



“I’ve had the satisfaction of knowing that I am helping to improve the facilities, the community, and the quality of life where I live.”

Greg France  
Vice Chair, Bicycle Advisory Commission

As Vice Chair of the Bicycle Advisory Commission, Greg is also the longest serving Bicycle Advisory Commissioner. As our bicycle trails and facilities continue to expand, this is a perfect time to thank Greg for his countless hours of community service. Thanks Greg and see you on the trails!

#### **What attracted you to bicycling?**

Greg: Necessity. I lived in a single parent house and my mom worked during the day. If I wanted to go anywhere, I had to peddle to get there!

#### **Do you remember your first bike?**

How could I forget? It was a hand-me-down yellow banana bike with those tall handlebars.

#### **When did you move to West Des Moines?**

In 1992, we (my wife, Patti, and our children, Brendan and Brady) moved to West Des Moines.

#### **Why did you get involved in the Bicycle Advisory Commission?**

I have always wanted my kids to experience the lifestyle I had growing up riding bikes with all my buddies and wanted our City to be more accessible to bicycle riders of all ages and levels from families riding together on weekends to serious cyclists.

#### **How did you get involved with the Commission?**

I was active in the West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce and served as a volunteer Chamber member when the City started a task force exploring how to become a ‘bike friendly city.’ The task force consultant recommended the City form a bicycle commission. In 2011, the Mayor appointed me as one of 9 volunteers on the West Des Moines Advisory Commission.

#### **What’s the purpose of the Bicycle Advisory Commission?**

We advise the Mayor and the City Council on bicycle plans, programs, and policies based on the Bicycle Master

Plan and our Complete Streets Policy that includes trails and on-street bike facilities. Long term, we’d like to have a safe bike facility – a trail, shared road, or park with bike features – within ½ mile of everyone’s home.

#### **What changes have you observed since you first started riding your bike around West Des Moines?**

The overall biggest improvement is the continuing momentum of being a part of a big network of trails and roads that are bike connected. Our trails connect to Central Iowa’s 676-miles of trails for families biking together, commuters, or more serious cyclists.

#### **How much time do you devote to the Commission and how does one become a Commissioner?**

Our Commission meets once a month for about 2 hours. [You can apply online](#) and when there’s an opening, the Mayor appoints the next Commissioner(s). You don’t need special skills, just a willingness to volunteer your time.

#### **What benefits have you received from all your years as a volunteer?**

I’ve had the satisfaction of knowing that I am helping to improve the facilities, the community, and the quality of life where I live. We have a great city now, but it would be even better if more people would give back.

#### **What’s on your bucket list?**

I would love to take a big RV and hitch-up our bikes and ride across the U.S. with our entire family.

