



**WIDENING OF U.S. HIGHWAY 331**  
**Submitted for**  
**FY 2009 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations**  
**Walton County, FL**

**Request:**

Walton County, Florida requests \$7 million from the Surface Transportation Program or Transportation Community System Preservation Program within the fiscal year 2009 Transportation- HUD Appropriations bill to support the design and construction of the expansion of U.S. 331 to four lanes in order to provide additional capacity for evacuation purposes and regional economic development.

**Background:**

U.S. Highway 331 is the primary north/south roadway in Walton County and the only roadway connecting north Walton to south Walton County. The roadway is currently over traveled and 274% above its capacity level in the evening. The maximum service volume is 690 vehicles per hour and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) measured a trip count of 770 vehicles per hour in 2005. The overabundance of vehicles on U.S. 331 poses a daily threat to each commuter who travels on this road causing multiple accidents each year. U.S. 331 is also the sole evacuation route out of south Walton during hurricanes and has a 30 hour evacuation time.

The widening of U.S. Highway 331 would also allow a safer transportation corridor for workers from north Walton who support the tourism industry in south Walton. U.S. 331 links Alabama and Florida from Interstate 65, Interstate 85 and Interstate 10 from Montgomery, Alabama to the Gulf of Mexico and U.S. Highway 98 in Florida.

**Cost:**

There are four segments of U.S. Highway 331 that Walton County would like to expand to four lanes. The segment from the north end of the Choctawhatchee Bay Bridge to Interstate 10 has right-of-way acquisition under way. No funding has been appropriated for mitigation or construction. The total construction cost of the 4 segments is estimated at \$164,882,000. However, the County is primarily concerned with expanding the north end of the Choctawhatchee Bay Bridge to State Road 20 and the total cost of expanding this portion is \$69,408,000. The Florida Department of Transportation has funded the segment from the Choctawhatchee Bay Bridge to State Road 20 at \$41,791,000 for right-of-way acquisition. This project is supported by the Walton County Board of Commissioners, City Councils of DeFuniak Springs, Freeport and Paxton, Florida Department of Transportation, Northwest Florida Regional Transportation Authority, and Walton County School District.

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**CHOCTAWHATCHEE BAY BRIDGE WIDENING**  
Submitted for  
**FY 2009 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations**  
**Walton County, FL**

**Request:**

Walton County, Florida requests \$5 million from the Surface Transportation Program or Transportation Community System Preservation Program within the fiscal year 2009 Transportation–HUD Appropriations bill to support additional design, right of way and construction to provide enhancements to the Choctawhatchee Bay Bridge in order to allow for additional capacity for evacuation purposes and regional economic development.

**Background:**

U.S. Highway 331 and the Choctawhatchee Bay Bridge are the only routes in Walton County for residents from the southern portion of Walton County to travel to the northern portion. U.S. Highway 331 and the Choctawhatchee Bay Bridge is currently over traveled and 274% above its capacity level in the evening. The maximum service volume is 690 vehicles per hour and Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) measured a trip count of 770 vehicles per hour in 2005. The overabundance of vehicles on U.S. 331 and the Bridge poses a daily threat to each commuter who travels this route causing multiple accidents each year. The bridge and U.S. Highway 331 are the County's major evacuation route and have a 30 hour evacuation time.

Walton County requests support for the widening of the Choctawhatchee Bridge to four lanes. Currently, the Choctawhatchee Bay Bridge is a two lane bridge and causeway which is approximately 2.274 miles long. From Easter to Labor Day, the southern portion of Walton County has over 100,000 people living and visiting the area. Widening the Choctawhatchee Bridge would allow a safer route for residents and visitors traveling over the Choctawhatchee Bridge to ensure a much faster evacuation time during a natural disaster. U.S. 331 links Alabama and Florida from Interstate 65, Interstate 85 and Interstate 10 from Montgomery, Alabama to the Gulf of Mexico and U.S. Highway 98 in Florida.

**Cost:**

The total cost of this project is \$479,644,000 for design, right-of-way acquisition, mitigation and construction. The Preliminary Design and Engineering Study was done in 1995 and 60% of the design has been completed. There are not adequate local and state funds available to fund a project of this magnitude. This project is supported by the Walton County Board of Commissioners, City Councils of DeFuniak Springs, Freeport and Paxton, Florida Department of Transportation, Northwest Florida Regional Transportation Authority, and Walton County School District.

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# US 331 MULTILANE PROJECTS

## 2206651 From SR 20 to I-10

<u>PROJECT PHASE</u>	<u>FUNDED AMOUNT</u>	<u>UNFUNDED AMOUNT</u>	<u>FY</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
PD&E	0.598		95	Completed

1% plans

## 2206633 From Edgewood Circle to I-10

<u>PROJECT PHASE</u>	<u>FUNDED AMOUNT</u>	<u>UNFUNDED AMOUNT</u>	<u>FY</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
Design		3.042		Not Funded
Right-of-Way		30.447		Not Funded
Mitigation				Cost not yet known
Construction & CEI		60.594		Not Funded
				4.254 miles

## 2206632 From New Alignment at Owl's Head Rd to Edgewood Cir

<u>PROJECT PHASE</u>	<u>FUNDED AMOUNT</u>	<u>UNFUNDED AMOUNT</u>	<u>FY</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
Design	2.896		09	
Right-of-Way	10.226		10,11	
Mitigation				Cost not yet known
Construction & CEI		56.581		Not Funded
				1.204 miles

## 2206631 From .5 Mi. South of SR 20 to Owl's Head Road

<u>PROJECT PHASE</u>	<u>FUNDED AMOUNT</u>	<u>UNFUNDED AMOUNT</u>	<u>FY</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
Design	2.449			
Right-of-Way	7.939			
Mitigation	0.809			
Construction & CEI	27.821		08	Complete
				0.245 miles

## 2206571 From SR 30 (US 98) to SR 20

<u>PROJECT PHASE</u>	<u>FUNDED AMOUNT</u>	<u>UNFUNDED AMOUNT</u>	<u>FY</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
PD&E	0.441		95	Completed

## 2206791 From Choctawhatchee Bay Br. To .5 Mi. South of SR 20

<u>PROJECT PHASE</u>	<u>FUNDED AMOUNT</u>	<u>UNFUNDED AMOUNT</u>	<u>FY</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
Design	3.294			
Right-of-Way	47.591			Underway