



JONAS C., MARIAN D., & ROBERT H. ERB CHARITABLE FUND PROPOSAL

Contact Information:

Founding Forward

1601 Valley Forge Rd, Valley Forge PA 19481

KennedyL@foundingforward.org

Year Incorporated: 1947

Contact: Lara Kennedy

301-520-2336

www.foundingforward.org

FEIN #: 26-1894379

Field/s of Interest:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Arts, Culture, Heritage	<input type="checkbox"/>	Environment, Animals	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Education, Library
<input type="checkbox"/>	Health & Human Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	Social Justice, Civil Rights	<input type="checkbox"/>	Religion

Organizational Information:

Geographic Area Served: **SE PA, national; especially Montgomery County, Chester County & Philadelphia**

Annual # of Clients & Description of Population Served:

Mission Statement: Founding Forward’s mission is to inform and engage citizens through transformational educational experiences grounded in American history. To that end, Founding Forward provides educational programs on the 75-acre Valley Forge campus adjacent to Valley Forge National Historical Park for students, teachers, and the community.

Project Description: The goal is to build a trail connecting Founding Forward's Medal of Honor with George Washington's Headquarters in Valley Forge National Park. The trail will create a direct link between two publicly accessible educational spaces exploring the historical significance of the American founding.

Annual Budget \$ <u>5.8M</u>	<u>15</u> # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
<u>70</u> % of budget for program expenses	<u>25</u> # of Board Volunteers
<u>20</u> % of budget for administrative expenses	<u>175</u> # of Active Non-Board Volunteers
<u>10</u> % of budget for fundraising expenses	<u>17,500</u> # of Volunteer Hours
<i>100 % total</i>	

Top 3-5 funding sources: The Union League of Philadelphia; Abele Family Foundation of Philadelphia, Holt Family Foundation of Cherry Hill NJ, Raynier Institute of Wilmington DE

Grant Amount Requested: **\$ 35,000**

Founding Forward Trail Project- Connecting the Medal of Honor Grove to George Washington's Headquarters in Valley Forge National Park:

Founding Forward's mission is to **inform and engage citizens through transformational educational experiences grounded in American history. To that end, Founding Forward provides educational programs on the 75-acre Valley Forge campus adjacent to Valley Forge National Historical Park for students, teachers, and the community.**

The Medal of Honor Grove, part of the Founding Forward campus, is a 42-acre conserved level 1 arboretum, designed as a living memorial to over 3,500 recipients of the nation's highest military decoration. Each Medal of Honor recipient is identified by a marker with name, branch, and the date and location of the act of valor. The Grove is open from sunrise to sunset, and provides an experiential learning opportunity in a quiet, peaceful environment.

Valley Forge National Historical Park is nationally significant as the site of the 1777-78 winter encampment of the Continental Army under General George Washington. Few places evoke the spirit of patriotism and independence, represent individual and collective sacrifice, or demonstrate the resolve, tenacity and determination of the people of the United States to be free as well as Valley Forge. The historic landscapes, structures, objects, and archeological and natural resources at Valley Forge are tangible links to one of the most defining events in our nation's history.

The goal is to build a trail connecting Founding Forward's Medal of Honor with George Washington's Headquarters in Valley Forge National Park. The trail will create a direct link between two publicly accessible educational spaces exploring the historical significance of the American founding. It will do more than provide a practical connector for the community to access both sites, **it will stand as an important symbolic union between the birthplace of the modern United States Army, and the site where the valiant efforts made by those armed forces are commemorated.** As the nation looks toward the 250th anniversaries of the founding and the encampment at Valley Forge, this partnership and the resulting trail will create a substantial lasting impact and **help visitors to consider the sacrifices made to protect the rights and responsibilities of American citizenship enshrined in the Declaration of Independence and Constitution of the United States.**

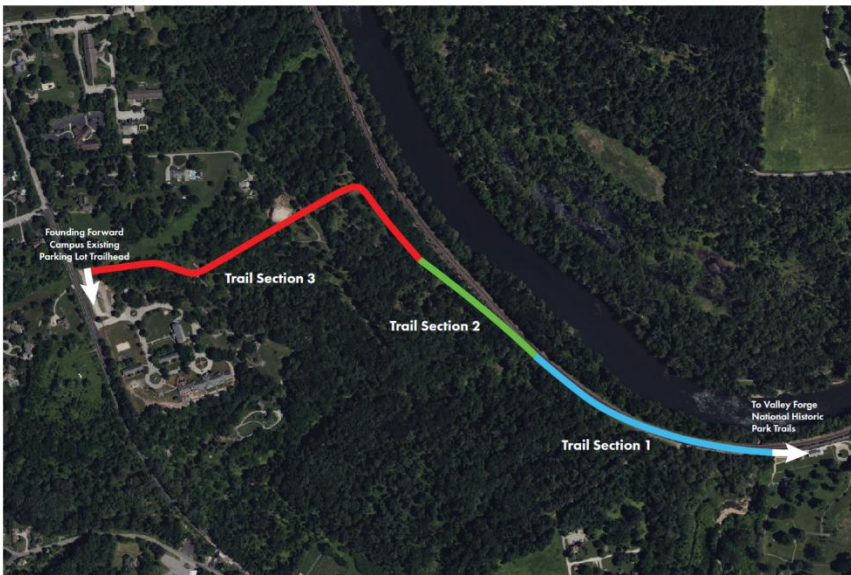
The expected outcome will create a publicly accessible trail. The best way to accomplish this will be to build the trail along the border of right-of-way between Founding Forward property, National Park property, and Norfolk Southern railroad property, as this will utilize previously disturbed land and will therefore avoid the need for additional extensive archeological and environmental study and consultation. Norfolk Southern has approved the lease of the right-of-way land for this intended use, and Valley Forge Park officials have added their support for the project using this alignment. For the purposes of construction, the project will be divided into three sections of trail; a flat portion leading from Valley Forge train station to the Medal of Honor Grove, a ramp traversing approximately 66 feet of elevation, and a section from the Medal of Honor grove to the Founding Forward parking lot, creating a defined trailhead.

A map of the proposed project is included below. Section two of the above concept plan traverses approximately 66 feet in elevation over an approximate horizontal distance of 910 feet. The trail would be designed at a maximum slope of 8% for a maximum distance of 200 feet. Every 200 feet there would be a level landing area measuring 10 feet by 10 feet. The 8% slope is ADA compliant based on federal highway administration standards for trails. The trail would be designed to be 10 feet wide.

A drafted timeline of activities:

- September 2025: Meeting/walk alignment w/ landscape architecture firm for feasibility study.
- September 2025: Meeting with township officials
- November 2025: Progress meeting
- December 2025: Meeting with DCNR representatives
- December 2025/January 2026: Progress meeting
- January 2026: Meeting with Valley Forge Park superintendent/staff
- January 2026: Formation of steering committee for project
- February 2026: Progress meeting
- March 2026: Plan presentation
- March 2026: Public meeting
- April 2026: DCNR funding application
- Spring/Summer 2026: Construction RFP
- Summer 2026: Public meeting
- Summer/Fall 2026: Construction begins

A preliminary cost estimate is included below, provided via third-party landscape architecture firm performing feasibility study.



Washington Headquarter's Trail: Medal of Honor Memorial Grove to Valley Forge National Historic Park

Founding Forward - 1601 Valley Forge Rd, Valley Forge, PA 19482



**Washington Headquarter's Trail:
Medal of Honor Memorial Grove to Valley Forge National Historic
Park**

Total Cost Estimates

Section	Total Estimated Project Costs	\$	
Section 1	\$	655,700	
	Total Proposed Site Improvements	\$	546,200
	Construction mobilization (3%)	\$	16,400
	Erosion and Sedimentation Control (2%)	\$	11,000
	Construction Contingency (5%)	\$	27,400
	Engineering (10%)	\$	54,700
Section 2	\$	1,306,300	
	Total Proposed Site Improvements	\$	1,088,400
	Construction mobilization (3%)	\$	32,700
	Erosion and Sedimentation Control (2%)	\$	21,800
	Construction Contingency (5%)	\$	54,500
	Engineering (10%)	\$	108,900
Section 3	\$	549,500	
	Total Proposed Site Improvements	\$	457,800
	Construction mobilization (3%)	\$	13,800
	Erosion and Sedimentation Control (2%)	\$	9,200
	Construction Contingency (5%)	\$	22,900
	Engineering (10%)	\$	45,800
Total Estimated Project Costs		\$	2,511,100

