Hinge collective is working with Bon Secours and the community of West Baltimore to develop a park and community space that will be a new social hub centered around play. The engagement strategy for this project is centered around personal narratives and relationships to ideas of play, family, and public space.

In order to capture these narratives and guide the design process, Hinge recruited and paid a cohort of 10 community members to host a walkshop, conduct interviews with friends and neighbors, host events, and participate in design charrettes. This cohort was given the title of Community Design Ambassadors (CDA’s) and have stepped up as leaders of the project. Working closely with the CDA’s, Hinge has facilitated two “Park Jam” events that featured free food and music as well as an opportunity for all community members to share their ideas in a low-pressure, informal setting surrounded by friends and neighbors having a good time.

At the most recent Park Jam Hinge displayed rendered versions of three design options that were developed by the CDA’s in a focused charrette. It was clear that the CDA group had taken ownership when one of the Ambassadors exclaimed “Wow! We did this.” Hinge is currently in the process of working with the CDA cohort to condense the three designs into one. Hinge is retained as the landscape architect to carry the park project through construction which is anticipated to be completed in the spring of 2020.

TUSCULUM SQUARE (aka: urban action)
New Kensington Community Development Corporation (NKCDC)
Philadelphia, PA
2018 - Present

The strategic improvement of the vacant lot on the corner of Kensington Ave and Tusculum Street began as a graduate level design studio at The University of Pennsylvania taught by Hinge Collective principals, Alexa Bosse and Ari Miller with NKCDC as a key partner. With the support of NKCDC and Hinge, the students performed the initial outreach and engagement that lead to a conceptual design proposal, ultimately providing the catalyst for funding and implementation.

With the realization of the student proposal for a healing space as the end goal, Hinge and NKCDC have been facilitating a series of incremental improvements with support of the Knight Foundation. In the summer of 2018 Hinge attended community events with a prototype of a community message board, constructed by students, to ask community members to share their memories of and wishes for their neighborhood. The success of these interactions in identifying shared aspirations lead to the “Wish Gallery” installation, where messages were paired with portraits and arranged in an outdoor gallery.

The next phase of the project, completed in the fall of 2018, sought to shift perceptions of the space through small, strategic design moves implemented through a community build event that created a clean, green space bordered by custom planters and a ground mural on the sidewalk. NKCDC and Hinge have already observed trash being picked up by those who pass by and this space has already become a place of relative respite and peace.
FRANKFORD PAUSE PARK
Frankford Community Development Corporation
Philadelphia, PA
2015 - Present

Frankford Pause is the name of the part art environment, part pocket park that has been developed in a former vacant lot in the heart of the Frankford neighborhood of Philadelphia. Located at a pivotal intersection between the commercial corridor and residential neighborhood, it also lies adjacent to the main transportation hub for the community.

This multi-phased project, under the leadership of Frankford Community Development Corporation (FCDC), serves as the premier outdoor event venue and community hub. The pilot phase, designed by Hinge Collective, was completed in early 2018. It has been a phased tool for Hinge and FCDC to leverage the involvement of the community and to test ideas of incremental placemaking, event programming, community engagement opportunities, and co-creation and building experimentation with youth. The past year has seen increased community involvement and ownership along with improved perceptions of the neighborhood among those visiting the park for planned events or individual recreation.

Design of the final build-out of the park has been informed by the rigorous and in-depth post occupancy evaluation completed by Hinge over the spring/summer of 2018. Construction for Phase 2.0 will begin in 2020.

JASPER STREET SOCCER PITCH
New Kensington Community Development Corporation (NKCDC) + Kensington Soccer Club (KSC)
Philadelphia, PA
2018 - Present

Hinge is working with the community of Kensington to develop a new community space and soccer pitch that is being partially funded by the ESPN and Under Armor RePlay grant to “revitalize vacant spaces in to places for sports”.

The soccer pitch will be programmed by the non-profit Kensington Soccer Club (KSC) that offers low, to no-cost soccer programming to local youth. Hinge facilitated a series of intimate meetings that included immediate neighbors, stakeholders, youth coaches at KSC, and community leaders. Following these focused meetings Hinge was able to develop a series of events that featured games and activities that elders remembered from block parties and community gatherings in the past along with pop-up soccer programming to test sizes of spaces on site.

At these events Hinge also gathered input and shared design ideas, ultimately leading to a single concept design that has full community support. This project is currently fundraising for the next phases of design and implementation.