Nāʻālehu Interim Housing — Legislative Update
Oct 30, 2026

Item	Status as of October 30, 2026
Project	12 two-bedroom, one-bath interim homes for households displaced by Hurricane Lala
Location	Nāʻālehu Civic Center (State land), 95-5669 Māmalahoa Hwy, beside the public library
Homes delivered	12 of 12 on island
Applications	10 pre-applications received; 7 eligible for consideration with 1 additional household to apply (County of HI)
Key Ceremony	Friday, December 18th, 2026

October Update

- **Site work.** Civil plan finalized October 14; excavation and site utilities installation underway. Basalt rock closer to the surface than expected slowed excavation and has pushed the occupancy ready date from October 30 to December 18. This schedule is also dependent on weather conditions.
- **Homes.** 12 of 12 are on island.
- **Power.** HECO will extend service from Māmalahoa Highway with one new pole, which may require removing one tree and trimming another; every effort to avoid this requirement has been explored. DHS is seeking Library, DAGS and community agreement first. The service agreement is expected next week.
- **Permits.** Updated drawings are moving through the County's EPIC system, with fire, water and health coordination ongoing.



Excavation beside the library (left); basalt rock near the surface (right), October 2026.

Change to Site Layout The proposed site layout was thoughtfully designed to foster a sense of community, encourage connection among residents, and maximize the efficient use of available land and building space while accounting for existing site constraints. *Current site layout (left) compared with the previous layout (right).*



Resident Applications
The County has received 10 pre-applications for the 12 homes. While applications from eligible households remain below the number of available homes, the need for interim housing remains clear. Targeted outreach continues to connect with displaced and harder to reach families, particularly those temporarily staying in hotels or who have relocated outside of Kāʻū.

Who qualifies. Individuals and families displaced by Hurricane Lala; the County of Hawaiʻi determines eligibility and prioritizes housing need and vulnerability.

How to apply. Through the County of Hawaiʻi pre-application page: online or download the form and email or drop it off. After the pre application process County will conduct background checks and continue other housing and support resources.

After recovery. Interim workforce housing for educators and clinicians.

Community engagement
Residents weighed in at the October 8 meeting and in comments through October 20.

- Two major themes emerged and the team is addressing each:
  - Traffic on Māmalahoa Highway was one, and traffic calming is being raised with DOT.
  - The second concern was raised with support of the project but emphasized the need to preserve space for future library expansion. However, the existing septic leach field located directly behind the library presents site constraints that may limit opportunities for expansion.



- **Additional Outreach:** was scheduled for Monday, October 26 at Nāʻālehu Hongwanji. Community advocates and leaders have been identified to help reach displaced ʻohana and strengthen connections within the community. Community partners continue to identify housing needs that may not yet be reflected in the number of pre-applications received. Additional talk story sessions hosted by the County/DHS & Outreach team to families staying in hotels are planned for the coming week to help connect affected households with available housing and support resources.

- **What's next:** Library and Civic Center will be notified before the November 10–13 crane work, with a DOT public notice when homes are trucked in and Ironwood Tree removal and pruning.

How you can help

1. Refer displaced households to apply or reach out for assistance; Kaʻū families who call your office can apply or get help through the additional County pages.

2. Support traffic calming with DOT for Māmalahoa Highway at the site.