

Chris Nicholas Vrame on Why Stalled Land Hurts Communities and What It Takes to Move It Forward

Sacramento entrepreneur and real estate developer Chris Nicholas Vrame shares what he learned navigating years of zoning delays to turn idle California land into a working community.

Sacramento, California Apr 20, 2026 ([IssueWire.com](https://www.IssueWire.com)) - When Land Sits, Communities Pay the Price

Undeveloped or stalled land is often treated as a neutral condition, a property waiting for the right moment. Chris Nicholas Vrame, a Sacramento-based entrepreneur and real estate developer, describes it differently. In his view, land that could support homes, businesses, and services but does not is a cost that falls on the surrounding community.

His experience with the Lakeside Business Park and Residential Planned Community in Elk Grove, California, put that belief to the test over a period of years. The property had stalled due to zoning restrictions and planning delays. Vrame acquired it, worked through the regulatory process, and saw it become a mixed-use development with more than 300 single-family homes alongside professional offices, restaurants, and local businesses.

The Zoning Gap and What It Actually Requires

Rezoning a stalled property is not a quick administrative step. It involves sustained engagement with planning authorities, documentation of long-term viability, and the willingness to continue when timelines stretch beyond initial projections. For the Elk Grove project, Vrame describes the process as requiring exactly the patience that most developers exhaust before approval arrives.

What he observed throughout the process was that obstacles are often informational. The reasons a property stalls tend to be specific and solvable, even when they appear fixed. The challenge is staying engaged long enough to find the solution.

What the Finished Project Reveals

The Lakeside project now houses more than 300 families. The commercial portion serves the residents who live there, creating a self-sustaining local economy rather than an isolated housing block. For Vrame, this integration of residential and commercial was not incidental. It was the design principle from the start.

He has said that development is not about buildings as much as it is about creating places where people live their lives. The distinction shapes how he evaluates projects from the beginning.

What Other Communities and Developers Can Take From This

Vrame identifies three patterns from his experience with the Elk Grove project that apply to stalled properties in other markets. First, understand why the stall happened. The obstacle is usually more specific than it first appears. Second, build for the community the project will serve, not just for the property itself. Mixed-use design, when appropriate to the location, creates more durable developments. Third, accept that the timeline will exceed initial estimates. Projects with genuine long-term value rarely

move quickly.

About Chris Nicholas Vrame

[Chris Nicholas Vrame](#) is an entrepreneur and real estate developer based in Sacramento, California. He co-created The Tasting Room, a Chicago wine bar recognized by Wine Spectator, and served as co-founder and primary financial partner of Arena Softball. His most prominent development project is the Lakeside Business Park and Residential Planned Community in Elk Grove, California. More information is available at chrisnicholasvrame.com.

Media Contact

Chris Nicholas Vrame

*****@chrisnicholasvrame.com

<https://www.chrisnicholasvrame.com/>

Source : Chris Nicholas Vrame

[See on IssueWire](#)