



PHUENTSHOLING THROMDE

SEPTEMBER 2022

ANNUAL BULLETIN

Our yearly overview & activities update



Clean & Liveable Phuentsholing

PREFACE

Phuentsholing Thromde is pleased to come up with an annual bulletin for the financial year 2021-2022 in compliance with the Local Government Act 2009. It encapsulates both the success stories and the challenges confronted in the wake of a pandemic. This report shall also take readers through a number of planned activities, adhoc assignments and deposit works executed by Thromde with financial support from the RGoB and the donor agencies.

The pandemic has put Phuentsholing into lockdown several times since the year 2020 and marked the history of unprecedented diminution in terms of growth and development. The pandemic has instigated serious issues in developmental activities including labour shortage, lack of expertise and shortage of construction materials. The first-ever lockdown was imposed from 11th August to 8th September 2020 while the second lockdown started on 23rd December 2020 and ended only on 16th January 2021. The 3rd and the complete lockdown happened from 6th April till 27th June 2021. In FY 2021-2022, Phuentsholing had to undergo two lockdowns and one blackout period. The first lockdown was imposed from 8th July 2021 till 10th August 2021 followed by 72 hours blackout from 7th January to 9th January 2022. The 2nd lockdown started on 16th January 2022 and ended on 13th March 2022.

During the pandemic, in our joint effort to combat the pandemic, our staff were assigned with the covid 19 management duties over their professional task. To address the labour shortage and continue the operation of developmental activities, Thromde made every effort to localize the skilled labour but laborers lacked the required skills to take up the projects and those with skills did not show their interest because of the mandatory quarantine they had to undergo. Nevertheless, despite all challenges imposed by the pandemic, Thromde has exceptionally exhibited its perseverance in the face of the pandemic and has championed executing most of the planned and adhoc activities.



Uttar Kumar Rai
Thrompon
Phuentsholing Thromde

Covid 19 has left mean footprints on our effort in shaping Phuentsholing thromde but with the ease of lockdown and covid 19 waning out, we are optimistic that under the guidance of the visionary leader, His Majesty the King and with the economic resilience plans in place, our economy revives before too long.

Happy reading and Tashi Delek

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BACKGROUND

Phuentsholing is the country's oldest city and the second largest town in Bhutan located in the southern foothills along the embankment of Ammochhu, Omchhu and Barsachhu. The city is truly described as the economic capital of the country which shares the Bhutan-Indian border separating the two countries. The strategically located town flourishes huge trading transactions and businesses making it the country's biggest commercial hub.

After Bhutan opened to modernization with the first five-year plans in 1961 and with a series of national economic development plans, Phuentsholing grew at an unprecedented rate leading to the preparation of the first Development Plan in 1987. The first Phuentsholing Structure plan (1987-2001) was prepared by National Urban Development Corporation (NUDC). Since then, 'the town' started to take its shape with unparalleled growth in terms of improved social infrastructure while the businesses started mushrooming due to its commercial viability.

Phuentsholing is also the domicile for many regional offices and is home to people from all walks of life. It is an abode where entrepreneurs and business individuals thrive in since businesses are advantaged by being in close proximity to India. Large populations can also be attributed to the availability of modern amenities which facilitate seamless businesses. Beside commercial centre, Phuentsholing also has the potential to become a recreational hub and ecotourism spot.

Phuentsholing Thromde (municipality) is one of the four big municipalities in Bhutan. It was first instituted as Phuentsholing City Corporation in 1983 under Chukha District. In 2011 Phuentsholing City Corporation became one of the Local Government bodies aptly known as Thromde in accordance with the Local Government Act of Bhutan, 2009. Phuentsholing Thromde elected its first ever Mayor who is known as Thrompon and six members called *Thuemi*. The limited Thromde area of 15.6 sq km houses a population of 25,918 (Source: CHCP by RIGSS 2021) against the carrying capacity of 85947.

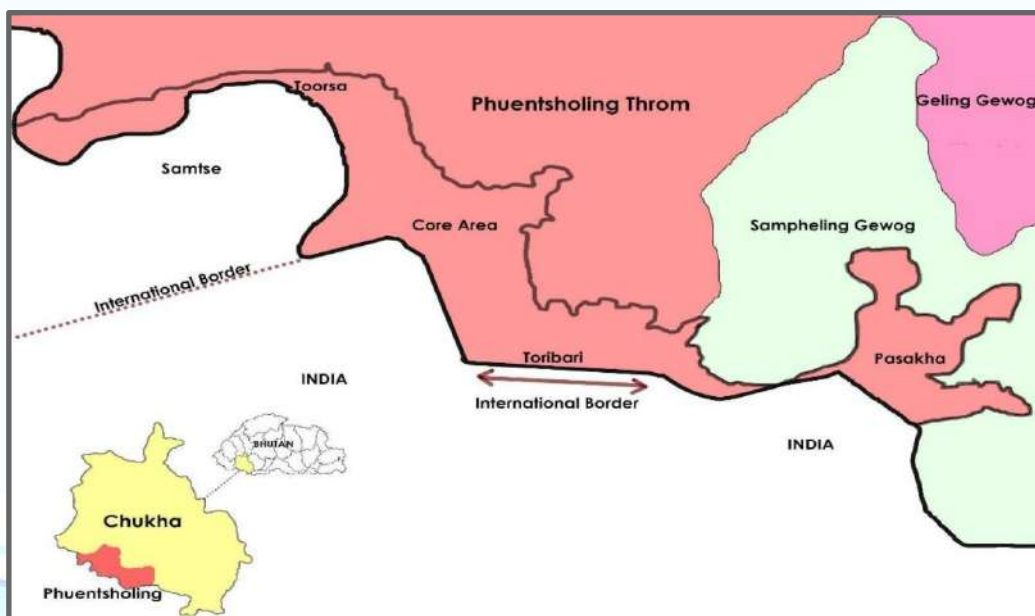


Figure 1: Thromde Map

This annual report consists of two main broad categories, viz. major events and achievements; and the annual financial state of Phuentsholing Thromde. Further, readers will be taken through a number of ad hoc activities executed over and above the planned activities notwithstanding the issues and challenges effectuated by the COVID-19 pandemic in achieving the set target.

VISION, MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

Vision:

A responsive city offering its residents a clean and liveable environment with comprehensive quality services that nurture rich traditional and cultural values and enhance a vibrant commercial atmosphere.

Mission:

To be a vibrant and dynamic Local Government by ensuring the provision of municipal services and socio-economic infrastructures and facilities to make Phuentsholing Thromde an ideal place to live, work and play

Objectives:

- 1) To enhance carbon neutral, climate and disaster resilient development.
- 2) To improve the quality of education & skills.
- 3) To enhance transparent, effective and efficient public service delivery.
- 4) To be transparent, accountable and build a culture of integrity.
- 5) To improve the liveability, safety and sustainability of human settlements.
- 6) To strengthen evidence-based decision and data culture.
- 7) To involve the community as stakeholders and work with markets.

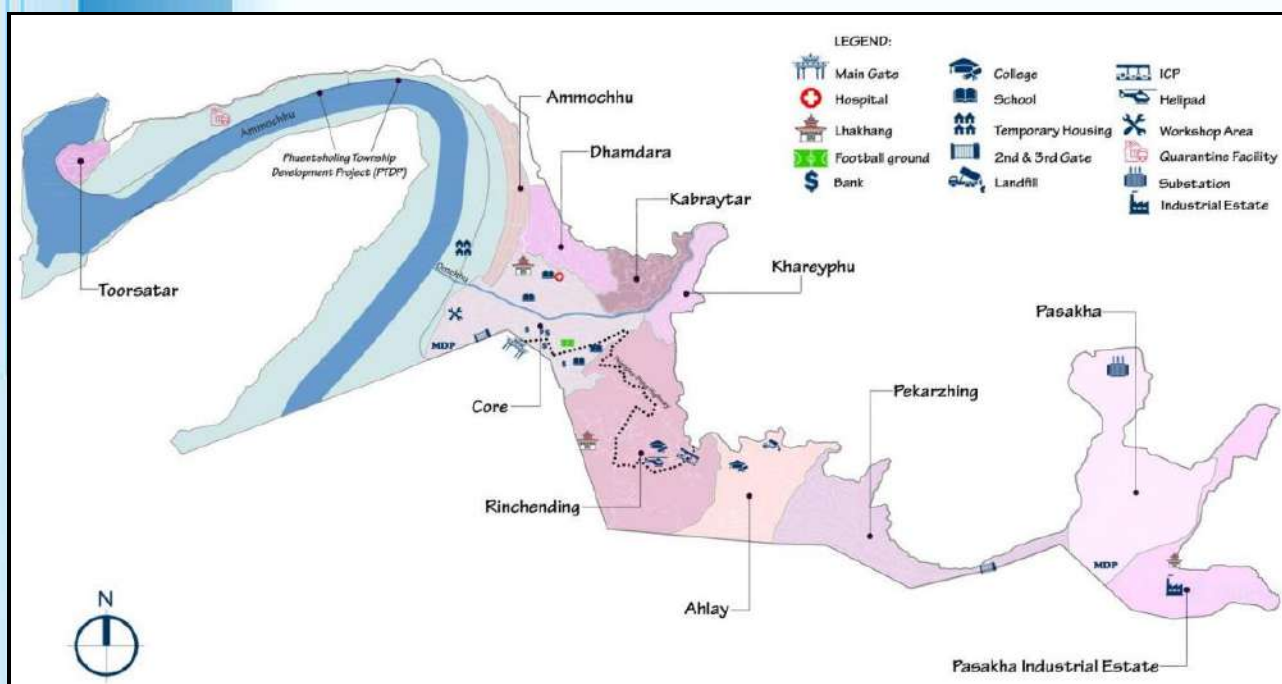
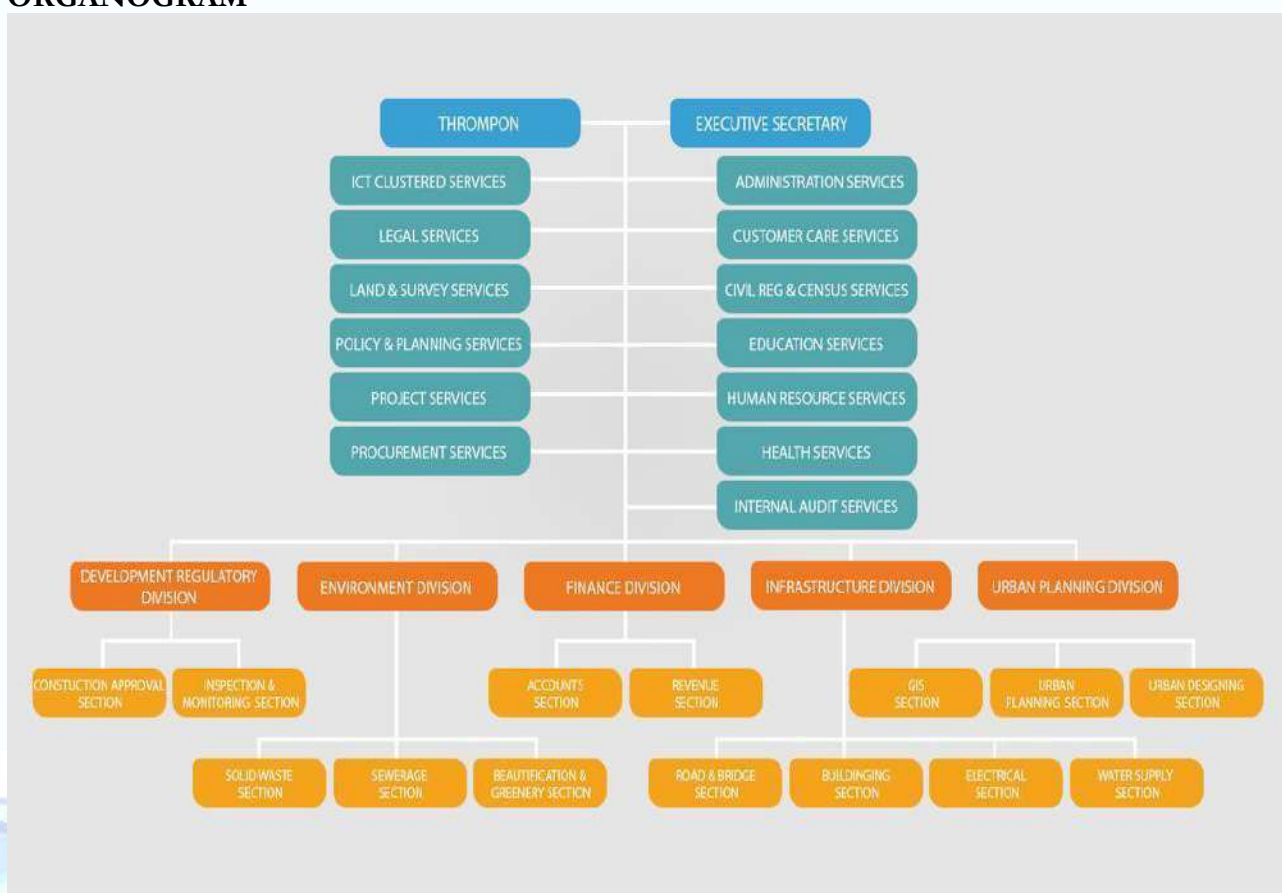


Figure 2: Thromde at a glance

ORGANOGRAM



Area by LAP and region

Sl.no	Area	Area (acre)	Area (sq km)
1	Ahlay	286.7	1.2
2	Ammochhu Chamkuna	2420.7	9.8
3	Core	460.4	1.9
4	Dhamdara	147.4	0.6
5	Kabreytar	134.3	0.5
6	Khareyphu	97.3	0.4
7	Pasakha	585.8	2.4
8	Pasakha Industrial Estate	328.2	1.3
9	Pekarzhing	356.3	1.4
10	Peri-urban Phuentsholing Gewog	112.8	0.5
11	Peri-urban Sampheling Gewog	43.8	0.2
12	Rinchending	667.0	2.7
13	Toorsatar	50.6	0.2
	Total	5691.4	23.0

Source: Comprehensive Household Census of Phuentsholing Thromde & Peri-urban Areas Report by RIGSS, 2021

THROMDE STAFF (AS OF JUNE 2022)

Sl. No.	Type	Male	Female	Total
1	Elected members	5	2	7
2	Regular staff	61	33	94
3	Contract staff	17	8	29
4	Master roll employee	108	25	133
	Total Staff	191	68	259

SUMMARY OF CAPITAL BUDGET IN THE FY 2021-2022

Sl. No.	Source of funding	Total budget (in million)
1	RGoB (Capital grant)	365.507
2	Water Flagship Program (WFP)	57.5
3	Asian Development Bank (ADB)	40.41
4	Small Development Project (SDP)	177.19
	Total	640.60

Key Achievements and Events

EDUCATION

1.1. Construction of Principal Quarter at PHSS

The construction which was started in the FY 2020-2021 was completed in all aspects and handed over to the Thromde in the FY year 2021-2022. The activity was executed at the cost of Nu. 2.45m.



1.2. Youth Action Plan



School is an avenue where school-going children learn not just academic aspects but also the values, skills and attitudes required for their future endeavours. Besides, students are also given the opportunity and platform to exhibit their inborn talents, skills and aptitudes. Therefore, to cater to all the expected aspects of life, it's important that teachers prepare our younger generation to be stronger and more

resilient. Hence in preparation for how our children want the way we want, providing them the guidance and interventions at the right time at the right age to the schools' leaders and representatives is of utmost importance.

The school management heads, viz. the pastoral care head, academic head, education program head and school curricular head coordinated the program. During the event, the areas focused on were:

- **Leadership orientation**—Overall management of student's welfare, the roles and responsibilities of a student's leaders as a bridge between students and the management.
- **Academic aspects** – Deliberating the importance of education and responsibilities as a leader.
- **Student's welfare**—Informing that teachers and support staff are there to provide necessary support and assistance during difficult times, especially with regard to stress management.
- **Educational programs in the school** – Besides the normal school academic aspects, there are many other activities that help students grow professionally and academically.



1.3. Scouting Activities

As per the mandates from the Bhutan Scout Association, Phuentsholing Thromde Scouts Association has conducted BULT for teachers in Phuentsholing Thromde from classes PP to VI. The five days BULT began on 28th April 2022 and ended on 2nd May 2022. The training was a grand success and both the parties-trainers and facilitators benefited a lot through the program.



Scouting is a program that provides opportunities for the participants to enhance their personal

growth and development to become better citizens. In Bhutan, scouting was once a voluntary program where only the interested one can take part in it. Today the program found more of its beneficiary than its drawbacks and made it a whole school approach program.



The training helped the participants gain hands-on experiences while familiarizing themselves with the terms and terminologies used in scouting. They also grasped the in-depth meaning and significance of scout ideals. Further, the participants were educated on camp rules, scout laws, scout promise, scout motto, and Scout slogan. The presentation on the history of scouting was made and the program also included the theory on the fundamentals of scouting, why scouting? What is a religion to you? Scouting and religion, eight-fold paths. Participants actively participated in the theory session about elements of badges, a section on scouting, flag hoisting and lowering. The program was concluded with the "Whole School Approach Scouting Program " which is imperative to carry out any scouting activities considering the holistic development of the young learners.

1.4. Development of ECCD

The Thromde with the support from UNICEF and RGoB has completed setting up ECCD at the Integrated Vegetable Market (IVM) in 2020. JICA through private volunteers has supported the following equipment and materials for the ECCD.

Sl. No.	Items	Quantity	Amount
1	Air conditioner 1.5 tonne	13	472420
2.	LCD Screen 48"	2	104000
3.	Desktop low end	1	49980
4.	Printer	1	13675
5.	Bookshelves	3	28332
6.	Almirah	1	8944
7.	Half secretariat table	3	20832
8.	Visitors chair with arm	6	13464
9.	Refrigerator double door	1	29850
10.	Micro oven	1	9950
11.	Swing bucket with rope	3	5100
12.	Radio and Mic	1	10000
13.	Seesaw	3	24000
14.	Tri cycle	3	11400
15	Slides	4	62000
Total			863947

In addition, Thromde has also procured the entire essential items for the ECCD to function. In FY 2021-2022, additional works such as the installation of age-appropriate toilets, water tanks, play areas, etc were carried out.



CIVIL

2.1. Dzongkha Development Program

On 2nd November 2021, the Thromde education office and human resource section in collaboration with different schools coordinated Dzongkha reading and writing competitions in different schools. The reading competition was conducted from class PP to III while the essay writing competition was conducted in two groups, class IV-V and class VI-VII. The top three from all categories were awarded prizes and certificates.



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HEALTH

3.1. Dengue and other Vector-borne Disease Prevention Activities

Frequent outbreaks of vector-borne diseases have been reported from the diseases, a number of awareness programs, and vector inspectors and insect collectors. has conducted two rounds of thermal fogging. The activities were amount of Nu.0.600 million.



borne diseases like dengue and other Phuentsholing and to prevent people programs were initiated such as surveillance training for Sanitary Further, the Thromde Health Office Indoor Residual Spray (IRS) and carried out with the approved



3.2. HIV/AIDS and STI Prevention in 6 Demkhong

Thromde Health Section in collaboration with Phuentsholing Hospital carried out HIV/AIDS and STI advocacy and voluntary screening/testing to observe world AIDS day 2021 from 19/11/2021 to 7/12/2021.

The program was initiated to:

- ✓ Educate the public on the importance of prevention, mode of transmission, timely



diagnosis, care and treatment for HIV and STIs including viral hepatitis B and C.

- ✓ To ensure greater participation of our communities in responding towards the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS and subsequently to let our people know their HIV status on time for timely care, support and treatment.
- ✓ To link those diagnosed with HIV/STIs and other medical health conditions with appropriate care, support and treatment.

The Health Information and Service Centre (HISC) Phuentsholing mobilized the required number of test kits (HIV, Hepatitis B and Syphilis) from the buffer stock maintained by HISC, Phuentsholing at Phuentsholing general hospital. In line with COVID-19 safety protocol, a large gathering of people was restricted and the team visited the work site of the targeted population and carried out the campaign. Out of 1007 samples, 11 cases of syphilis and 6 cases of hepatitis were detected. The sample was collected and shifted to HISC for testing.



URBAN PLANNING DIVISION

4.1. Revision of Detailed Project Report (DPR) for Omchhu

The city of Phuentsholing has been adversely affected by floods and river bank erosion from Omchhu every year causing severe damages to adjoining land and threats to infrastructure and lives. The increasing hazards due to climate change including those in the upper catchment will be the main impediments to the sustainable development of the important and growing city. The Thromde has given high priority to the implementation of protection works, which are capable of withstanding high floods. The Thromde is also interested in protecting the Omchhu catchment, restoring the river environment and developing a landscape in harmony with the growth of the city, nature and culture. Accordingly, the project, 'Hydrological Modelling of Omchhu including Engineering Solutions, Detailed Design and Drawings of Mitigation Structures with Landscape Design' was prepared by the local consultant (Gyaltshen Consultant) through the NAPA-II project funded by United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Bhutan. The assignment covered a detailed hydrological and watershed management study for flood hazard mitigation from Omchhu river including the design and drawing of mitigation structures. The DPR was completed in January 2018.

The DPR was then submitted to ADB seeking funds for the implementation of the said project. ADB, however, urged PT to revise the DPR in order for the project to be potentially considered for ADB funds on the following key grounds:

- The hydraulic analyses in the DPR omitted two new bridge structures which were being constructed across the river, comprising the Omchhu bridge near the YDF building and the curvilinear bridge (NBR-II bridge) near the crocodile farm. Updated hydraulic modelling, including the two structures, was recommended.

- More robust engineering designs should be developed for the in-river structures to address the ongoing maintenance issues experienced with the existing structures.
- Sustainable riverfront development plans that will socially and economically benefit the community.

Therefore, the 'Revision of Omchhu DPR' was initiated to address the recommendations given by ADB with the following objectives:

- a. To incorporate comments and suggestions given by ADB.
- b. To come up with a robust and long-term climate resilient flood protection scheme along the specified reach of the Omchhu based on the revised hydraulic analysis (Egis, 2020) and new geotechnical investigations.
- c. To reclaim the land to the extent possible as per site conditions for riverfront development.
- d. To come up with a pragmatic and sustainable riverfront development master plan that will benefit the community socially and economically and shall enhance community vitality and attract tourists.

The report was prepared in line with the list of deliverables for the consulting assignment on 'Revision of Detailed Project Report for Omchhu'. The contract was awarded to the APECS Consultant on 29th November 2021 and the effective contract period was 180 days. However, a series of lockdowns resulted in a halt to the work. Therefore, the completion date was revised at a later date. The report covers the following scopes:

1. Topographic survey.
2. Geological and geotechnical investigations.
3. Assessment of existing structures (including embankments, retaining walls, etc).
4. Flood protection scheme issues, objectives and design criteria.
5. Mitigation measures option assessment.
6. Detail infrastructure designs and drawings.
7. Preparation of a Bill of Quantities and a cost estimate.
8. A pragmatic riverfront development master plan with 2D and 3D models along with details and working drawings with a minimum of two case studies (international best practices) relevant to the assignment.

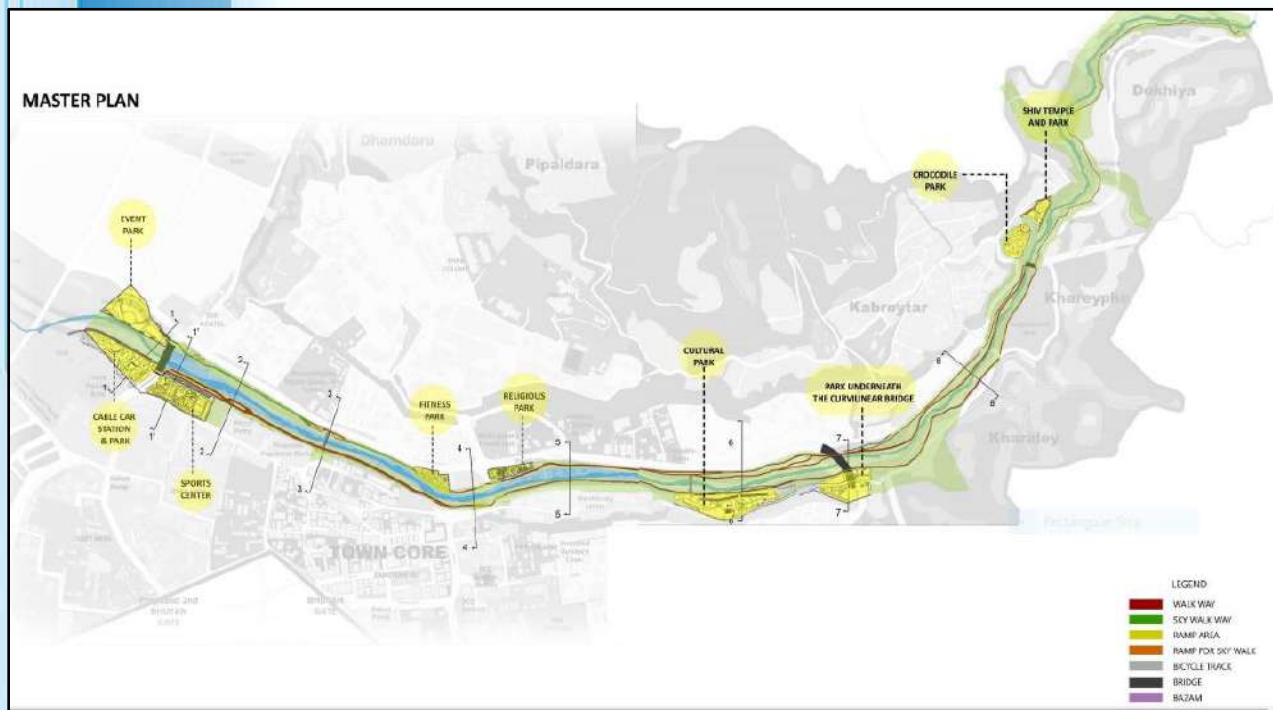


Figure 3: A master plan of the Riverfront Development Plan along the entire Omchhu.



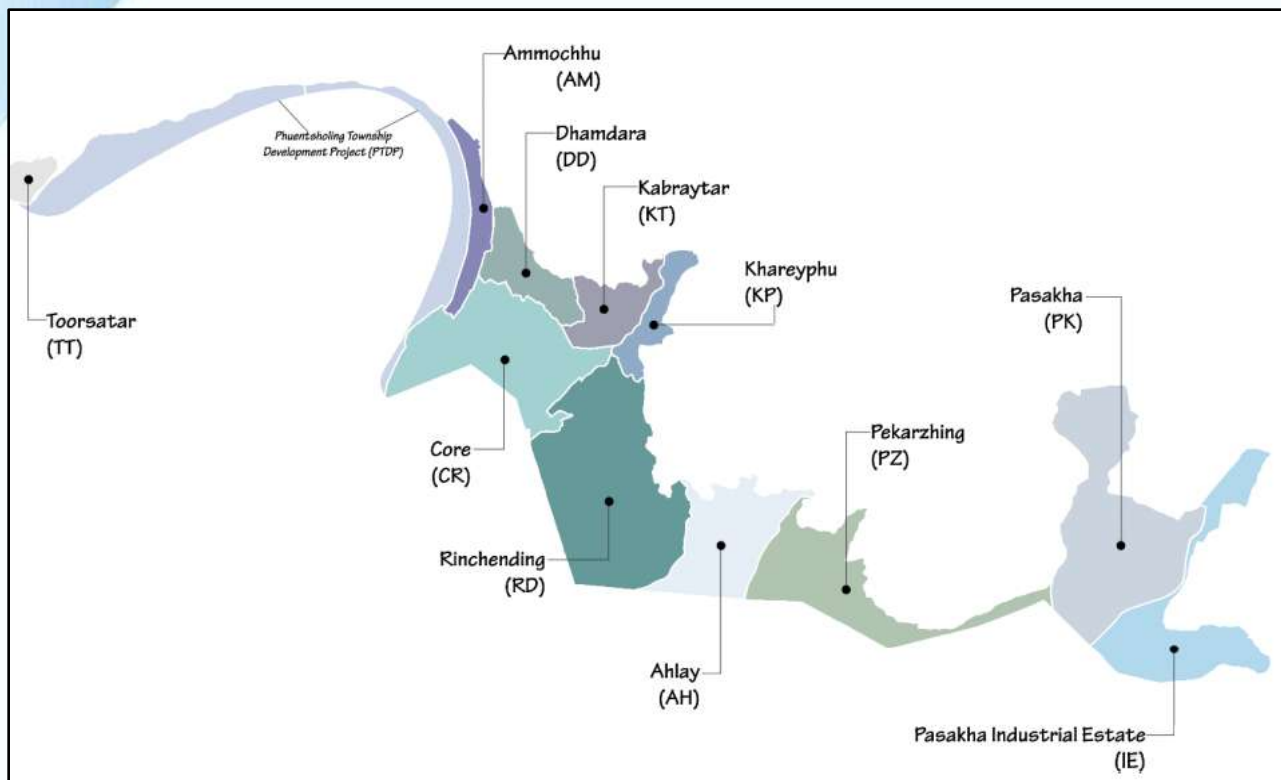
Figure 4: A 3D landscaping of the Riverfront Development Plan along the entire Omchhu.

4.2. GIS updation of infrastructure network and city addressing system

In view of the need to have a uniform addressing, Phuentsholing Thromde came up with a ‘Street Addressing Framework’ to implement street addressing in the year 2018. However, it was not implemented. The need for city addressing was never felt more than now due to the COVID-19 pandemic. To minimize contacts, movements were restricted, and services were home-delivered. However, the lack of proper address made it difficult for the service providers and health care workers to deliver the services. Phuentsholing Thromde City Addressing Guideline was thus prepared in-house to tackle these limitations. The document was prepared by researching relevant international addressing practices and contextualizing to our context.

City addressing was initiated with the objectives to develop a guideline for naming the streets, develop a guideline for numbering buildings and units, develop a guideline for installation of street signs and building and unit numbers and develop a guideline for the management of the City Addressing System.

Guidelines for numbering buildings, the extract from the city addressing system



To help in identifying the location of the building, building numbers shall be prefixed with two letters representing the Local Area Plan in which it sits. For uniformity, the following prefixes shall be used.

Every Cadastral plot is considered as a building for building numbering and the future reservation is resolved by giving a suffix letter to the number in cases where the plots are fragmented. In cases where more than one registered cadastral building receives against the plots buildings will have to the assigned shall be numbered odd number on the left from the starting and shall not be street. For buildings compounds, the a numerical suffix assigned cadastral plot as a hyphen symbol. Ex streets forming a buildings shall be from the starting considering the odd rule.

For consecutive shall be reserved. more buildings are plot, then the

from the previous plot shall be assigned with the reserved number and numbering shall take consecutive alphabetical suffixes. For buildings on multiple plots, the lower consecutive number shall be displayed. However, both plots shall be assigned individual addresses. For a cul-de-sac, consecutive numbering in a clockwise direction from the starting point of the street shall be done. Ancillary buildings such as private garages, stores, kitchens, and toilets that function as a part of the main structure shall not be provided with a building number. The letter 'O' should be avoided in naming zones to avoid confusion with the number '0' Ex: CR instead of CO xi. Illegal buildings shall not be numbered. With no access road, the building shall have consecutive alphabetical suffixes assigned in a clockwise direction from the footpath. For a plot with an individual access street, the numbering of the building shall be done from the main street and not the access street. The building number shall be mounted on a post on the main street.



building exists on a plot, the first the number issued and the subsequent an alphabetical suffix number. Buildings sequentially by an left side and an even side commencing point of the street repeated on the same within enclosed numbering shall have following the address considering the building divided by a – CR-27-1. For closed loop, the numbered clockwise point of the loop, and even numbering undeveloped plots, a building number However, if two or built on the same consecutive building

The sample of building number, unit number and street name are given below.

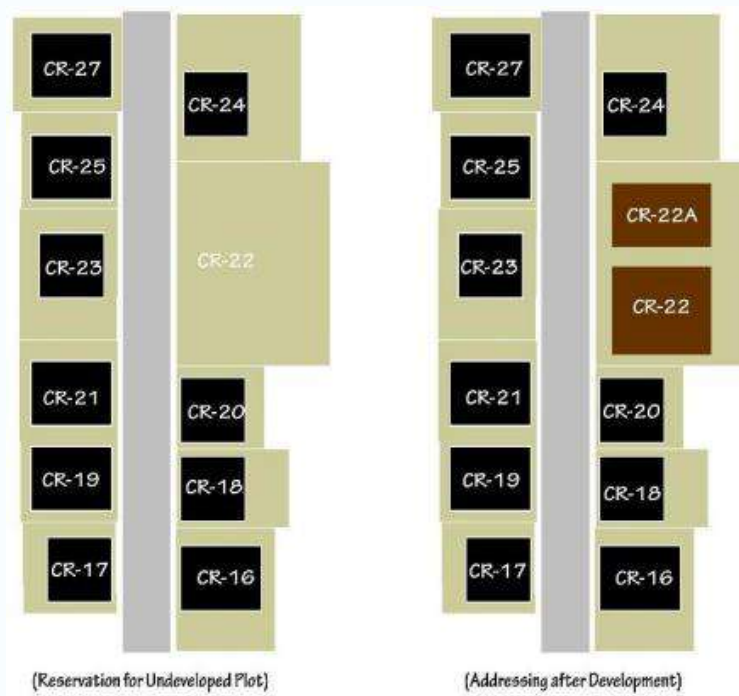
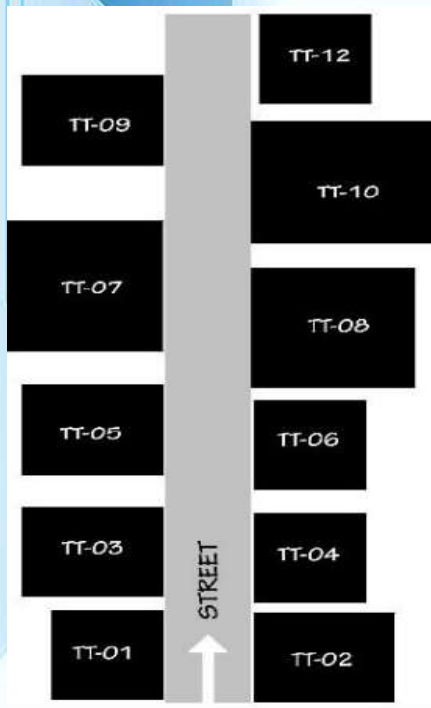


Figure 5: Odd-even building number

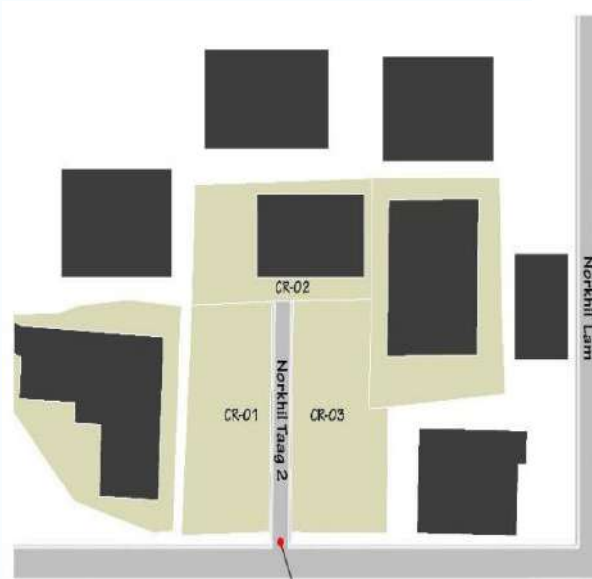


Figure 6: Building number for reserved plot

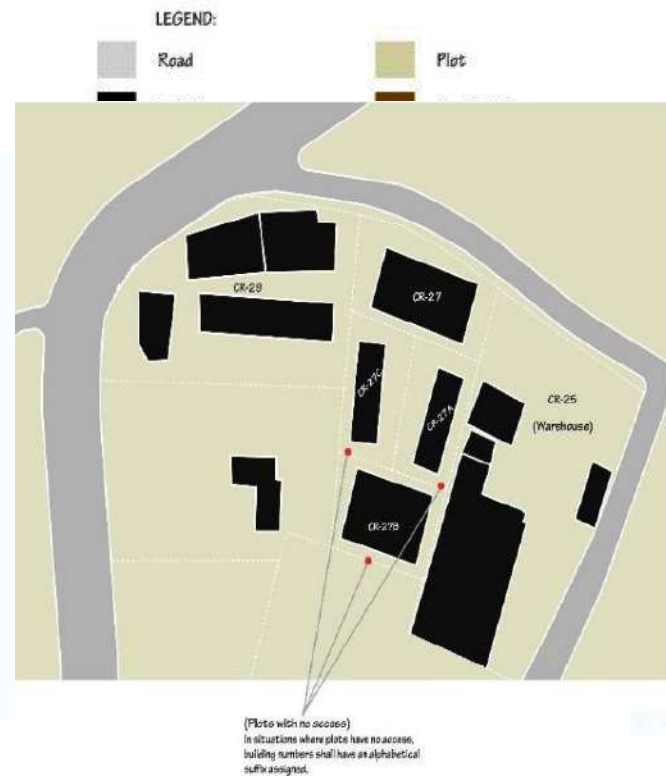


Figure 7: Number of buildings in a cul-de-sac

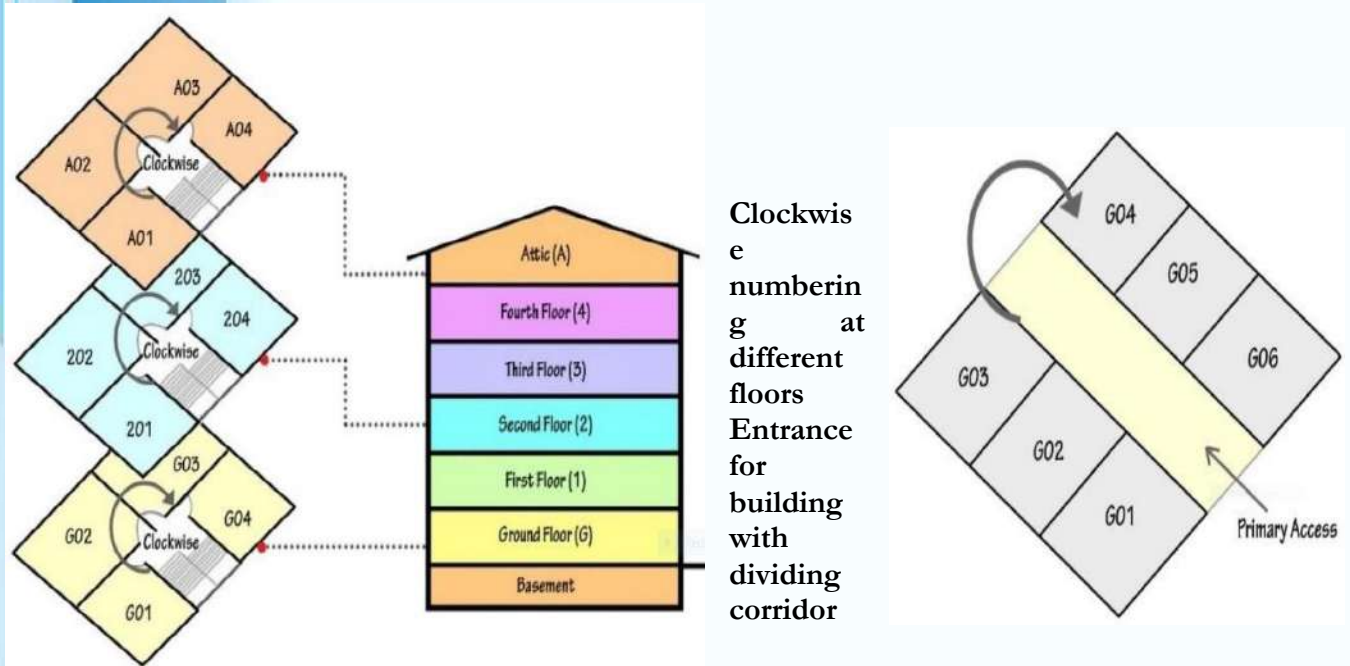


Figure 8: Building numbering syntax

G01, KT1, Kabray Lam

Unit number Building number Street/Road name

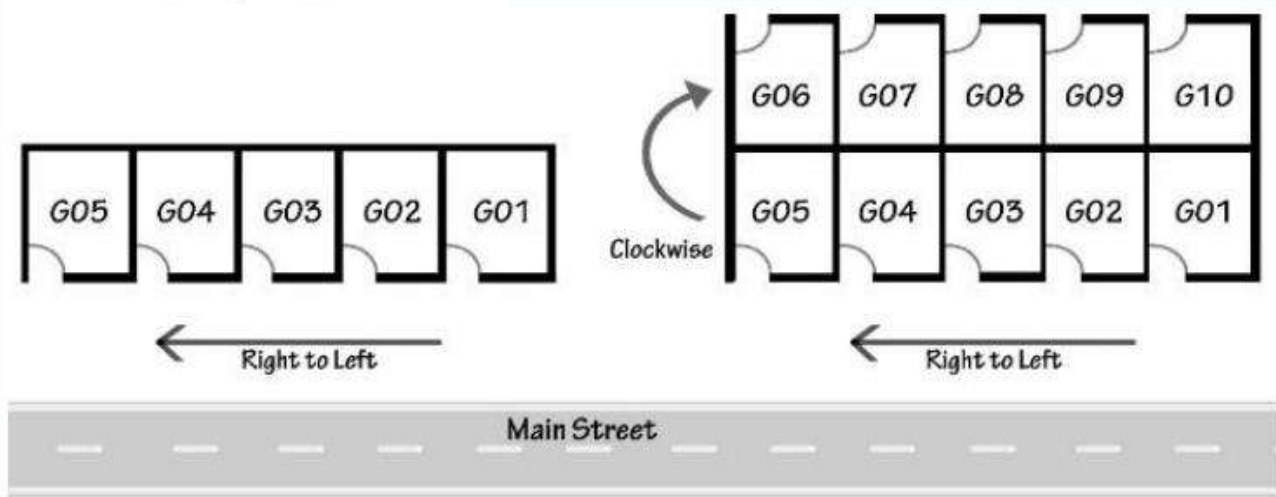


Figure 9: Unit numbering for single storey buildings with multiple units

Unit numbering syntax

Floor	Prefix
Basement	B
Ground floor	G
First floor	1
Second floor	2
Third floor	3
Fourth floor	4
Fifth floor	5
Sixth floor	6
Jamthog	J
Attic	A

Prefix for different levels

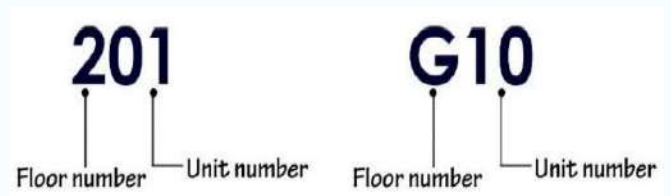


Figure 10: Unit numbering plates with dimension



Figure 11: Building numbering plate



Figure 12: Building numbering for a building with an access road for a single plot



Figure 13: Building number for buildings within the compound



Figure 14: Standard Street signage

4.3. Conceptual Design of Theme Park at Pepsi Factory Area

The review of the Core LAP realized the need for a theme park for adding value to the town and as a means of entertainment to people from within and from other regions. This could also act as a subset of the visitor's attraction to the town and make the town economically, socially and environmentally vibrant. The proposed theme park is located in the existing industrial area (Pepsi Factory area) comprising an area of 10.30 Acres.

This theme park would be the first of its kind not only in the town but in the whole country. It will be an amusement park that would be inclusive in nature with diverse activities to engage all kinds of people. Its strategic location makes it possible to attract people not only from other regions of Bhutan but also from across the border.



Objectives:

- To plan and design a theme park in Phuentsholing.
- To create a hub for recreation and ecotourism of national importance.
- To help the local community by providing various jobs in the amusement park.
- To be the leading entertainment provider in the country.
- To attract various investors and to develop the concept of entrepreneur.
- To attract local and regional tourists and to provide them with better and unique experiences.

The conceptual design of the park was given to the Architectural students of the College of Science & Technology (CST) as a design competition project. The different participating teams provided the floor with diverse ideas and possibilities that space could be visualized. It was also an opportunity to foster innovation in students by rewarding them for their hard work and inculcating a sense of pride in them by bringing their ideas to life.

Winning Design (The Fortune Park):



Figure 15: Master plan

The proposal of the park revolves around the idea of reviving people's connection with open spaces & community which caters to people of all ages and facets. The planning principles & architectural elements are derivative of Tashi Tagye (eight lucky signs). The design aims to revive the importance of social spaces which have been lost amidst the pandemic.



Figure 16: Views of parks & activities

4.4. Urban Design and Detailed Infrastructure Design for Ammochhu LAP

The Ammochhu LAP is bounded by the Ammochhu river to the west, the Core town to the south and Damdara to the east. LAP lies in the flood plain of one of the country's major rivers, Ammochhu. From the east, the LAP area starts from the foothills of the slopes of Dhamdara and with Phuentsholing- Samtse Highway on the West, lying adjacent to the Phuntsholing township Development Project (PTDP), embodying the flat floodplains along the left bank of Ammochhu. The Phuentsholing-Samtse Highway forms a natural boundary between the Phuentsholing Township Development Project (PTDP) and LAP.

The Ammochhu LAP was first prepared in 2014 to facilitate land development for private individuals adjacent to the PTDP areas. The LAP review was initiated in 2019 in collaboration with DHS, MoWHS to accommodate the fast-changing demands and trends of development. The review intended better infrastructure provisions along with the land use revision to predominantly commercial usage from the earlier residential usage. The core town being under significant development pressure, primarily of a commercial nature, Ammochhu LAP has been envisaged as a commercial center that will play a

supporting role in decongesting the core town. The integration of the LAP with the PTDP has also been emphasized since it shares the same boundary and is located adjacent to each other. With the LAP review completed, development of the LAP has to be initiated and demand is only increasing. The practice so far is that no holistic development of infrastructure is planned and implemented due to various reasons. The infrastructures are prioritized and implemented as and when the budget becomes available based on demands by the particular community or other emerging events and circumstances without considering the holistic approach and long-term objectives. In the absence of a Detailed Project Report (DPR), it becomes very difficult for Thromde to seek a budget for holistic development.



Keeping in mind the long-term vision and a holistic approach, an Urban Design and Detailed Infrastructure Design for Ammochhu LAP was initiated which shall guide the development in a coordinated manner allowing a more conducive urban environment, with the main objectives as follow:

1. To have a comprehensive Urban Design for LAP Development.
2. To have detailed and holistic social and physical infrastructure designs and drawings with the estimates (BoQ).

Some 3D extracts from the project

The timely urban design and infrastructure design will certainly contribute to transforming Ammochhu and Phuentsholing as a whole, into a vibrant, attractive, robust and accessible town.



Urban development and economic development go hand in hand with more than 75% of the GDP taking place in urban areas thus establishing the compelling logic of economic geography where urban regions determine connectivity, communication and access and economic growth. These premises, therefore, can be set forth for the Ammochhu Urban Design in terms of economic development, connectivity, aesthetics and image.



ENVIRONMENT DIVISION

5.1. Environment Impact Assessment for Local Area Plan

Environment Impact Assessment is mandatory as per the “Environment Assessment Act 2000”. All Local Area Plans should be subject to EIA and obtain environment clearance from the National Environment Commission. Environment clearance is a prerequisite of all developmental activities in



LAPs. With various infrastructure developmental activities in the pipeline, which were duly approved and funded by the RGoB, the proponent cautiously takes into account all potential impacts (both adverse and positive). For adverse impacts, environmental management plans were prepared from the planning stage till the execution of project activities.

Figure 17: Google earth view of Pekarzhing LAP boundary where the EIA was carried out

Like environmental aspects and associated impacts identified, assessment of impacts and final mitigation measures against every project activity were also proposed. Therefore, through the approved budget in FY 2021-2022, the EIA for all LAPs was carried out. Additionally, the environmental event was observed on world environment day through the plantation.



5.2. Advocacy and Awareness on Disaster Management in 6 Demkhong

In line with Thromde Disaster Management Contingency Plan, Thromde has sensitized all the volunteer members as well as residents of six Demkhongs about disaster preparedness and response. The program also covered different institutes.



5.3. Mitigation at the Landfill

This activity was in line with the outsourced terms and conditions where the proposed budget was utilized for landfill mitigation works at Pekarzhing. Native soil covering and compaction



of waste by heavy machines was the primary activity.

5.4. Advocacy and awareness on solid waste management in 6 Demkhong

With the intent to achieve 80% household level waste segregation as dry and wet by the end of the 12th FYP, advocacy regarding waste management, segregation, open dumping and open burning are important components of Thromde's solid waste management strategy. Therefore, the budget was proposed in the FY 2021-2022 to create awareness in all Demkhongs and accordingly the program was initiated.

5.4.1 Garbage trucks received from JICA

The Waste Management Project under the Japanese Grant Aid to RGoB with a total budget of Nu. 330million initiated the purchase of garbage trucks for the four Thromdes. Phuentsholing Thromde received five numbers of waste collection vehicles (compactors) with the K-tracker (GPS) and one excavator as landfill equipment for improvement of



solid waste management. The vehicles were received and the tendril ceremony was initiated in a modest way on 14th May 2022. The vehicles through grant aid have helped thromde in the solid waste management through the initiation of door-to-door waste collection and segregation of the wastes at the source. The compactors are deployed as per the schedule on the daily basis. The vehicles are utilized to their full capacity and are a boon for the Thromde to keep Phuentsholing town clean and green.



5.5. Landscaping and Improvement of Land Parcels

The allocated budget was utilized for landscaping and beautification works along NBR, plantation and beautification work from the second gate till the Royal guest house. With the completion of the SASEC project, beautification along this stretch is a priority since a maximum number of vehicles ply through this lane. The beautification work was carried out throughout the stretch.



5.6. Construction of Incinerator shed and Maintenance of Caretaker's house

National Environment Commission (NEC) in collaboration with JICA, Japan has recently installed a 300kg/cycle biomedical and hazardous waste incinerator at Ahalay landfill site. It was installed to address the tight landfill site disposal capacity and to implement an appropriate waste disposal system towards achieving zero waste by 2030.



INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

6.1. Road, Bridges, Building & Facilities

6.1.1. Development of Park near RIGSS

Community parks provide a variety of benefits to the surrounding area. From a safe place for physical activity to elevated property values in the immediate vicinity, there are many ways for both residents and local government officials to benefit from parks. Thromde initiated the creation of a space for community members to congregate safely by adding a park. By providing a safe place for kids to play and parents to bring their little ones, they



can walk through the park to enjoy beautiful scenery.



In urban areas like Phuentsholing, community parks may be one of the only options for residents to enjoy nature and be active. Moreover, the Open-Air Theater (OAT) can be used as a platform for youth to showcase their talents in the field of entertainment while the audience can enjoy leisure time through interactions.

In addition to the variety of amenities, community parks benefit people in many other ways:

- Contribute to community identity.
- Provide active and passive recreational opportunities.
- Appeal to all ages.
- Contribute to the health and wellness of a community.
- Create valuable green space.



6.1.2. Formation Cutting from Allay till Lower Pekarzhing

Following the grievances from the plot owners and the community long since the FY 2019-2020, Thromde has allocated Nu. 5.6 m to give access to all plot owners after having studied the feasibility and economic viability. The formation cutting was executed departmentally and completed on 30th January 2022.



6.1.3. Construction of Permanent Structures and Blacktopping of road at Kabreytar and Khareyphu

The Kabreytar road provides access to the developed plots of private construction sites. The improved access road at Khareyphu is



expected to encourage private landowners to start their construction further, which can contribute to the economic development of Phuentsholing Toe constituency.



6.1.4. Construction of Loop Road and Permanent structure from YBM factory connecting 18m road at Pekarzhing LAP

The formation-cutting and construction of the permanent structures has given the plot owners easy access to the road that can facilitate the economic activities benefiting the people of Pekarzhing LAP at large.



6.1.5. Formation Cutting, Blacktopping and Construction of Permanent Structure at Nowdhokay

Nowdhokay road is connected to Pasakha highway which can benefit the residents of Pekarzhing LAP. The project was executed at a total cost of 9.8m.

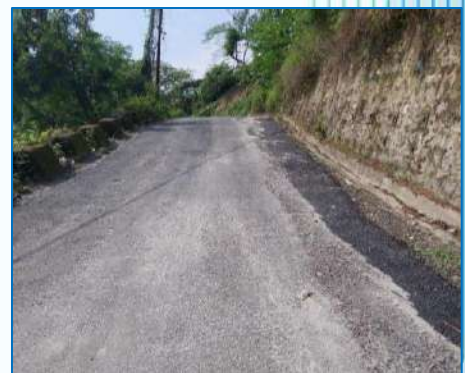


6.1.6. Construction of Thoroughfare Road towards Norbu Academy from ICP (CST gate)

Thoroughfare road would facilitate the plot owners with access roads and shorten the travel time. Earlier, the residents in and around Norbu Academy institute had to detour back from Tinkilo in order to drive to Pasakha and Thimphu but with this road, people don't have to.

6.1.7. Maintenance and improvement of road in core and extended area.

Maintenance and resurfacing of roads in the core and extended area is carried out annually to keep the road pliable all the time and to ensure that the road remains as safe as possible. The work was carried out departmentally in FY 2021-2022 with the total allocated budget of Nu. 10m.



6.1.8. Construction of Toe wall and Bio-engineering at Rinchending Goenpa slide area

Rinchending Goenpa and its periphery has been exposed to landslide threat over the years since 2003.

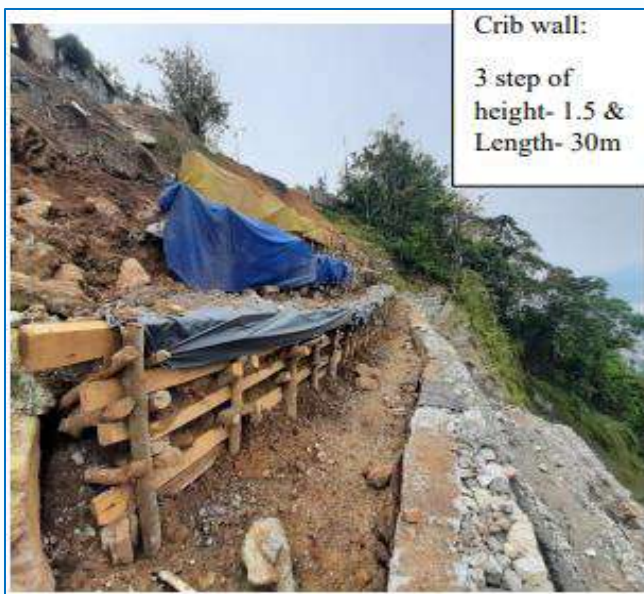


Several stakeholders had conducted studies to propose countermeasures on many occasions, however, the site still suffers high vulnerability of landslide risk which continues every monsoon.

Numerous mitigation measures have been useful in containing the slides and erosions following the interventions of the National Adaptation Program of Action-II (NAPA-

II). However, due to geographical and geological factors, landslides are still continuing and have been posing risks to Goenpa and other properties.

Therefore, as a short-term measure, construction of toe wall and bioengineering at the Rinchending goenpa slide area was carried out at the contract amount of Nu. 3.2m.



6.1.9. Construction of Permanent Structure at Lower Rakheldara

The permanent structure at lower Rakheldara was constructed to provide a permanent foundation for the road for long-term use. Constructing such structures will make the commuters safe and easy to travel.

6.1.10. Construction of Footpath and Storm water Drainage from FCB/Sonamgang School junction till lower Dhamdara



Construction of footpaths from Sonamgang school to the junction of lower Dhamdara will increase the safety of students and local residents of Dhamdara LAP while the construction of stormwater drainage will prevent the accumulation of water during the rainy season. It is also crucial to have a proper drainage system in that area as the area was frequently flooded with monsoon runoff.

Likewise, such improvement/maintenance activities were carried out in other sites located at the core and extended area of Phuentsholing Thromde.



6.1.12. Improvement of storm water drain at kabreytar



6.1.13. New footpath construction and road improvement in core and Gaddi area

6.2. Water Supply

In line with the 12th FYP, to achieve access to 24x7 safe drinking water for every household and commercial entity, about 3.5 km of raw water line was constructed from Rinchenling to Pemaling to distribute water in the Pemaling housing colony. The augmentation of the water supply at Kabreytar was also completed and the main water supply lines at Dhamdara and Amochu were extended for better water services. The activities were initiated to ensure access to reliable water for drinking, washing, and cooking and to improve sanitation facilities in the Thromde area.

6.2.1. Construction of new Water Supply Scheme-Ahalay

Ahlay LAP population will be 3442 in 2047 as forecasted in the water safety plan 2016. Water demand will be 0.86 mld. Current production is about 0.17 MLD, a deficit of 0.70 MLD. There are three institutes in the LAP namely; Nursing College, Yonten Kuejung High School and CST institute.



Currently, water supplied from the Kharbandi treatment

plant is not sufficient due to less quantity and drying up of surface water sources. To have sufficient water for this LAP, augmentation of the water scheme is inevitable. Therefore, a new water source was identified below

LAP and

now we have independent schemes for the LAP. The approved amount was used for borewell drilling, reservoir tank, transmission and distribution networks.



6.2.2. Construction of new Water Supply Scheme-Pekarzhing LAP

Pekarzhing LAP has an area of 79.70 hectares with a population of 3140. The water safety plan indicates that the population will increase to 11826 in 2047. The LAP is identified as a potential industrial area where many industries are in the pipeline. Further, plot owners are in process of constructing many buildings in the area. Therefore, existing water lines were rehabilitated.



6.2.3. Construction of new Water Supply Scheme at Damdara/Rakhel Dara LAP

Plot owners have constructed many buildings in the area. The population is increasing daily and there is water scarcity in the area. As per the water safety plan, the LAP population will be 2242 heads in 2047. The water section rehabilitated the existing water line to meet the increasing demand. The Caretaker quarter was also renovated since the structure was very old.

6.2.4. Construction of new Water Supply Scheme at Pasakha LAP/Malbase

Pasakha LAP has an area of 86.00 hectares with a population of 9700 heads. The water safety plan indicates that the population will increase to 11000 in 2047. The LAP is identified as an industrial zone where many industries have



been built and functioning well. Therefore, Thromde has rehabilitated the existing water line as a basic need to encourage plot

owners to come up with new constructions and businesses set up in the area.



6.3. Streetlights

Supply, installation, testing and commissioning of compound lighting along the roadside towards Malbase, lower Gurungdara and at Dhamdara were carried out. In total, 22 numbers of street poles and 23 numbers of street lighting fixtures were installed in different locations.

Since it is necessary to provide and ensure reliable street/compound/security lighting for the safety and welfare of the general public, it is important to provide and maintain good street lights. Besides supply, installation, testing and commissioning of compound lighting in all the places, the maintenance of street lights in the whole Thromde was carried out by the Electrical section as deemed necessary.



In order to reduce the recurrent operation and maintenance costs, solar street lighting systems are piloted at certain areas. If successful, slowly all conventional street lights shall be replaced with solar lighting systems.

SMALL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS (SDP)

Small Development Projects are time-bound projects, which are community-oriented development in areas such as roads, drinking water schemes, education, health, sewerage and other infrastructure. The projects are funded by the Government of India and are planned and implemented under the supervision of the Gross National Happiness Commission based on the priorities and needs of the community.

List of Small Development Projects- GoI Funded are portrayed in the table below.

Activities	Amount in Million (Nu.)	Achievement
1. Construction of sewerage network along with Sewer treatment plant at Pekarshing LAP (SDP II)	50	85% completed
2. Blacktopping of urban road & permanent works at Pekarshing LAP (SDP II)	50	Completed
3. Realignment of sewer line from Integrated Vegetable Market (IVM) to the sewerage treatment plant (SDP III).	18.39	Completed
4. Construction of permanent works & blacktopping of the road at Allay [(2km) SDP III]	36.2	Completed
5. Construction of Integrated Market shed at kabreytar (SDP IV)	22.6	Completed

7.1. Realignment of Sewer line from IVM to STP



The existing sewer line between IVM and Sewer Treatment Plant (STP) was frequently blocked due to poor gradients leading to an overflow of wastewater to the surrounding area, often causing inconvenience to the residents and commuters.

Therefore, curtail the issue, realignment of the sewer line from IVM to STP was proposed under SDP projects amounting to Nu.18 million and it was successfully completed in July 2022.

7.2. Construction of Permanent Structure and Blacktopping of Road at Ahalay

The construction of permanent structures and blacktopping of roads at Ahalay is benefiting residents of Ahalay LAP. It has also made it easier for students studying at Yonten



Kuenjung Academy and Arura Academy of Health Sciences to commute. The rationale was also to encourage plot owners to construct houses and ease the problem of a housing crunch in the main town.



7.3. Construction of Integrated Vegetable Market at Kabreytar

In the wake of the pandemic, it has become critical to establish vegetable sheds at various locations of Thromde in order to decongest the only IVM located at the core town. The establishment of a new IVM is expected to ease the congestion in the core town. It would largely benefit the people from upper Kabreytar, lower Kabreytar, Dhamdara and pipaldara with the variety of farm produce.



7.4. Construction of Sewer network along with Sewer Treatment Plant at Pekarzhing



With the Pekarzhing LAP ready for implantation, development activities are



ongoing and many more in the pipeline. As part of the development of the city, expanding the sewer network has become necessary, which shall benefit the households and encourage plot owners to come up with the constructions that would ultimately contribute in the decongestion of the core town.

7.5. Blacktopping of Urban Road and Permanent works at Pekarzhing

This activity covers all link roads of Pekarzhing LAP and is connected to Pasakha highway. The blacktopping of the road and construction of permanent works can benefit Pekarzhing residents and the commuters. Additionally, having many developmental activities ongoing, a proper blacktopped link road is critical and inevitable.

WATER FLAGSHIP PROGRAM

The government has identified nine flagship plans and programs out of which water flagship is amongst the top priority projects. The flagship programs were initiated with high-priority multi-sector interventions to address national issues in a targeted manner. It is also an integrated and innovative approach that can address emerging development issues. The total amount earmarked for the flagship projects was Nu. 15 billion.

Phuentsholing has two ongoing water flagship projects viz Barsachhu and Omchhu while Ammochhu water treatment plant is in the pipeline. The projects are aimed at addressing the water shortage and making water accessible 24/7 to all the residents of the Phuentsholing Thromde. On commissioning all three water treatment plants, the residents in all LAPs are expected to have access to an uninterrupted safe drinking water supply. While Omchhu water treatment plant is on the verge of completion, the progress of Barsachhu is about 30% which shall be continued in the FY 2022-2023.

8.1. Omchhu Water Treatment Plant



8.2. Barsachu Water Treatment Plant



ADHOC ACTIVITIES

The Phuentsholing Thromde has initiated and executed numerous adhoc and deposit activities besides the planned activities with the changed priority due to the pandemic. In our effort to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 to other parts of the country, the planned activities were stockpiled until the ease of lockdown in the country.



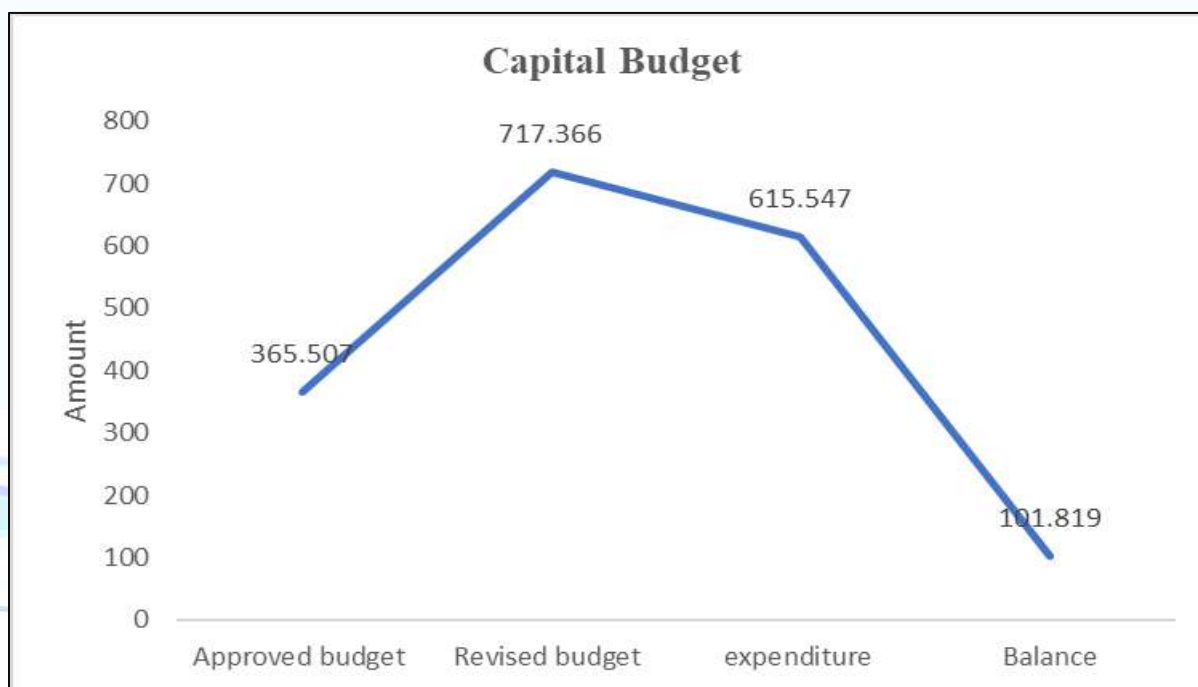
Sl. No	Name of activities	Expenditure (Covid fund/ Thromde)	Amount (Nu)	Mode of execution
1	Construction of bathroom & fencing at DGPC isolation centre	Covid-19 fund	306,390.00	Departmentally
2	Construction of plumb concrete wall cum drain at Kabreytar and RRM wall at teen kilo	Maintenance and improvement of the road at the core and extended area	1,719,253.35	Contract
3	Construction of L-drain & Hume pipe at Malbase	Thromde (maintenance & improvement of the road in core and extended area.	297,101.08	Contract
4	Resurfacing of the road at Kabreytar, lower Rinchening and Thromde parking area	RGOB	1,878,000.00	Contract
5	Maintenance of Kuenga hotel and construction of entry gate of PHSS	Covid-19 fund and hardware association of Phuentsholing	1,189,440.22	Contract
6	Reinstatement of toilet at GREFF	Zimdra funded	2,333,031.99	Contract
7	Construction of RCC boundary wall from BP-73/2 to 73/3 at LCS, Passakha	Construction of wall from Jarna to Passakha	6,097,282.91	Contract
8	Construction of RCC boundary wall from BP-73/3 to 74 at Passakha	Construction of wall from Jarna to Passakha	11,959,319.75	Contract
9	Construction of barbed wire fencing at Passakha	Construction of wall from Jarna to Passakha	636,927.30	Contract
10	Construction of watch tower at Pemaling	RGoB	714,022.45	Contract
11	Construction of RRM wall at Alhay	Construction of wall from Jarna to Passakha	1,030,701.80	Contract
12	Extension and maintenance of flu clinic at MLCP and PSA	Covid-19 fund	926,480.75	Contract
13	Dredging of Omchu River & filling of road at new Automobile workshop area behind STP, P/ling	River dredging at Omchu	1,818,503.70	Departmentally
14	Construction of temporary shelter at Lower Karbeytar	RGoB	3,711,288.64	
15	Relocation of health facility	RGoB	20,517.00	Departmentally
16	Retrofitting of culvert and improvement of footpath & Drain for Dhamdara LAP road	RGoB	2,326,703.36	Contract
17	Resurfacing work at Ashi Sabtri Area	RGoB	251,603.73	Contract

18	Cordoning off health declaration sheet with pre-painted	Covid-19	94,185.00	Departmentally
19	Mitigation work, construction of Gabion wall at lower Kabreytar.	Disaster fund	500,000.00	Contract
20	Construction of pedestrian entry/exit terminal	RGoB	183.92	Contract
21	Construction of RRM wall Palden Tashocholing shedra	RGoB	2,095,832.40	Contract
22	Construction of toilet at DGPC isolation center	Covid fund	63,806.19	Contract
23	Construction of Gabion protection wall at Omchu river Opposite to NPPF colony	Disaster fund	2,000,000.00	Contract
24	Construction of additional wall & fixing of concertina wire along municipal boundary wall at Chinese lane	covid fund	164,710.00	Departmentally

THE FINANCIAL STATE OF FY 2021-2022

10.1. Capital Grant

The figure below shows the annual capital state of Phuentsholing Thromde during the FY 2021-2022. The revised budget was Nu.717.366m against the approved block grant of Nu. 365.507million. Although the financial progress against the revised budget is only 87%, the progress with reference to the approved block grant is 150.95%. The balance amount of 101.819 was lapsed and was reincorporated in FY 2022-2023. The balance amount is from the Small Development Project and the advances.



10.2.1. Sources of Revenue

Sl No.	Head of Accounts	Abbreviation
1	TAXES	
a	Land Tax	LT
b	Vacant Land Tax	VLT
c	Property Transfer Tax	PTT
d	Urban House Tax/Commercial House Tax/Rural House Tax	UHT
2	RENTAL OF PROPERTIES	
a	Lease land Rent	LLR
b	House Rent	HR
c	Shed Rent vegetable	SRV
d	ATM Rent	ATM
3	Fees	
a	Building Plan Fee	BPF
b	Cost of Lagthram	COL
c	Demarcation of plot	DOP
d	Environment clearance	ECF
e	New water supply connection.	NWC
f	Parking Fee - Operator	PFO
g	Reconnection Fee	RCF
h	Registration Fee	RF
i	Sale of Tender	SOT
j	Site plan	SPF
k	Transaction Form	TFF
l	Occupancy Certificate	OC
m	PENALTY	PTY
4	SERVICE CHARGES	
a	Clearing of sewerage lines.	CSL
b	Septic tank emptying	STE
c	Service charge	SC
d	Temporary connection of water supply line	TCW
e	Water & Sewerage	WB
f	Replacement of water meter (SD/Cost of Meter)	RWM
g	A service charge of Water Tanker	WT
h	Temporary shelter service charges	TS
5	OTHERS	
a	Auction	AC
b	Dumping of waste / Expired items at unauthorized places.	DOW
c	Road Cutting	RC
d	Weighbridge Operation	WBO
e	Security Deposit	SD
f	Betterment Charges	BC

g	Annuity Scheme (RICB)	AS
h	Liquidity Damage	LD
i	Overpayment Recovery	OPR
j	App payment	App

10.2.2. Revenue for FY 2021-2022

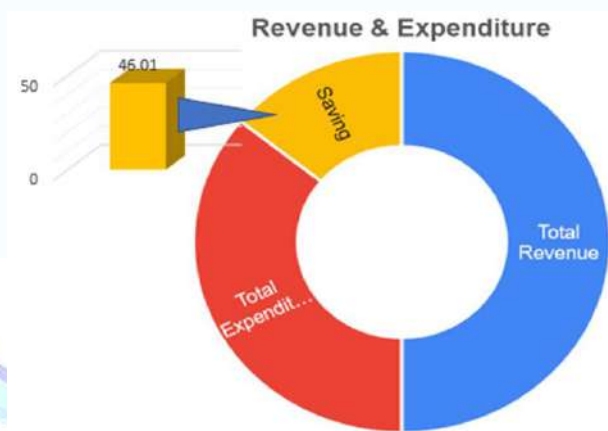
Sl No.	Head of Accounts	Total revenue
1	Taxes	29,539,662.00
2	Rental of properties	54,530,828.56
3	Fees	7,160,456.00
4	Service Charge	1,565,390.00
5	Penalty	22,468,506.72
6	Others	47,746,994.00
Total		163,011,837.30

Monthly revenue collection in the FY 2021-2022

The total revenue generated in the FY 2020-2021 is Nu. 163.01m.

10.2.3. Expenditure from revenue

Financial Year	Total Revenue	Total Expenditure
2021-2022	163.01	117.000



GENERAL

In this section, we would like to give the readers a trip down to the memory lane of the series of events held in Phuentsholing Thromde in FY 2021-2022.

11.1. APA Signing between Thrompon and Executive Secretary followed by Executive Secretary and Division/Section heads for FY 2021-2022.

The signing of Phuentsholing Thromde Agency APA between Dasho Thrompon and the Executive Secretary was convened on 4th October 2021 in Thromde conference hall in presence of all division and section heads to support and ensure effective implementation of the planned activities for the desired outcomes. Further, to strengthen APA implementation and to make the Divisions/Sections fully responsible for driving implementation and delivering the results against planned activities and priorities, 14 division and section APAs were signed between the Executive Secretary and the respective heads. The FY 2020-2021 Agency APA in total had 7 objectives, 10 success indicators and 106 major activities.

11.2. Oath-taking Ceremony of Thromde Thuemis

On 19th March 2022, the oath-taking ceremony of the Thrompon and the Tshogpas from six Demkhongs was conducted in presence of Dasho Dzongdag of Chhukha Dzongkhag, Dasho Drangrab of Phuentsholing Drungkhag court, venerable Rinchen Lam, the Executive Secretary of Phuentsholing Thromde, the Division heads and the sector heads

11.3. The memory lane

This memory lane consists of a collection of random photos taken in the FY 2021-2022 (photo source Thromde WhatsApp group and PPS).



APA signing



Oath Taking Ceremony



Memory lane



ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

COVID-19 did not spare Thromde and has impacted the developmental activities. Thromde had to face a chain of challenges that had put construction works at a halt. The significant challenges are as follows.

Shortage of Labour

Local workers did not show interest to work in Phuentsholing due to frequent movement restrictions. It was mandatory for all individuals moving out of Phuentsholing to stay in quarantine, which they didn't like since they had to undergo it after completing the work. Further, continuous lockdown since mid-April 2021 has restricted the construction activities and this compelled existing labourers to leave the site, contributing to the labour shortage.

Zonation has also affected the work progress since the inter-zone movement of laborers was restricted.

Shortage of Expatriates

For some planned activities sites, though the construction materials had already been mobilized, foreign workers left for their hometowns which made the work put to a halt. Contractors had to immediately stop the work due to the non-availability of expatriates.

Shortage of Construction materials

Since COVID-19 has affected globally, international borders have been sealed. The consignments got cancelled and the contractors couldn't import the raw materials and other construction materials. Contractors were left with only locally available materials, which made the construction work stop.

Diverse issues amid COVID-19 have resulted in the delay of planned activities, primarily, the construction works. Thromde explored every measure to address the issue but due to prolonged lockdown, its initiatives proved less effective. Thromde has explored the availability of skilled labour to address the labour shortage. Similarly, to tackle the shortage of raw materials and to expedite the work, Thromde opted for available prefabricated and precast concrete materials.

Housing shortage

The housing shortage in Phuentsholing is not a new topic of concern. Despite various measures in place and a number of new residential buildings being constructed every year, the issue has remained unresolved. The lack of space coupled with the growing population activated the housing crunch. People from all walks of life migrate to the town which aggravates the issue. There is a surge in population due to business opportunities favoured by the location and the employment opportunities in the industries.

It is not a surprise to see the worsening scenario of the housing crunch in the post covid times in Phuentsholing. People are forced to the city hunting for business opportunities after being badly impacted by more than two years of lockdowns in the country. On the other hand, the number of buildings remained consistent since the construction sector was put at a halt due to various reasons during the pandemic. However, Thromde in an effort to address the housing issue and decongest the core town area has prioritized Pekarzhang LAP development. Upon completion, the buildings are expected to mushroom up which can greatly help in addressing the pressing housing issue.

CONCLUSION

More than two years into the COVID-19 pandemic taught us a lot about resilience: what makes us stronger, safer and more adaptable and what doesn't. Thromde shall focus on the economic revival plans in ways that heighten the growth and protect us all. Thromde is mindful that the choices we make today – how we choose to allocate our resources will have long-term implications not just for women, children and other vulnerable populations, but for our overall health and survival as a species.

Phuentsholing Thromde, which is the country's largest commercial hub, was once the home to thousands of people but ever since covid 19 made its way into Bhutan, and with the longest lockdown in Bhutan, the population has been decreasing since the pandemic has propelled many to leave the city.

A number of challenges were faced by the Thromde ranging from a shortage of laborers to a scarcity of construction materials. Many workers left the site as they could not earn their living. For Phuentsholing, the primary objective, since early 2020 was to prevent the transmission of the COVID-19 virus to the other parts of the country and in doing so, many planned activities were gravely affected. Contractors struggled to meet the deadlines while officials equally agonized; they were required to shoulder additional responsibilities in managing the spread of the COVID-19 virus and new variants. Many adhoc activities had to be carried out in containing the viruses such as the construction of flu clinics, Desuup shelter, labor shelter, tranship facilities for smooth trading, and the construction of watchtowers and POEs at the border area to monitor illegal entry and exit of foreigners.

Despite painstaking attention to capital activities, prolonged lockdown due to increasing numbers of positive cases in the community didn't allow Thromde to execute the work and complete the activities as desired. That is why many activities are put into "closed work" to be completed in FY 2021-2022. However, with the pandemic waning out with time, Thromde is vigorously working to bring back the life of Phuentsholing Thromde.

"If we-the King, government, and people, work together as members of one family we can emerge unscathed from any adversity that we may encounter. That our people from all backgrounds are ready to make personal sacrifices, despite facing difficulties themselves, shows that they place the interest of the nation above all else. I will forever appreciate the unwavering support of our people during this ordeal." His Majesty the King

With the blessing from His Majesty the King, we will strive together and we will get through this together for a better tomorrow, *together we can!*

Thank You

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & DISCLAIMER

This annual bulletin was prepared by the Policy and Planning Section in their personal capacities as aspired by the Executive Secretary of Phuentsholing Thromde and in partial fulfillment of the Local Government's mandate to have an annual report.

The timely publication would not have been possible in absence of administrative support from Dasho Thrompon, continuous encouragement and supervision of the Executive secretary, backing from all employees, especially the Urban Planning Division for their contribution to the publication and Assistant Monitoring and Coordinating Officer (AMCO) for her persevering venture into the design and write up.

The unauthorized information in any form, if any, the PPS took liberties with, is purely for publication and not in any way intended to harm anyone.

TASHI DELEK



Clean & Liveable Phuenstholing



Pelkhil Lam, Post Box No. 02

EPBAX Number: +975-05-251208/252168

FAX Number: +975-05-252882

www.pcc.bt