

Bicycle Crashes on a Path with Rigid Bollards

Municipal governments and other landowners use a variety of bollards to prevent access to multi-use trails and bike paths they design and maintain. Some of these are dangerous and may result in the property owner being found at fault for improper design. Lane dividers are used to keep cyclists and pedestrians within different lanes; others are there to keep vehicles off the path or trail entirely. Most of us pay little attention to them; that is, until someone runs into one, resulting in serious injury. Here are some considerations.

It is not unusual for a path or trail to have two side-by-side lanes, one for cyclists and another for pedestrians. The designer has a choice of where to place bollards at the entrance or break in the path. Many of us have seen them placed so that one is within the center of each lane. This may not be the safest design. An alternative would be to place one bollard along the centerline between the lanes and another on each side of the path. This minimizes obstruction issues for cyclists by increasing clear zones. It also reduces interaction problems between pedestrians and cyclists while accomplishing the task of keeping vehicles off the path or trail.

Another issue is the selection of either a rigid or flexible bollard. Clearly, rigid bollards are more hazardous to cyclists. However, in my area, this appears to be the most commonly used type of bollard. After a cycling accident in which one of these rigid bollards results in a cyclist's

injury, the designer would be required to successfully defend its choice of using a rigid bollard over a flexible design.

If you've been injured in a cycling accident involving any of these design issues, you should consult with an experienced bicycle injury attorney to determine whether you have grounds to seek financial recovery against the entity responsible for its design or maintenance.

Jim Dodson is an experienced bicycle accident lawyer, cyclist and bicycle safety advocate who has been representing accident victims for over 25 years. Although his primary office is in Clearwater, he represents injury victims throughout Florida. He is the author of the [Florida Bicycle Accident Handbook](#) which answers the most commonly asked questions by injured cyclists. If you have questions about a Florida cycling accident this valuable resource is available to you absolutely free of charge at www.jimdodsonlaw.com.

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