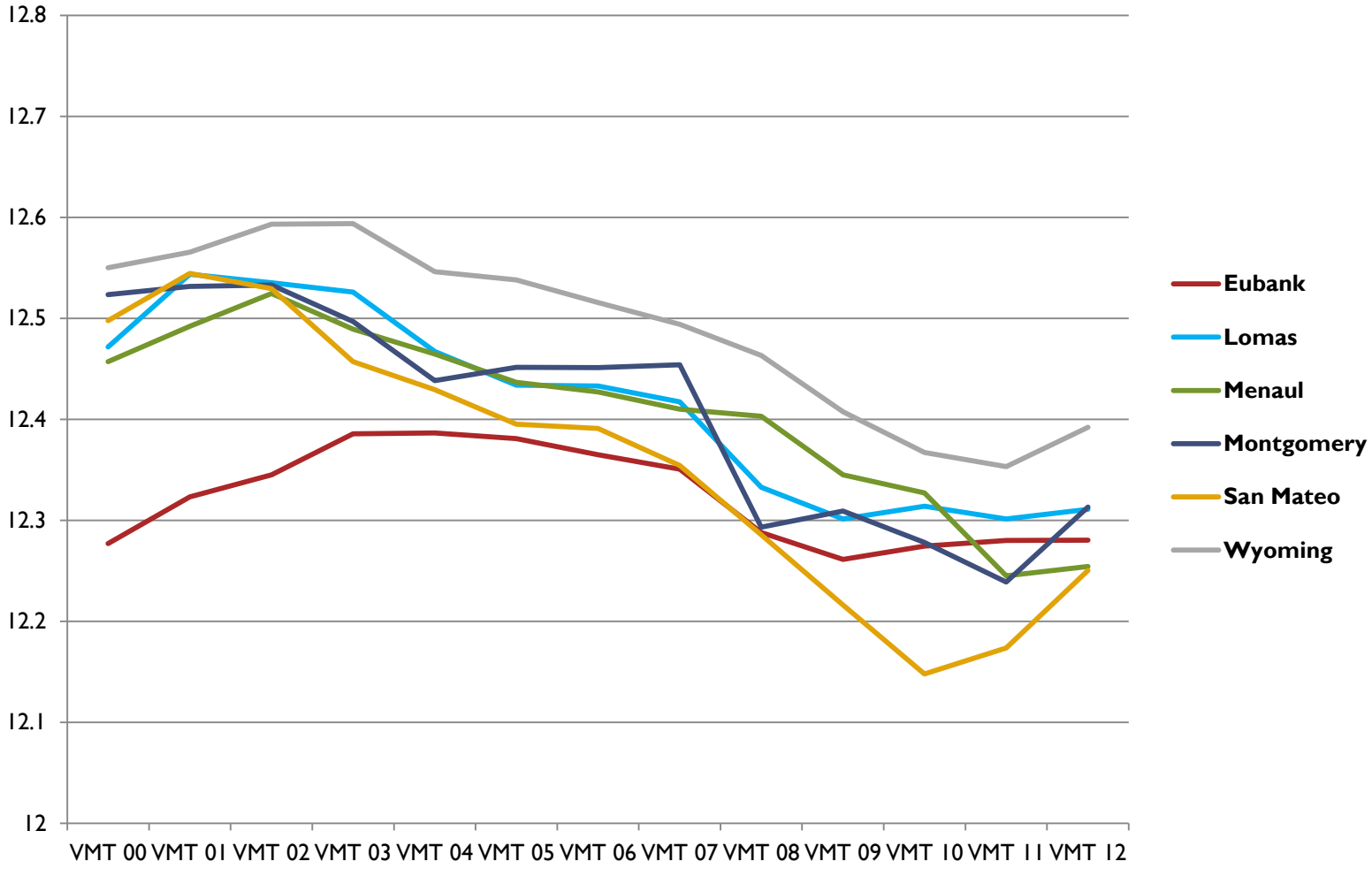

| River Crossing | VMT Change |
|---|---|
| Central | -13% |
| Paseo del Norte | 34% |
| Rio Bravo | 7% |
| I-40 WB | 28% |
| I-40 EB | 27% |
| Montano | 3% |
| US 550 | 43% |
| Alameda | 9% |
| NM 6 | 16% |
| Bridge | -4% |
| Total | 23% |

# Interstates, VMT 2000-2012



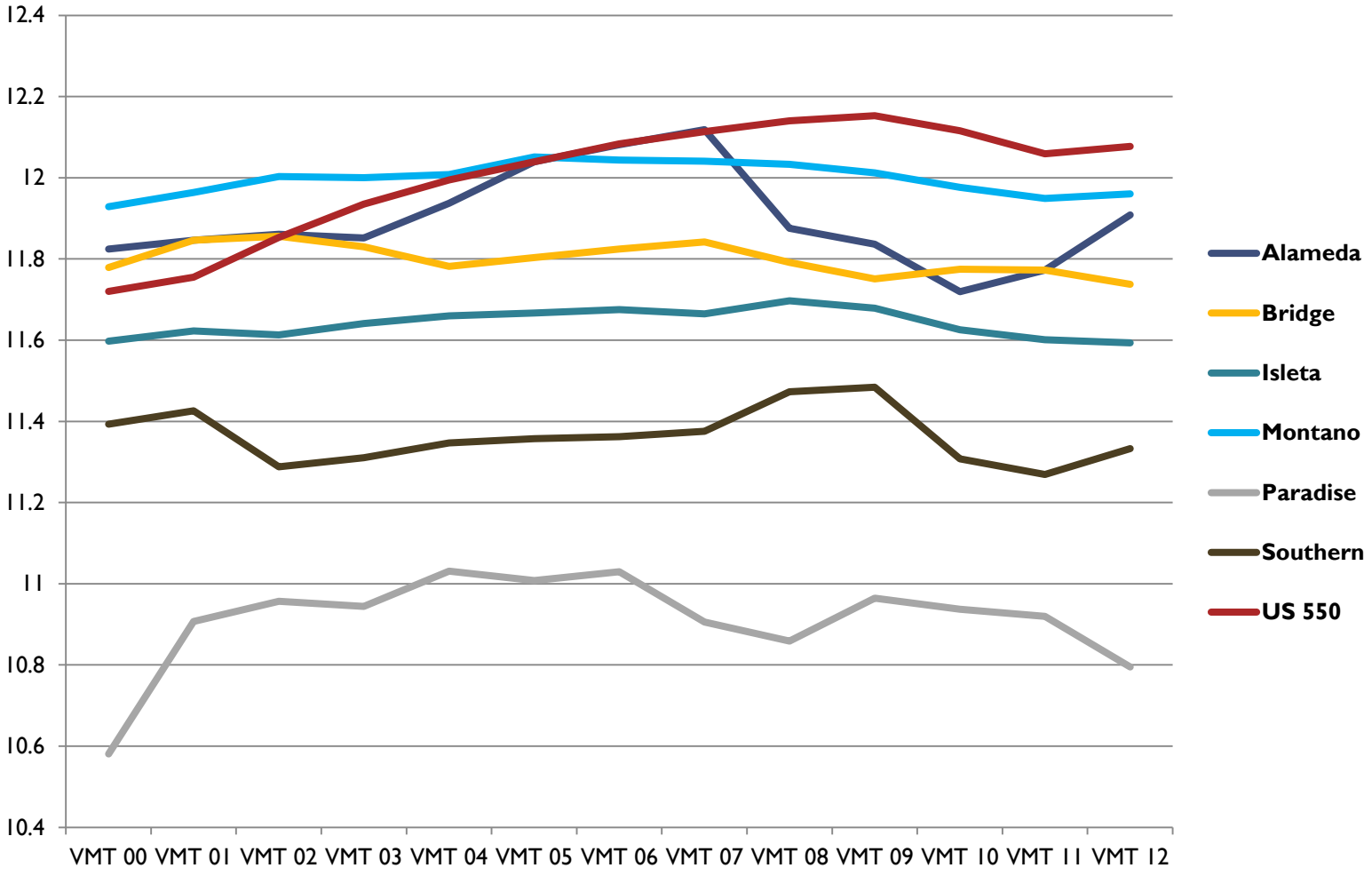

| Corridor | VMT Change |
|---|---|
| Coors | -4.8% |
| I-25 NB | 16.7% |
| I-25 SB | 18.3% |
| I-40 WB | 27.2% |
| I-40 EB | 26.6% |

# Eastside Corridors VMT: 2000-2012




Natural log applied to corridor-level VMT totals

# Westside Corridors VMT: 2000-2012




Natural log applied to corridor-level VMT totals

# Findings

- Nearly all corridors east of the Rio Grande had lower traffic volumes in 2012 than in 2000 (Interstate 40 is the main exception)

- Corridors west of the Rio Grande demonstrate roughly the same levels of traffic in 2012 as in 2000, despite high levels of population growth