



COMMUNITY CALL-TO-ACTION

Against Harassment

WORKING
TOGETHER
TOWARD
A
PEACEFUL
OUTCOME

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Critical Mass Austin 3/31/23 Recap of Events

"We denounce threats to public safety, all forms of harassment, and oppressive attempts to force the vastly different cultural norms of one group on another."

On 4/5/23, a Social Cycling Austin Ride Leader (Female 1 Social Cycling Austin Rider Leader/9-Year Member, CMATx Organizer-Ride Leader), announced responsibility for bringing Critical Mass Austin Tx (CMATx) riders to our meeting location on a public Facebook post created by a Social Cycling Austin Admin (Male 1 Social Cycling Austin Admin-Leader/14-Year Member, CMATx Organizer). Our ride leader was forced to alter our pre-planned route to reduce the threat to public safety caused by the barrage of physical attacks and harassment from the individuals invading as part of CMATx.

- A CMATx rider placed himself and his bike less than a foot in front of our female ride leader, physically blocking her from proceeding for almost 2 minutes until several of our riders intervened with requests that he allow her to proceed. (Male 2 Social Cycling Austin/3-Year Member, CMATx Rider)
- Blocking all roads in intersections to prevent our group and all motorists from proceeding (e.g., Haskell & Chicon; Holly & Waller); ((Male 3 Social Cycling Austin Rider Leader/10-Year Member, CMATx Rider), (Male 2 Social Cycling Austin/3-Year Member, CMATx Rider), and others that arrived with CMATx)
- Riding erratically and dangerously close to the ride leader which compelled several of our riders to create a buffer to protect her from falling or being crashed into. (Two incidents involving Male 3 Social Cycling Austin Rider Leader/10-Year Member, CMATx Rider)
- Attempting to overtake the direction of our route by calling opposite directional turns
- Yelling obscenities at our riders including "F*CK RBA" and "You're not my f*cking mom!"
- Aggressively swerving between our riders, riding into on-coming traffic, playing "chicken" with oncoming motorists by abruptly swerving into the oncoming lane
- Doing "tricks" in the middle of the densely packed mass causing at least one crash and several near misses
- Expressing unprovoked aggression toward motorists (e.g., Yelling at a motorist while repeatedly hitting the side of their car)

The hostile behavior from the CMATx riders caused many of our regular riders to leave the ride to avoid crashes, verbal confrontations, and physical fights. Meanwhile, the CMATx riders continued the harassment and followed us to our after-party where we coordinated music and free-to-borrow skates for members of the community. We were forced to take on unusual additional responsibilities.

- Created a physical buffer between the DJ equipment and one of the CMATx riders who was moving recklessly and erratically near the equipment. Multiple requests to give space were ignored, the individual continued to remove the buffer, and it had to be replaced at least seven times.
- Two women endured repeated, physical restraint in the form of “bear hugs” from a male CMATx rider despite repeated requests for no physical contact. (Male 2 Social Cycling Austin/3-Year Member, CMATx Rider)
- Provided assistance to a woman who was “creeped out” by male that arrived with CMATx. He invaded her personal space by unexpectedly placing himself on the ground under her leg that was propped up on a stool
- Fulfilled multiple requests from female riders to be escorted to their vehicles out of safety concerns related to CMATx riders that were hanging out in the parking lot
- Organizers were compelled to escort our male riders to their vehicles to help prevent incitement of violence from CMATx riders that were hanging out in the parking lot
- Organizers picked up four bags of discarded trash at the end spot when there is usually less than half a bag

Overview

Ride Bikes Austin (RBA) co-founders have been on the receiving end of harassment from a select group of members of Austin's cycling community. The harassment began in June of 2021 with personal attacks on social media when RBA was in its beginning stages. The harassment escalated and directly impacted our extended community at the RBA organized Critical Mass Austin (CMA) event that took place March 31, 2023. Critical Mass Austin TX (CMATx) organizers and riders created threats to public safety, engaged in oppressive attempts to force their vastly different cultural norms on our group, and attacked us with other forms of harassment at the 3/31/23 event.

Two-Part Call-to-Action

RBA co-founders are creating two opportunities for individuals, organizations, and businesses in the community to demonstrate solidarity with RBA by publicly declaring agreement with a statement denouncing harassment and ensuring representation at the Critical Mass Austin Call-to-Action ride scheduled for 6/30/23.

We are seeking permission to include organizations/individuals' names on the list of allies when we share the statement and related information to our media accounts. We are hoping to get confirmation of agreement with the statement from organizations/businesses and from the individuals that are the organization's organizers, board members, employees, and/or volunteers.

Proclamation

We denounce threats to public safety, oppressive attempts to force the vastly different cultural norms of one group on another, and all forms of harassment.

Call-to-Action Ride

The June Critical Mass Austin ride organized by RBA will be a Call-to-Action against threats to public safety and a celebration demonstrating support for the Austin Transportation Department's focus on creating infrastructure improvements that increase safety for all road users.

Will be scheduled 5/26/23 or 6/30/23 at 7:58 PM, the ride will begin and end near the Rodolfo "Rudy" Mendez Recreation Center located at 2407 Canterbury St, Austin, TX 78702. There will be an identified ride leader, volunteer ride marshals helping the group navigate intersections, and pre-tested 8-mile route. The route is optimized for people using different types of micromobility including bicycles, electric unicycles, skates, onewheels, skateboards, and other electric devices.

The ride will end with an after party that includes over 100 pairs of free-to-borrow skates and music by The Underground Atx. Additionally, the non-profit organizations that table at CMA events every few quarters will be invited to share information about their missions.

Desired Outcome

We are hoping that a concerted showing of support for the statement will help influence the Critical Mass Austin TX (CMATx) organizers and riders that created threats to public safety, oppressive attempts

to force the vastly different cultural norms of one group on another, and other forms of harassment at our event on 3/31/23 to stop all plans to continue.

How to be An Ally

To be an ally means the same for organizations as it means for individuals.

Being an ally is to agree to be included on the list of supporters that will be a part of the RBA media release and to share support of the statement on their own media accounts. This can be done by creating a post, reposting or sharing related posts created by RBA, and creating or sharing related stories on media accounts.

The final ask is related to the Critical Mass Austin Call-to-Action ride. It means you will help us promote it and show up to ride in solidarity with us.

Creating the Call-to-Action

RBA organizers are working to complete three stages related to creating this community Call-to-Action.

Stage One - Documentation and Preparation

Testimonials from 21 individuals, including two organizers, regarding their experience at the 3/31/23 CMA event organized by RBA are documented and anonymized.

Public statements from eight CMATx perpetrators who engaged in threats to public safety, oppressive attempts to force the vastly different cultural norms of one group on another, or harassment related to the 3/31/23 CMA event organized by RBA are documented.

Creation of related content for public release through social media and cloud storage.

Storage and Availability

Anonymized documentation will be available in a digital publicly accessible folder. Original copies of all documentation, including witness testimonials, will continue to be stored privately.

Cloud Storage Folder Link

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1noR_TXjfGvnPtG-9XNgFokGolA1kalva?usp=sharing

Stage Two - Feedback and Approval

The organizations that RBA organizers have supported through volunteerism, creation of tabling opportunities, and promotion on social media will receive a draft of the social media Call-to-Action prior to publication.

Request for Approval from Allies

RBA organizers are requesting feedback or confirmation from allies that are willing to answer this Call-to-Action denouncing harassment.

Additional Allies

Additional allies that answer our Call-to-Action will be added to the list of supporters as the Critical Mass Austin Call-to-Action Ride approaches.

Stage Three - Publication

Content with a link to the publicly accessible digital folder that contains anonymized supporting documentation will be released through the Ride Bikes Austin media accounts.

Social Media Content

Information shared on social media will include our denouncement of threats to public safety, our cultural norms, and information related to the invasion we experienced 3/31/23. Information about the Critical Mass Austin Call-to-Action Ride will also be released.

Part I: Proclamation

We denounce threats to public safety, all forms of harassment, and oppressive attempts to force vastly different cultural norms of one group on another between all road users regardless of mode of transportation.

Critical Mass Austin TX (CMATx) organizers and riders engaged in all three activities on 3/31/23 when they invaded the CMA all wheels welcome event organized by RBA.

Part II: Differences in Cultural Norms

CMATx

- No Rules
- No Route, No Announced Leader

CMA

- We respect each other and other road users
- We stay to the right side of the road and behind the ride leader
- We have a pre-tested route, our designated ride leader sets the pace

Part III: Threats to Public Safety During 3/31/23 Invasion

Incidents & Testimonials

Playing “chicken” with oncoming motorists by abruptly swerving into the oncoming lane

“What made me feel uncomfortable and unsafe was that the other cycling group. .. all over the place and rode right into traffic...” (Female, Age: 20-25, Regular CMA Participant)

“I felt incredibly uncomfortable having riders from the other Critical Mass Ride attend our ride due to their reckless behavior. Several were ... swerving into oncoming traffic.” (Male, Age: 20-25, Regular CMA Participant)

“They rode against traffic several times! This caused cars to stop, move to the side and created dangerous conditions for automobiles and bike riders, alike.” (Male, Age: 35-40, Regular CMA Participant)

Expressing unprovoked aggression at motorists

"...as we were passing 35 someone from the other group got in front of a car and was hitting it and yelling at the driver." (Female, Age: 20-25, Regular CMA Participant)

"The behaviors I saw that made me uncomfortable. [CMATx] People were yelling aggressively at cars...people were yelling and acting out in a way that would have made it understandable for someone to call the cops on us." (Female, Age: 30-35, New CMA Participant)

Doing "tricks" in the middle of the densely packed mass of riders and riding recklessly increasing risk of crashes

"One rider also almost crashed into me during the ride." Female, Age: 20-25, Regular CMA Participant)

"One of the [CMATx] disruptive riders performed an unsafe wheelie, bumped an RBA member and actually caused the RBA member to fall off his bike and injure himself." (Male, Age: 35-40, Regular CMA Participant)

"Several were performing wheelies, swerving...disrespecting the ride leader" (Male, Age: 20-25, Regular CMA Participant)

"They performed dangerous tricks on their bikes nearly missing participants, creating an unsafe environment for peaceful riders..." (Male, Age: 35-40, Regular CMA Participant)

"SCA came up behind us, then started aggressively weaving in and out of RBA members. Some SCA members started doing bike tricks in the middle of the group, and unfortunately one person did fall over. This could have caused more crashes but luckily everyone around was being observant." (Male, Age: 35-40, Regular CMA Participant, Riding with 7-year-old child)

Recklessly riding dangerously close to the ride leader increasing risk of pile-up crashes and prompting some of our regular riders to form a protective barrier around her

"Our ride leader was on her tall bike and [Name Removed: Male Social Cycling Austin Ride Leader/10-year member] came speeding by me extremely close and then he got in front of her and stopped almost making her fall." (Male, Age: 30-35, New Participant)

"I...felt a gush of wind when [Name Removed: Male Social Cycling Austin Ride Leader/10-year member] rode by close enough that I could been knocked off my tall bike if he'd been a few inches closer. I endured that same experience two more times before the ride was over." (Female, Age: 45-50, Regular CMA Participant)

Attempting to overtake the direction of our ride leader by calling opposite directional turns which caused several near miss crashes between our ride leader and other cyclists

"The other party that joined us did not respect the leader's instructions and kept calling out "rolling" as we approached stop signs, they were too close to other riders and almost clipped some of them. (Male, Age: 25-30, Regular CMA Participant)

"The worst part is when they would call...the opposite turn of what [our ride leader] said. One time, I thought she said straight but apparently it was a turn and I almost got in her way. I would have felt awful if I was the reason she crashed!" (Male, Age: 20-25, Regular CMA Participant)

"Dibs as leader of the newly founded #criticalrbacma." (Female 2 Social Cycling Austin/4-Year Member, CMATx 1-Year Member)

Part IV: Oppression During and After 3/31/23 Invasion

Incidents, Testimonials, and Statements

CMATx invaded our ride with the intention of forcing us to ride in a single group on their terms and have publicly stated they intend to do this regularly

"I'll take responsibility for bringing the rides together...I feel I gave the people what they wanted...I think it worked out fine. 75% of the people did not know what the heck was going on...I say we try to do it every once in a while" (Female 1 Social Cycling Austin Rider Leader/9-Year Member, CMATx Organizer-Ride Leader/9-Year Member)

"Not much RBA could do, we just rolled up on em." (Male 4 Social Cycling Austin/6-Year Member, CMATx Rider/3-Year Member)

"If everybody but the party poopers are having a grand time riding together, it seems like that's not a problem for everybody, it's a problem for the party poopers. Get ya minds right and ride as one, friends!" (Male 1 Social Cycling Austin Admin-Leader/14-Year Member, CMATx Organizer-Rider/14-Year Member)

*"Mostly my issue was people making the group feel unfriendly. I love RBA because from the beginning I have been welcomed and included. RBA travels the roads in a safe way that makes me feel safe being a part of the group. It sucked to feel like people were f*cking with that." (Female, Age: 30-35, New CMA Participant)*

"RBA did not want us there. We were not welcome. The faces on the leaders were faces of anger and frustration. They desperately wanted to shake us. So much anger on RBA's side. The stop at Sanchez was hilarious. Waving hands to allow us to roll by. Good times." (Male 5 Social Cycling Austin Admin-Ride Leader/14-Year Member, CMATx Rider/10-Year Member)

Forced us to alter our pre-planned route by physically blocking our ride leader in addition to blocking motorists and other cyclists from proceeding through intersections

"Yeah the way it was explained to me was SCA "chased RBA in circles so they couldn't get away." Doesn't sound like healing." (Female 3 Social Cycling Austin/13-Year Member)

"We left. Yeah, I just couldn't keep doing circles like that and the rest of the route on skates. I get we had to do that because it was too dangerous to do our planned route through downtown with those other people acting like that." (Female, Age: 25-30, Regular CMA Participant)

"I know people got mad and left because we were just going in circles..." (Male, Age: 45-50, Regular CMA Participant)

*"At a 4-way intersection...the leader called for us to stop. Immediately after, a man said "don't stop!" And darted out into traffic. This was scary and when I looked to the left, I saw people laughing. Then another man [Name Removed: Male Social Cycling Austin 3-year member] rolled in front of the leader, blocking her way, and I told him to please move. He looked at me and said "you're not my f*cking mom." (Female, Age: 40-45, Regular CMA Participant)*

"...it was a little strange to me that they were trying to lose us in the first place." (Female 4 Social Cycling Austin Admin-Rider Leader/14-Year Member, CMATx Organizer-Rider/10-Year Member)

Most of the individuals engaging in reckless behavior or issuing declarative statements of their intent to force us to ride with them have been banned from our events for more than a year due to harassment or threats to public safety while attending previous group rides

Part IV: Harassment During and After 3/31/23 Invasion Incidents, Testimonials, and Statements

Directing obscenities and hostility at our riders

*"The ride started with these [CMATx] disruptive persons riding around and loudly and rudely screaming at other members in the [CMATx] group expressing their excitement to "flick sh*t up for RBA...they continued to yell out profanities throughout the ride. They bragged about why they were present, stating that they dislike RBA and continuously yelled "F*ck RBA!" (Male, Age: 35-40, Regular CMA Participant)*

"I was uncomfortable, mostly I just heard a couple of guys keep yelling how much they hated RBA." (Female, Age: 50-55, New CMA Participant)

*"I overheard some guy on a bmx bike talking sh*t to another rider about RBA...it was pretty trashy. Whoever he was whining to didn't seem very interested in hearing it!" (Male, Age: 30-35, Regular CMA Participant)*

*"I definitely felt uncomfortable, unsafe, and disappointed. There was a different energy about the critical mass ride from ones that I had previously attended. During the ride I overheard [CMATx] individuals say "I'm going to keep f*cking with them." It seemed to be an outside group apart from critical mass and it felt like harassment. (Male, Age: 25-30, Regular CMA Participant)*

"When we came to the stop sign, the road was blocked off by [CMATx] and it immediately felt hostile and I see RBA as my family and anyone that rides with us are friends but that was not the case that night." (Male, Age: 30-35, New Participant)

Preventing free movement, inappropriate touch, and physical restraint of female members of our group

"We were headed North on Waller when Social Cycling Austin 3-year member forced me to stop by planting himself with his bike horizontal directly in my path at the Holly intersection. I was prevented from going in any direction because CMATx riders were preventing east and westbound motorists from proceeding and our group of riders was directly behind me." (Female, Age: 45-50, Regular CMA Participant)

"I experienced unwanted forced bear hugs and touching from a male CMATx member on three separate occasions. Every request to stop touching me was ignored, and I had to apply force to get his arms off me. This same individual is currently featured in a video on the CMATx Facebook page tearing an RBA sticker off his bike and screaming "Fuck RBA." (Female, Age: 40-45, Regular CMA Participant)

"The guy [from CMATx] who was dancing and talking to himself at the dj booth came up and got right under my leg while I wasn't looking, and it really creeped me out." (Female, Age: 25-30, Regular CMA Participant)

"I was physically restrained by a CMATx rider in unwanted bear hugs twice. I had to struggle to get him off me. The 2nd time it happened I became concerned for the safety of one of our regular male riders that witnessed the incident because he began to show visible aggravation. I had to repeatedly request for the perpetrator to give me space, to give the dj equipment space, and to back off in general throughout the night." (Female, Age: 45-50, Regular CMA Participant)

Part V: Critical Mass Austin Call-to-Action Ride (5/26/23 or 6/30/23)

A Call-to-Action against threats to public safety and a celebration supporting Austin's infrastructure improvements that increase safety for all road users.

We will meet at 25 Pedernales and depart at 7:58 PM.

We have a designated ride leader, volunteers helping us navigate intersections, and pre-tested 8-mile route. Our route is optimized for bicycles, electric unicycles, skates, onewheels, skateboards, and other electric devices.

Our after party includes over 100 pairs of free to borrow skates and music by The Underground Atx. Austin's Yellow Bike Project, Ghisallo Cycling Initiative, Great Springs Trail, Red Line Parkway Initiative, ReThink 35, and Safe Streets Austin are invited to table with us.

Critical Mass Austin 3/31/23 Testimonials

Testimonials were obtained through direct messages, public social media posts, email, and through text messages. Original and redacted documentation is available as needed. All names are removed and replaced with descriptive information.

Experience of Critical Mass Austin Attendees

“What made me feel uncomfortable and unsafe was that the other cycling group was super loud, all over the place and rode right into traffic not caring about their surroundings. One rider also almost crashed into me during the ride.” (T01 - Age: 20-25, Female, Regular CMA Participant)

“I could tell things were off right after rollout because of the constant whistling. But we didn’t have any bad interactions. We stayed pretty far back in the procession.” (T02 - Age: 40-45, Male, Regular CMA Participant)

“The main incident I remember was as we were passing 35 someone from the other group got in front of a car and was hitting it/yelling at the driver.” (T03 - Age: 20-25, Female, Regular CMA Participant)

“I was uncomfortable, mostly I just heard a couple of guys keep yelling how much they hated Rba.” (T04 - Age: 50-55, Female, New CMA Participant)

“I’m not feeling safe and that’s how I’m feeling right now. I’m not feeling very safe like all of this really triggered shit in me. Sorry to say that but it’s true I mean I know I got trauma crap going on, but you know it’s like that night with them being like they were, I was just like really. 🙄 I feel like I’m being like really bombarded on social media with them... 🙄” (T19 - Female, Age 60-65, Regular CMA Participant)

“When we went on the critical mass ride, there were riders who were going against the group which made it difficult to ride safely. I notice when we got to the feeder road they began to go into all 4 lanes instead of staying close to the group which affected the safety of the other riders. My friend was also on skates and the outside group almost ran into her and other riders several times. Critical mass rides are usually a place of community but the other riders made it feel unsafe for the group as they kept weaving in and out of people and going in the opposite direction through the crowd which led to unnecessary confusion.” (T20 - Female, Age 20-25, Regular CMA Participant)

“I felt uncomfortable, because some SCA riders rode unpredictably, I heard [Name Removed: Female 1 Social Cycling Austin Ride Leader/9-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx Organizer-Ride Leader/9-Year Member] shouting "Go Ride Bikes Austin", as though to antagonize us. [Name Removed: Male 03 Social Cycling Austin Rider Leader/10-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx Rider/10-Year Member], never once apologizing for laughing at RBA pics I'm tagged in on fb, held his arms in an open hug gesture to me. I was standing far away and didn't reciprocate. I was worried about how they would treat you and [Name Removed].” (T21 - Female, Age 30-35, Regular CMA Participant)

"The harassment was uncalled for! The members from the other group were swerving all around. The worst part is when they would call "rolling" when our ride leader would call "stopping" or when they would call the opposite turn of what she said. One time, I thought she said straight but apparently it was a turn and I almost got in her way. I would have felt awful if I was the reason she crashed! Also, the other bikers would get really close to incoming traffic. I don't need to see anyone die!" (T05 - Age: 20-25, Male, Regular CMA Participant)

"I overheard some guy on a bmx bike talking sh*t to another rider about RBA. Don't remember the face or [exact] content but it was pretty trashy. Whoever he was whining to didn't seem very interested in hearing it!" (T06 - Age: 30-35, Male, Regular CMA Participant)

"On Friday night at the critical mass I felt unsafe for myself and other members of the group, the other party that joined us did not respect the leader's instructions and kept calling out "rolling" as we approached stop signs, they were too close to other riders and almost clipped some of them." (T07 - Age: 25-30, Male, Regular CMA Participant)

"I felt incredibly uncomfortable having riders from the other Critical Mass Ride attend our ride due to their reckless behavior. Several were performing wheelies, swerving into oncoming traffic, and disrespecting the ride leader." (T08 - Age: 25-30, Male, Regular CMA Participant)

"I know people got mad and left because we were just going in circles and there might've been some people a little over intoxicated which is never good for the overall safety of everyone. I didn't notice the drunk people till we stopped and I think most of them might've been from out of town. I didn't recognize any of them." (T09 - Age: 40-45, Male, Regular CMA Participant)

"I felt they came off as really aggressive for no reason, everything felt tense initially and then some of them was riding really recklessly." (T10 - Age: 35-40, Male, Regular CMA Participant)

"[Name Removed: Male 03 Social Cycling Austin Rider Leader/10-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx Rider/10-Year Member] makes me feel unsafe because his behavior is erratic and I've heard him in the past talk about how he carries a gun and I've heard him threaten people with it at Social Cycling Austin rides so seeing him makes me feel unsafe. Part of the reason I quit going to SCA was hearing him threaten a car driver with a gun.

The guy [Name Removed: Male 02 Social Cycling Austin/3-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx Rider/1-Year Member] who was dancing and talking to himself at the dj booth came up and got right under my leg while I wasn't looking, and it really creeped me out. Other than that, I just felt generally unsafe because of everything I heard about how they tried to take over our ride." (T11 - Age: 25-30, Female, Regular CMA Participant)

"We left. Yeah, I just couldn't keep doing circles like that and the rest of the route on skates. I get we had to do that because it was too dangerous to ride through downtown with those other people acting like that and I explained it to [Name Removed: Male] and [Name Removed: Female]. Also, me and

[Name Removed: Male] were ready to fight people so probably not a good idea for us to stay.” (T12 - Age: 25-30, Female, Regular CMA Participant)

“I did not enjoy the night overall because I did not feel safe, listened to, or respected. When [CMATx] riders rode in front of the leader, I asked them to please stay behind her, and was ignored. I felt [CMATx] people getting too close to me when we were riding, and several times almost hitting me.

At a 4-way intersection before the store stop, the leader called for us to stop. Immediately after, a man said "don't stop!" And darted out into traffic. This was scary and when I looked to the left, I saw people laughing.

Then another man [Name Removed: Male 02 Social Cycling Austin/3-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx Rider/1-Year Member] rolled in front of the leader, blocking her way, and I told him to please move. He looked at me and said "you're not my f*cking mom."

It made me really angry and stressed to be in that environment, so much so that if they were there again acting that way, I'd choose not to attend. People being unsafe and stupid alone is fine, I guess, but when you act that way with a lot of people and cars are involved it is unsafe. Even if you put your life in danger only, you are forcing us to watch and feel anxiety and fear and it was extremely upsetting for me personally.” (T13 - Age: 40-45, Female, Regular CMA Participant)

“The behaviors I saw that made me uncomfortable. [CMATx] People were yelling aggressively at cars. In the convenience store parking lot people were yelling and acting out in a way that would have made it understandable for someone to call the cops on us. People weaving through the bike group in a reckless and aggressive way.

[CMATx] people [were] not being polite and respectful of those around them. Disrespecting the group as a whole and disrespecting the community and spaces we were taking up.

Mostly my issue was people making the group feel unfriendly. I love RBA because from the beginning I have been welcomed and included. RBA travels the roads in a safe way that makes me feel safe being a part of the group. It sucked to feel like people where f*cking with that.” (T14 - Age: 30-35, Female, New CMA Participant)

“I believed it to be a bit excessive that SCA came up behind us, then started aggressively weaving in and out of RBA members. Some SCA members started doing bike tricks in the middle of the group, and unfortunately one person did fall over. This could have caused more crashes but luckily everyone around was being observant.

I take the sweep position seriously, and when these large groups come together no one is really taking into account that someone is trying to look out for everyone who joins. It would be nice that when other groups join, they take a moment to recognize the group they're joining and ask relevant safety questions for the well-being of all involved in the rides.

[Name Removed: Female] told me, but I didn't immediately notice was [Name Removed: Male 03 Social Cycling Austin Rider Leader/10-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx Rider/10-Year Member] from SCA was walking around and pointing out bikes, to other [CMATx] ride members and it made [Name Removed: Female] feel very uncomfortable as if it was done with nefarious purposes in mind. And no point in time should we as a community after fear for our bikes or bike accessories surrounded by other community members." (T15 - Age: 35-40, Male, Regular CMA Participant; Attended with a 7-year-old child)

"I definitely felt uncomfortable, unsafe, and disappointed. There was a different energy about the critical mass ride from ones that I had previously attended. During the ride I overheard [CMATx] individuals say "I'm going to keep f*cking with them." It seemed to be an [CMATx] outside group apart from critical mass and it felt like harassment.

Those people and others [from CMATx] really killed the fun and community of the ride. At another point during the ride, I got in between one of our riders and the [CMATx] group to try and help diffuse a situation. The [CMATx] rider immediately got aggressive and pointed me out to another in his [CMATx] group. After that I felt like a target and put more attention on my surroundings instead of trying to enjoy the critical mass ride. I was disappointed that other "adults" would make it a point to harass a community event just for their own fun. I know this is not how all Mass rides go, but it'd definitely be unfortunate if this was someone's first time attending and their experience." (T16 - Age: 25-30, Male, Regular CMA Participant)

"The first group ride [Name Removed: Male], [Name Removed: Male] and I went on was with SCA before the ride started we were all hanging out getting to know everyone joking about if we were ever going to start riding when this dude [Name Removed: Male 3 Social Cycling Austin Rider Leader/10-Year Member, CMATx Rider/10-Year Member] walks up to us and my friend [Name Removed: Male] tries to shake his hand. [Name Removed: Male 3 Social Cycling Austin Rider Leader/10-Year Member, CMATx Rider/10-Year Member] says f*ck you and my friend [Name Removed: Male] replied with the same thing and he laughed and tried to play it off and introduced himself as the ride leader.

We all looked at each other and immediately recognized that this guy [Name Removed: Male 03 Social Cycling Austin Rider Leader/10-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx Rider/10-Year Member] is super drunk and seems threatening so we distance ourselves when the ride is getting ready to take off. He's so drunk he can't find his bike so we point it out to him and he says 'I wish somebody would try to steal my bike so I could shoot 'em.'

Later during the ride were at the back and he [Name Removed: Male 03 Social Cycling Austin Rider Leader/10-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx Rider/10-Year Member] rolls up and says I wish I could slap some punks for riding e-bikes tonight and I told him he should slap himself because he's the only punk and we rode off laughing. That was the first and only time we rode with them [Social Cycling Austin]. When we started at critical mass there was a smaller group some familiar faces and some new people but once we started riding we got a few blocks in and a group [CMATx] of obviously unfriendly people came doing wheelies speeding through the group and getting extremely close to other riders.

When we came to the stop sign, the road was blocked off by some of their riders and it immediately felt hostile and I see RBA as my family and anyone that rides with us are friends but that was not the case that night. Our ride leader was on her tall bike and [Name Removed: Male 03 Social Cycling Austin Rider Leader/10-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx Rider/10-Year Member] came speeding by me extremely close and then he got in front of her and stopped almost making her fall.

I felt myself get extremely defensive and like if I saw somebody do something to my friends that it would put me in a dangerous position. I would have to defend them and myself against a large group of unfriendly [CMATx] people, one of which I already know has mentioned he carries a firearm and wants to use it against somebody.

The vibe immediately shifted when the [CMATx] group showed up, so I chose to leave that night because I felt we were in danger and I didn't want to watch something happen and be in that position."
(T17 - Age: 30-35, Male, New Participant)

"I am a member of RBA and I attended the Critical Mass ride on 3/31/23. I am reaching out to express my disappointment and concern for my safety during this ride caused by non-RBA [CMATx] members. These very disruptive [CMATx] people made the experience unsafe for all riders by performing dangerous and illegal moving violations, yelling and screaming profanities randomly and frightening our members attempting to enjoy themselves peacefully.

The ride started with these [CMATx] disruptive persons riding around and loudly and rudely screaming at other members in the [CMATx] group expressing their excitement to "f*ck shit up for RBA." This made me and several RBA members uncomfortable because we do not behave in this way when we ride together. We are a peaceful social bike group that rides our bikes, enjoying this magnificent city. The disruptive riders' behavior clearly did not reflect our values.

They continued to yell out profanities throughout the ride. They bragged about why they were present, stating that they dislike RBA and continuously yelled "F*ck RBA!" They performed dangerous tricks on their bikes nearly missing participants, creating an unsafe environment for peaceful riders. Additionally, they rode against traffic several times! This caused cars to stop, move to the side and created dangerous conditions for automobiles and bike riders, alike.

One of the [CMATx] disruptive riders performed an unsafe wheelie, bumped an RBA member and actually caused the RBA member to fall off his bike and injure himself. This was the last straw for me. Several members left the ride early fearful for their safety and I too stopped riding as it became too dangerous to ride near this other group of [CMATx] men.

This was not the first time that we have experienced harassment and threats to public safety like this with this [CMATx] group of dangerous riders. I moved to this city to engage in a more peaceful, safe and unique way of life that aligns with my lifestyle. This group of [CMATx] men challenge my right to pursue a safe environment in the city of Austin. RBA has always supported a safe space where all peaceful riders can come together and enjoy each other's company. These [CMATx] outliers are not a part of RBA and are plaguing this city with their ridiculous and obscene behaviors. They have made a practice of

harassing peaceful, law-abiding local riders and have publicly demonstrated their angst by breaking traffic laws and creating unsafe conditions for cyclists and other road users in Austin.

I am writing this statement in hopes that the City of Austin takes notice of this and engages in practices that will stop this type of harassment and unsafe road conditions for its citizens.” (T18 - Age: 35-40, Male, Regular CMA Participant)

Public Statements from Critical Mass Austin Tx (CMATx)

"I heard that #RBACMA rode with #CriticalMassAustin last Friday. It warms my heart to know that our bike community is healing." (Male 01 Social Cycling Austin Admin/14-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx Organizer-Rider/14-Year Member)

"Yeah the way it was explained to me was SCA "chased RBA in circles so they couldn't get away." Doesn't sound like healing." (Female 3 Social Cycling Austin/13-Year Member)

"I'll take responsibility for bringing the rides together. It was bound to happen at some time. It's a question that gets repeated each month...I feel I gave the people what they wanted. Most of the rules were followed and most of us partied, danced, and skated at the end. Some smiles were genuine, some were fake, and some smiles were upside down." (Female 1 Social Cycling Austin Ride Leader/9-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx Organizer-Ride Leader/9-Year Member)

"Can't say I didn't encourage this." (Male 05 Social Cycling Austin Admin-Ride Leader/14-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx Rider/10-Year Member)

"That sh*t felt about as foreign as coding to an illiterate... not much rba could do, we just rolled up on em and started riding with." (Male 04 Social Cycling Austin/6-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx Rider/3-Year Member)

"Well, if only two out of two hundred are having a bad time, and that bad time is one of their own making, then maybe that's as good as it's gonna get for a while. I can live with that." (Male 01 Social Cycling Austin Admin/14-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx Organizer-Rider/14-Year Member)

"...I expect the handful of people who had a bad time on the ride probably heavily overlap with the same small handful people who've been trying to exclude our friends and I from the local cycling community over the past few years, so I'm not surprised if I didn't hear any negative reviews of the various groups merging to ride as one. Which, honestly is fine by me. If everybody but the party poopers are having a grand time riding together, it seems like that's not a problem for everybody, it's a problem for the party poopers. Get ya minds right and ride as one, friends!" (Male 01 Social Cycling Austin Admin/14-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx Organizer-Rider/14-Year Member)

"Now I'm curious, was this the ride turning back on itself? I know the RBA-owned ride pre-plans their routes. What an interesting choice of roads to take. " (Male 01 Social Cycling Austin Admin/14-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx Organizer-Rider/14-Year Member)

"Seems to be anger. Those were not happy faces on the not-so-dynamic-duo." (Male 05 Social Cycling Austin Admin-Ride Leader/14-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx Rider/10-Year Member)

"Nah they decided to do circles and circles which made some of there own riders mad but whatever." (Male 03 Social Cycling Austin Rider Leader/10-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx Rider/10-Year Member)

“Honestly, it was a little strange to me that they were trying to lose us in the first place...we probably at least doubled the size of their ride.” (Female 4 Social Cycling Austin Admin-Rider Leader/13-Year Member)

“it had their 5 skaters disappointed and a few of them left the ride. Their loss.” (Female 1 Social Cycling Austin Ride Leader/9-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx Organizer-Ride Leader/9-Year Member)

“The rba sweep/flag person did not know what was going on. He pulled over to get to the back and looked puzzled.” (Male 05 Social Cycling Austin Admin-Ride Leader/14-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx Rider/10-Year Member)

“I think it worked out fine. 75% of the people did not know what the heck was going on...I say we try to do it every once in a while because we still need to try to hit up campus a few more times.” (Female 1 Social Cycling Austin Ride Leader/9-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx Organizer-Ride Leader/9-Year Member)

“Dibs as leader of the newly founded #criticalrbacma.” (Female 2 Social Cycling Austin/4-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx 1-Year Member)

“Hell yeah! Take it back to its roots and bomb campus! Midpoint on the West Mall” (Male 01 Social Cycling Austin Admin/14-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx Organizer-Rider/14-Year Member)

“[Name Removed: Male 01 Social Cycling Austin Admin/14-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx Organizer-Rider/14-Year Member] sure! You be in the front Sir [Name Removed: Male 01 Social Cycling Austin Admin/14-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx Organizer-Rider/14-Year Member].” (Female 1 Social Cycling Austin Ride Leader/9-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx Organizer-Ride Leader/9-Year Member)

“Also. Did anyone get a certified letter yet. I haven’t yet. But kind of expecting it.” (Male 05 Social Cycling Austin Admin-Ride Leader/14-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx Rider/10-Year Member)

“ROFL!!! After the first round was officially sent, received, and got promptly laughed at (and rightly ridiculed) by everyone who came across them, I expect they realized the inefficacy of their weird, spuriously quasi-legalese threats. If the legal masterminds in the overly-litigious employ of [Name Removed] couldn't shift us with their ACTUAL legal threats, what chance do these two stand with fake ones.” (Male 01 Social Cycling Austin Admin/14-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx Organizer-Rider/14-Year Member)

“I figure if we can all ride as one a few more times, maybe whatever issues these folks are beefing over (I still haven't been told by anyone what their problem with austin cyclists is) can fade away as we all keep riding together.

To that end, if anyone is still in contact with [Name Removed: Female 2 Social Cycling Austin/4-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx 1-Year Member]/hasn't been ostracised, please pass along word that I'd love to speak with them and understand why they seem so intent on sabotaging their own rides like this.

Seems rather counterproductive, but maybe they have a good (thought still uncommunicated) reason for doing so.” (Male 01 Social Cycling Austin Admin/14-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx Organizer-Rider/14-Year Member)

“Yeah, I expect about the same to come of this request as the last several I've made (aka. absolutely nothing), but I want to make sure everyone knows that the bridge is still open, at least on this side.” (Male 01 Social Cycling Austin Admin/14-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx Organizer-Rider/14-Year Member)

“It was awesome. About 200 strong. Like the old days. rba did not want us there. We were not welcome. The faces on the leaders were faces of anger and frustration. They desperately wanted to shake us. So much anger on rba’s side. The stop at Sanchez was hilarious. Waving hands to allow us to roll by. Good times.” (Male 05 Social Cycling Austin Admin-Ride Leader/14-Year Member, 5:30 CMATx Rider/10-Year Member)

A Call-to-Action Message from Critical Mass Austin Organizers

Pending

Appendix A – Links

Critical Mass Austin Tx (CMATx) Media Accounts

Facebook Fan Page: <https://www.facebook.com/CriticalMassATX>

Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/austintxmass>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/criticalmassaustintx>

Public Cloud Storage Folder

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1noR_TXjfGvnPtG-9XNgFokGolA1kalva?usp=sharing

Ride Bikes Austin Media Accounts

Ride Bikes Austin

Reddit Account <https://www.reddit.com/user/ridebikesaustin/>

Facebook Fan Page <https://www.facebook.com/RideBikesAustin>

Facebook Group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ridebikesaustin>

Instagram Account <https://www.instagram.com/ridebikesaustin/>

Critical Mass Austin

Reddit Account <https://www.reddit.com/user/criticalmassaustin/>

Facebook Fan Page <https://www.facebook.com/CriticalMassAustin>

Facebook Group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalmassaustin>

Instagram Account <https://www.instagram.com/criticalmassaustin/>