

2.3.2 RECOMMENDED INTERVENTIONS

The existing street network of River North is a remarkable asset. It is quite continuous and complete, forming well-scaled urban blocks that will readily accommodate a wide range of building types and uses. They also have generous rights-of-way, sufficient to accommodate the mix of travel modes needed in urban neighborhoods. However, the network is generally deficient in two areas, from the perspective of fully realizing the vision for River North and the objectives of CSS.

1. There are missing links in the network, particularly near the River. **New street segments are proposed to complete or adjust the network, as shown on the right.** [Street Realignment Study Areas have been identified to target further analysis and determine feasibility of any proposed project.](#)
2. Most of the existing streets have overly wide pavements, inadequate sidewalks, and sparse street tree plantings, if any. This is inherited from the area's previous industrial history and general disinvestment, and will be corrected through the phased construction of public improvements of several types, as noted on the diagram to the right.

Because the cost of moving the curbs inward to narrow the pavement and widen the sidewalks would be prohibitive if applied throughout River North, a targeted strategy of prioritized interventions is recommended. On many street corners and at mid-block locations, "bulbouts" or curb extensions, are planned, to narrow the visual width of the streets and to reduce pedestrian crossing distances and time, improving pedestrian comfort, convenience and safety.

On selected streets new landscaped medians are proposed, to provide a more complete tree canopy enclosing and shading the space of the street, to help reduce the travel speed of vehicles, and to provide a pedestrian refuge mid-way in the crossing.

Broadway, **clearly the most important single street in River North,** is to be more heavily reconstructed. From its past as the highway to Austin, it has inherited a very wide pavement and much-too-narrow sidewalks. To transform Broadway from a tired old highway strip to a major, mixed-use urban corridor, it is necessary to reconstruct the curbs to create much wider sidewalks, with new street trees and streetlights to help define high quality pedestrian ways. The sidewalk construction will reduce the number of travel lanes from three each way to two, which is sufficient to handle the peak morning and evening traffic. During the non-peak hours curbside parking will be permitted, to encourage the development of pedestrian-oriented shops and restaurants along Broadway.

