

Erin Hinojosa

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Bieter Spokesman: ACHD Owes Mayor Apology After Changing Tune In Impact Fee Flap

"[Sara Baker's] original opinion accuses the mayor of making stuff up and that's not what really happened."

by [George Prentice](#) [@georgepren](#)

The "he said, she said" war of words between Boise City Hall and the Ada County Highway District has a new wrinkle: "She said things a little differently."

During his June 12 State of the City Address before a packed house at the Boise Centre, Boise Mayor Dave Bieter made particular reference to what he considered business-unfriendly impact fees assessed by ACHD, referring to a conversation that he had with a local developer who claimed that he faced a possible \$125,000 impact fee for a \$325,000 development.

"That killed the deal," said Bieter, referring to the proposed restaurant for Warm Springs Avenue. "And I've heard dozens of those stories."

Three days later, in a blistering "Reader's View" written for the Idaho Statesman, Sara Baker, president of the ACHD Commission, fired back at Bieter saying what he said "isn't true."

"The quote request never happened, based on ACHD records and the recollections of our staff," wrote Baker. "And we know the target property on Warm Springs Avenue because a staffer for the mayor asked about it a few days before the speech, obtaining the \$125,000 as a worst-case example."

But during KTVB-7's 10 p.m. newscast on Thursday, June 27, Baker's story had changed. This time, she told a reporter that indeed there was a figure given from ACHD regarding the proposed development.

"The answer that was given to them was total ballpark, total estimate, without any deducts from that at all," Baker told KTVB-7.

The mayor's spokesman, Adam Park, says Baker's story has changed significantly.

"[Baker's] original opinion accuses the mayor of making stuff up and that's not what really happened," he said.

"I think that deserves an apology to the mayor," Park told Boise Weekly.

Park said the mayor's office sees the numbers game with ACHD as an ongoing challenge for developers.

"That's a common occurrence," said Park. "A developer will say, 'I got this price, which is quite high, and then, upon scrutiny or challenge, that amount will go down. These numbers are being quoted again and again, and are very high. And in this case, it killed the deal.'"



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