

= New Jersey Route 31 =

Route 31 is a state highway in New Jersey , United States . It runs 48 @. @ 93 mi ( 78 @. @ 75 km ) from U.S. Route 1 Business ( US 1 Bus . ) / US 206 in Trenton , Mercer County north to an intersection with US 46 in Buttzville in White Township , Warren County . Along the way , Route 31 heads through the communities of Flemington , Clinton and Washington . Most of the highway is state @-@ maintained ; however , the section within the city limits of Trenton is maintained by the city . Much of Route 31 is a two @-@ lane highway that passes through farmland , woodland , and mountainous areas . Two portions of the route ? from Trenton to Pennington and from Ringoes to Clinton ? consist of more development .

The highway was constructed from 1926 to 1935 . Route 31 has carried two different numbers in the past . It was known as Route 30 between 1927 and 1953 , when it was renumbered to Route 69 to avoid conflicting with US 30 in southern New Jersey . It was renumbered to Route 31 in 1967 due to sign theft that resulted from the sexual meaning of the number 69 . There were plans made in the late 1960s and early 1970s to build a freeway in the Route 31 corridor that would begin in the Trenton area and extend as far north as Interstate 84 ( I @-@ 84 ) in Port Jervis , New York ; however , it was canceled in the mid @-@ 1970s due to opposition from area residents and environmental and financial constraints . In recent years , the portion of Route 31 between Flemington and Clinton has been widened to four lanes . In addition , there was a failed project to build a bypass of Flemington that would have also eliminated the Flemington Circle .

= = Route description = =

= = = Mercer County = = =

Route 31 heads north from US 1 Bus. and US 206 at the Trenton Battle Monument in Trenton , Mercer County on city @-@ maintained two @-@ lane undivided Pennington Road . The route passes by residences and some businesses in the northern part of Trenton , crossing County Route 653 ( CR 653 , Calhoun Street ) . Route 31 enters Ewing Township and becomes state @-@ mantainted at the point where it crosses CR 634 ( Parkway Avenue ) . The route continues north through suburban residential areas and passes to the west of The College of New Jersey campus . It crosses into Hopewell Township and briefly becomes a four @-@ lane divided highway as it interchanges with I @-@ 95 . Past this interchange , Route 31 continues north as an undivided road through a mix of residences with some businesses , meeting CR 546 and CR 640 at a traffic circle . It continues past the circle as a two @-@ lane , undivided road and bypasses Pennington to the west . The route briefly skirts into Pennington twice , where it is a divided highway as it crosses over CSX 's Trenton Subdivision . Route 31 enters Pennington again before heading back into Hopewell Township . Here , the road meets CR 640 ( North Main Street ) again , and heads north into farmland and woodland with some homes . It eventually turns to the northwest and crosses CR 518 ( Lambertville @-@ Hopewell Road ) .

= = = Hunterdon County = = =

Upon crossing CR 518 , Route 31 enters East Amwell Township , Hunterdon County and continues through rural areas . The route eventually forms the border between East Amwell Township and West Amwell Township and intersects CR 579 ( Harbourton Road ) . The two routes run concurrent to the northwest , becoming a three @-@ lane road with a center left @-@ turn lane that crosses entirely into East Amwell Township before resuming along the border of East and West Amwell Townships . The road becomes a divided highway and crosses entirely into East Amwell Township again before it comes to an interchange with US 202 , where CR 579 continues north into Ringoes and Route 31 heads north along US 202 , a four @-@ lane , divided highway with intersections featuring jughandle ramps .

US 202 and Route 31 head to the north , coming to an intersection with Old York Road , which heads to the southwest as Route 179 and to the northeast as CR 514 . Past this intersection , the road forms the border between East Amwell Township to the west and Raritan Township to the east before crossing entirely into Raritan Township . The road continues north through farms , reaching commercial development as it approaches the Flemington area . The road widens to six lanes and crosses into Flemington . The road comes to the Flemington Circle where US 202 continues to the northeast , Route 12 heads to the west , and Route 31 continues to the north on a five @-@ lane , undivided road .

The route crosses back into Raritan Township , where it briefly becomes a four @-@ lane divided highway before reentering Flemington . Not long afterward , it heads into Raritan Township again , where it crosses CR 523 ( Walter E. Foran Boulevard ) and passes by the former site of Flemington Speedway , now a commercial development called Raritan Town Square . Route 31 passes through suburban development before turning into a four @-@ lane , divided highway with some intersections controlled by jughandles and crossing over Norfolk Southern 's Lehigh Line and the South Branch Raritan River into Readington Township . It continues north through a mix of farms and wooded areas with some residential areas , crossing into Clinton Township .

Route 31 comes to an interchange with I @-@ 78 and US 22 , where it turns to the northwest into a more developed setting and interchanges with Route 173 . The road runs through Clinton Town , where it crosses the South Branch Raritan River again . Back in Clinton Township , Route 31 intersects CR 513 ( Halstead Street ) , forming a concurrency with that route and running along the eastern shore of Spruce Run Reservoir . CR 513 splits from Route 31 by heading north on West Main Street and Route 31 continues north , narrowing to a two @-@ lane undivided road . The route crosses into Lebanon Township , where it heads northwest across the wooded Musconetcong Mountains . Route 31 passes through Glen Gardner , which it enters upon crossing Spruce Run , before heading into Hampton , where it heads west through that community as a three @-@ lane road with two southbound lanes and one northbound lane .

= = = Warren County = = =

Route 31 crosses the Musconetcong River into Washington Township , Warren County , where it heads north into the agricultural Musconetcong Valley . It heads into Washington Borough , where the road becomes four lanes , passing under Norfolk Southern 's Washington Secondary and crossing Route 57 ( Washington Avenue ) . Past the Route 57 intersection , Route 31 narrows to three lanes , and becomes a two @-@ lane road again as it crosses back into Washington Township at the Essex Road intersection . It heads into farmland before turning northwest and heading across Oxford Mountain , entering Mansfield Township . While crossing Oxford Mountain , Route 31 skirts along the border between Mansfield Township and Washington Township . The route enters Oxford Township , where it heads through the community of Oxford as a four @-@ lane road . Route 31 continues north through a mix of woods and agricultural areas past Oxford , crossing into White Township at the East Quarry Road intersection and coming to its terminus at US 46 .

= = History = =

= = = Old roads and construction = = =

Before the state received ownership of Route 31 , the portion of the highway from Clinton to Oxford was part of the Spruce Run Turnpike . The turnpike was chartered by the New Jersey State Assembly on February 6 , 1813 and was maintained and tolled by the Spruce Run Turnpike Company . The turnpike served as a connector along the old Hopewell Road from modern @-@ day Lambertville ( then called Georgetown ) to New Brunswick . The road also served as a highly used connector route for the Jersey and Castenoga wagon lines , which served both of the

aforementioned communities . The route from Trenton to Pennington was part of the Pennington Turnpike , another privately maintained pre @-@ designation highway . The turnpike was chartered on March 17 , 1854 by the General Assembly along an alignment of the old Pennington Road . The turnpike road was to be constructed no further than 32 feet ( 9 @. @ 8 m ) in breadth , and to be made out of stone , plank or gravel . The turnpike cost one cent for every carriage or sled pulled by horses or mules ( and one cent more for every animal ) , five mills for horse and rider and every dozen of pigs and sheep . It cost two cents to move a dozen cattle , mules or horses . Fines were levied as high as \$ 10 ( 1854 USD ) to anyone who vandalized any structure along the turnpike . If the company did not construct their highway in six years , the state would then take over and make it a public highway . On November 1 , 1898 , the 7 @-@ mile ( 11 km ) long turnpike , made mostly of stone , was taken over by the state at a cost of \$ 31 @, @ 661 @. @ 87 ( 1898 USD ) . Repairs were slated to be completed on the road by October 31 , 1899 . Also on March 17 , 1854 , the state legislature made the charter official for the Hopewell and Ewing Turnpike , which used the portion of Route 31 from Pennington to the current @-@ day intersection with CR 654 . The turnpike was taken over by the state in 1897 and the privately maintained company was dissolved .

The formation of current @-@ day Route 31 began around 1916 , when a portion of the highway , along the community of Hampton was taken over by the state and was repaired to state standards for \$ 300 ( 1916 USD ) . In 1923 , the state of New Jersey passed the Good Roads Act , which greatly expanded the state highway system in New Jersey . This act took over pre @-@ existing highways and rebuilt them to a standard mandated by the state . Construction began on Route 31 in 1926 , when the State Highway Department began work at the southern terminus in Trenton . A total of 11 bridges were constructed along the highway during this time , signifying the route 's construction northward . The oldest ones , dating back to 1926 , were located in Ewing Township and Oxford Township . The one in Ewing Township was along the first portion of the highway to be constructed . By 1929 , the construction had reached Lawrence Township , where another long stretch of highway was built . During 1930 , the construction had reached Clinton , Glen Gardener , and Washington . Construction of the highway progressed northbound , with sections of the Mercer @-@ Hunterdon @-@ Warren route reaching Hunterdon County in 1931 . The Hunterdon County portion up to the Musconetcong River was constructed for six months , with completion in October 1931 . Construction of the highway northward from the Musconetcong River started in October of the same year . The mainline construction reached the northern terminus in Buttzville in 1932 . The route , although the construction had reached its northern end , was not complete due to bypasses around Clinton and Pennington were proposed to be built . These bypasses were never constructed , and during 1934 , more portions of the highway in Hunterdon County were finished . The route was completed in 1935 , providing an uninterrupted route from the capital city of Trenton to northern Warren County .

= = = Designation = = =

What is today Route 31 was defined in the 1927 New Jersey state highway renumbering as Route 30 , a highway that began in Trenton and ended in Buttzville . In the 1953 renumbering , Route 30 was renumbered as Route 69 , as the number conflicted with US 30 in southern New Jersey . The bypass of Ringoes , shared with US 202 , opened in the 1960s . Due to the sexual meaning of the number and resulting sign theft , Route 69 was changed in 1967 to Route 31 once all the signs were removed . The justification for the removal was that people were stealing signs as a trophy for dorm rooms because of their interest in the number 69 .

A limited @-@ access freeway was once planned to serve traffic along the Route 31 ( then Route 69 ) corridor . Plans came forth in the 1960s for a highway to run along Route 69 from the in @-@ construction US 1 freeway ( then designated Route 174 ) to the U.S. Route 202 freeway in Ringoes . The estimated cost to build the highway according to the proposal estimated to \$ 18 million , with construction completing in 1975 .

There were plans to extend the freeway further in both directions , including northward to I @-@ 80 in Hope Township and southward to I @-@ 195 . Each of these two extensions were brought forth in

the 1960s , and were later shelved due to lack of support . In the early 1970s , a 36 @-@ mile ( 58 km ) long extension of Route 31 was proposed from Oxford , connecting the highway with the proposed Route 23 freeway to I @-@ 84 near Port Jervis , New York . This northern freeway extension of Route 31 was to be known as Route F @-@ 31 and the Foothills Freeway , and was to run through the Kittatinny Mountains , passing through Stokes State Forest and High Point State Park . The proposal gave an estimated price tag of about \$ 105 million ( 1970s USD ) . The northern freeway faced high opposition from residents living in Warren and Sussex counties , who feared environmental damage . A group called Opponents of the Foothills Freeway formed to prevent the road from being built . Along with the growing opposition , environmental and financial issues arose , causing the New Jersey Department of Transportation to cancel the Route 31 from being built mid @-@ 1970s .

Following the completion of I @-@ 287 's New Jersey portion in 1993 , more out @-@ of @-@ state tractor trailer drivers began to use the alignment of Route 31 as a toll @-@ free alternative to the New Jersey Turnpike . On July 16 , 1999 , oversized trucks were banned from using Route 31 as part of a larger statewide ban imposed on New Jersey roads not a part of the National Highway System by then @-@ governor Christine Todd Whitman . The legislation had a significant effect on trucks that followed Route 31 as it forced them to use I @-@ 287 and the New Jersey Turnpike instead . In the mid @-@ 2000s , the portion of Route 31 was widened during extensive construction between Flemington and Clinton that widened the road to four lanes .

= = = The South Branch Parkway = = =

In 2005 , the New Jersey Department of Transportation introduced a case study for Route 31 for its New Jersey : Future in Transportation project . Over time , the residents and business owners of Raritan Township and Flemington had growing concerns over the congestion along the highway and US 202 . After trying to use vacant land to the east of the current alignment , the Department of Transportation put forth the Flemington Bypass , trying to relieve congestion on Route 31 along the commercial district and to provide access to the industrial land between the two highways and the South Branch River . The project was never completed and the proposed site remains undeveloped . The Department of Transportation is now looking at a scaled @-@ down bypass , proposed as the South Branch Parkway , to connect Route 31 to US 202 in Flemington .

The parkway was to be built as a two @-@ lane alternative to Route 31 defining the border of the suburban and rural portions of Flemington Borough and Raritan Township . Along with the new parkway , a brand @-@ new local street network was proposed to help support the new alignment . These would minimize the pressure of traffic on Route 31 and include better roads for bicycles and pedestrians . More direct routes to different portions of the community would be provided to maintain the community 's character . The proposed parkway was to also help upgrade the sensitive history along the South Branch River . According to the 2008 highway plans , the South Branch Parkway would cost the state more than \$ 2 @-@ 2 million ( 2008 USD ) in funds to put together the survey of lands in the proposed alignment . Some of these funds for the survey were originally intended to go towards the removal of the Flemington Circle .

= = Major intersections = =