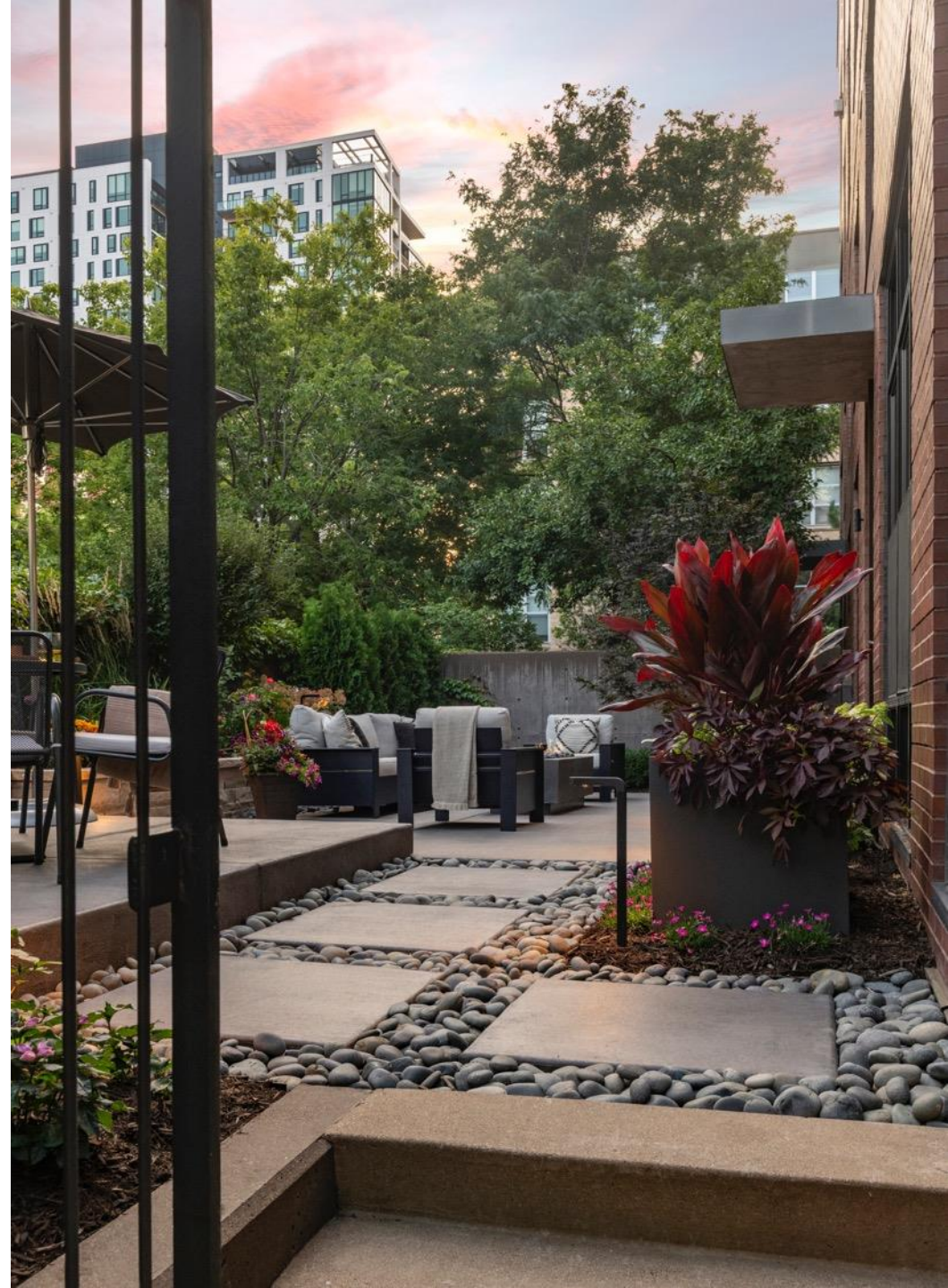


Hidden City Gem



The Vision

- Our client wanted their small city courtyard to feel like a true extension of their home—modern, functional, and welcoming.
- They envisioned distinct areas for dining, lounging, and gardening, all organized within a compact footprint.
- Privacy, sustainability, and seasonal planting opportunities were key, as was relocating the fire feature to make it more central and inviting.







LI



Design & Build Approach

Structure and Flow

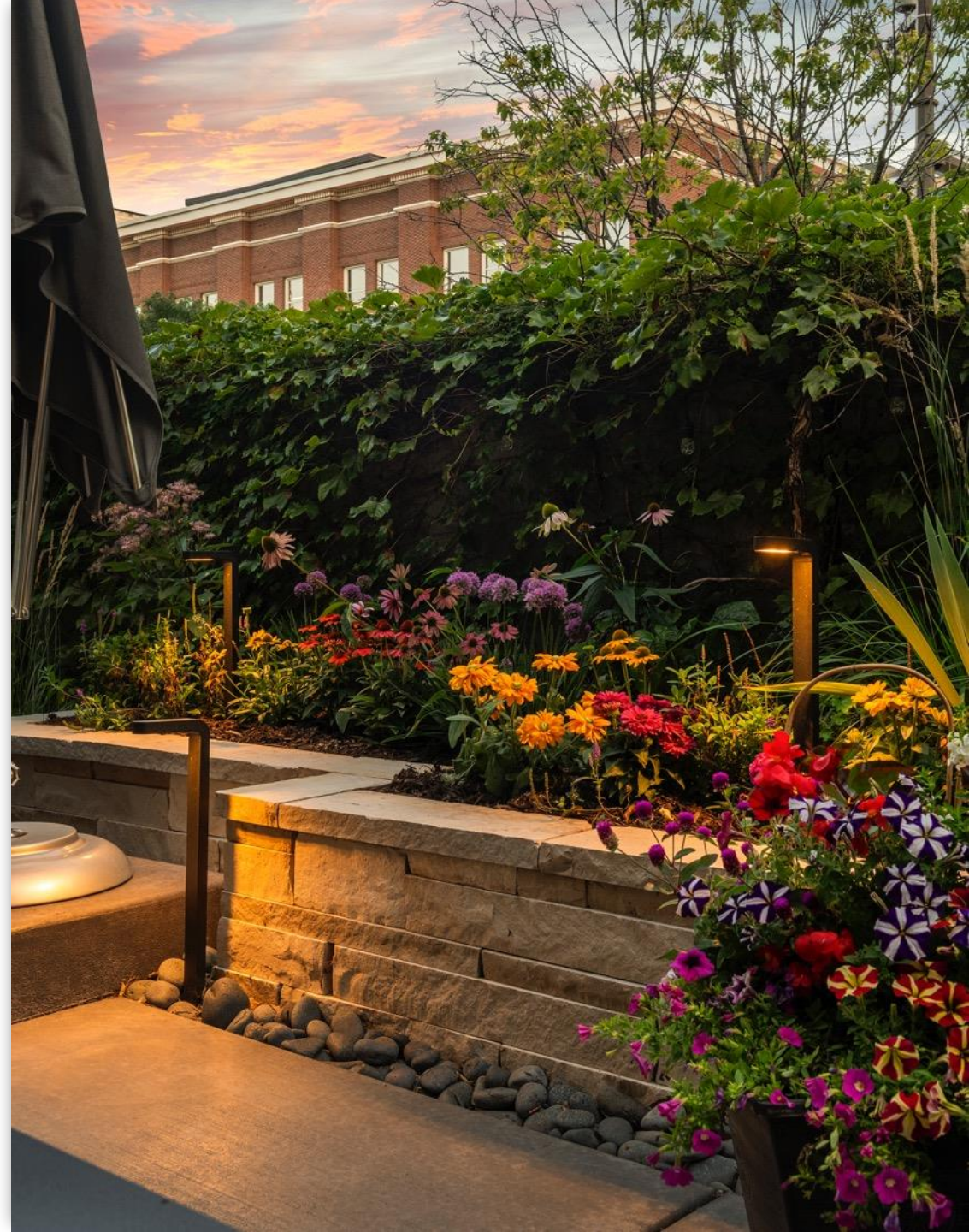
- We reorganized the courtyard to create clear destinations while maintaining a sense of openness. The fire feature now greets you visually at the entry, establishing a focal point and drawing people outside.
- Two patios in contrasting concrete finishes—one stepped up for dining—define separate living zones without overcrowding the space. A custom stone wall with a clean cap elevates planting beds and doubles as additional seating, blending form and function.





Gardens and Seasonal Interest

- The planting plan combined structure with color and texture. Two Columnar Maples along the wall provide privacy from neighboring buildings. A Japanese Maple adds striking seasonal foliage, while a Bloomerang Lilac tree offers fragrance and spring-to-summer blooms.
- Layered perennials reflect the client's favorite colors, creating a full, vibrant garden aesthetic. Three custom planters, finished to the client's preference, allow for seasonal updates and keep gardening central to the courtyard experience.
- Elevated garden beds also provide overflow seating for larger gatherings.











Systems for Easy Living

- A tailored irrigation system ensures each planting area—including raised planters—receives the right care.
- A modern LED lighting system highlights trees, paths, and architectural elements, automatically turning on at dusk and off at sunrise providing safe and secure access to the outside.
- From inside the home, the courtyard glows like an outdoor living room, enhancing both daytime and nighttime enjoyment.
- Thoughtfully tucked at the back, a clean gravel square offers a dedicated relief area for their two beloved dogs, blending practicality with ease of care.



Challenges and Solutions

- Working in a dense urban setting required careful planning:
- **Access:** All demolition and construction materials—including concrete, stone, trees, and soil—were moved by hand through a single 36-inch gate and up existing steps.
- **Staging:** With no space on-site or on sidewalks, deliveries were phased and temporarily stored in trucks and trailers. A dedicated crew member ensured materials were secure.
- **Permits & Parking:** City permits were actively managed and rescheduled around weather delays.
- **Extreme Heat:** The walled courtyard created 100°F microclimates, requiring extra measures for crew safety and plant protection.
- **System Integration:** Collaboration with the building's maintenance team allowed us to connect irrigation to the shared water line while giving the client full control through a dedicated controller.









The Result

- The completed courtyard balances modern design with everyday function. Defined yet connected zones allow for lounging, dining, and gardening without overwhelming the compact space. The fire feature creates a central gathering point, planters bring year-round flexibility, and layered gardens provide lush seasonal interest.
- At night, soft lighting transforms the courtyard into a glowing extension of the home. The result is a modern, sustainable, and highly personal outdoor retreat—proving that even the smallest city courtyards can become vibrant living rooms in their own right.



