

City of Austin – Bike Month

The League of American Bicyclists was founded as the League of American Wheelmen in 1880. Bicyclists, known then as "wheelmen", had to deal with obstacles such as rutted roads of gravel and dirt while facing antagonism from horsemen, wagon drivers, and pedestrians.

In an effort to improve riding conditions, more than 100,000 cyclists from across the United States joined the League to advocate for paved roads. The success of the League in its first advocacy efforts ironically led to our national highway system.

The League has celebrated National Bike Month for over 50 years (since 1956). Local bicycling clubs have historically coordinated Bicycle Month activities for the City of Austin. In support of National Bike Month, the City of Austin typically proclaims May Bike Month and also proclaims a Bike to Work Day during the month. In 2000, The City Bicycle Program and Lance Armstrong partnered to create a public service announcement for Bike to Work Day. The catch line was, "Hi, I'm Lance Armstrong, going to work means riding my bike, it can for you too."

The Bicycle Program staff also developed and uses a plone (an open source content management system) for the use of City of Austin employees. This intranet resource includes links to the Austin Cycling Association's Bike Month calendar, locations of the Bike to Work Day breakfast stations, available city shower facilities, bike route maps, Bicycle Ambassadors, and how to check out a bicycle from the City's fleet of bicycles.

The Bicycle Ambassadors are a collection of long time bike commuters who ride to work every day, rain or shine. They have tips on routes, clothing, bags, grease free pants, bicycle maintenance, and gear. Each of the ambassadors has regions of expertise and is happy to chat about it.