



USDOT Ladders of Opportunity Every Place Counts Design Challenge
**CASE STUDY: NJ-31 INTEGRATED LAND-USE
& TRANSPORTATION PLAN**
FLEMINGTON / HUNTERDON COUNTY, NJ

In lieu of a conventional highway bypass, the NJ-31 plan integrates land use and transportation to create an at-grade parkway, complete with streets and blocks, sidewalks, and bike lanes.

PROJECT TYPE

Highway Prevention

DURATION

Integrated planning commenced in 2006. The project began at South Branch Parkway and is substantially complete.

BACKGROUND

Hunterdon County, located between New York City and Philadelphia, has become a thriving bedroom community for commuters to both cities. The area's rapid growth has stressed the local and regional transportation network, particularly NJ Route 31. As the state's primary north-south connection through the area, NJ-31 is moving traffic volumes well beyond its design capacity.

In 2003, New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) was in the process of preparing an environmental impact statement for a federally funded bypass to assist with congestion when the project was deemed unfeasible due to cost, inconsistency with New Jersey's smart growth principles, and community concerns regarding impacts on local business.

In 2006, NJDOT prepared a revised environmental impact statement for the NJ-31 corridor and initiated an integrated planning process. The proposed integrated approach is a replacement for a more expensive freeway that had a larger physical and environmental impact on the surround

community, and would have negatively impacted the borough's main street.

The integrated plan for NJ-31 includes:

- A new, at-grade parkway
- A new network of local roads, sidewalks, and bike lanes
- A series of streets and blocks at Flemington Circle—where NJ-31, US-202, and NJ-12 converge

PARTNERSHIPS

The NJ-31 Integrated Land Use and Transportation Plan is strongly supported by local residents, business associations, and commercial stakeholders. The project is facilitated and executed by:

- NJ Department of Transportation
- Raritan Township
- Flemington Borough

BENEFITS

- Increase pedestrian and bicycle activity due to new local streets.
- Less congestion and more efficient travel patterns due to distribution across a greater number of streets.
- Preserve sense of place through sensitive historic building guidelines.
- Cost-effective and environmentally sound; the parkway is a less expensive option with smaller environmental impact.

CHALLENGES & LESSONS LEARNED

State And Local Champions: Collaboration between NJDOT's Division of Planning and Project Development in combination with the support local advocates was critical to the success of this project.

Cannot Build Out Of Congestion: The originally planned bypass would not have solved congestion for future predicted traffic.

Flexible Planning Process: By having a flexible process the project team was able to address needs and issues in real times.

Trust Building: Prior to project completion the community was generally distrustful of NJDOT. The project team reestablished trust by including and encouraging public input throughout the process.

Recognizing Fiscal Realities: It was critical that NJDOT recognize initial designs were not economically feasible before commencing community engagement regarding alternatives.

Fiscal Benefits Of Integrated Planning: Intentional, informed decisions about traffic patterns and land use often lowers capital costs and reduced the burden on the state DOT.

PROJECT WEBSITE

<http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/works/njfit/route31.shtm>

MORE INFORMATION

[ICF Case Study: NJ-31 Integrated Land Use and Transportation Plan](#)



Proposed flyover plan. Photo credit: Glatting Jackson Kercher Anglin, Inc.

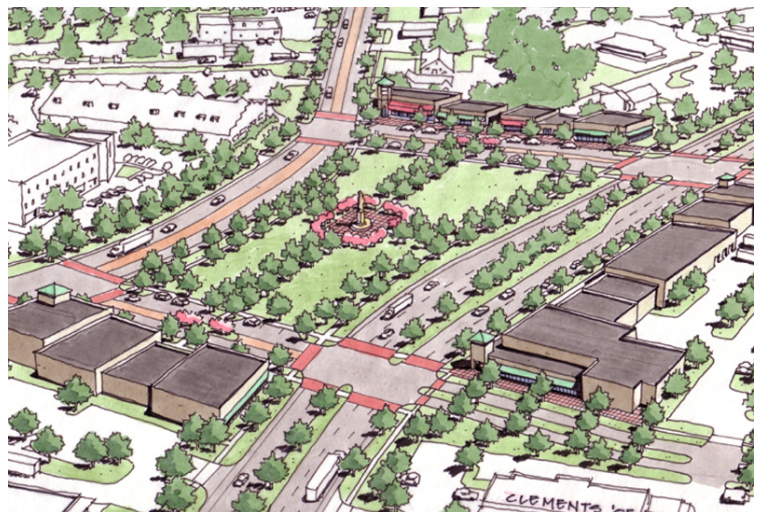
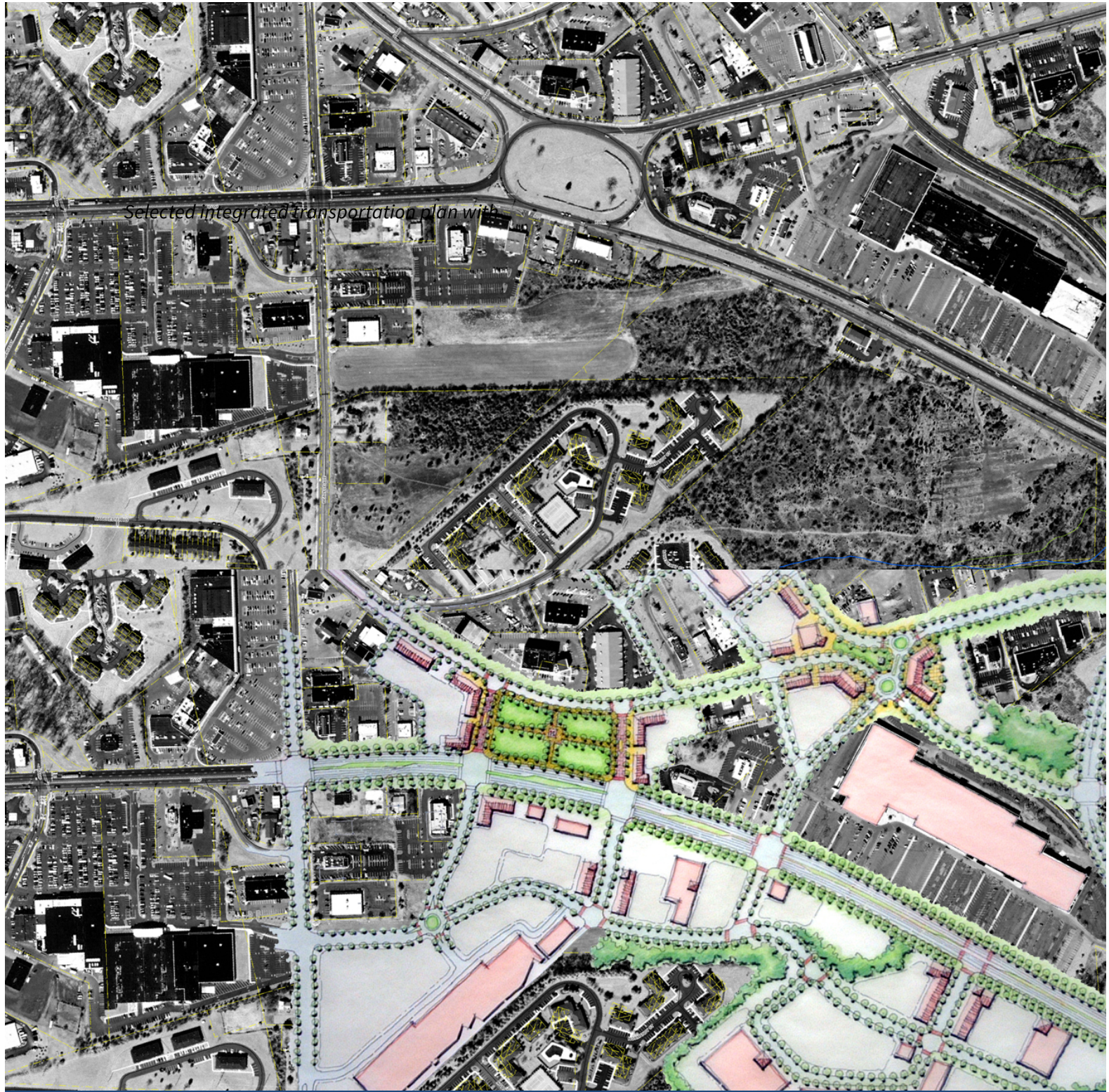


Illustration of pedestrian-friendly redesign of signature traffic circle in Flemington. Photo credit: Glatting Jackson Kercher Anglin, Inc.

Cover page: Aerial of Route 31 in Flemington New Jersey before full implementation. Photo Credit: Philip Kineyko

Selected integrated transportation plan with



Top photo: Aerial of Route 31 in Flemington New Jersey, circa 2006.

Bottom photo: Aerial of Route 31 in Flemington New Jersey with overlay of new street network connections, parkway design, traffic circle improvements, and public square. Photo credits: Glattig Jackson Kercher Anglin, Inc.