



**Testimony of Daniel Cochran, President
Shady Grove Medical Center**

Testimony on the Great Seneca Plan Planning Board Draft

June 12, 2024

Good evening, Council President Friedson and members of the Montgomery County Council. I am Daniel Cochran, President of Adventist HealthCare's Shady Grove Medical Center, one of the largest landowners and employers in the Great Seneca Plan area. On behalf of the evolving Medical Center, I am pleased to comment on how the Great Seneca Plan may be improved to help the campus achieve critical healthcare objectives over the next few decades. Our primary goal is to preserve maximum flexibility in the Great Seneca Plan so that the Medical Center may adapt and grow in an ever-changing healthcare delivery system.

The approximately 40-acre Medical Center campus is in the heart of the Life Sciences Center portion of the Great Seneca Plan. It is surrounded by Medical Center Drive, Broschart Road and Blackwell Road extended. The property is developed with three hospital structures: an acute care medical surgical hospital, an acute inpatient rehabilitation hospital and a behavioral health specialty hospital. These hospitals are spread out throughout the campus and currently operate semi-autonomously. When we say semi-autonomously, we mean operationally they are distinctly different structures – they have their own support systems like cafeterias, kitchens, and material receiving functions, to name a few.

The future of healthcare and viable financial sustainability for hospitals require us to combine and economize these systems as much as possible. In response, we commissioned a campus master plan that supports economies of scale with one kitchen, one loading dock, one imaging department and one materials handling plant supporting all three sets of patients at the same time. In the campus master plan, the three hospital structures will become one large connected medical facility emanating from our main hospital in the core of the campus. The campus plan will also provide what the Great



Seneca Plan calls an infill “Opportunity Site” on the northwest portion of the campus once the sprawling behavioral health hospital is relocated southward near the main hospital.

Throughout the Great Seneca Plan process, the Medical Center has worked closely with Planning Staff in an effort to align our anticipated campus growth plan with Staff’s desire for street and pedestrian connectivity within the campus. I am pleased to report that the engagement has been fruitful because the Planning Board Draft reflects agreement on the number and types of connections. The remaining issue is where these connections should be located. In particular, the Medical Center supports an east-west vehicular connection through the Opportunity Site in the northern portion of the campus, which may be accommodated with future development. The Planning Board Draft sites the road connection within the hospital growth area identified in the campus master plan. While we understand the desire for conne

ctivity and manageable block sizes, this aspiration should not preclude the Medical Center’s imperative to grow as medical needs dictate.

Submitted with this testimony is a map showing the Plan’s recommended east-west vehicle and pedestrian connections through the campus and how they conflict with future hospital growth. We advocate instead for connections that are immediately feasible and will align with critical hospital functions. A second map illustrating this proposal is also attached with this testimony.

In addition to eliminating conflicting connections through the campus, the Medical Center seeks to clarify Great Seneca Plan expectations regarding publically accessible spaces in the campus and alternatives to linear pedestrian connections. We address these technical issues in an attachment submitted with the testimony.

Overall, we wish to impress upon the County Council that the Medical Center has unique needs that cannot be addressed by the general vision for the Life Sciences Center. We support the effort to ensure that the Life Sciences Center continues as the premier location for the life sciences and biohealth industries in the County. However, the Medical Center’s healthcare delivery mission and specializing building types



distinguishes it from other property owners and its needs should be respected in the final version of the Great Seneca Plan.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our perspective with you this evening. We look forward to working with you and your staff as the Great Seneca Plan process reaches its conclusion.



SGMC and ROAD Z

External Roads (Public)

Internal Roads (Private)

Property Line

Recommended Master Plan Street Alignment

Recommended Bicycle Facility (Trails per Fig. 21)

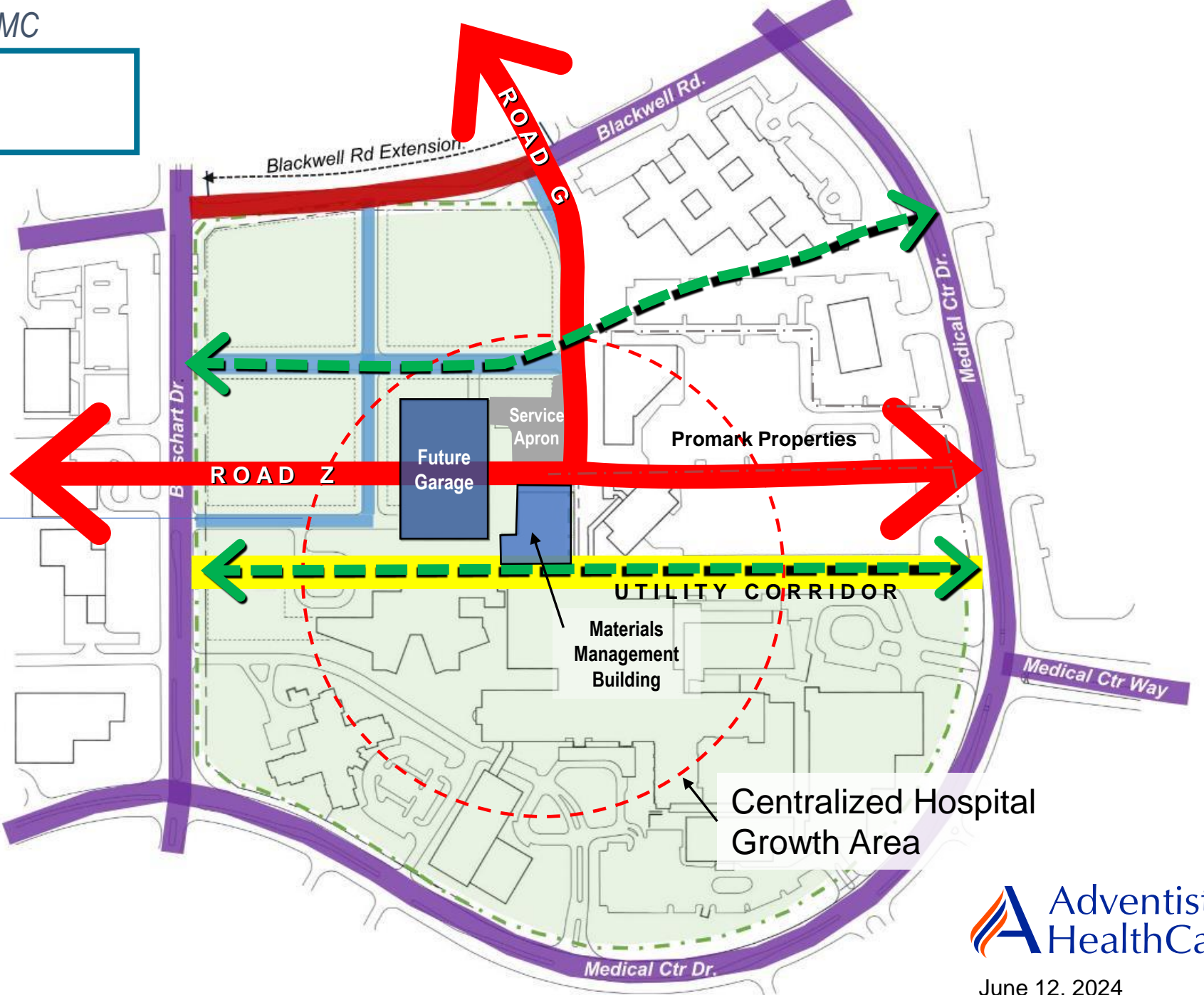


FIGURE 22- Life Sciences Center Master Planned Streets (Partial Enlargement)

SGMC PROPOSED BIKES & PEDS

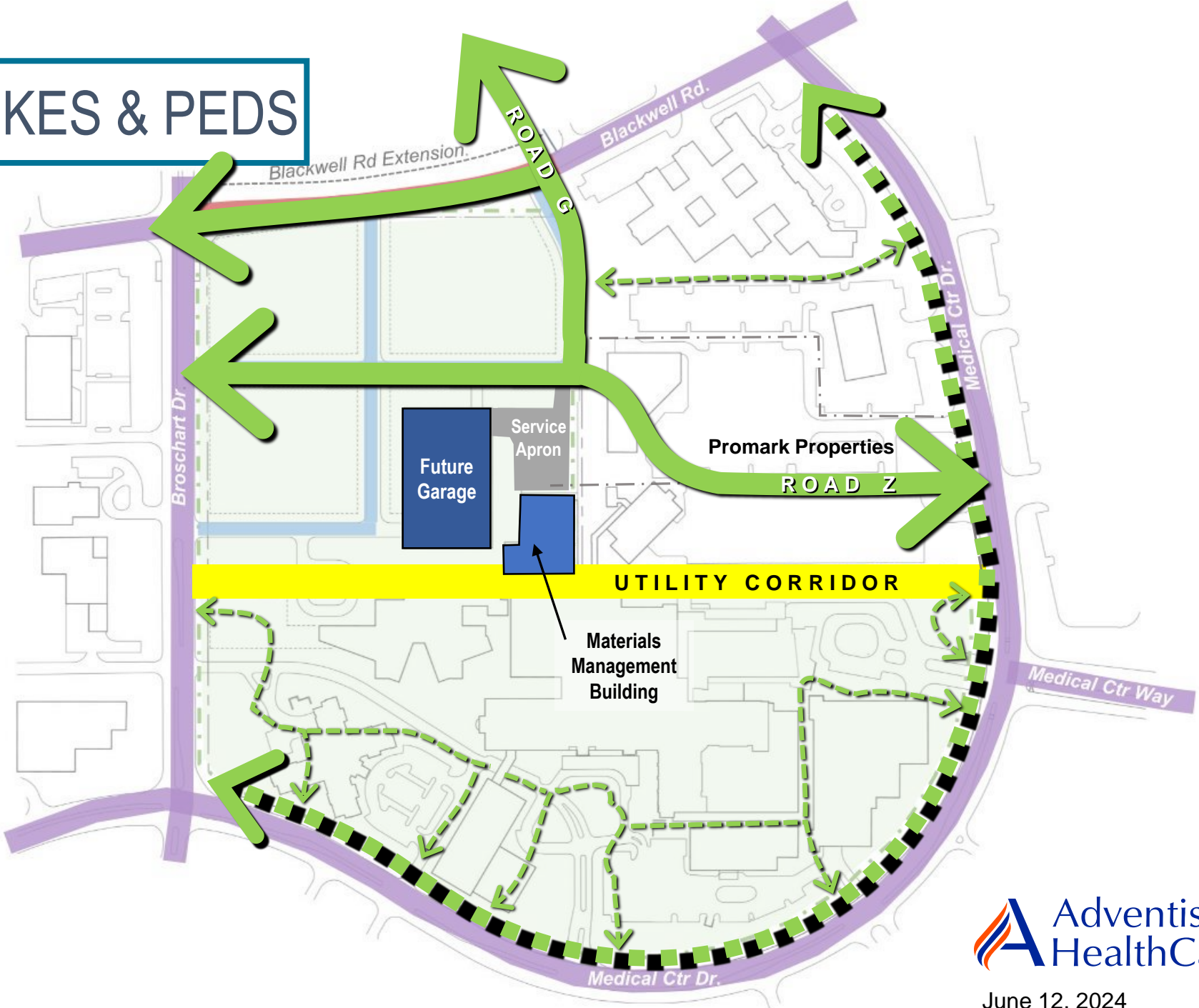
Bikes and Peds (Complete Streets)



LSC Loop (Bikes and Peds)



Other Pedestrian Connections





THE GREAT SENECA PLAN
PLANNING BOARD DRAFT

Proposed Changes
(Pages 58-59)

8. Adventist HealthCare Shady Grove Medical Center

Adventist HealthCare Shady Grove Medical Center is an important anchor for the area and contributor to Montgomery County. The Shady Grove Medical Center currently employs approximately 2,000 people, including medical professionals and support staff. The Shady Grove Medical Center anticipates redevelopment of their campus in the coming years to improve healthcare efficiencies and patient services, particularly through the consolidation of buildings and entrances.

The Great Seneca Plan acknowledges that the Shady Grove Medical Center campus has unique infrastructure requirements and constraints and seeks to balance the needs of the campus with the vision for the Life Sciences Center to become a complete community, characterized by a high-quality built environment and vibrant public realm. Rather than propose a fine-grained street grid and alley network throughout the campus, the Plan recommends one east-west street connection~~s~~ as well as bicycle and pedestrian connections between Medical Center Drive and Broschart Road, north of the Medical Center's existing patient tower and anticipated service dock and south of the master planned extension of Blackwell Road, as feasible. The final alignment, design and ownership of the street and bicycle/ pedestrian accomodations connections shall coordinate with the Medical Center's healthcare delivery needs and be determined with new development or redevelopment of the site at the time such development is under regulatory review by the Planning Department. The Plan further recommends a privately publicly-owned urban park (or parks), up to a minimum of 1/2 acre in size, be provided in accessible location(s) for community use along Broschart Road, near the future transit stop.

The Plan acknowledges the importance of the Medical Center in both the Life Sciences Center and the county. As the Medical Center grows and evolves, efforts should be made to improve frontages along Medical Center Drive, Broschart Road, and the recommended street connections to improve multimodal accessibility and connectivity, as well as contribute to the public realm of the Life Sciences Center. While specific design guidance will be provided in the Great Seneca Plan Design Guidelines, the Plan acknowledges that flexibility in building placement, form, orientation and transparency may be necessary to achieve hospital efficiencies and services, and recommends that these development standards be determined with new development or redevelopment of the site at regulatory review by the Planning Department.