

NOTE: This response was posted on June 24th, 2020 regarding the former naming of the FM Greenway. For more information, please consider viewing [The Enduring Legacy of Slavery and Racism in the North](#) by the Harvard Radcliffe Institute.

Over the past year, we at Metro COG have had the privilege to work on a greenway master plan to provide a framework for recreational concepts and other significant programs and facilities that would parallel the FM Area Diversion Project. The vision that has been arrived at for this project, through a combination of public input and stakeholder engagement, is an inviting, engaging, and accessible regional attraction for area residents and visitors alike, hosting a variety of interconnected seasonal recreation trails, native habitats, and other natural, educational, and cultural activities.

Our project team realized the importance of giving the greenway its own name and identity apart from the important flood protection role of the FM Area Diversion. Through discussions and deliberations on multiple names, we decided to choose Agassiz Greenway after Louis Agassiz, the prominent 19th century geologist and glaciologist for whom glacial Lake Agassiz and a number of our regional organizations, businesses, and institutions are named after.

Soon after a public engagement meeting and the release of draft materials in mid-June, Metro COG and several of our project partners began receiving comments regarding the name of the greenway.

Unbeknownst to anyone on our project team, Louis Agassiz was a proponent of scientific racism and wrote at length on issues of white supremacy in the 1800's.

We extend our sincere gratitude to those in the community who brought this significant issue to our attention.

One of the foremost goals of the greenway is to provide a public open space that promotes access and full use for all visitors and FM area residents, and in doing so, improving the quality of life for everyone in our region.

Our project partners, including Fargo, West Fargo, Horace, Cass County, the Diversion Authority, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, have agreed not to use Agassiz Greenway as the name for the recreation master plan.

Metro COG is moving forward with FM Greenway as a temporary name for the master plan and is working to revise our draft materials, including an informational video produced for the project. We will also be posting a brief explanation disclosing the history and legacy of Louis Agassiz on the greenway project website.

Again, we thank the members of our community who reached out and educated us on the profound impact this naming decision would have had on this project.