Nā‘ālehu Interim Disaster Housing Project

Compilation of Community Input Received October 6 – 20, 2026

This document compiles written community comments received regarding the proposed 12-unit interim housing development adjacent to the Nā‘ālehu Public Library. Comments are presented in the order received and are reproduced as submitted, including original spelling and emphasis.

Privacy note: Personal contact information, including email addresses, phone numbers, mailing addresses, and handwritten signatures, has been redacted. Redactions are marked *[in brackets]*. Attachments referenced in a comment (e.g., videos or forms) are not included in this compilation.

Summary of Comments

#	Commenter	Date Received	Topic
1	Julie and Tom Pasquale	Oct 6, 2026	Support for the project and expedited timeline
2	Brian Akaka, Pa‘a Prefab	Oct 12, 2026	Technical requirements and supplier opportunities
3	Paul Montague	Oct 18, 2026	Concerns about site, cost, and eligibility
4	Vanessa Ott	Oct 18, 2026	Site design to allow future library expansion (replaces Oct 9 comment)
5	Melissa Wheeler	Oct 19, 2026	Support for revised design proposal
6	A. Grace Cruz	Oct 20, 2026	Application form issue; Punalu‘u water service

Comment 1 · Julie and Tom Pasquale

Received	Tuesday, October 6, 2026
Subject	Interim Disaster Housing Project in Naalehu
Location	Na‘alehu, HI

We are writing to express our strong support for the proposed project.
This is a great idea, and the expedited timeline is appreciated.
The sooner, the better.
Mahalo,

Julie and Tom Pasquale
[Mailing address and phone number redacted]

Comment 2 · Brian Akaka, Paʻa Prefab

Received	Monday, October 12, 2026
Subject	Nāʻālehu interim housing — technical requirements and local prefab supplier opportunities
Organization	Paʻa Prefab

Aloha Nāʻālehu project team,

I'm Brian Akaka with Paʻa Prefab, a Hawaiʻi Island business supplying small steel-framed prefabricated structures and building components. I'm interested in supporting disaster-recovery housing and the longer-term workforce-housing needs described in DHS's October 6 announcement.

Could you please share the available technical brief and procurement information for the 12-home project beside Nāʻālehu Public Library, or direct me to the project manager and procurement contact? In particular:

1. Has the construction system, manufacturer or general contractor already been selected? Are there remaining supplier/subcontract opportunities, or similar future projects?
2. Are the homes factory-built, panelized or site-built, and must they be relocatable?
3. What wind, seismic and flood-design criteria apply, and what foundations and anchorage are specified?
4. What roof slope, wind-driven-rain performance, uplift connections and coastal-corrosion specifications are required?
5. What Hawaiʻi-sealed engineering, factory QA, third-party inspection, permitting and occupancy documentation is required for the disaster-to-workforce transition?
6. What is the vendor-interest process and current delivery/installation schedule?

We are exploring a pitched-roof or removable over-roof option for compact prefab units. I would like to understand the project's requirements before proposing any specific product, price or delivery commitment.

Mahalo,
Brian Akaka
Paʻa Prefab
[Phone number redacted]
www.paaprefab.com

Comment 3 · Paul Montague

Received	Sunday, October 18, 2026, 11:36 AM
Subject	Na'alehu housing plan
Location	Ocean View, HI

I'm sorry, this is not well thought out and overly expensive for what you get. Why not set up these homes on the land off South Point Road that is being prepared for housing? Why not help people rebuild their homes? Why take property from the library? It will prevent future expansion of the library.

Who is going to benefit from these tiny homes? Certainly not families. Who decides who gets to use them? Tiny homes are great for individual homeless people.

Paul Montague
[Mailing address and phone number redacted]

Comment 4 · Vanessa Ott

Received	October 18, 2026, 8:04 PM (email; letter dated October 17, 2026)
Subject	Public Comment re: Nāʻālehu Interim disaster housing

Aloha,
This email is a copy of the PDF attachment, providing a choice of either format (email or PDF) for the person compiling public comments.

Please replace the comment I hastily submitted to Joe Campos on Oct 9, 2026

> From: Vanessa Ott *[email address redacted]*
> Date: Fri, Oct 9, 2026 at 8:42 AM
> Subject: Urgent: Better Plan for buildings behind the Naalehu Library
> To: Joe Campos, DHS *[email address redacted]*

...with this:

PUBLIC COMMENT
re: Naʻalehu Interim Housing Development 2026
From: Vanessa Ott
Date: Oct 17, 2026

I support the goal of providing 12 interim housing units in Naʻalehu built and maintained by the State of Hawaiʻi. However, the current housing complex's design will wipe out the Kaʻū community's hope of ever having a decent-sized library.[1] **Therefore, I beg that any building on this state land be required to accommodate future Naʻalehu State Library expansion.**

Although much of Kaʻū is considered "country," this interim housing community should be designed as if it were in an urban area where space is extremely limited. If the State is going to pack 12

housing units in such a small space, the complex can't be designed like a suburban development with every house having a small yard and driveway in front. If we optimize the available land as shown in the picture, we can create a safer interim housing community *and* have room to expand the library in the future.

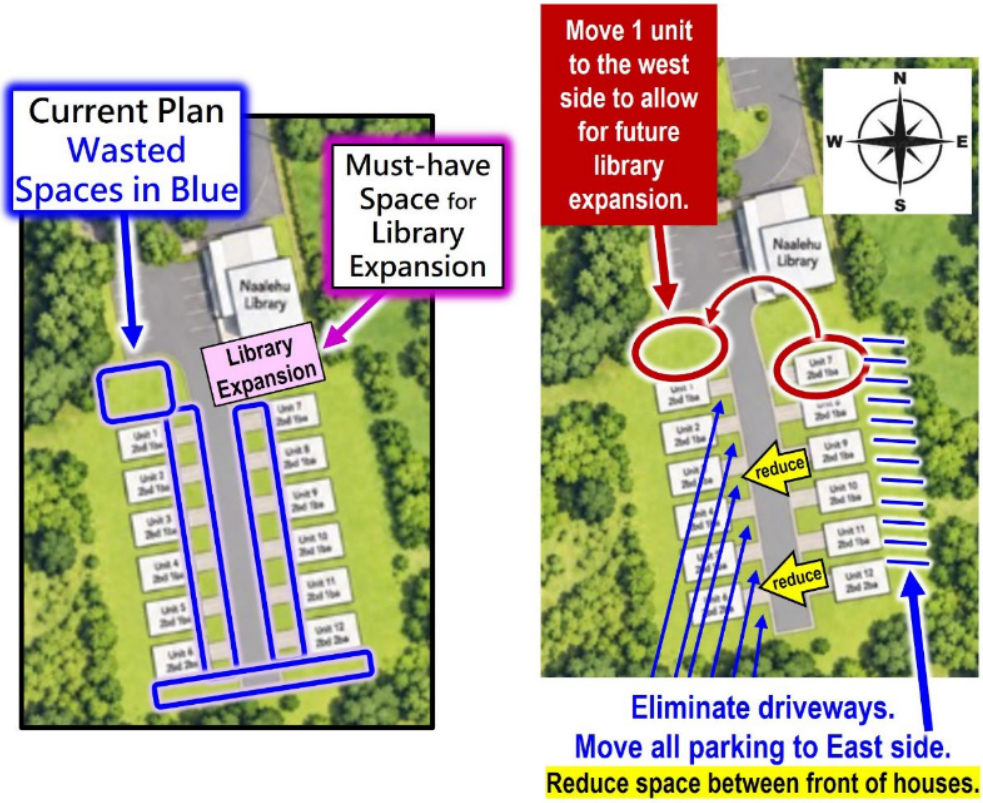


Figure submitted by commenter: current site plan with spaces the commenter considers wasted (left), and proposed changes (right): move one unit to the west side to allow for library expansion, eliminate driveways, move all parking to the east side, and reduce space between the fronts of houses.

Consider this. In many European cities, built centuries before cars, there are parking lots at the end of a street just a short walk from everyone's front door. Only residents may park in those lots. There are no cars on the street between two rows of houses. Only emergency vehicles and pedestrians can be on the street making it safer for baby carriages, tricycles, bicycles, pedestrians, ambulances, fire trucks, and a leisurely stroll after dinner. The next picture is a rendition of what the complex could look like with 12 housing units, parking, a park, and a bigger library if wasted space is used more judiciously.

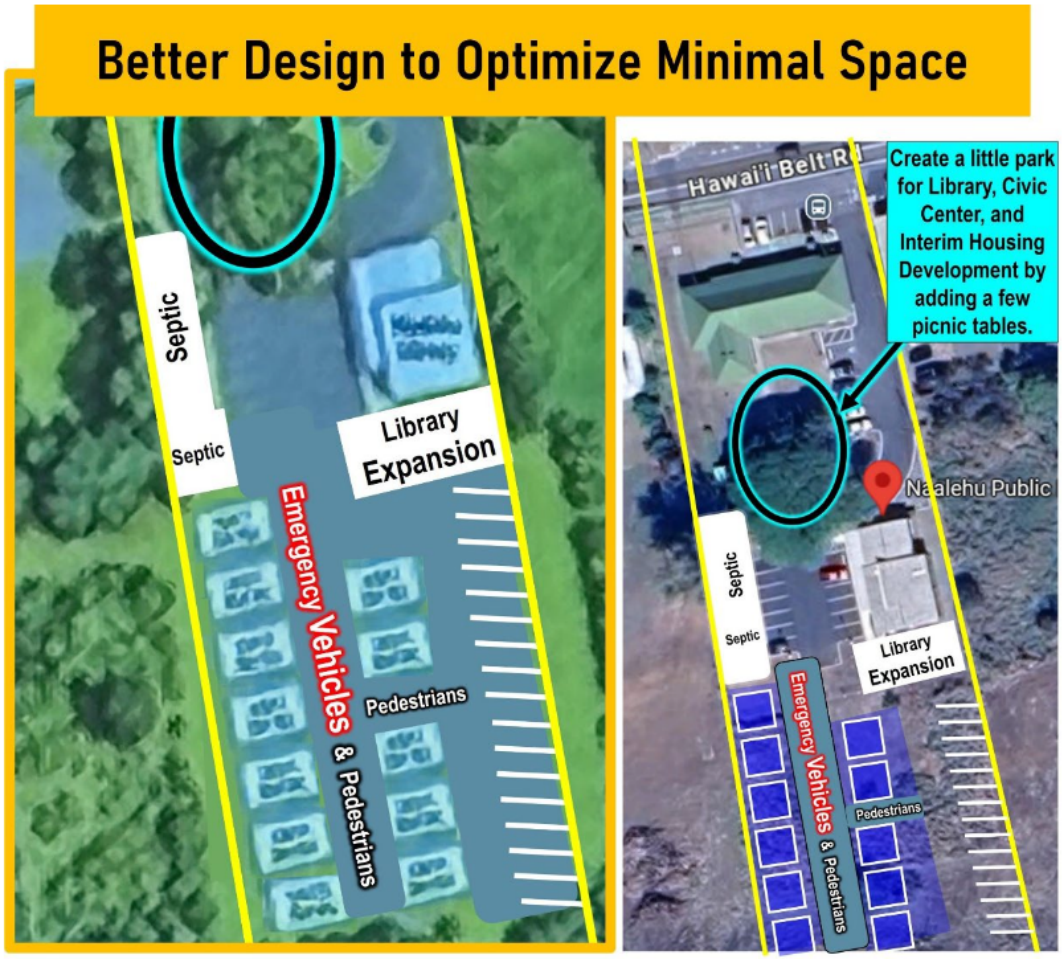


Figure submitted by commenter: "Better Design to Optimize Minimal Space," showing a central emergency-vehicle and pedestrian way, parking along the east side, septic area, library expansion area, and a small park with picnic tables for the library, civic center, and housing development.

ADVANTAGES OF A BETTER DESIGN THAT OPTIMIZES SPACE

- Enables future expansion of the Naʻalehu Library.
- Separates pedestrian traffic from motor vehicle traffic.
- Eliminates the need for sidewalks.
- Provides a safe area for tricycles, wheelchairs, baby carriages and pedestrians.
- Emergency vehicles don't have to share the road with cars.
- Provides 16 (maybe more) parking spaces.
- Gives more of a sense of community with all houses facing each other on the "Emergency Vehicle & Pedestrian" throughway.
- Septic system for housing complex & library has easy access for maintenance.

[1] **WHY KA‘Ū NEEDS A BIGGER LIBRARY IN NA‘ALEHU**

The Ka‘ū district is the largest, in terms of land mass, in the entire state. Unfortunately, the Na‘alehu Library is appallingly tiny. There are no meeting rooms to serve the community. Any meetings held there completely crowd out library patrons. There is no storage for books that the Friends of the Ka‘ū Libraries could sell to raise money for the Ka‘ū Libraries (Na‘alehu and Pahala), nor any place in the library for a small book store. Limited space means a very limited number of books to browse.

Some may argue that because we have Pahala Public & School Library, which is larger than the Na‘alehu Library, we don’t need a larger library in Na‘alehu. Nothing could be further from the truth. Ka‘ū’s population is growing, and most of that growth is in Ocean View, which is 25 miles from Pahala, and only 12 miles from Na‘alehu.

The table below shows the financial and time expenditures for individuals from each community to get to either library. If just 1% of the people from each community make only one visit to the Na‘alehu Library the total cost to the community is about $306.55 for gas, and 50 hours or more of the people’s time. That’s almost half the amount of time and money for 1% of the community to get to the Pahala Library ($596.35 and 88 hours or more).

			Round Trip to Pahala Library			Round Trip to Na‘alehu Library		
	Population	% of Ka‘ū Population	Miles	at $5.80/gal 30 mi/gal Gas Cost	Hrs:Mins	Miles	at $5.80/gal 30 mi/gal Gas Cost	Hrs:Mins
Hawaiian Ocean View	4,864	57.6%	49.2	$9.51	1:20	22.8	$4.41	0:42
Discovery Harbour	1,171	13.9%	35.8	$6.92	1:12	8.6	$1.66	0:18
Na‘alehu	811	9.6%	26.2	$5.07	0:54	negligible	negligible	negligible
Wai‘ohinu	198	2.3%	30.2	$5.84	1:00	4.2	$0.81	0:12
Pahala	1,403	16.6%	negligible	negligible	negligible	26.2	$5.07	0:54

Table as submitted by commenter: round-trip miles, gas cost (at $5.80/gal, 30 mi/gal), and travel time from each Ka‘ū community to the Pahala and Na‘alehu libraries.

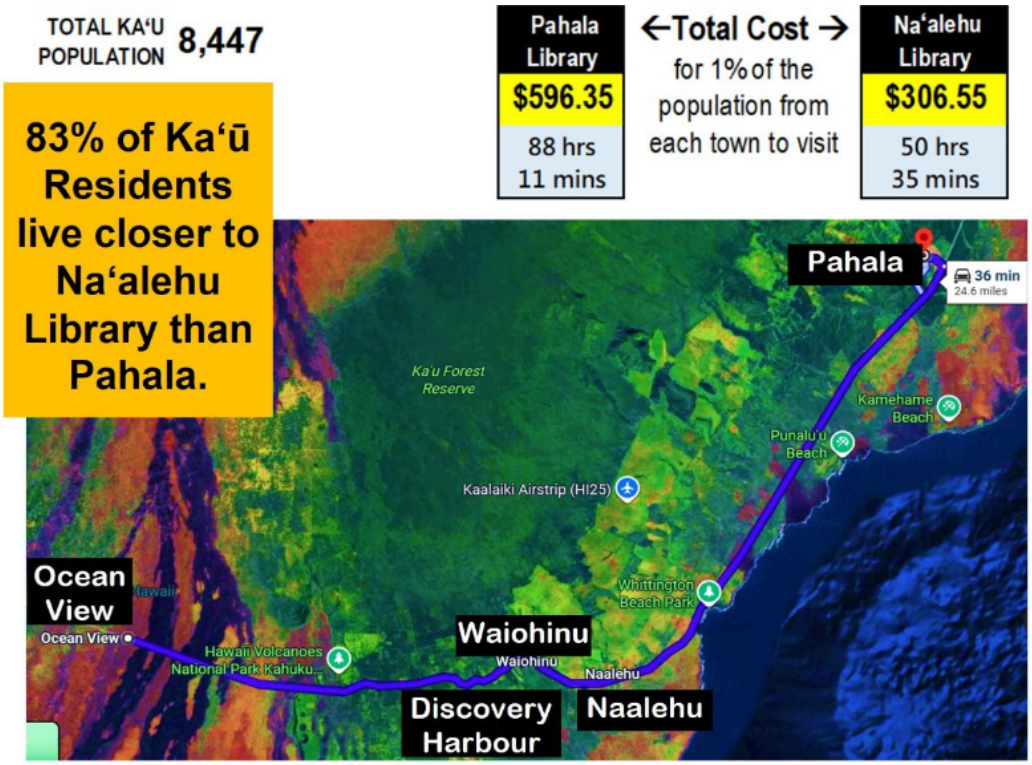


Figure submitted by commenter: total cost comparison and route map from Ocean View through Discovery Harbour, Waiohinu, and Naalehu to Pahala, noting that 83% of Ka'ū residents live closer to Na'alehu Library than Pahala.

A bigger, better library in Na'alehu has been on my wish list since I first became a teacher at Na'alehu Elementary School and discovered Na'alehu Library in 2007. It was in a double-wide and didn't even have a bathroom!

The Na'alehu Library has always gotten short shrift when it comes to facilities. Our local library needs to be larger and more functional. The land just south of Na'alehu Library is the *only* place the library can expand. The current design of interim housing project on that parcel of land threatens Na'alehu Library's future expansion, and would deal a crippling blow to the intellectual growth of this community.

Therefore, I implore the State of Hawai'i to design the interim housing project so that Na'alehu Library, the southernmost library in the U.S.A., can grow and adequately serve our remote, southern Big Island community.

Mahalo,
[Signature redacted]
Vanessa Ott

Comment 5 · Melissa Wheeler

Received	Monday, October 19, 2026
Subject	Naalehu Library housing proposal
Location	Na‘alehu, HI

Aloha, I am in full support of the **revised** design proposal to allow room for expansion of our library in Naalehu!
It would not impede the housing number, which we are desperately in need of here, and I think the design layout w/o a driving lane thru the middle makes complete sense. It would make the development a “neighborhood” encouraging all to feel like one, instead of individuals separate from one another.

I live in Naalehu, my address and phone in the footer below! *[Address and phone number redacted]*
Mahalo for your efforts!
Melissa

Comment 6 · A. Grace Cruz

Received	Tuesday, October 20, 2026
Subject	Naalehu Interim Disaster Housing Pre-Application Form : Linked Checkboxes Auto-populating
Addressed to	Department of Human Services staff (Mr. Campos and Ms. Bancaco) *[email addresses redacted]*; Community Voice

Aloha Mr. Campos and Ms. Bancaco,

Mahalo again for taking the time to meet with the Naalehu community and inform us about the temporary housing plans earlier this month. I don’t know if you remember me, but I asked a couple of questions about measures to prevent inflated living costs and whether the State had any plans to assist with the water situation in Punalu‘u.

Revised PDF Form Attachment - Checkbox Glitch

I wanted to bring to your attention that the current PDF form on the website is auto-populating responses across linked checkboxes. (Please see the attached video or screenshot below.) I updated the checkbox properties on a neighbor’s form so we could work around the issue. I’ve attached the revised form in case you’d like to use it to replace the version currently on the site. *[Attachments not included]*

Community Distribution Contact

I also wanted to share my contact information, as I’ve been working with several impacted residents and would like to make myself available as another community liaison. I’m a writer for our local newspaper, and I also have a distribution channel through my FB page, which has served as a community resource alongside other hubs during the disaster. *[Contact information redacted]*

Follow-Up re Punaluʻu Water

At the Naalehu community meeting on October 8, I asked whether the State had any potential solutions for one of our communities, which has now been without water for nine weeks.

Yesterday, October 19, Punaluʻu Water and Sanitation, LLC appeared before the Public Utilities Commission at a public meeting (Docket No. 2025-0167) to address the matter, and there remains no plan for restoring water service. The communities of Colony I and Kalana Estates continue to go without running water, with no resolution detailed for the near future. Do you know if there are any additional avenues for State support?

Mahalo again for all you do. I truly appreciate your work and am grateful to have leaders who care about the communities you serve. Mahalo in advance for your time and attention to this email.

Respectfully,
A.G. “Mandy” Cruz
Volunteer Neighbor-to-Neighbor Community Coordinator
[Phone number redacted]
Kaʻū Hurricane Relief & Recovery · Neighbors for Kaʻū