

= New Jersey Route 72 =

Route 72 is a state highway in the U.S. state of New Jersey . It runs 28 @. @ 74 mi (46 @. @ 25 km) from the Four Mile Circle with Route 70 in Woodland Township in Burlington County to County Route 607 (CR 607) in Ship Bottom on Long Beach Island in Ocean County . Route 72 travels through the Pine Barrens as a two @-@ lane undivided road . After an interchange with the Garden State Parkway , the route becomes a four- to six @-@ lane divided highway through built @-@ up areas of Manahawkin and crosses the Manahawkin Bay via the Manahawkin Bay Bridge onto Long Beach Island .

What is now Route 72 was originally designated as Route S40 in 1927 , a spur of Route 40 (now Route 70) running from Four Mile to Manahawkin . The road was extended to Ship Bottom by 1941 before it was renumbered to Route 72 in 1953 . A realignment that took place in 1969 between U.S. Route 9 (US 9) and the Manahawkin Bay Bridge resulted in the designation of Route 180 on the former alignment ; this road is now CR 50 . Plans in the late 1960s and the 1970s called for a proposed Route 72 freeway , running from the western terminus at Route 70 to the concurrently proposed Interstate 895 (I @-@ 895) at the New Jersey Turnpike in Westampton Township , connecting Philadelphia 's northern suburbs with the Jersey Shore . The freeway plans along with I @-@ 895 were canceled by the 1980s . The Manahawkin Bay Bridge underwent deck repairs completed in May 2010 , with the bridge slated to be rehabilitated and a parallel span to be built to the south .

= = Route description = =

Route 72 begins at the Four Mile Circle intersection with Route 70 , CR 644 , and CR 646 in Woodland Township , Burlington County , heading to the southeast on Barnegat Road , a two @-@ lane undivided road . The route passes through heavily wooded areas of the Pine Barrens that are a part of the Brendan T. Byrne State Forest . The road passes near a state hospital before coming to an intersection with the northern terminus of CR 563 . Past CR 563 , the route continues through the Pine Barrens , passing under an abandoned railroad line prior to a junction with CR 532 . Here , Route 72 forms a concurrency with CR 532 and the road enters Barnegat Township in Ocean County , where it comes to a crossroads with CR 539 . From this intersection , Route 72 and CR 532 continue to a junction with CR 610 , where CR 532 splits from the route by heading to the east . A short distance later , the route intersects the western terminus of CR 554 , which continues along Barnegat Road , and Route 72 turns to the south @-@ southeast through more wooded areas .

The highway enters Stafford Township and passes to the southwest of the residential Ocean Acres community . After a junction with Nautilus Drive (CR 111) , Route 72 widens into a four @-@ lane divided highway , intersecting CR 105 and CR 2 before coming to an interchange with the Garden State Parkway . Following this interchange , the route enters the Manahawkin area and widens to six lanes as it passes woods to the northeast and business areas to the southwest . Route 72 interchanges with US 9 and continues southeast through a mix of woods and commercial areas as a four @-@ lane road , with CR 50 (Bay Avenue) paralleling the route to the north . The road intersects CR 20 and CR 6 before it passes to the north of the Beach Haven West residential development and passes near wetlands . A road provides access to Bay Avenue before Route 72 crosses the Manahawkin Bay on the Manahawkin Bay Bridge , also known as the Dorland J. Henderson Memorial Bridge . After traversing two small islands consisting of a mix of residences and marshland , the road continues into Ship Bottom on Long Beach Island . Upon entering Ship Bottom , the route splits into a one @-@ way pair following 9th Street eastbound and 8th Street westbound . Route 72 passes by resort businesses , intersecting CR 4 and CR 89 before ending at CR 607 a block from the Atlantic Ocean .

Route 72 is a major route providing access to Long Beach Island , a popular Jersey Shore resort , from Philadelphia via Route 70 and from New York City via the Garden State Parkway . As such , the portion of the route east of the Garden State Parkway interchange sees congestion during the summer months .

= = History = =

What is now Route 72 was originally designated as Route S40 in the 1927 New Jersey state highway renumbering . It was to be a spur of Route 40 that was to run from Route 40 at Four Mile to Route 4 (now US 9) in Manahawkin . By 1941 , the route was extended east to the intersection with Long Beach Boulevard in Ship Bottom . In the 1953 New Jersey state highway renumbering , Route S40 was renumbered to Route 72 . By 1969 , Route 72 was moved to a new alignment to the south between US 9 and the Manahawkin Bay Bridge ; the old alignment became Route 180 . This route was eventually removed from the state highway system and is now CR 50 , although more commonly known as " Bay Avenue " .

A freeway was originally proposed for the Route 72 corridor in the late 1960s . The Route 72 freeway was planned to run from the Four Mile Circle to the New Jersey Turnpike in Westampton Township , where it would connect to the proposed I @-@ 895 that would continue to I @-@ 95 near Bristol , Pennsylvania . The existing Route 72 would also be widened into a four @-@ lane divided highway . Both I @-@ 895 and Route 72 were intended to connect Bucks County , Pennsylvania and the Willingboro area with the Jersey Shore . The proposed freeway for Route 72 was to cost \$ 39 million . However , construction costs and the desire to use money for mass transit led to cancellation of both I @-@ 895 and the Route 72 freeway by the 1980s .

In 2000 , the Manahawkin Bay Bridge was dedicated the Dorland J. Henderson Memorial Bridge in honor of Dorland J. Henderson , who was one of NJDOT ? s top engineers that designed the lighting system for the Manahawkin Bay Bridge . In September 2009 , the NJDOT began repairs to the deck of the Manahawkin Bay Bridge . This project , completed in May 2010 , cost \$ 4 million and received funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 . The Manahawkin Bay Bridge is to undergo a rehabilitation project and a parallel bridge will be built to the south . Construction began on May 3 , 2013 with completion expected in 2019 .

= = Major intersections = =