Dug Gap Road Corridor Study

Project Advisory Group Meeting #1

November 17, 2025

Gresham Smith

DALTON GEORGIA

Agenda

- Team Introductions
- Housekeeping
- Study Overview
- Key Tasks
- Existing Conditions Key Findings
- Needs & Opportunities
- Upcoming Engagement Activities

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Mentimeter Instructions

6

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Please share your name and organization.

James Davis, GDMPO

Charlie Morrow DU

Karey Williams, Whitfield County Schools

Kent Benson Greater Dalton MPO

Paul Patterson Whitfield County Fire Department

Donnie Blankenship Dalton Fire Department

Chad Townsend - City of Dalton

David Saylors, Dalton Police Department

Study Overview

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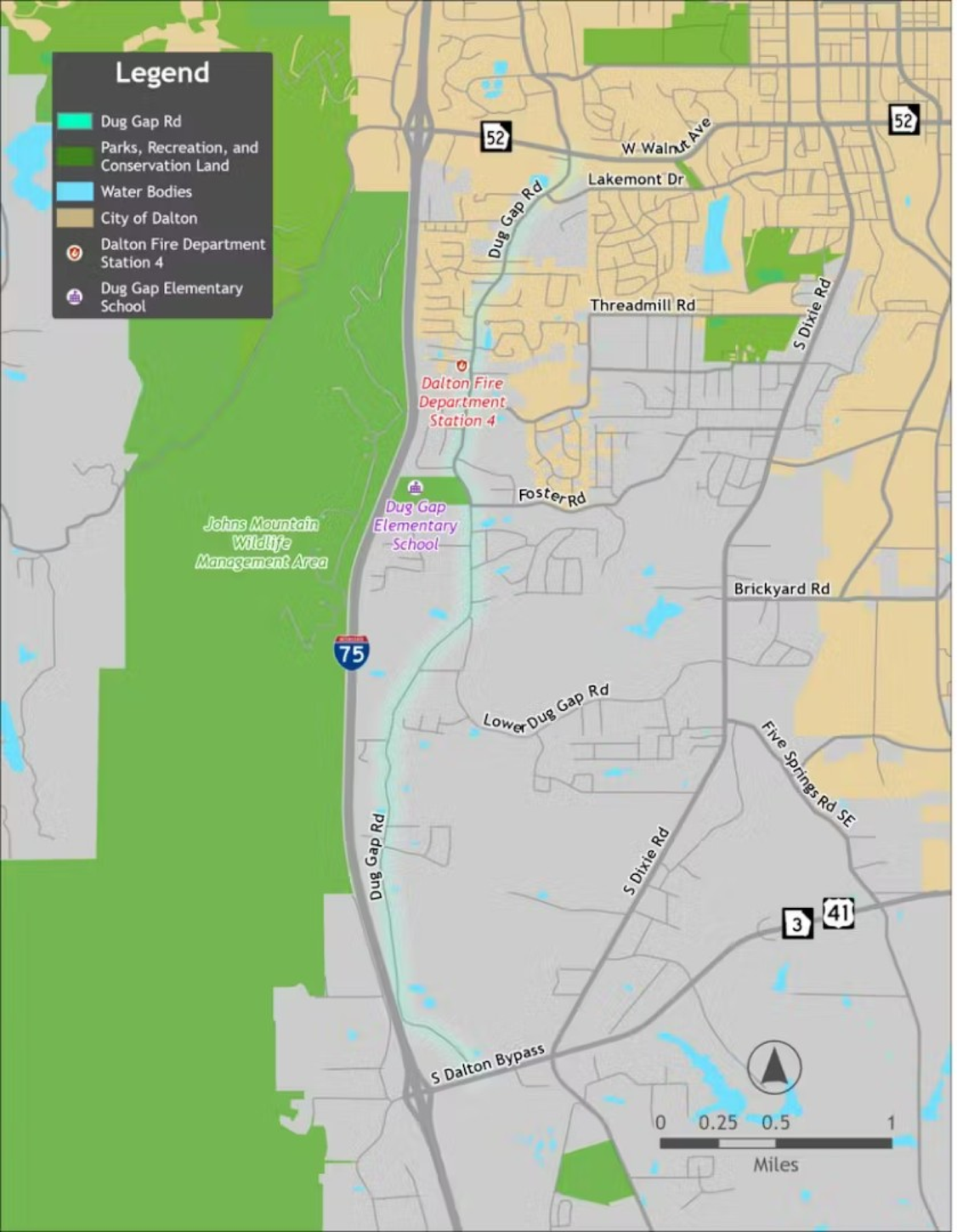
Objectives

- Improve traffic operations and corridor conditions
- Address specific areas with safety concerns and crash history
- Stimulate discussion on development and improvement of quality of life
- Develop comprehensive document that includes analysis, findings, and set of actionable goals



Study Area

- 5.3-mile corridor
- Parallels I-75
- Home to numerous residential areas and places of worship
- Dug Gap Elementary School
- Commercial on both ends of the corridor
- Some industrial near the bypass

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What outcomes do you hope for from this study?

Address safety concerns, sidewalks, bike paths

I hope this is a catalyst to improve the corridor from a safety, traffic flow and development standpoint.

Increased school zone safety, increased intersection safety, bike/ped

Continue to review traffic flow near Dug Gap Elementary to eliminate blind spots and increase school zone safety.

Determine if there is a way to add or remove traffic signals to improve increased traffic flow

Upgrades to the corridor to help relieve current & future traffic congestion. Improve pedestrian accessibility around the heavier residential areas.

Occasionally

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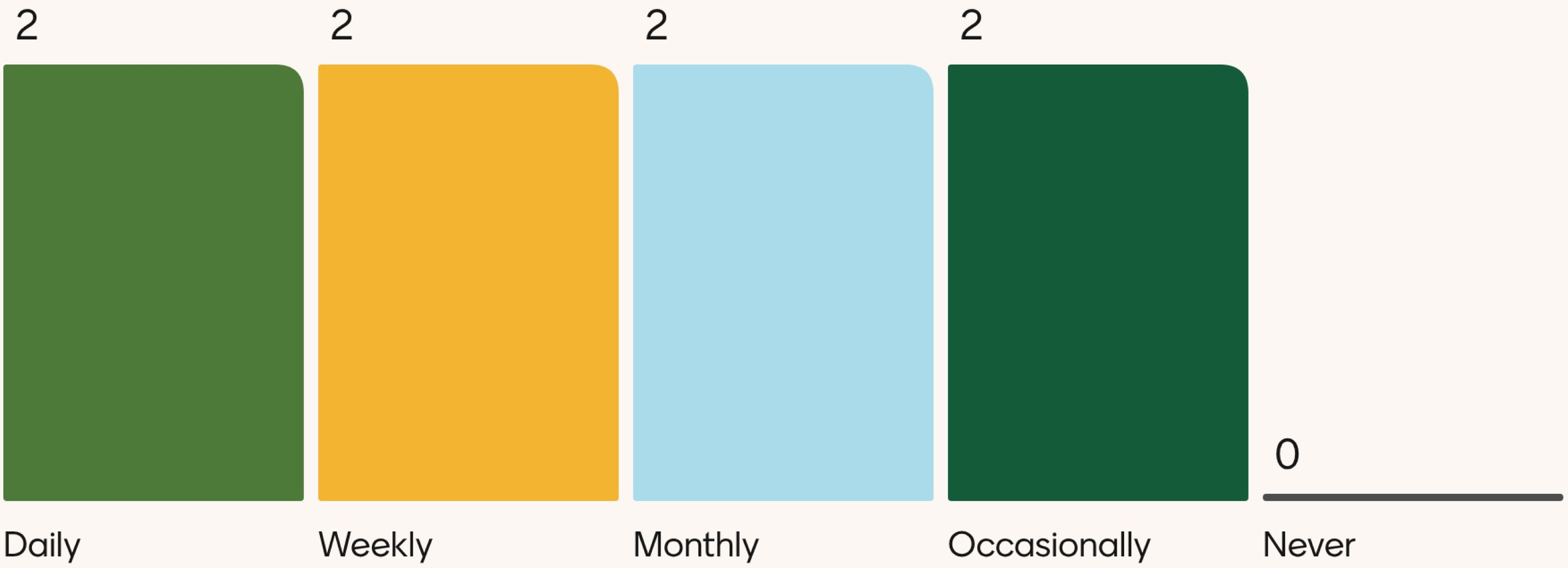
How often do you travel on this part of Dug Gap Road?



Key Tasks

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Project Management

- Project Kickoff
- Project Coordination Meetings
- Living Project Schedule
- Outreach and Coordination

Existing Conditions Analysis

- Collect and analyze data on current conditions along the study corridor
- Perform traffic analysis to determine measures of effectiveness, in current and horizon year
- In-person field review
- Identify needs and opportunities for improvements
- Prepare a technical report summarizing existing conditions

Public Engagement

- Share information about the corridor and collect input and feedback about recommendations
  - Project website
  - Community events (up to 2)
  - Project Advisory Group (up to 4 times)
  - Focus Groups (up to 8 groups)
- Document comments received and summarize key themes

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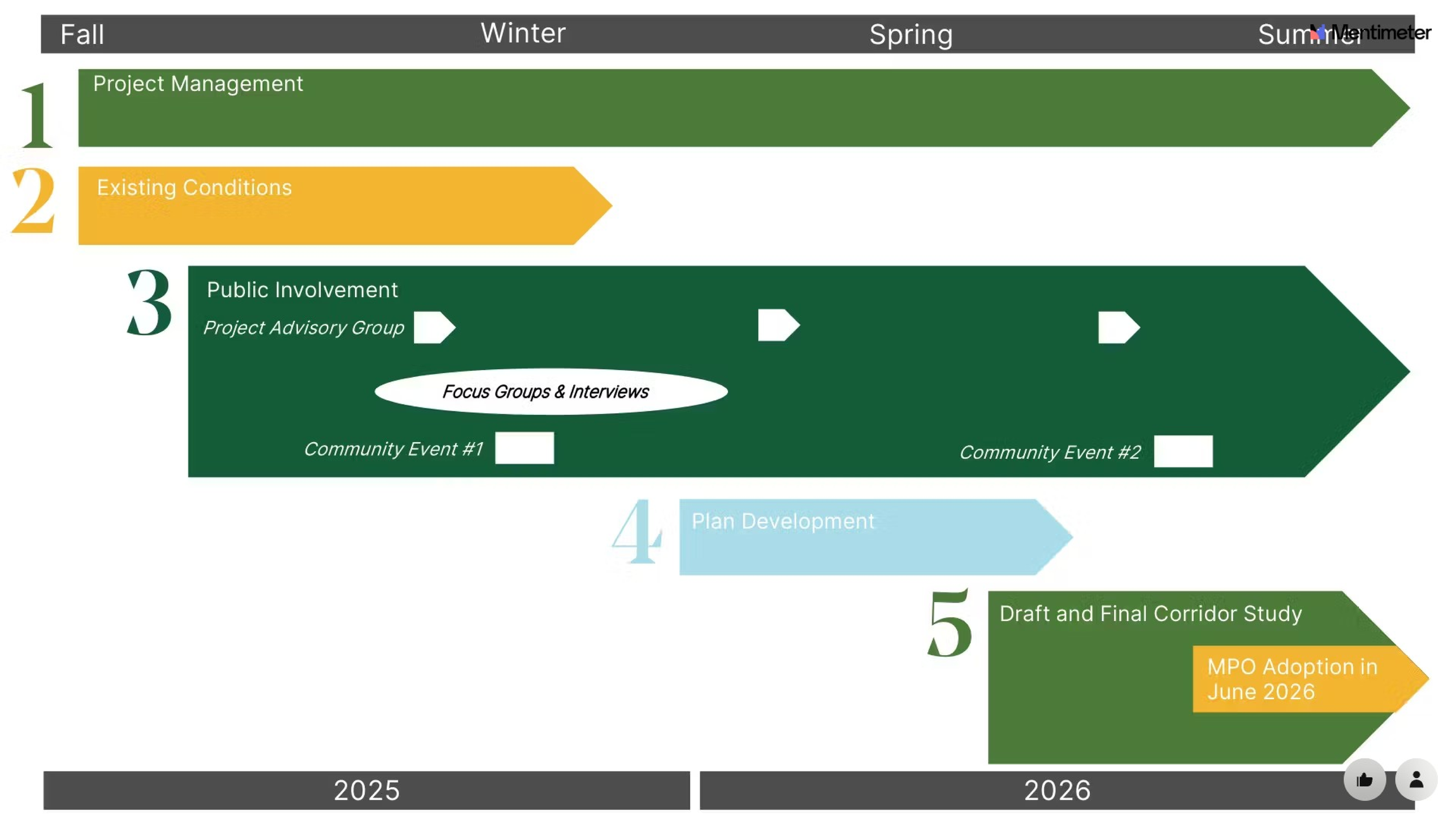
Produce Corridor Study

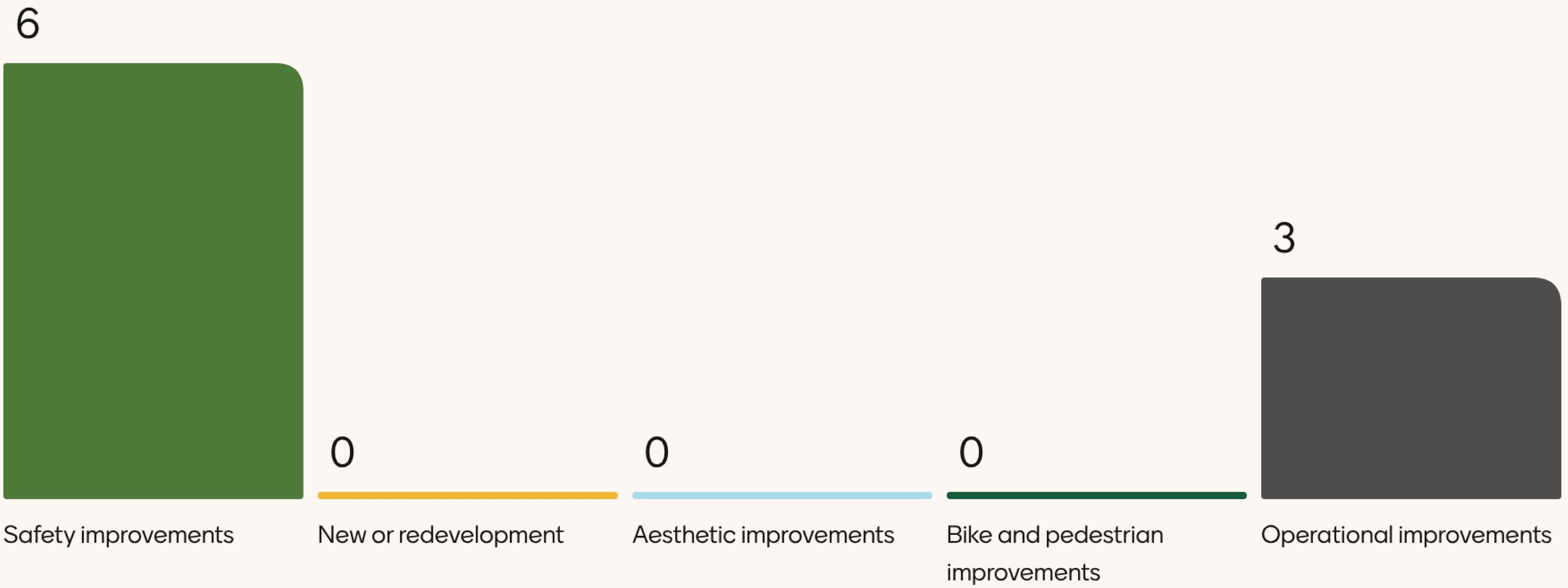
- Determine vision, goals, objectives, and performance measures
- Identify potential improvements
- Develop prioritization framework
- Document funding resources and cost estimates
- Prepare final report

Deliverables

- Technical report summarizing the findings from the existing conditions assessment
- Corridor study summarizing the planning process, community engagement activities, and recommendations for short-, mid-, and long-term improvements


Fall
Winter
Spring
Summer
Mentimeter
1
Project Management
2
Existing Conditions
3
Public Involvement
Project Advisory Group
Focus Groups & Interviews
Community Event #1
Community Event #2
4
Plan Development
5
Draft and Final Corridor Study
MPO Adoption in June 2026
2025
2026

What do you see as the biggest needs along this corridor of Dug Gap Road?



Existing Conditions Key Findings

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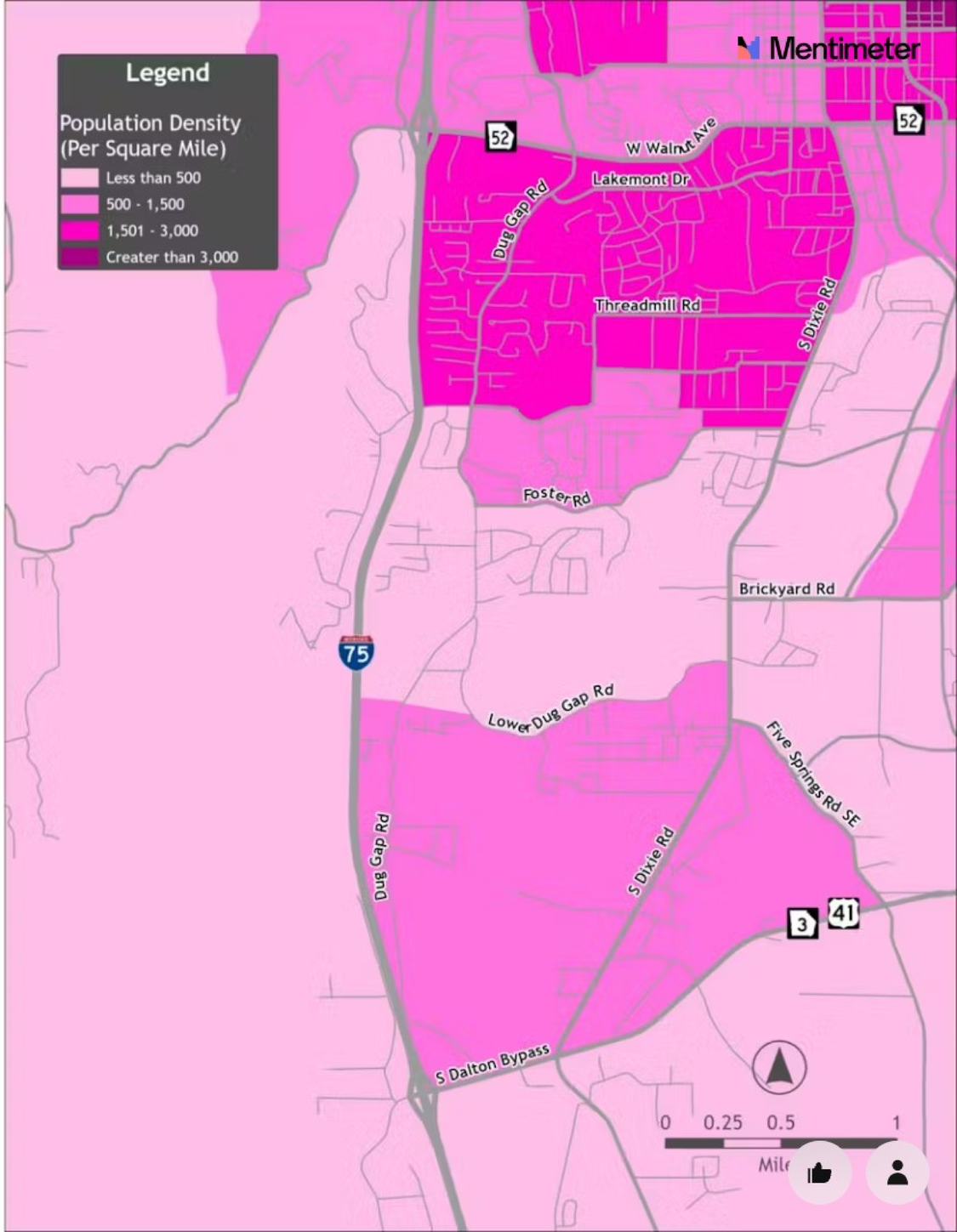
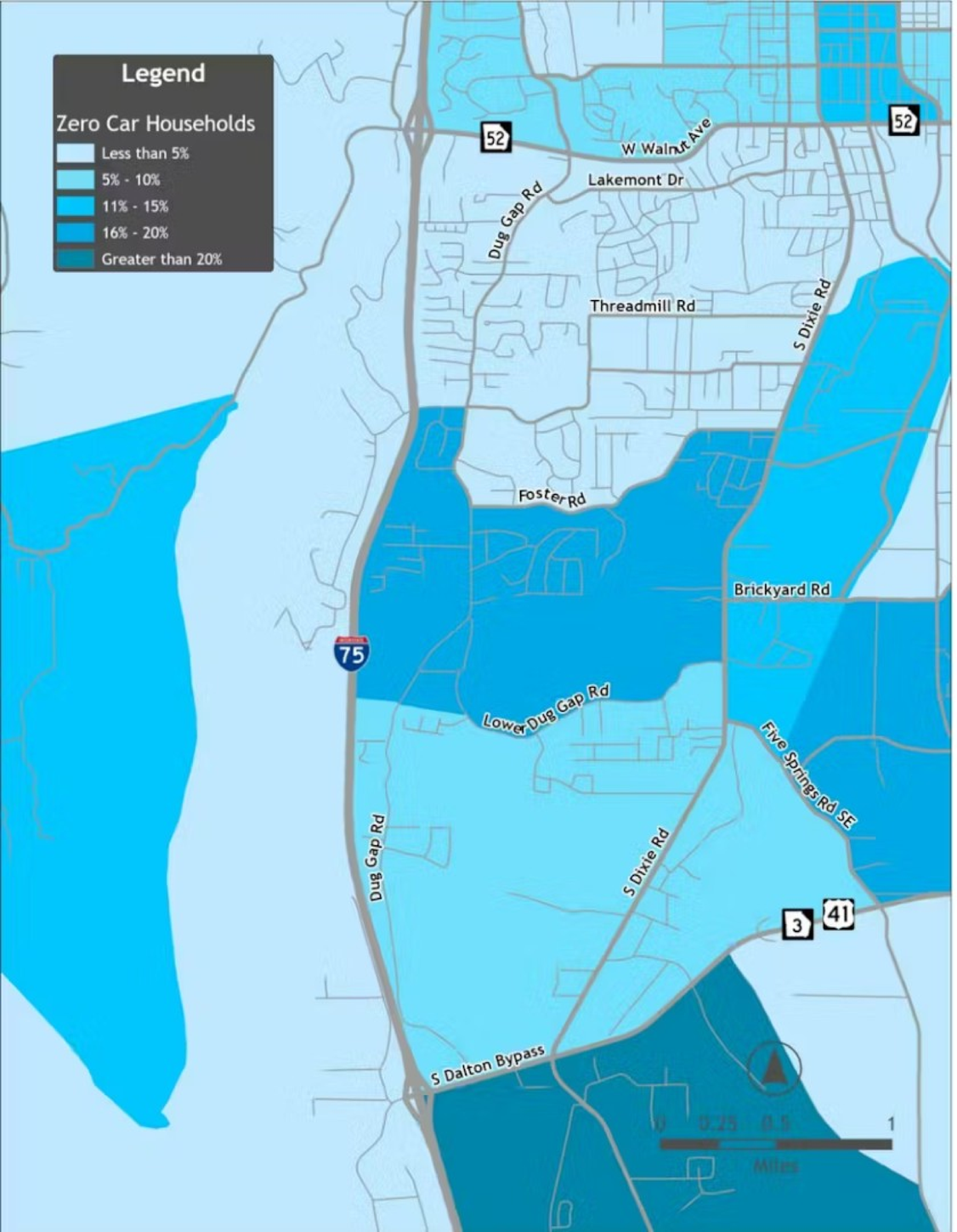
Population Density

- Low- to moderate-density residential areas
  - Northern portions of the corridor, exhibit moderately urban densities
  - Transitions to suburban and semi-rural levels further south



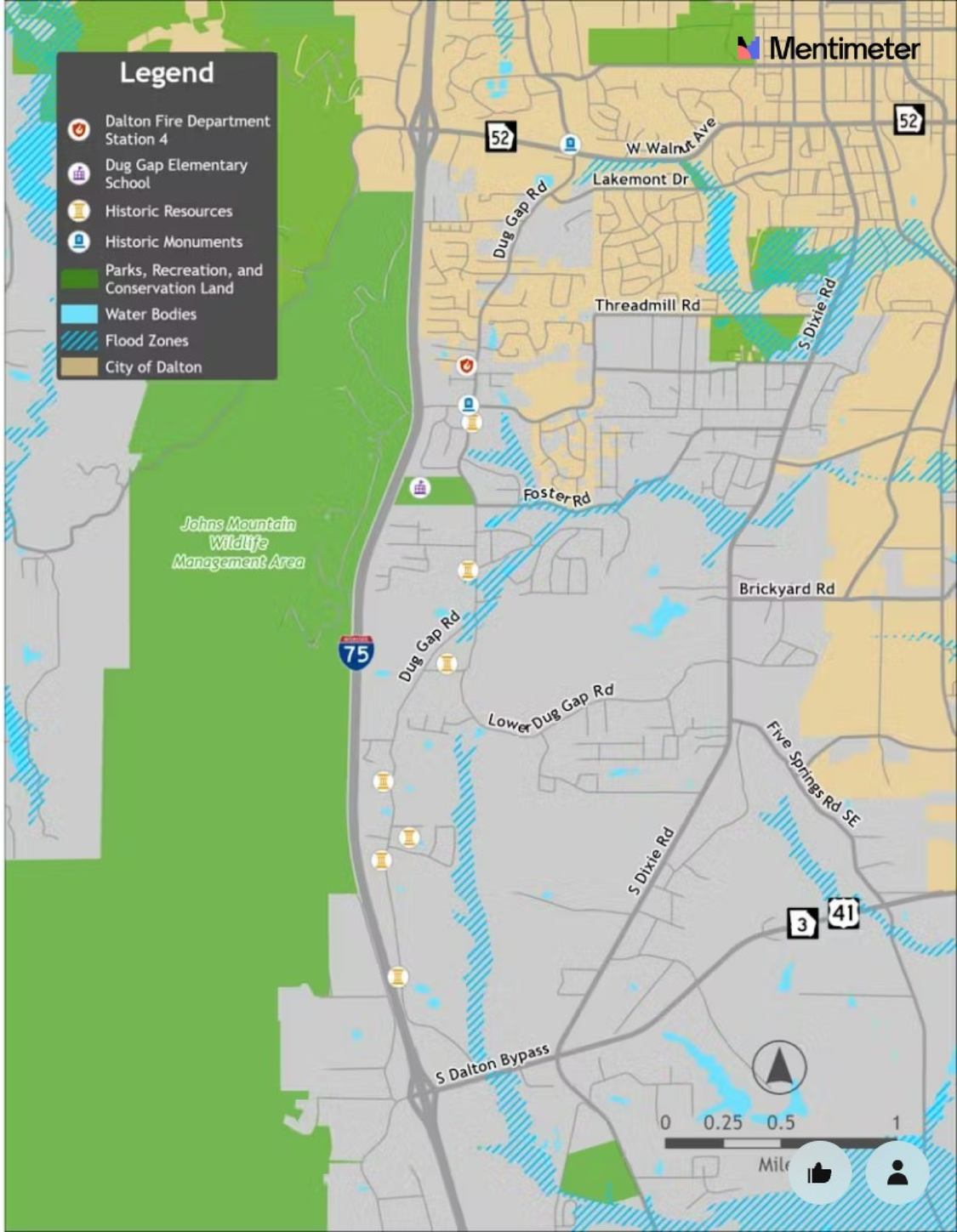


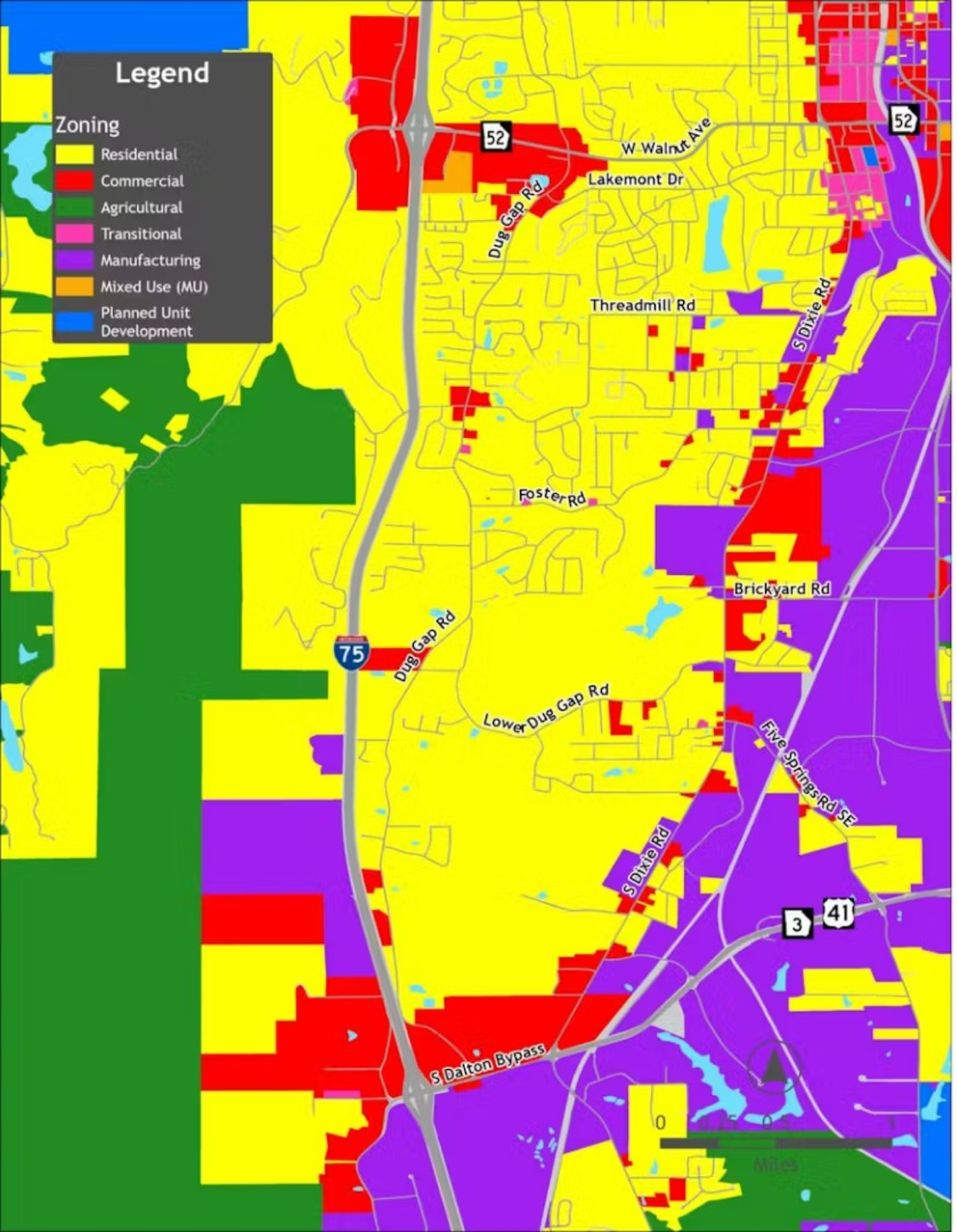
Households With No Vehicle Available

- 6-7% of households within one mile of the corridor do not own a vehicle
- Car-free households are most prevalent around the central section of the corridor, where older housing stock and renter occupancy are more common

Natural, Historic & Cultural Resources

- A few properties and structures along the corridor that date to the mid-19th and 20th centuries
- Largely residential properties, with a few institutional and transportation-related resources
- Pre-date the modern highway era and capture the early rural-to-suburban transition along this key north-to-south travel corridor



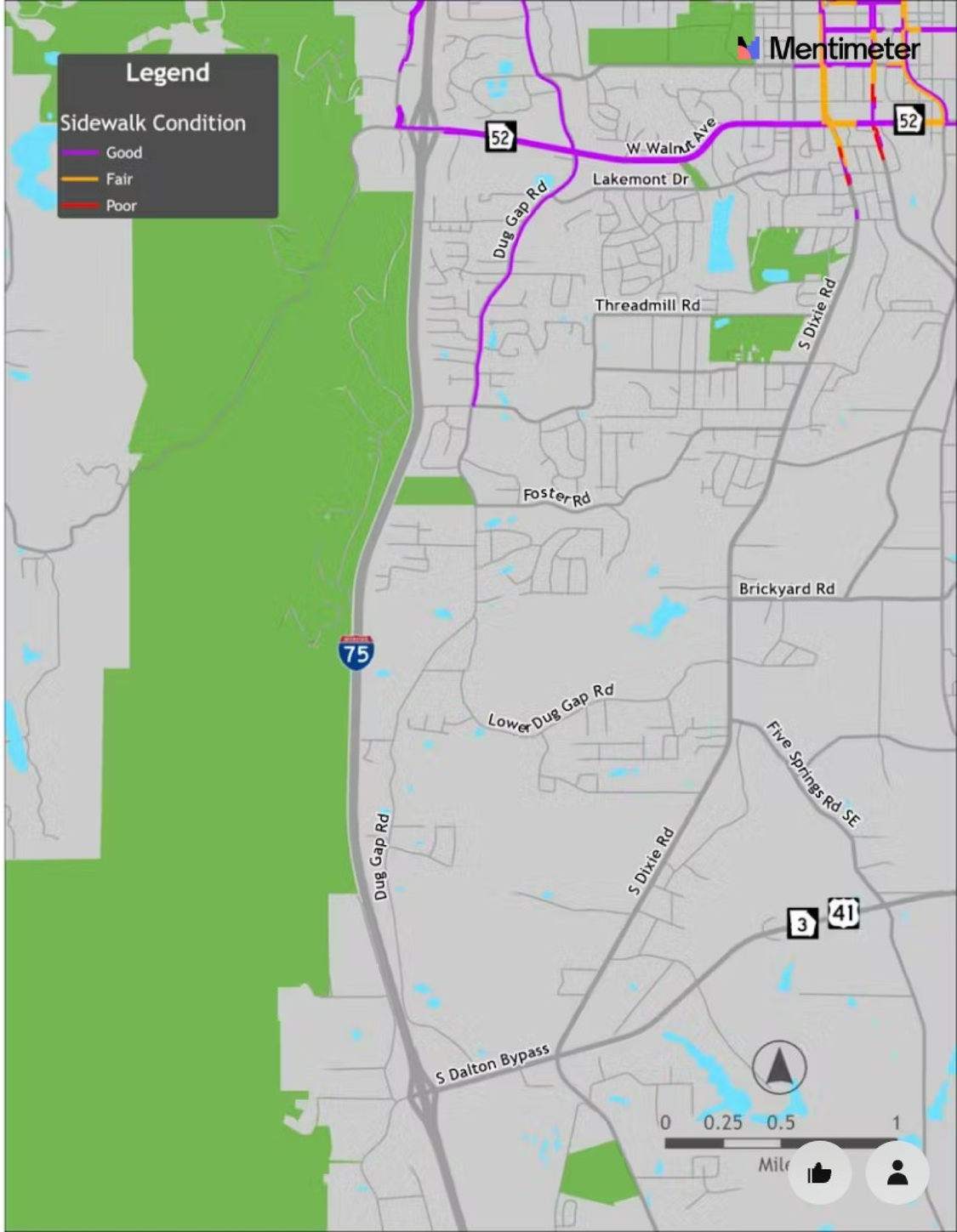


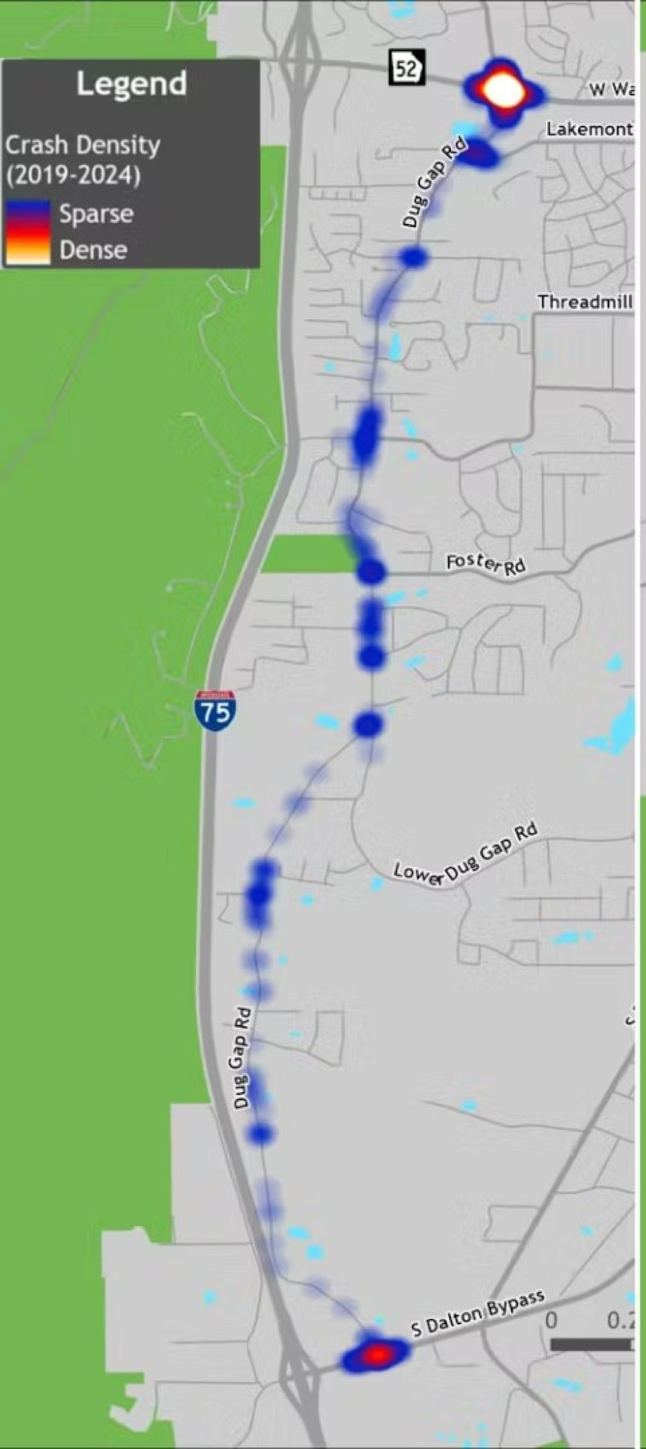
Zoning

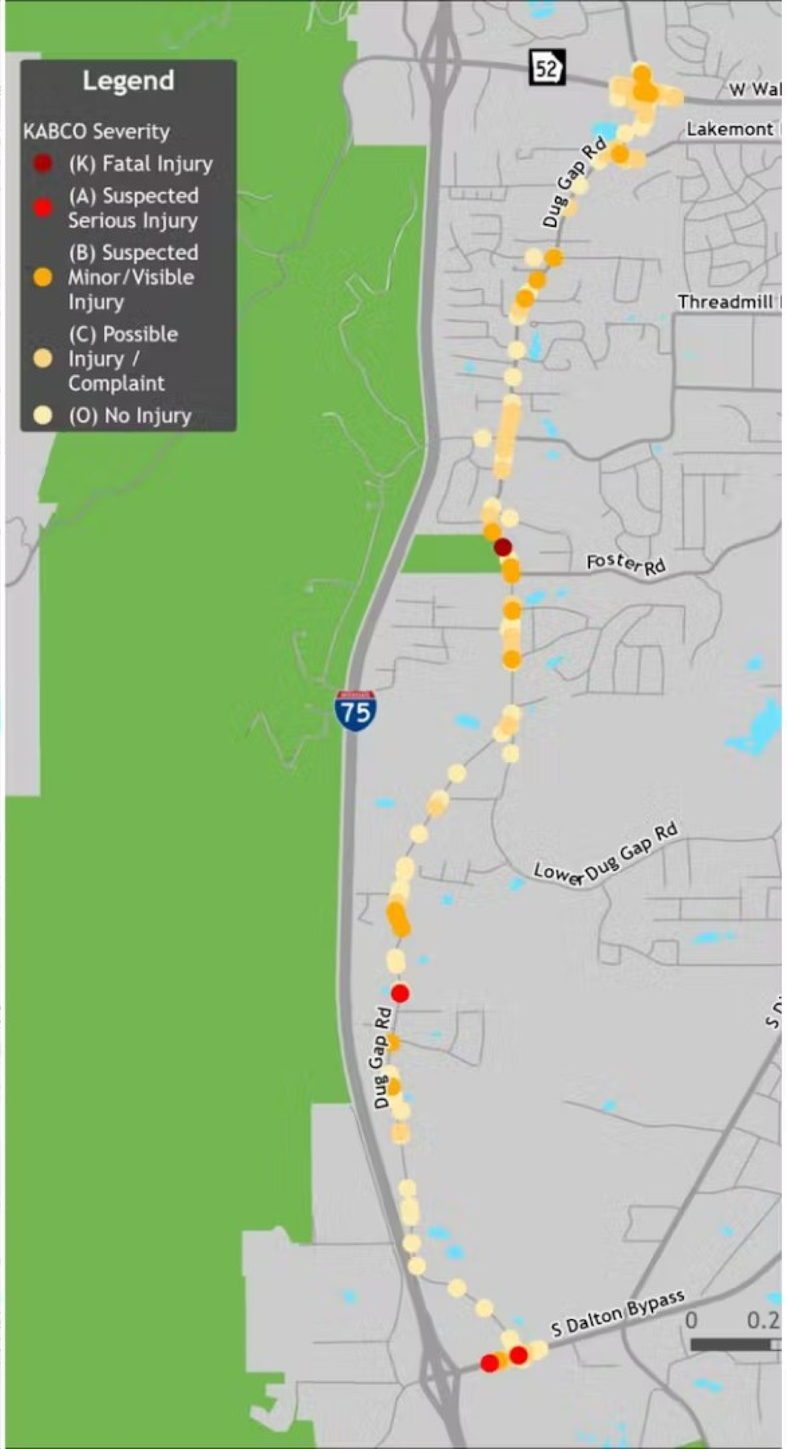
- Most parcels along corridor are zoned as low-density single-family residential
- Commercial-zoned parcels appear in clusters near major intersections
- Industrial-zoned parcels are concentrated mainly in the southern reaches of the corridor
  - Together with big-box commercial uses, this area generates higher truck traffic volumes

Sidewalks & Pedestrian Infrastructure

- Largely without continuous sidewalks
- Infrastructure at several intersections do not meet ADA standards
- Sidewalk gaps and inconsistent crossing treatments present systemic barriers to safe pedestrian mobility along the corridor







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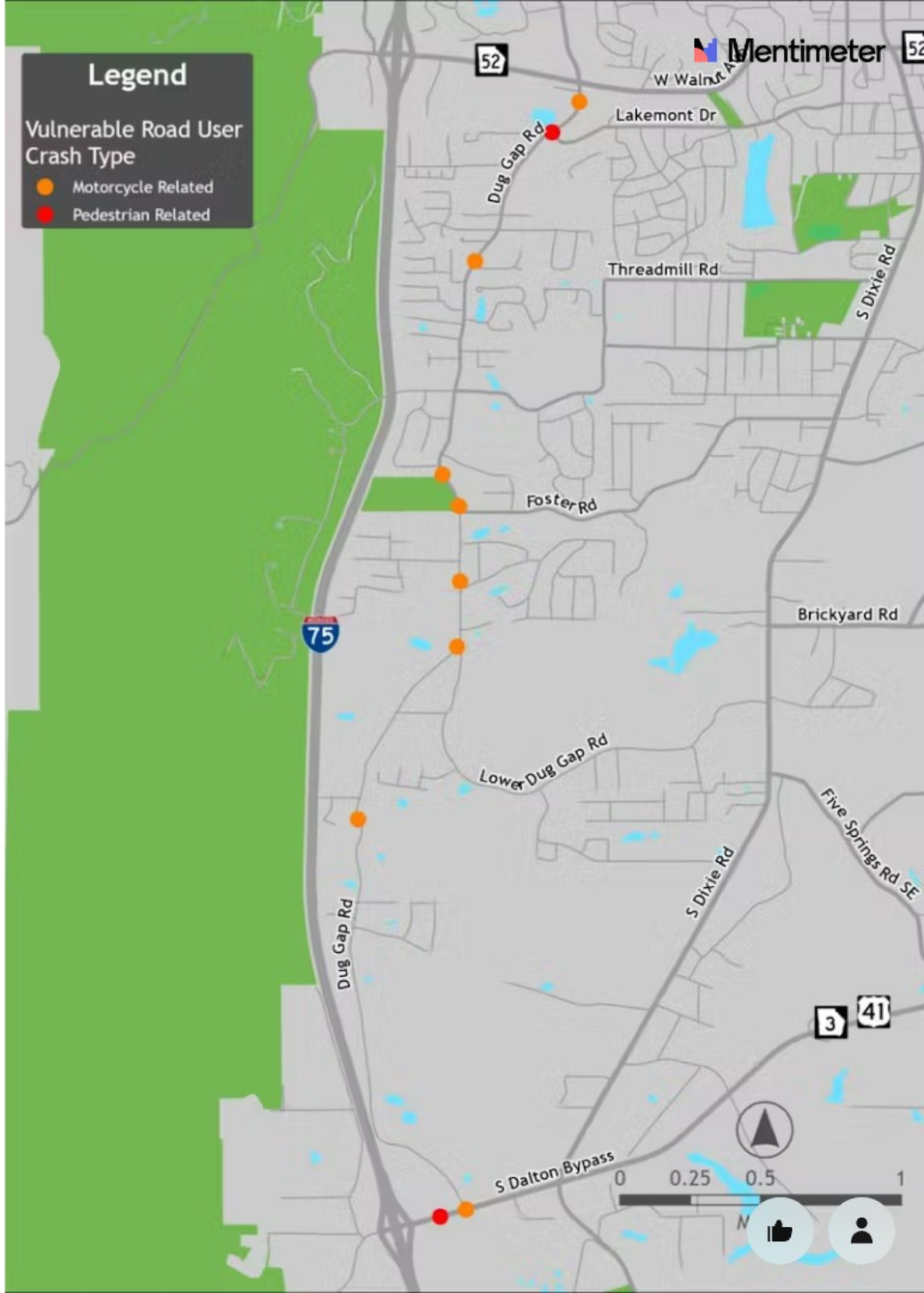
Crash Density & Severity

- Areas with highest overall crash density are on the northern and southern ends of corridor
- Higher concentrations at intersections with collector roads and where the road alignment has curvature
- Fatal and serious injury crashes
  - 1 fatal crash near Dug Gap Elementary School
  - 3 serious injury crashes, two of which involved vulnerable road users

Crashes Involving Vulnerable Road Users

- Number of crashes involving a vulnerable road user between 2019-2024
  - 8 - Motorcyclist
  - 2 - Pedestrian
  - 0 - Bicyclist



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What other needs do you perceive along this Dug Gap Road corridor?

Bicycle lanes

We need a roundabout connecting Shields and Lakemont, and perhaps more lanes north of that point.

Sidewalks ost Dug Gap School

sidewalks, lighting, and traffic signals

Speeds at school zone

Roundabout at Dug Gap Mt. road?

Yes

Yes, correct. At threadmill

4

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What are key destinations along this corridor? Where are the places you go?

Foster Road, Threadmill Road, Lakemont Drive, Shopping plaza at Walnut and Dug Gap, Nursing Home.

Dug Gap School, Shields and Mineral Springs Road, several churches along the route.

Shopping centers at Dug Gap & Walnut Avenue

Dug Gap Elementary and churches

Intersections at Foster, Conn 3, Walnut. School, nursing home.

5

Needs and Opportunities

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Traffic & Congestion

- No significant congestion
  - However, at the intersection with Walnut Avenue (SR 52), there are noticeable delays during the mid-day and PM peak periods
- The middle of the corridor, between the residential, commercial, and industrial land uses to the north and south, may benefit from additional access management controls, noise abatement, and intersection and safety improvements

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Safety

- Portions of the corridor, especially within Dalton city limits, experience crash rates higher than average statewide crash rates
- Many places along the corridor have outdated signage and obsolete signal technology

Bicycle & Pedestrian

- An estimated 580 walking trips and 30 bicycling trips occur each day along the corridor, concentrated north of Dug Gap Mountain Road / Threadmill Road
  - South of Dug Gap Mountain Road / Threadmill Road, does not have sidewalks, including to connect to Dug Gap Elementary School
  - Dedicated bicycle infrastructure is absent along the Dug Gap Road corridor

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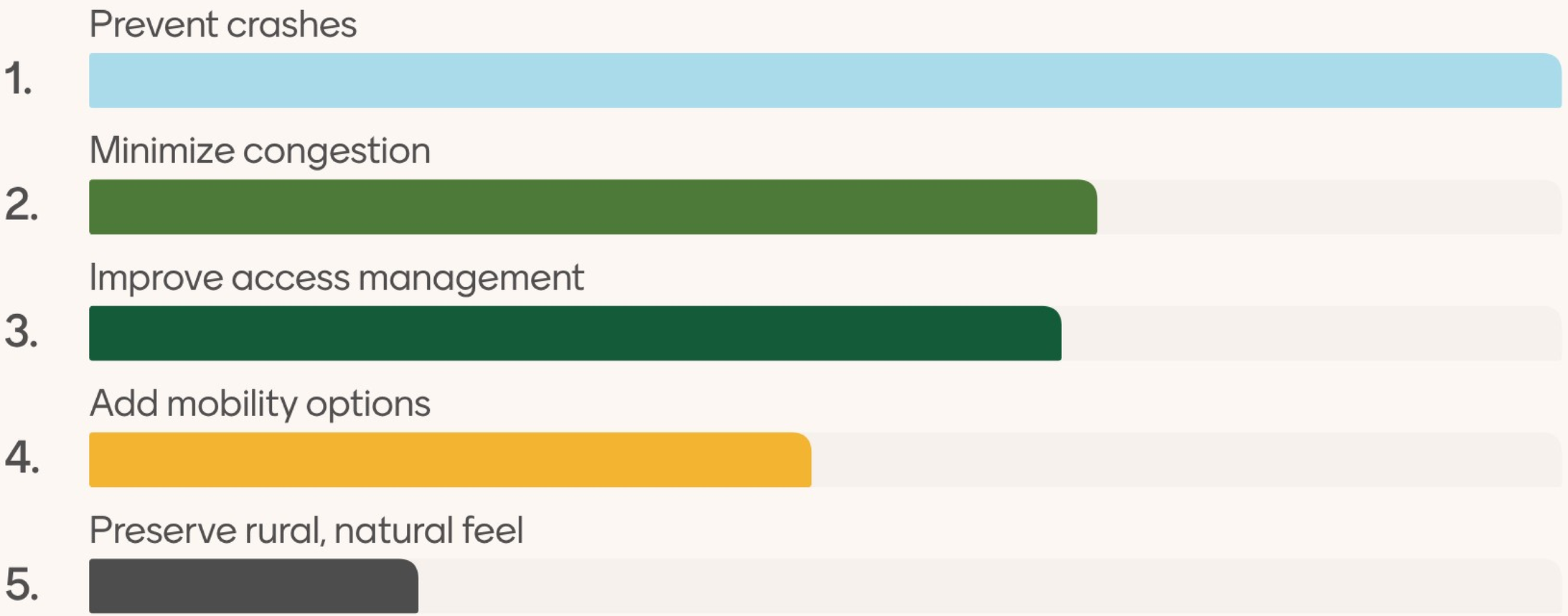
Rank these potential areas of recommendations for this corridor.



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What, if any, barriers or challenges do you foresee in response to recommendations for the corridor?

Funding

Right of Way issues, funding

Citizen opposition to development

ROW

Right of way acquisition.

Public sentiment, NIMBY and CAVE people

Property owner opposition, funding

7

Upcoming Engagement Activities

Upcoming Engagement Activities

- Tentatively attending the Mistletoe Festival on Saturday, December 6th
- Additional engagement in Spring 2026
- Project website:

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Thank you!

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