

CITY OF PROVIDENCE  
ZONING BOARD OF REVIEW

INSPECTION & STANDARDS  
RECEIVED

MAR 08 2024

APPLICATION FOR VARIANCE OR SPECIAL USE PERMIT

Check Each Type Zoning Relief Sought:

☐

Variance – Use\*

☒

Variance – Dimensional\*

☐

Special Use Permit\*\*

\* Attach APPENDIX A to apply for a Use or Dimensional Variance

\*\* Attach APPENDIX B to apply for a Special Use Permit

If a section of the application is not applicable, please indicate this by using N/A in that field.

Applicant: Adrienne Gagnon

Applicant Mailing Address

Email: adrienne@downcitydesign.org

Street: 370 Cranston Street

Phone: 401-952-8227

City, State, Zip: Providence RI 02907

Owner: DownCity Design

Owner Mailing Address

Email: info@downcitydesign.org

Street: 370 Cranston St

Phone: 401-272-8070

City, State, Zip: Providence RI 02907

Lessee: N/A

Lessee Mailing Address

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Attorney: N/A

Attorney Mailing Address

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Does the proposal require review by any of the following:

☐

Downtown Design Review Committee

☐

I-195 Redevelopment District Commission

☐

Capital Center Commission

☐

Historic District Commission

1. Street Address of Subject Property: 370 Cranston Street, Providence RI 02907

Plat and Lot Numbers of Subject Property: 31-198

2. Base Zoning District(s): 06 - Commercial II (C-2)  
 Overlay District(s): N/A
- 3a. Date owner purchased the Property: 09/04/2019
- 3b. Month/year of lessee's occupancy: N/A (Owner-occupied, no tenant)
4. Dimensions of each lot:
- |                     |                     |                     |                                  |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| Lot # <u>1</u>      | Width <u>50</u>     | Depth <u>94</u>     | Total area <u>4992</u> sq. ft.   |
| Lot # <u>      </u> | Width <u>      </u> | Depth <u>      </u> | Total area <u>      </u> sq. ft. |
| Lot # <u>      </u> | Width <u>      </u> | Depth <u>      </u> | Total area <u>      </u> sq. ft. |
| Lot # <u>      </u> | Width <u>      </u> | Depth <u>      </u> | Total area <u>      </u> sq. ft. |
- 5a. Size of existing structure(s) located on the Property:
- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <u>Principal Structure:</u>                        | <u>Accessory Structure:</u>          |
| Area of Footprint <u>3232sf</u>                    | Area of Footprint <u>37' 4" x 2"</u> |
| Overall Height <u>14' (lowest) - 17' (highest)</u> | Overall Height <u>6 ft</u>           |
| # of Stories <u>1</u>                              | # of Stories <u>&lt; 1</u>           |
- 5b. Size of proposed structure(s) located on the Property:
- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <u>Principal Structure:</u>                        | <u>Accessory Structure:</u>          |
| Area of Footprint <u>3232sf</u>                    | Area of Footprint <u>37' 4" x 4"</u> |
| Overall Height <u>14' (lowest) - 17' (highest)</u> | Overall Height <u>8 ft</u>           |
| # of Stories <u>1</u>                              | # of Stories <u>&lt; 1</u>           |
- 6a. Existing Lot Coverage:
- Building Coverage (area of all roofed structures) 3232sf
- Total Impervious Coverage Area (area of all roofed structures and impervious surfaces) 3232sf
- Rear Yard Impervious Coverage (area of structures and impervious surface in rear yard) 986 sf
- Front Yard Impervious Coverage (area of structures and impervious surface in front yard) N/A
- 6b. Proposed Lot Coverage:
- Building Coverage (area of all roofed structures) 3232sf
- Total Impervious Coverage Area (area of all roofed structures and impervious surfaces) 3232sf
- Rear Yard Impervious Coverage (area of structures and impervious surface in rear yard) 954 sf
- Front Yard Impervious Coverage (area of structures and impervious surface in front yard) N/A
- 7a. Present Zoning Use of the Property: Community Center and Educational Facility - Vocational
- 7b. Legal Zoning Use of the Property as recorded in the Dept. of Inspection & Standards:  
C-2
8. Proposed Zoning Use of the Property: C-2
9. Number of Parking Spaces:
- # of existing spaces 0 # of proposed spaces 0
10. Are there outstanding violations concerning the Property under any of the following:  
       Zoning Ordinance        RI State Building or Property Maintenance Code(s)

11a. List all Zoning Ordinance Sections from which a variance is sought:

<u>Section Number</u>	<u>Section Title + Quantity of relief, if applicable (eg. 4' setback where 6' required)</u>
1302.I.	Fences and Walls (requesting 8' fence height, rather than 6' height)

11b. Identify the section(s) of the Zoning Ordinance that provide for the special use permit, and list all section(s) which provide Use Standards for the proposed Special Use(s):

<u>Section Number</u>	<u>Section Title</u>


12. Summarize any changes proposed for the Property (use, construction/renovation, site alteration):

DownCity Design has renovated the property for use by our non-profit organization. A Temporary Certificate of Occupancy was issued by the City of Providence on March 4, 2024.


*The undersigned acknowledge(s) and agree(s) that members of the Zoning Board of Review and its staff may enter upon the exterior of the Property in order to view the Property prior to any hearing on the application.*

*The undersigned further acknowledge(s) that the statements herein and in any attachments or appendices are true and accurate, and that providing a false statement in this application may be subject to criminal and/or civil penalties as provided by law, including prosecution under the State and Municipal False Claims Acts. Owner(s)/Applicant(s) are jointly responsible with their attorneys for any false statements. As indicated on the instructions page, this application may not be signed by an attorney on behalf of their client(s).*

Owner(s):

\_\_\_\_\_  
Type Name  
DowCity Design  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Type Name  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Applicant(s):

\_\_\_\_\_  
Type Name  
Adrienne Gagnon  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Type Name  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

***All applicable requirements listed and described on the Instruction Sheet shall be met or this application will not be considered complete.***

## APPENDIX A

### APPLICATION FOR VARIANCE(S)

Rhode Island General Laws § 45-24-41(d) and (e) require that the Applicant for a variance demonstrate:

1. That the hardship from which the applicant seeks relief is due to the unique characteristics of the subject land or structure and not to the general characteristics of the surrounding area; and is not due to a physical or economic disability of the applicant, excepting those physical disabilities addressed in § 45-24-30(a)(16);
2. That the hardship is not the result of any prior action of the applicant;
3. That the granting of the requested variance will not alter the general character of the surrounding area or impair the intent or purpose of the zoning ordinance or the comprehensive plan upon which the ordinance is based; and
4. (a) For a **use variance**: That the land or structure cannot yield any beneficial use if it is required to conform to the provisions of the zoning ordinance;  
(b) For a **dimensional variance**: That the hardship suffered by the owner of the subject property if the dimensional variance is not granted amounts to more than a mere inconvenience, meaning that the relief sought is minimal to a reasonable enjoyment of the permitted use to which the property is proposed to be devoted.

Please provide the following information:

1. What is the specific hardship from which the applicant seeks relief?

DownCity Design requests a variance to install an 8 foot fence to replace the previous 6 ft chain link fence enclosing the courtyard in the center of the property. This higher fence height will enhance physical security of the building / site, ensure safety and privacy of our youth program participants, and protect neighbors from the noise of our construction vocational programs. Please see response to question 6 below for more details.

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2. Specify all unique characteristics of the land or structure that cause the hardship:

370 Cranston Street features a highly atypical design, with a C-shaped building surrounding a courtyard that is open along one side of the property line. This creates a vulnerable condition. DownCity Design received grant funding from RIEMA (RI Emergency Management Agency) to enhance site security. Our landscape architect Tom Lee of TL Studio designed an attractive and secure metal fence with perforations that ensure both overall privacy and necessary sight lines when needed for law enforcement, etc. See attached drawings and renderings. Please note that the fence will not be street-facing; it is between two property lines where zoning permits building to the lot line, at full height.

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3. (a) Is the hardship caused by an economic disability? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No x \_\_\_\_\_  
(b) Is the hardship caused by a physical disability? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No x \_\_\_\_\_  
(c) If the response to subsection (b) is "yes," is the physical disability covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), 42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq.? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

4. Did the owner/applicant take any prior action with respect to the Property that resulted in the need for the variance requested? (Examples include, but are not limited to, any changes the owner/applicant made to the structure(s), lot lines, or land, or changes in use of the Property)?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No ☒ \_\_\_\_\_

If "yes," describe any and all such prior action(s) and state the month/year taken:

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5. If you are seeking a USE VARIANCE, set forth all facts that demonstrate that the Property cannot have any beneficial use if you are required to use it in a manner allowed in the zoning district:
- 

6. If you are seeking a DIMENSIONAL VARIANCE, set forth all facts that indicate that if the variance is not granted, the hardship the owner/applicant will suffer is more than a mere inconvenience:

The proposed fence design is designed to:

1. Prevent break-ins and illicit activity in courtyard. There were several break-ins during the building renovation in 2023, and it was determined by law enforcement agents that perpetrators easily scaled the 6 ft chain link fence to gain access to the property through the vulnerable courtyard.
2. Protect the privacy of our program participants, who are minors between ages 11-18.
3. Mitigate noise from our workshop, to protect neighboring residences and businesses. In our free afterschool and summer programs, Providence youth design and build service projects for public spaces in Providence. We frequently have saws and drills running, and participants may occasionally use the courtyard space for outdoor fabrication, which will get noisy! A fence will protect our neighbors.

Please note that we removed the previous 6' chain link fence, which was in disrepair, in Dec. 2023. Since then, there has been a temporary 8' wire fence and there have been no break-ins during this period.

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***IF MORE ROOM IS NEEDED TO ANSWER ANY OF THE ABOVE QUESTIONS, PLEASE SUBMIT AN  
ADDENDUM TO THIS APPENDIX WITH COMPLETE RESPONSES.***

## **APPENDIX B**

### **APPLICATION FOR SPECIAL USE PERMIT**

In accordance with Rhode Island General Laws § 45-24-42(b), Section 1901 of the Zoning Ordinance requires that the Applicant for a special use permit demonstrate:

1. That the proposed special use is set forth in the ordinance and complies with the applicable use standards for the authorization of a special use permit;
2. That the proposed special use will not substantially injure the use and enjoyment of nor significantly devalue neighboring property; and
3. That the proposed special use will not be detrimental or injurious to the general health or welfare of the community.

**Please provide the following information:**

1. **Indicate the Ordinance section(s) which provide Use Standards for the proposed Special Use(s); and State all facts that demonstrate that the proposed special use will be in conformance with the Use Standards for the proposed Special Use(s):**

N/A

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2. **State all facts that demonstrate that the proposed special use will not substantially injure the use and enjoyment of neighboring property and will not significantly devalue neighboring property:**

N/A

---

3. **State all facts that demonstrate that the proposed special use will not be detrimental or injurious to the health or welfare of the community:**

N/A

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***IF MORE ROOM IS NEEDED TO ANSWER ANY OF THE ABOVE QUESTIONS, PLEASE SUBMIT AN  
ADDENDUM TO THIS APPENDIX WITH COMPLETE RESPONSES.***



# DCD COMMUNITY CENTER

370 CRANSTON STREET, PROVIDENCE, RI



## CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS

DATE: 10.16.2023

### LIST OF DRAWINGS:

- |       |                           |
|-------|---------------------------|
| L 1.0 | LAYOUT AND MATERIALS PLAN |
| L 2.0 | GRADING PLAN              |
| L 3.0 | CONSTRUCTION DETAILS      |
| L 3.1 | CONSTRUCTION DETAILS      |

### DRAWINGS PREPARED BY:

**TLSTUDIO**  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

269D S. Main Street  
Providence, RI 02903  
T 401 383 3574

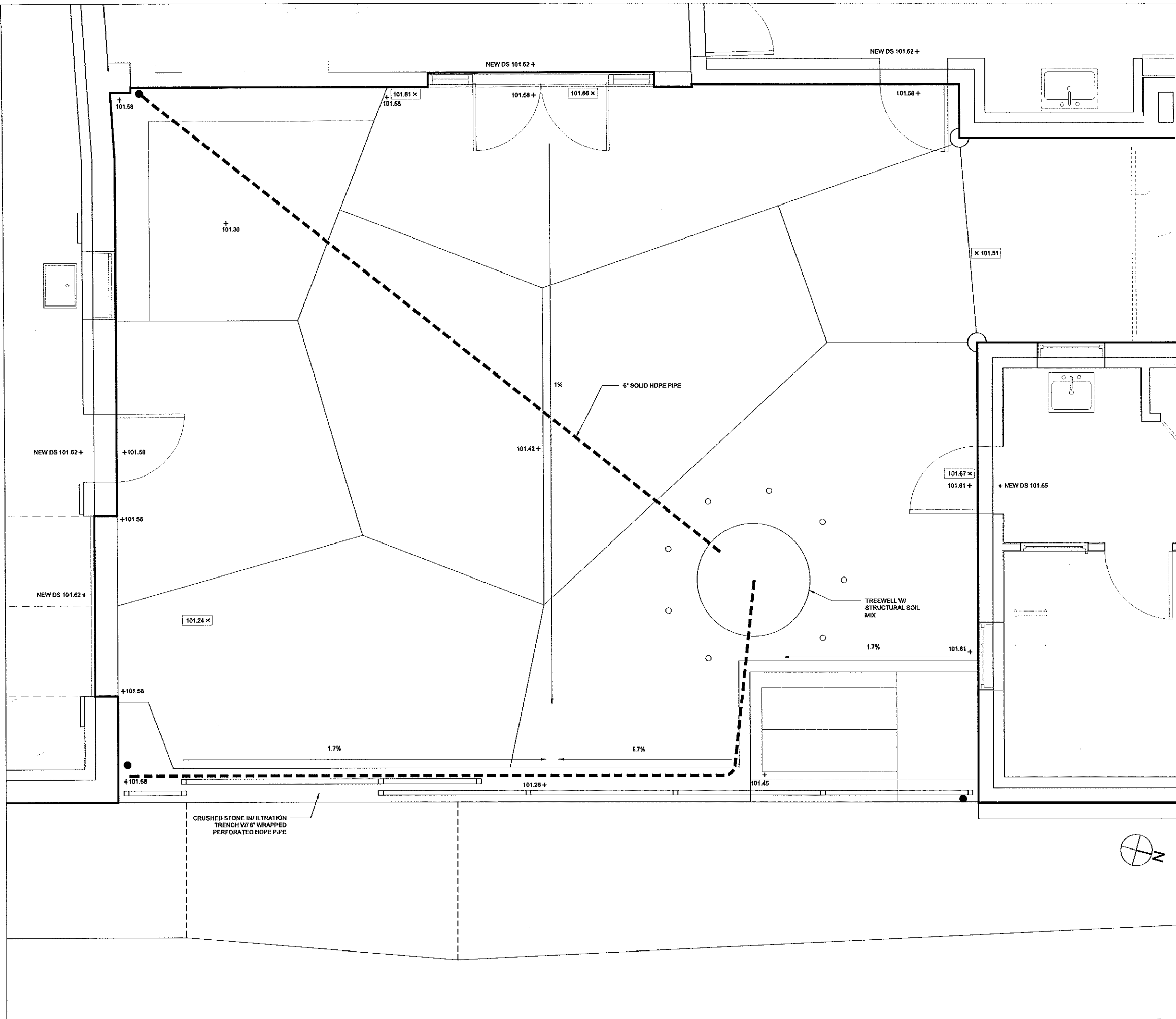
www.tlstudiolinc.com  
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GRADING NOTES

1. Install staked haybale siltation fence at edge of proposed grading as shown. Maintain haybale fence in good condition throughout project.
2. The locations of utilities shown on the plan are approximate. The contractor shall call Dig-Safe to verify the precise location of all utilities on-site before initiating demolition activities and protect existing utilities throughout construction. Any utilities damaged by construction activities will be repaired by the contractor at no cost to the owner.
3. Provide samples of materials proposed for use for the review of the Landscape Architect, including fill, topsoil, planting soil, and pavements. Suitable excavated materials removed to accommodate new construction may be used as fill material subject to the approval of the Landscape Architect. Soil test reports for topsoil shall be provided by the contractor through the University of Massachusetts soil testing laboratory.
4. Promptly notify the Landscape Architect of unexpected sub-surface conditions. Contractor to set grade stakes showing lines and elevations for review and approval by the Landscape Architect prior to rough grading.
5. Perform grading within contract Limits of Construction, including adjacent transition areas, to new elevations, levels, profiles, and contours indicated. Provide subgrade surfaces parallel to finished surface grades. Provide uniform levels and slopes between new elevations and existing grades. Grade surfaces to assure areas drain away from structures and to prevent ponding and pockets of surface drainage.
6. Topsoil to be installed shall be natural, friable, fertile soil characteristic of productive soil in the vicinity, reasonably free of stones, clay lumps, roots, and other foreign matter. Do not use muddy topsoil. Place during dry weather. Allow for 6" average depth of topsoil screened for lawn areas, and 12" depth at planting areas, except as otherwise indicated on the drawings.
7. Fine grade topsoil eliminating rough and low areas to ensure positive drainage. Maintain levels, profiles, and contours of subgrades.
8. Protect finish graded areas from traffic and erosion. Keep free of trash and debris. Repair and re-establish grades in settled, eroded, and damaged areas. Where completed areas are disturbed by construction operations or adverse weather, scarify, re-shape, and compact to required density.
9. Upon completion of earthwork operation, clean areas within contract limits, remove tools, and equipment. Provide site clear, clean, free of debris, and suitable for further site work operations.

LEGEND

- XXXXX EX SPOT ELEVATION
- XXXX+ PROPOSED SPOT ELEVATION
- HDPE PIPE

TLSTUDIO

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

269D S. Main Street  
Providence, RI 02903  
T 401 383 3674

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Number	Issue	Date
1	CONSTRUCTION UPDATE	8/1/23

STAMP:	SCALE: 1" = 1'-0"
	DATE: 10.16.23
	DRAWN BY: CD
	CHECKED BY: TL

PROJECT TITLE:

**DCD COMMUNITY  
DESIGN CENTER**

370 CRANSTON STREET  
PROVIDENCE, RI

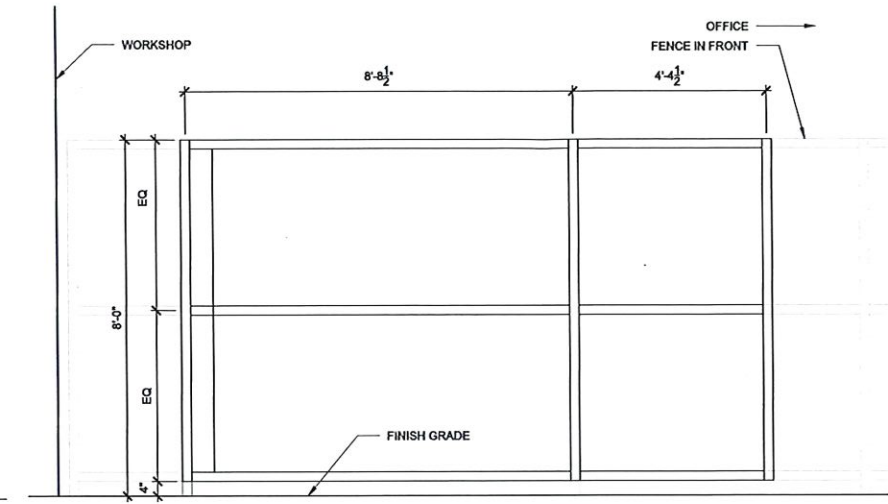
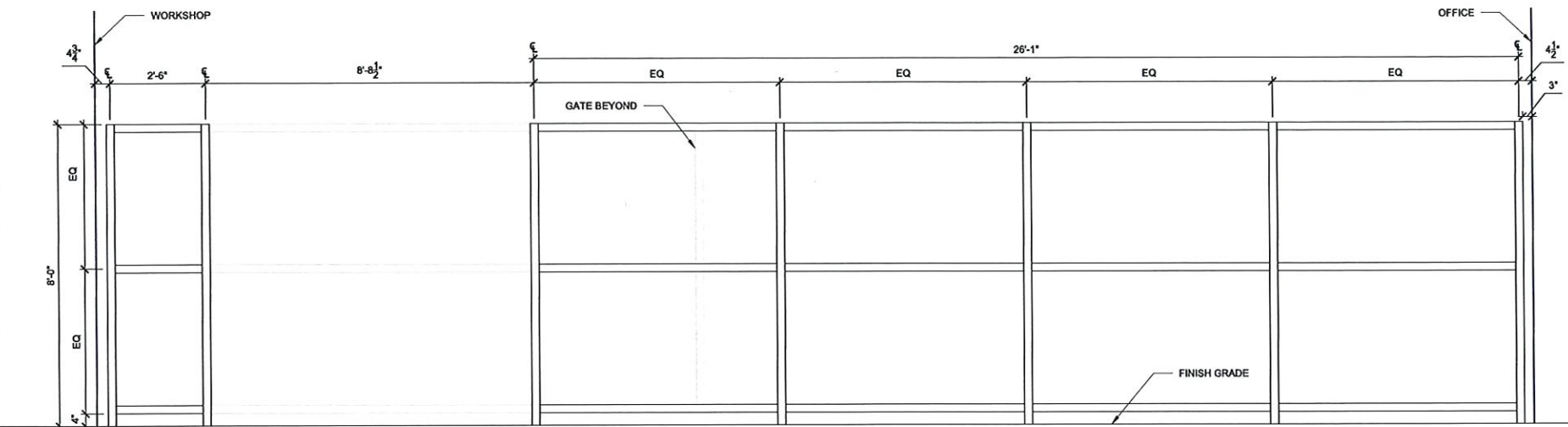
DRAWING NAME:

**GRADING PLAN**

SHEET TITLE:

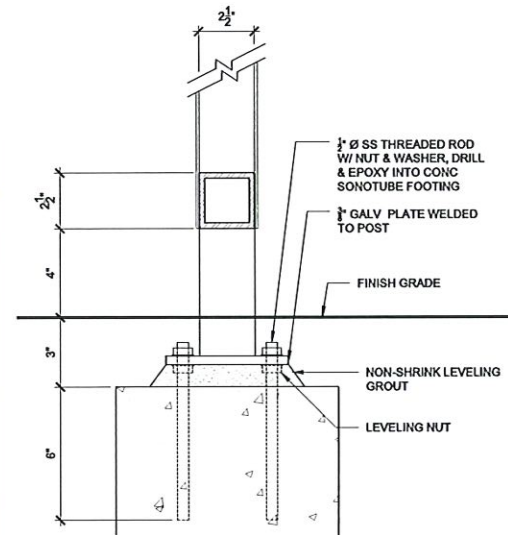
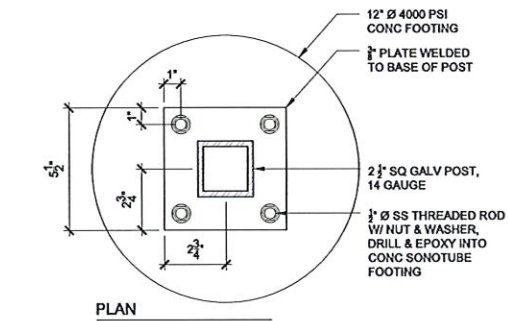
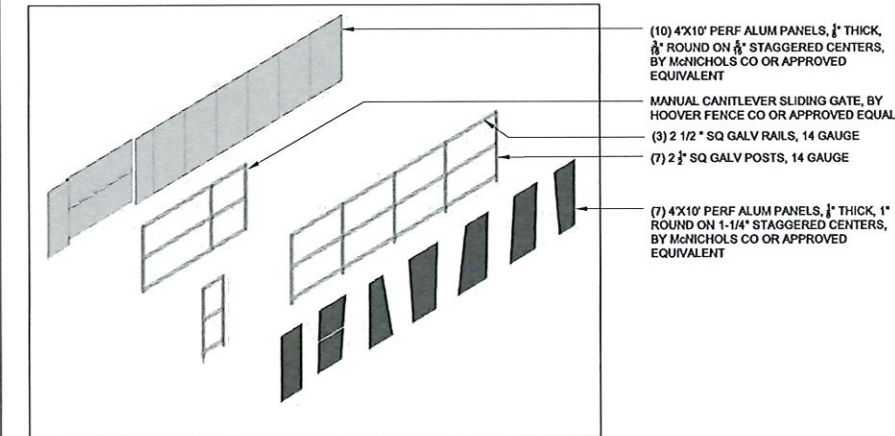
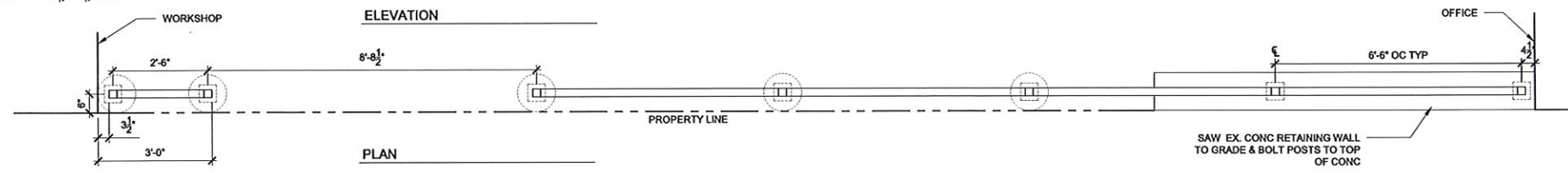
**L2.0**

Number	Issue	Date
1	CONSTRUCTION UPDATE	8/1/23

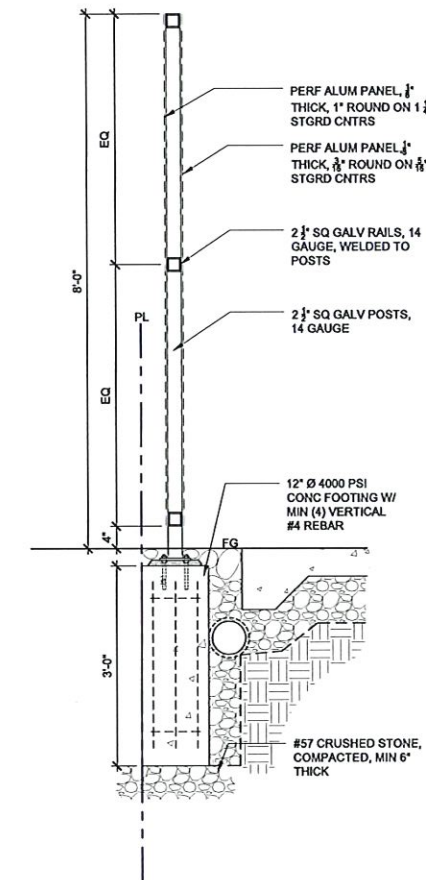


**3 GATE FRAME**  
 1/2" = 1'-0"

**4 FENCE FRAMING**  
 1/2" = 1'-0"



**2 POST MOUNTING DETAIL**  
 3/4" = 1'-0"



**1 FENCE POST SECTION**  
 3/4" = 1'-0"

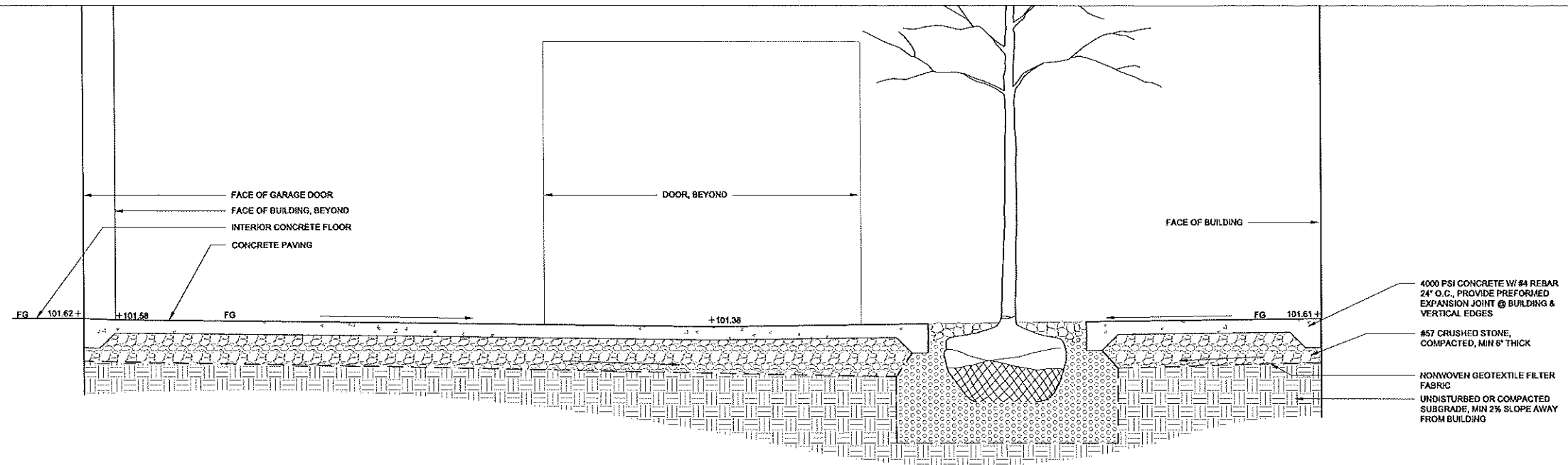


STAMP:	SCALE: VARIES
DATE: 11.20.2023	
DRAWN BY: CD	
CHECKED BY: TL	

PROJECT TITLE:  
**DCD COMMUNITY DESIGN CENTER**  
 370 CRANSTON STREET  
 PROVIDENCE, RI

DRAWING NAME:  
**CONSTRUCTION DETAILS**

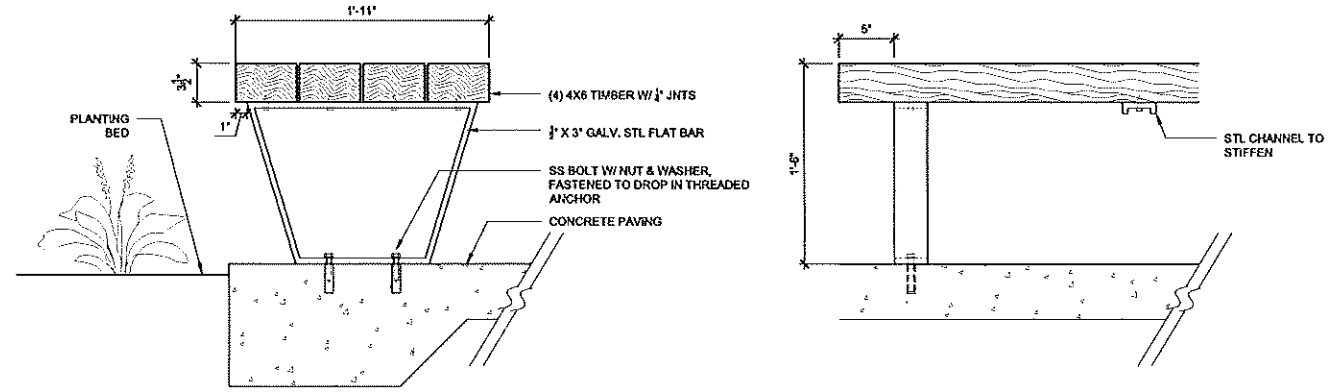
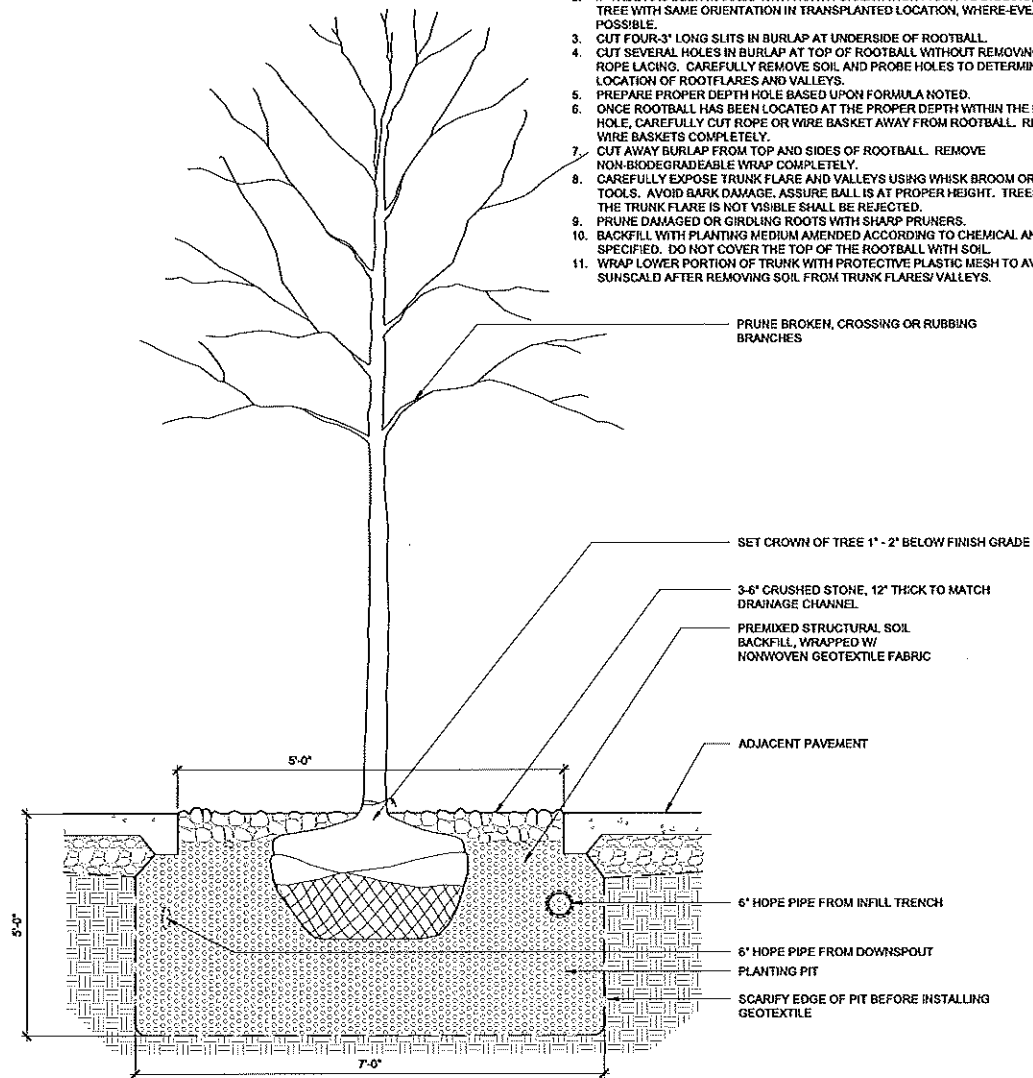
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**L3.0**



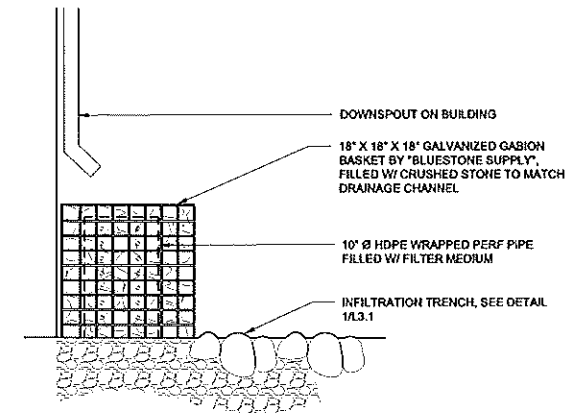
**5 COURTYARD SECTION**  
 1/2" = 1'-0"

**TREE PLANTING NOTES:**

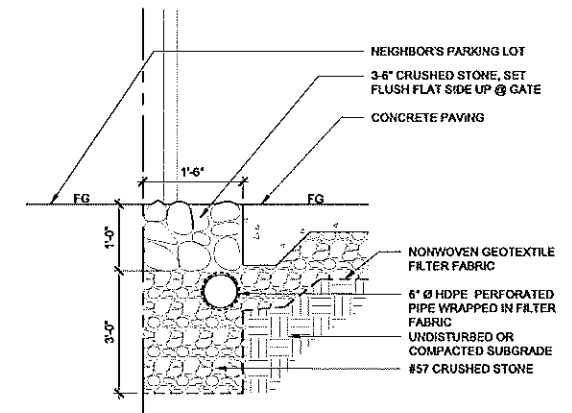
1. REVIEW PROPER TREE-PLANTING TECHNIQUES WITH L.A. PRIOR TO PLANTING.
2. IF TREE HAS BEEN MARKED WITH NORTH ORIENTATION PRIOR TO DIGGING, POSITION TREE WITH SAME ORIENTATION IN TRANSPLANTED LOCATION, WHERE-EVER POSSIBLE.
3. CUT FOUR-3" LONG SLITS IN BURLAP AT UNDERSIDE OF ROOTBALL.
4. CUT SEVERAL HOLES IN BURLAP AT TOP OF ROOTBALL WITHOUT REMOVING WIRE OR ROPE LACING. CAREFULLY REMOVE SOIL AND PROBE HOLES TO DETERMINE LOCATION OF ROOTFLARES AND VALLEYS.
5. PREPARE PROPER DEPTH HOLE BASED UPON FORMULA NOTED.
6. ONCE ROOTBALL HAS BEEN LOCATED AT THE PROPER DEPTH WITHIN THE PLANTING HOLE, CAREFULLY CUT ROPE OR WIRE BASKET AWAY FROM ROOTBALL. REMOVE WIRE BASKETS COMPLETELY.
7. CUT AWAY BURLAP FROM TOP AND SIDES OF ROOTBALL. REMOVE NON-Biodegradable WRAP COMPLETELY.
8. CAREFULLY EXPOSE TRUNK FLARE AND VALLEYS USING WHISK BROOM OR HAND TOOLS. AVOID BARK DAMAGE. ASSURE BALL IS AT PROPER HEIGHT. TREES WHERE THE TRUNK FLARE IS NOT VISIBLE SHALL BE REJECTED.
9. PRUNE DAMAGED OR GIRDLING ROOTS WITH SHARP PRUNERS.
10. BACKFILL WITH PLANTING MEDIUM AMENDED ACCORDING TO CHEMICAL ANALYSIS AS SPECIFIED. DO NOT COVER THE TOP OF THE ROOTBALL WITH SOIL.
11. WRAP LOWER PORTION OF TRUNK WITH PROTECTIVE PLASTIC MESH TO AVOID SUNSCALD AFTER REMOVING SOIL FROM TRUNK FLARES/ VALLEYS.



**3 ADD ALT: WOOD BENCH**  
 1 1/2" = 1'-0"



**2 GABION SPLASH BLOCK**  
 1 1/2" = 1'-0"



**1 INFILTRATION TRENCH**  
 3/4" = 1'-0"

**4 TREE PLANTING IN COURTYARD**  
 NTS





Photo 1: 370 Cranston St courtyard view, facing Southeast



Photo 2: 370 Cranston St courtyard view, facing Northeast





Photo 3: 370 Cranston St fence view from neighboring lot, facing West



Photo 4: 370 Cranston St view of full building, facing Southwest





Photo 5: 370 Cranston St facade, facing South



