BikeHouston FAQs:

What is BH? BikeHouston is Houston’s only bicycle advocacy organization. We are a 501 c-3 non profit group that represents the interests of bicycle riders in the nation’s fourth largest city. Established in 2004 as an all volunteer group, in 2014 BikeHouston transitioned to a professionally staffed organization with growing membership and support numbers, as well as, financial backing. It is positioned to continue growing in order to transform Houston into a bikeable city.

What is BH’s Mission? BikeHouston’s mission is to create streets that are safe and accessible for bicyclists to increase the quality of life of all Houstonians. BikeHouston works to accomplish its mission through advocacy and community education.

- Our advocacy work focuses on ensuring that bicycle riders’ needs are included in government work from planning to construction to law enforcement. We use the power of our members to drive change.
- Our community education programs teach motorists about cyclists’ rights and cyclists about their rights and responsibilities. We also host events designed to empower everyone to start riding a bike.

I want to see change quickly - what is happening now?
This is a great time to get involved.
1. Thanks to BH’s leadership the city is planning for bikes for the first time in 20 years. The plan is critical as it will set the vision for a real network of safe places to ride through-out Houston.
   It will also include pilot projects - so real improvements now. There are 2 pilot projects in the plan and BH is pushing the city to add in more.
2. BH is involved with Management Districts, neighborhood groups and others to help them make bicycle improvements. Ex. Providing advice in the Montrose district to ensure we get real improvements and not just repainting of bad bicycle lanes.
3. Ex. Lamar Street Protected Bike Lane. BH advisors worked on getting this concept in place and now we are working to finish the job by getting the connection built from Lamar to Buffalo Bayou
4. Elections! BH is working to ensure we get pro-bike people elected in the fall.

Why should I support BH?
Cities change as people who support bicycling get involved. If you want better places to ride, more respect from drivers and law enforcement, then you should support BH. In order to be effective we need to unite everyone who supports bicycles.

Our power is directly related to the number of members and supporters we have. When our staff sit down with city council and other government leaders they need to be able to convince them that people actually support this and that spending money on bicycle infrastructure will make them more popular (and more electable).
Why should I become a member?
Members provide critical financial support so that we can have full time staff paying attention to what the city does and getting them to be more bicycle friendly. Members also provide us with legitimacy - again they show the power of the movement, we want to be able to say 1,000s of people support us enough to join as a member.

Cities that are truly bicycle friendly and that are much smaller than us, ex. Seattle, have a bicycle advocacy group with 16,000 members. BH is only at 650 but our goal is to get to 2,000 by the end of 2015. We can only get there with your help!

Other membership benefits: discounts at growing number of shops around town and on BH events and merchandise. Ex. include: Bike Barn, i-cycle, Karbach and many more.

How much does membership cost?
$40 for individuals annually, $20/year for limited income, and on up. Whatever you can give is appreciated - having you committed at a level you are comfortable is what matters to us.

What do you spend my money on?
Your money is spent almost entirely on staff time - staff are hard at work in advocacy and in the education/communication realms - we focus our efforts on uniting the bicycling community and then using our unified power to push for better bicycle projects. We are working to get bicycles considered during all construction and design projects. A small amount is spent on marketing materials (much of what we have is donated or done pro-bono). And a tiny amount on rent. Again - our working space is very cheap.

What about Critical Mass?
Critical Mass is one of the larger groups of riders in HTX. Over the last year, the leaders of Critical Mass have engaged with the Houston Police Department and the Mayor's Office to plan safe routes and comply with the law, and in exchange the City of Houston and the Police Department are now supporting the ride.

While BikeHouston does not sponsor Critical Mass in an official capacity, we do want to capitalize on the opportunity Critical Mass presents. Specifically, the chance to speak with thousands of people on bicycles about safe riding and uniting them to push for a better, safer city for all.

What volunteer opportunities are there?
There are many volunteer opportunities including: outreach and bike valet at events, ride leaders/assistants, advocacy - tracking specific bicycle projects and more, office work, handy people - fixing and building things, and on-going project needs. If you want to get involved as a volunteer we would love to have your help.
What kind of events does BH do?

BH offers a range of events. We attend many community events and lead rides, educate the public about bicycling safety and current bike improvement efforts. We currently lead one signature fundraiser ride a year, The Moonlight Ramble and host other smaller fundraising events throughout the year.

We hold monthly socials and bring in engaging speakers.