

# REFUGEE RESPONSE TEAM

Thompson Okanagan & Kootenays

## East Kootenay Long Term Newcomer Housing Discussion

Minutes  
Wednesday, January 11, 2023  
Videoconference

### Attendees:

Desneiges Profili- CBAL  
Carolyn Amantea- CBAL  
Andra Louie- CBAL  
Jennifer Pratschke- CBAL  
Tais Lintz- CBAL  
Gillian Wells- CBAL  
Kaitlin McKenna- CBAL  
Chrisy Hill- CBAL  
Patty Villasenor- CBAL  
Katherine Hamilton- CBAL  
Kim Weatherall- CBAL  
Pete Bourke- Columbia Valley Housing Society  
Joy Guyot- Town of Golden  
Ron Oszust- Town of Golden  
Jill Dewtie- Golden Community Economic Development  
Jill Sadler- College of the Rockies  
John Manuel- Town of Golden  
Michelle Taylor- College of the Rockies  
Ute Juras- Family Dynamics  
Karen Cathcart- Columbia Shuswap Regional District  
Wesley Routley- Town of Golden  
Thibault Leconte- Intern Architect Cranbrook  
Ben Green- Green Door Property Management  
Kyla Lam- Columbia Valley Housing Society  
Richard Dale- Town of Golden  
Phil Armstrong- Town of Golden  
Brenda Draper- Creston Valley Ministerial  
Donna Fields- United Way



WelcomeBC

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Province of British Columbia through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs.



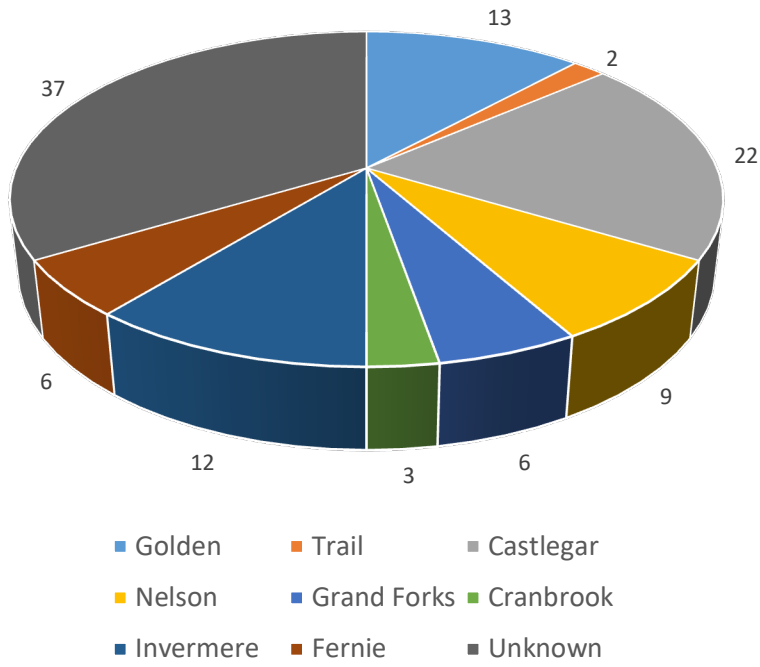
## Activity 1- Challenges

The attendees discuss the main challenges for newcomers when seeking housing. Below is a list of the common challenges identified by the attendees:

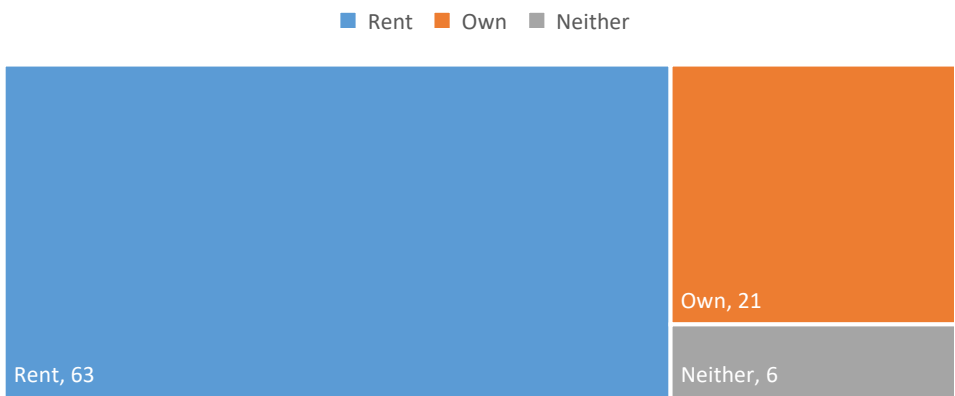
- Lack of housing availability
- Cost of housing (utilities plus already inflated rent)
- Lack of references
- Airbnbs
- Lack of credit for utilities and for credit check for rentals
- Living wage not being provided
- Lack of downpayment
- BC Housing restrictions on who can apply
- Limitations placed on renters (types of food to cook, access to amenities, etc)
- Language and cultural barriers
- Pets
- Discrimination/racism
- Access to information on availability, processes and subsidies
- Challenges attracting developers to invest and build more homes
- Location of housing in relation to work, transportation and other key services
- Quality of rentals
- Restrictions on how many people can live in rentals
- Lack of availability for homes to accommodate families
- Short term rentals are discouraged or not at all available
- Lack of information or awareness of renter rights and landlord responsibilities
- Too much information that is scattered across multiple platforms

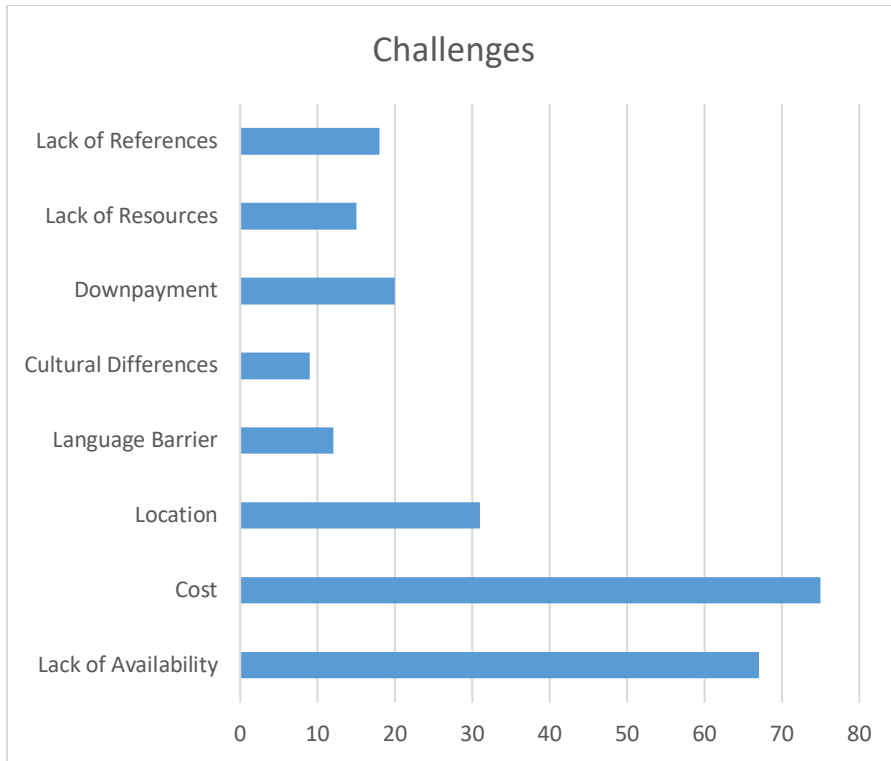
CBAL shared the challenges as identified in a survey of 90 newcomers from across the Basin and Boundary.

### Respondent Locations



### Rent/Own/Other





## Activity 2- Resources

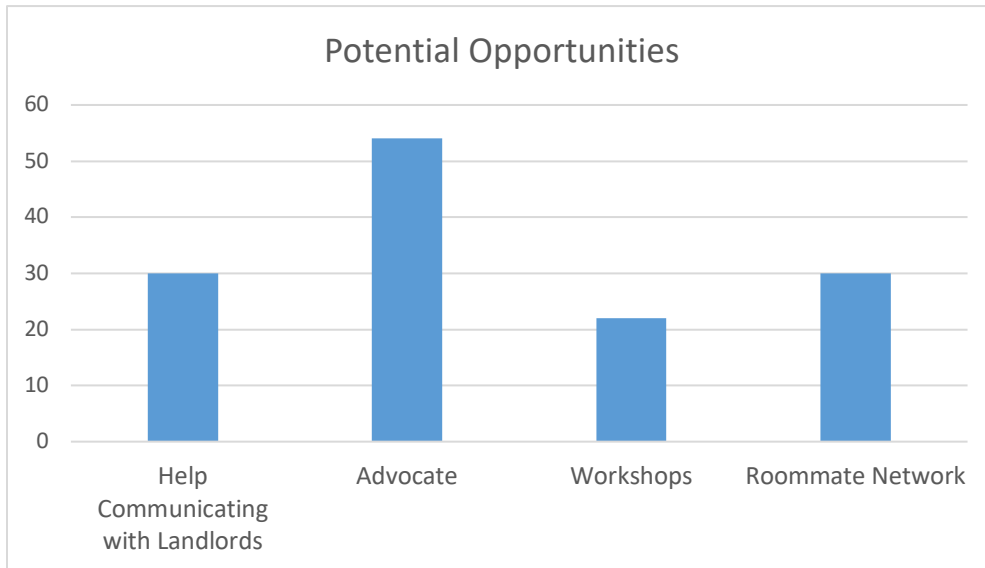
With the wide array of resources available across the region, attendees identified the key resources that are currently available in the region to support newcomers. Below is a summary of the resources:

- New Canada Housing Benefit
- BC211 United way <https://bc211.ca>
- Invermere Community Groups: Family Dynamix, Lakeview Manor and CV Housing
- Rental Assistance Program
- <https://www.bchousing.org>
- [www.bchousing.org/calculator](https://www.bchousing.org/calculator)
- Facebook market groups- Fernie, Golden
- Realtors
- Fernie Family Housing
- United Way
- Salvation Army
- Community refugee teams
- Community spirit and willingness to come together and support newcomers
- Churches
- Settlement program- CBAL <https://cbal.org/settlement-services/>
- Golden Economic Development Housing Guide- <https://goldenced.ca/living-and-working/finding-housing/>

- The RNIP website has a great orientation page:  
[https://www.canva.com/design/DAFNilo34Qo/XtHpW\\_JE10PpoU4DAAI-9g/view#1](https://www.canva.com/design/DAFNilo34Qo/XtHpW_JE10PpoU4DAAI-9g/view#1)
- Columbia Valley Housing Society- <https://cvhousingsociety.ca>

### Activity 3: Needs and Opportunities

Understanding there are a wide variety and diverse needs of newcomers, CBAL asked survey respondents to identify actions/resources that would have helped to bridge the gap.



Attendees used breakout rooms based on community to identify potential opportunities or actions that could help to make the difference for newcomers to overcome housing challenges.

The following is a list of cumulative list of potential opportunities that exist. This listing is based on priority as identified in discussions within the breakout session.

Opportunity	Description	Potential Partnerships
Workshops & Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide newcomers with a series of workshops focusing on tenancy rights, building relationships with landlords, housing research, applying for rentals, caring for home and conflict resolution</li> <li>• Provide information and resources for landlords on cultural agility</li> </ul>	<p>Settlement agency, property management, advocacy centres, community services, employment agencies and other local community groups with expertise in these areas.</p> <p>Settlement agency, property management agencies, local community members, municipalities and housing coalitions.</p>

<p>Advocacy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide information and resources to newcomers about the housing process</li> <li>• Assist in building relationships between newcomers and landlords, but also access and referrals to other community housing programs</li> <li>• Create a better relationships with landlords, builders and property management companies- get them to begin to contact you with opportunities</li> </ul>	<p>Settlement agency, local advocacy groups and agencies that have services specific to housing.</p> <p>Settlement agency, housing groups, property management companies</p>
<p>Building Networks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revive or build on existing community refugee networks that have dedicated teams with in-depth experience.</li> </ul>	<p>Settlement, community groups and community members.</p>

**Follow Up**

CBAL will connect with attendees via email and attendees will be asked to complete a survey. This survey will seek to identify those parties willing and interested to take part in future discussions and activities.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 pm MST.