Is This the End of the Automobile Era?

John Njord
“If progress is to be steady we must have long term guides extending far ahead.”

- Dwight Eisenhower

1959 State of the Union Address
Why does thinking about the future really matter?
Foresight is **NOT** about trying to predict the future

“Trying to predict the future is like trying to drive down a country road at night with no lights while looking out the back window.”

--Peter Drucker

*Management Consultant*
Lord Kelvin, 1895
Mathematical Physicist

“Heavier-than-air flying machines are impossible.”
Harry Warner, 1925

Warner Brothers

"Who the hell wants to hear actors talk?"
Thomas Watson, 1943
Chairman of IBM

"I think there is a world market for maybe five computers."
“If enough people see [segways], you won’t have to convince them to architect cities around it. It will just happen.”

Steve Jobs, 2001
Fore·sight

ˈfôrˌsīt/

The act of looking forward
Foresight is about being adaptable

“It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is the most adaptable to change.” – Darwin
Foresight explores: What if the oil fueled auto era ends?
Foresight explores:
What if engineering practices must be upgraded to ensure resiliency to natural disasters?
Foresight explores:

What if a ‘disruptive’ technology eliminates human drivers?
Foresight explores:

What if tomorrow’s economy requires radically different freight patterns?
A Foresight theme we’ll explore further:
What if we’ve lost our appetite for driving?
“Nothing behind me, everything ahead of me, as is ever so on the road.”

— Jack Kerouac, *On the Road*
“I’ve got fuel to burn. I’ve got roads to drive.”
— Neil Young,
*Keep on Rockin’ in the Free World*
Have we seen peak per capita VMT?"
The future is uncertain
The trends making it uncertain are sometimes magnifying, sometimes conflicting, and ultimately unknown.
Population growth

Today: 318 million
2050: 440 million
Percent of population over age 65

Today: 13%
2030: 20%
The makeup of the US population is changing

Today
- White: 63%
- Black: 27%

2050
- Hispanic Black Asian: 53%
- Hispanic Black Asian: 47%
A Changing Workforce

Labor Participation Rate

Peaked in 1997
67%

Low in 1963
58%

2013
63%
Blurring of City and Suburb
Changing Behaviors
All of these unknowns warrant a shift from prediction to preparation.

Today

Planning Horizon

Point forecast

Risk Management

Scenario Planning

Future 1

Future 2

Future 3
Report offers four versions of the future

Momentum

Global Chaos

Tech Triumphs

Gentle Footprint
And a modeling tool whose results open a window to the future
Thinking it through, in itself, has value