

Section 3.3 | Community Plan Map and Subareas

The community plan designations described in the previous section are applied to a map, known as the community plan map, to guide growth and preservation decisions throughout the planning period.

During individual project reviews, planners use the community plan map to determine if a project is compatible with the community's vision for that area. Likewise, developers and landowners must use this map and the community plan designations in the previous section to design their projects to meet the community's vision and needs.

The community plan map is also used to help the County plan for future services and infrastructure like roads, transit, water and wastewater systems, and parks.

For the purposes of this Plan, the South Maui community is divided into six subareas:

Subarea 1: Mā'alaea/Keālia

Subarea 2: North Kīhei

Subarea 3: South Kīhei

Subarea 4: Wailea

Subarea 5: Mākena

Subarea 6: 'Āhihi-Kīna'u/Kanaio

South Maui's linear shape results in each subarea varying in size, and all run mauka toward makai, with most development occurring within one mile of the coastline. They help to tell the story of South Maui by grouping communities together from north to south, with the majority of residents living in the North Kīhei, South Kīhei and Wailea subareas. These subarea delineations are not historical, political, or regulatory boundaries. It is also important to note that Kīhei is not a traditional place name, rather it is a remnant from the Kihei Sugar Plantation and associated camp and wharf in the region. Most [of](#) North Kīhei, [and](#) South Kīhei, ~~and Wailea~~ subareas are within the Kula moku, more specifically Kula Kai [and Wailea subarea spans Kula Kai and Honua'ula Moku](#).

Subarea 1: Mā'alaea/Keālia

Subarea 1 is located in the northwestern portion of the Community Plan area, bisecting the ahupua'a of Ukumehame and Waikapū. Its northern boundary borders Pōhākea Gulch then follows the coastline south along Honoapi'ilani Highway and North Kīhei Road until it reaches the southern end of Keālia National Wildlife Refuge. This roughly 5,000 acre subarea is largely unoccupied, containing only Mā'alaea Village and Harbor, with a population of 370 residents. Subarea 1 contains several recreational areas including portions of the historic Lāhainā Pali Trail traversing Kealaloloa Ridge, the Maui Ocean Center and the Keālia National Wildlife Refuge. Covering over 600 acres, the Refuge is one of the largest remaining natural wetlands and coastal salt marshes in the Hawaiian Islands¹⁰ and home to a variety of native and endangered water bird species. Meaning "the salt bed,"¹¹ the Keālia area was once used by Native Hawaiians in the production of salt.

¹⁰<https://www.fws.gov/testimony/hr-3176-kealia-pond-national-wildlife-refuge-hr-3292-cat-island-national-wildlife-refuge>

¹¹ Retrieved from ulukau.org

Subarea 2: North Kīhei

Covering over 17,000 acres, Subarea 2 is the largest geographical subarea. Its northern boundary borders Kūihelani Highway and to the south follows the Kūlanihākoʻi Gulch to the coast just north of the Kōʻieʻie Fishpond. Kūlanihākoʻi Gulch was named for the lake in the heavens that would overflow and fall to the earth as rain¹² and likely flowed into historic wetlands near the fishpond. Subarea 2 contains former Alexander and Baldwin sugar plantation lands, and this rich agricultural past is present today with some of the area still used for agricultural and ranching purposes. The coastal portion of Subarea 2 includes beaches and the Kenolio Recreational Complex, offering space for community events, meetings and recreational programs. Nestled between the mauka agricultural lands and beaches are mostly single-family homes; this subarea has a population of 9,170 residents.

¹² University of Hawaiʻi, Hilo. Wehewehe Hawaiian language resources. Retrieved from <https://hilo.hawaii.edu/wehe/?q=k%C5%ABlanih%C4%81koi>

Subarea 3: South Kihei

Subarea 3 covers roughly 6,400 acres [which includes portions of Ka'ono'ulu, Wai'ohuli, Kēōkea and Kama'ole Ahupua'a](#). Its northern boundary follows the lower portion of Kūlanihāko'i Gulch, and Kilohana Drive [and the southern edge of the Maui Meadows subdivision align with](#) ~~is~~ the southern boundary. Referred to as Kama'ole in the Kihei Civic Development Plan, which means "childless" or "barren",¹³ the name reflects the region's previously undeveloped inland character. Today, Subarea 3 is the commercial, service and residential center of the Plan area. It has a resident population over 17,000 and includes communities and planned developments mauka of Pi'ilani Highway. While Subarea 3 is the most populous, it maintains the characteristic small-town feel of the community plan area.

~~The [coastline](#) Subarea 3's coastline has many recreational resources, and its many beaches and [its](#) corresponding beach parks are popular with residents and visitors alike. It also contains wahi kūpuna resources like the active~~ [The most well known wahi kūpuna is Kalepolepo Fishpond. It is estimated Kalepolepo fishpond was built in the 1400s and was repaired in the late 1500s under the order of Umi-a-Līloa.¹⁴ During the repairs, Kō'ie'ie fishpond was renamed to Kalepolepo, \[literally\]\(#\) meaning "the dirt", ~~from all the dust rising in the air.~~ \[*this highlighted section deferred from June 21**\]\(#\)](#)

¹³ Retrieved from ulukau.org

¹⁴ Cordy, Ross (2000). *Exalted Sits the Chief*. Mutual Publishing: Honolulu.

Subarea 4: Wailea

~~Covering approximately 1,500 acres, Subarea 4 is the smallest in the community plan area. Its northern border runs along Kilohana Drive and to the south is bounded by Kauhaki Street. Described as the “City of Flowers” in the Kihei Civic Development Plan, Subarea 4 was developed as a master planned resort community and this legacy remains today. Subarea 4 is a popular visitor destination with many shops, resort hotels, and a golf course set inland from the many beaches and protected bays running along its coastline and a resident population of 1,380. The name “Wailea” comes from the ka’ao (legend) of the Hawaiian goddess of canoe builders, Lea, who appeared in the body of an ‘elepaio¹⁵ and would fly over this beautiful, beach filled portion of the coast. Thus, the area was known as “wai-Lea” or the “waters of Lea”.¹⁶~~

Subarea 4 covers approximately 1,500 acres and is the smallest subarea in the community plan. It spans the ahupua`a of Paeahu and part of Palaeua. Its northern border runs along Kilohana Drive, and its southern border is Kauhiki Street. Subarea 4 has a population of 1,380. It was planned as a resort community and this legacy remains.

Subarea 4 is a popular visitor destination with many shops, golf courses, and beaches and bays. Resort hotels also line the area with the capability of hosting conventions and conferences.

The original name for Wailea Beach, a popular beach for visitors, was Kahamanini. A beach abundant with fish and sought by fishermen of all types: net, pole, and spear. A sense of place can always be found in the original name of a place – Kahamanini, surgeon fish place – where one will find lots of fish.

¹⁵ Beckwith, M. Hawaiian Mythology. Retrieved from ulukau.org

¹⁶ Retrieved from ulukau.org

Subarea 5: Mākena

The southernmost populated portion of the community plan area, Subarea 5 covers approximately 4,000 acres. Its northern border is Kauhaki Street, and it extends just past [the end of the road after the 'Āhihi-Kīna'u/Kanaio Preserve parking lot](#). ~~Part of the Subarea 5 was once a~~ thriving Honua'ula coastal region [that traverses 10 ahupua`a, and, today Subarea 5](#) is home to roughly 100 residents. Mākena means “abundance.” The region’s name refers to the wealth of marine resources off the coast.¹⁷ Reminders of [some of Subarea 5’s historical past can be found today in the Palaua Cultural Reserve located in the subarea’s northern end and named for the ahupua`a it resides in](#) . The Reserve protects at least 14 native plant species and 13 archaeological complexes.¹⁸ ~~Subarea 5 also contains the~~ [The 1164.4-acre Mākena State Park spans Maluaka, Mo`oiki, Mo`oloa and Mo`omuku ahupua`a. It is](#) an extremely popular destination for residents and visitors ~~known for~~ [because of](#) its large white sand beach and prominent [cinder cone](#), Pu`u Ōla`i, ~~cinder cone~~, the tail of Puuoinaina.

In the 'Alalākeiki channel, between Kaho'olawe and the moku of Honua'ula, sits Molokini, a crescent shaped islet. One mo'olelo describes the origin of Molokini and Pu`u Ōla`i, as a mo`o (a large lizard or dragon) named Puuoinaina. Puuoinaina lived most of her life on Kaho'olawe, where she took two brothers as her husbands. Until one day she fell in love with Pele's lover, Lohiau, angering Pele. When Puuoinaina heard that Pele was angry with her, she ran into the sea. As Pele was on her way to visit Lohiau she came upon Puuoinaina stretching from Kaho'olawe to Mākena. Enraged with her rival, Pele cut Puuoinaina in two with her tail becoming Pu`u Ōla`i and her head becoming Molokini. ~~There is an effort to preserve and solidify this mo'olelo as a Traditional Cultural Property (TCP) with the National Park Service. An effort is being made to create a Traditional Cultural Property (TCP) that would include Molokini, the waters between Molokini and Pu`u Ōla`i, and a buffer zone inland of Pu`u Ōla`i. The National Park Service would be the entity to approve the designation.~~

¹⁷ Pukui et al. 1974:142. Retrieved from: https://mauicounty.gov/DocumentCenter/View/128302/080521-Agenda-Item_D1_Draft-AIS_May2021_Makena-State-Park-Improvements

¹⁸ Coleman, Holly K., Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Research Division. *Palaua*. Retrieved from: <https://19of32x2yl33s8o4xza0gf14-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/Palaua-Information-Sheet.pdf>

Subarea 6: 'Āhihi-Kīna'u/Kanaio

Subarea 6 is the southernmost portion of the community plan area and has no resident population (Socio-Economic Forecast Report, 2021). Most of the subarea is designated as Park or Open Space. It contains an abundance of wahi kūpuna (inclusive of natural [marine, and cultural](#) resources) including the 'Āhihi-Kīna'u Natural Area Reserve, Keone'ō'io Bay and portions of the Hoapili Trail. The 1,238-acre 'Āhihi-Kīna'u Natural [Area](#) Reserve was the first Natural Reserve Area designated in the state. It contains marine ecosystems with healthy coral reefs, rare anchialine ponds, dry land forest, numerous archaeological sites, and lava fields from Haleakalā's last eruption 200-500 years ago. Keone'ō'io Bay, or La Pérouse Bay, was where the first European, La Pérouse, stepped foot on Maui's shores. Today, the area around the bay contains remnants of coastal settlements, heiau and some of the most well-preserved portions of Hoapili Trail.