

= Rhode Island Route 37 =

Route 37 , also known as the Lincoln Avenue Freeway , is a numbered state highway running 3 @. @ 47 miles (5 @. @ 58 km) in Providence County and Kent County , Rhode Island , United States . The route is a nominally east ? west freeway for its entire length . Route 37 serves the cities of Cranston and Warwick and is also a major east ? west freeway in the Providence metropolitan area , linking T. F. Green Airport with Interstate 295 . The western terminus of Route 37 is an at @- @ grade intersection with Natick Avenue in Cranston . The freeway has numbered interchanges with I @- @ 295 , Rhode Island Route 2 , Pontiac Avenue , and I @- @ 95 before terminating at a trumpet interchange with U.S. Route 1 in Warwick .

Originally conceived as a freeway linking Scituate with suburban Warwick , the proposed alignment of Route 37 was later shortened to an alignment linking I @- @ 295 with I @- @ 95 . Construction on the freeway began in 1963 and was completed by 1969 . An eastward extension across upper Narragansett Bay was proposed in 1966 ; this proposal would have extended Route 37 north to I @- @ 195 and I @- @ 295 in Attleboro , Massachusetts , completing a beltway around the city of Providence . This extended route was approved and given the I @- @ 895 designation in 1968 , but the extension was ultimately canceled by the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) . In the 1980s , Route 37 was included in proposals for an eastward extension of Interstate 84 from Hartford , Connecticut to Rhode Island , but this alignment was also canceled . RIDOT has long @- @ range plans to extend Route 37 east to Route 117 in Downtown Warwick , but plans for a westward extension have been abandoned .

= = Route description = =

Route 37 begins at an at @- @ grade intersection with Natick Avenue in the city of Cranston ; Natick Avenue is an unnumbered road that is used to access Rhode Island Route 51 (Phenix Avenue) . Shortly after the intersection with Natick Avenue , Route 37 begins to head in a northeastern direction and has its first numbered exit at a cloverleaf interchange with I @- @ 295 . The interchange is signed as Exits 1A @- @ B from Route 37 west , but both the northbound and southbound lanes of I @- @ 295 are served via a single on @- @ ramp from Route 37 east . After the junction with I @- @ 295 , Route 37 passes through a densely settled region of Cranston and passes over Route 5 on a single @- @ span bridge . After passing under Glen Hills Drive , the freeway turns to head in a southwestern direction before intersecting Route 2 at a cloverleaf interchange signed as Exits 2A @- @ B.

After the interchange with Route 2 , Route 37 passes over Power Road before intersecting with Pontiac Avenue , an unnumbered , four @- @ lane highway in Cranston . The interchange , numbered as Exit 3 , is the only one along the length of Route 37 that does not have a suffixed exit number in either direction . Shortly after Exit 3 , Route 37 crosses over the Pawtuxet River and enters the city of Warwick . In Warwick , the freeway has a complicated interchange with I @- @ 95 that is signed as Exits 4A @- @ B. From westbound Route 37 , exit 4B is a right @- @ hand exit that is used to access I @- @ 95 north , while exit 4A is a left @- @ hand exit that is used to access I @- @ 95 south . Both ramps from eastbound Route 37 are right @- @ hand exits .

After the I @- @ 95 interchange , Route 37 widens to three lanes in each direction . The freeway crosses Jefferson Boulevard and Amtrak 's Northeast Corridor railroad on twin @- @ span bridges and passes to the north of the Lincoln Park Cemetery before interchanging with US 1 at exits 5A @- @ B. The freeway terminates at a trumpet interchange with US 1 , with the two left @- @ hand lanes defaulting onto US 1 north and the right @- @ hand lane serving US 1 south , which connects to T. F. Green Airport .

= = History = =

= = = Construction of the freeway = = =

The origins of Route 37 date back to 1956 , when the Rhode Island Department of Public Works (RIDPW) included the Route 37 Expressway on its list of proposed freeways for the state of Rhode Island . The freeway was originally proposed to begin at Route 116 in Hope , a village of Scituate , and extend east through Cranston to Route 117 in Warwick . The route would also have connections with the proposed I @-@ 295 in Cranston and I @-@ 95 in Warwick .

In 1959 , RIDPW approved construction of the expressway , amending the proposed route to an alignment extending roughly from I @-@ 295 to a junction with Route 10 (Huntington Expressway) in Warwick ; Route 10 would be extended south to Warwick as part of the plan . The routing was officially designated as Route 37 , but was also referred to as the " Lincoln Avenue Freeway " after a local road in Warwick that the new route would bypass . RIDPW originally planned to begin construction in 1960 , but it was delayed until 1963 due to ongoing construction projects with I @-@ 95 and I @-@ 195 in Providence . Route 37 was routed through mostly undeveloped land in the cities of Warwick and Cranston , and in 1969 , the construction of the freeway to an interchange with US 1 in Warwick was completed . The proposed southern extension of Route 10 was ultimately canceled by RIDPW .

= = = Proposed extensions = = =

In 1966 , Route 37 was included in a proposal to extend I @-@ 295 across Narragansett Bay to make a full beltway around the city of Providence . The plan , which was approved by both RIDPW and the Massachusetts Highway Department (MassHighway) , involved extending Route 37 eastward from its existing terminus at US 1 across Narragansett bay via a new bridge that would connect Warwick with the town of Barrington . The expressway would then head northward into the town of Warren , intersecting I @-@ 195 in the town of Swansea after crossing into Massachusetts . Eventually , the freeway would connect with I @-@ 295 at its existing northern terminus in Attleboro , Massachusetts .

In 1969 , the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) designated the proposed expressway as I @-@ 895 instead of the originally proposed I @-@ 295 . The expressway was planned to extend the existing Route 37 by 24 @.@ 4 miles (39 @.@ 3 km) , and was scheduled to be completed by 1975 . In 1971 , however , the expressway 's original routing was canceled due to community opposition in the towns of Barrington and Warren and concerns that a new bridge across Upper Narragansett Bay would interfere with aviation traffic at T. F. Green Airport . In 1971 , RIDOT submitted a new proposed alignment for I @-@ 895 that utilized the Jamestown and Newport Bridges in southern Newport County and bypassed Barrington and Warwick altogether , but the interstate was ultimately canceled in 1982 .

In 1981 , ten years after the eastern extension of Route 37 was canceled , RIDOT began planning studies for a western extension of the freeway . The expressway was included in a proposal to extend I @-@ 84 eastward from Hartford , Connecticut to Providence ; more northern alignments for the freeway had been rejected due to concerns of potential damage to the Scituate Reservoir . The southern routing of I @-@ 84 , which would have utilized Route 37 and terminated in Warwick , largely bypassed the reservoir 's watershed . In 1982 , however , I @-@ 84 was officially canceled by RIDOT after studies indicated that the southern alignment was not a feasible alternative .

= = = Recent history = = =

In June 2006 , erosion resulting from heavy rains exposed human remains near the westbound lanes of Route 37 in Cranston . Subsequent drainage improvements to the freeway led to the discovery of human remains from more than 70 individuals buried in late 19th and early 20th centuries . Archaeological research indicated that the portion of Route 37 in Cranston between Exits 2 and 3 was inadvertently constructed over a portion of the State Farm Cemetery in the 1960s . The cemetery 's wooden burial markers had deteriorated by the time Route 37 was constructed , and environmental studies that would have indicated the location of the cemetery were not conducted

prior to the expressway 's construction . In late 2006 , the remains of 71 individuals were exhumed from the site of the previous cemetery and re @-@ interred at the State Institution Cemetery in Warwick . On July 14 , 2009 , RIDOT hosted a memorial service for the 71 people re @-@ interred in Warwick .

= = Future = =

In 1992 , RIDOT reviewed plans for an eastern extension of Route 37 . The department conducted planning studies on two proposed freeway alignments that would extend Route 37 into Downtown Warwick . The first proposal continued the freeway southeast from US 1 to Airport Road for 0 @.@ 75 miles (1 @.@ 2 km) , while the second proposal extended the freeway east for 1 @.@ 5 miles (2 @.@ 4 km) , intersecting Route 117 and Route 117A in the village of Hoxsie before terminating at Route 117 (West Shore Road) . The first option was ultimately dropped by RIDOT after studies indicated the routing would interfere with aviation traffic at T. F. Green Airport . The freeway extension to Route 117 , however , remains on RIDOT 's long @-@ term plans .

= = Exit list = =