



Find your way...
to grow your business



Town of Thompson Mission Statement

“To serve our residents by delivering fiscally responsible, dependable services with integrity and professionalism as we work together to make our Town a vibrant, healthy, sustainable community.”

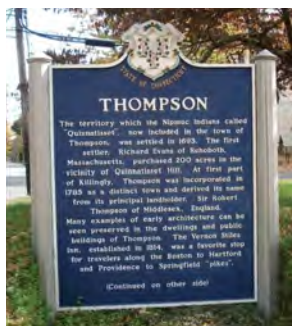
The Thompson Economic Development Commission is dedicated to further growth and development of the Town by attracting, retaining, and assisting businesses, while also preserving the integrity of the Town’s rich heritage.

Whether you are a new or established local business needing assistance, or you are just interested in learning more about Thompson as a place to live and set up shop, the EDC is here to help.

Learn more at
www.thompsonct.org/economic-development-commission

Welcome to Thompson:

a town with a rich manufacturing history and a beautiful agricultural landscape!



Situated in the northeast corner of Connecticut, Thompson is bordered by both Massachusetts and Rhode Island. The Town has one of the largest land areas in Connecticut, comprising 48.49 square miles. Our unique location offers an advantage for businesses seeking easy access to

major metropolitan areas in the region. We are a close-knit, neighborly community brimming with opportunities.

Find your way to our 10 villages and hidden treasures that provide all the beauty and outdoor recreation options of the New England countryside, combined with a favorable regulatory environment for residents and businesses alike.



About Thompson

General

Population	9,254
Land Area (mi. ²)	48
Population Density (people/mi. ²)	197
Households	3,819
Median Age	48
Median Household Income	\$95,905

Total Active Businesses 453

New Business Registrations

2023	72
2022	52
2021	63
2020	39
2019	28

Labor Force (Employed) 5,067

Top Industries (Employment)

Local Government	700
Manufacturing	293
Health Care & Social Assistance	262
Accommodations & Food Services	204
Other Services	181

Key Employers

Ivanhoe Tool & Die Company
Nutmeg Container (a Unicorr company)
Numa Tool

Mean Commute Time (minutes) 32

Working from Home 13%

Housing

Housing Units	4,252
Owner-Occupied	84%
Detached/Semi-Detached	82%
Median Home Value	\$259,400
Median Rent	\$1,081

Source: AdvanceCT 2024 Town Profile



Ideal Location

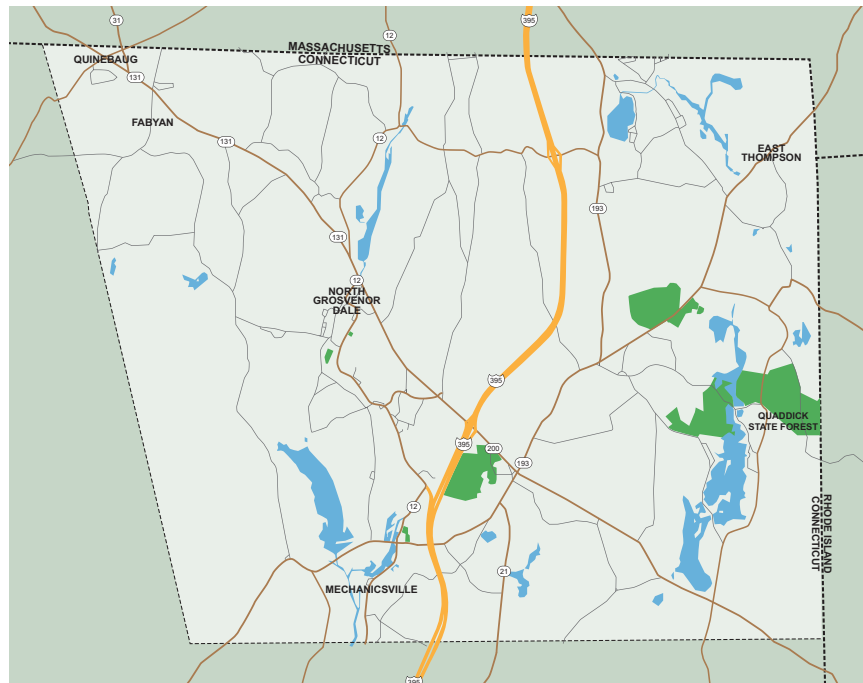
Thompson is located about an hour drive from three state capitals: Boston, MA, Hartford, CT and Providence, RI. We are also 30 minutes from Worcester, MA, New England's second-largest city, which has experienced dramatic development and revitalization in recent years.

The Town is bisected north-south by Interstate 395 (three exits), with approximately eight million vehicle trips annually (22,000 daily) passing at the Massachusetts state line, and 24,000 passing daily at the Putnam town line. The Route 12/Route 131 corridor is a primary artery to and from Massachusetts, realizing more than three million vehicle trips annually.

The Massachusetts Turnpike (Interstate 90), the major east-west interstate highway and direct connection to Boston, is just 12 miles from Thompson. An active freight rail line, owned by the Genesee & Wyoming family of railroads, runs north-south from the borders with Webster, MA and Putnam, CT.

Thompson is home to over 500 small businesses, ranging from kitchen-table, mom-and-pop enterprises, to skilled tradesmen and light manufacturing, as well as several world-class attractions that draw visitors year-round. It offers residents good public schools and services, with affordable real estate and property taxes. Planned redevelopment of historic buildings in town will bring almost 400 new rental units to the market over the next 10 years.

Thompson is also home to excellent outdoor recreation activities attracting thousands of visitors to the Town each year. These include Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park, Fort Hill Farms, Morning Beckons Farm, West Thompson Dam, the Airline State Park Trail and Quaddick State Park. These destinations and the

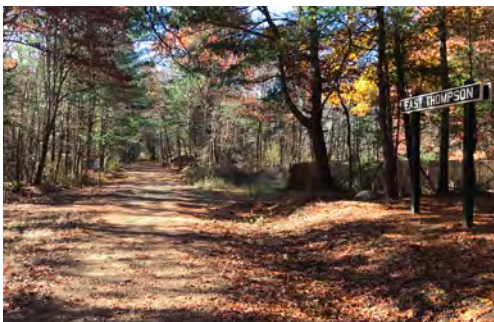


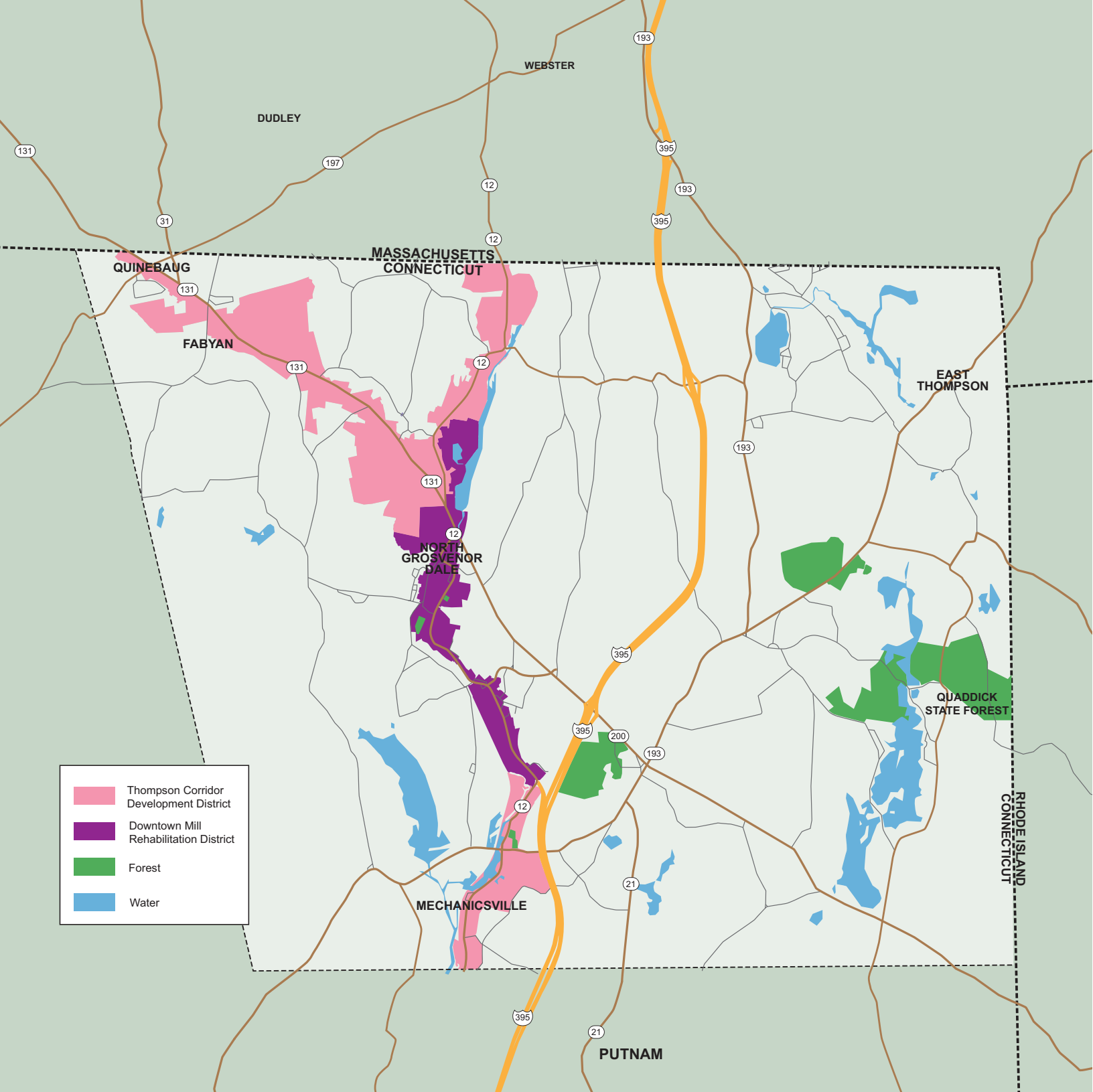


Town's significant natural resources greatly enhance its favorable quality of life, as well as provide value for start-up outdoor recreation businesses and other leisure activities, such as dining, shopping and lodging.

Thompson is committed to achieving business growth in ways that are green, sustainable and innovative. Adaptive reuse of existing buildings for new purposes is an important tool for economic revitalization. Infill development in neighborhoods that are well-suited to density and on properties in-between existing uses is also encouraged. Accordingly, the Town has designated the Downtown Mill Development District (DMRD) and the Thompson Corridor Development District (TCDD) as priority areas for viable development investment by potential new businesses and established businesses interested in relocating. The DMRD and TCDD correspond to Main Street, Route 12 and Route 131 within the Town.

Thompson's historic mill buildings are considered essential to the Town's plan for economic growth. Demolition of the Belding-Corticelli Mill building at 630 Riverside Drive renewed interest in preserving the remaining landmarks of the Town's past. A proposed private, multi-use redevelopment of The River Mill, the iconic 750,000 square-foot landmark at 929 Riverside Drive, is considered a crucial project for overall revitalization of the Town. The work in progress to rehabilitate the town-owned property at 65 Main Street into a small agri-business incubator supported by adjacent gardens and a new public park is an opportunity to demonstrate sustainable, adaptive reuse for community benefit.





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Economic Gardening in Thompson

65 Main Street Planning Project

Economic gardening is an entrepreneurial approach to economic development based on a strategy of helping local entrepreneurs grow their companies.

The Town of Thompson Department of Planning and Development has been awarded funding from the USDA Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production (UAIP) grant program to develop a small business support center with a focus on food system and agriculture business start-ups at the Town-owned building located at 65 Main Street in the North Grosvenordale neighborhood. The property was once designated housing for the superintendent of the public schools, later serving as the Town's public library, and then as the headquarters of Thompson Ecumenical Empowerment Group, Inc. (TEEG), the regional social services agency. After TEEG outgrew the space, the Town sought new uses for the property for years, eventually seeing an opportunity to help facilitate business growth with **a special emphasis on agriculture and food business start-ups.**

The conceptual plan for the entire property includes a "Food Forest," to be located behind the renovated building and along the French River, incorporating outdoor learning areas, forest restoration, outdoor seating, and more. Once fully-renovated, the building itself will house the small business support center where the town will provide shared office space for local micro-entrepreneurs, incubator programming and services, and a direct pipeline to student interns enrolled in the various career-path programs at Tourtellotte Memorial High School.



Thompson is poised at the threshold of opportunity.

Despite the challenges faced by so many post-industrial communities in New England, Thompson has high-quality assets and opportunities. The community has an agricultural history that has always run parallel to the boom-times of the mill era and has since outlived those industrial giants. Several family farms persist within the town, which is designated by the Connecticut Department of Agriculture as a Farm-Friendly Community. At the same time, the bones of the mill district remain and are ripe for redevelopment to meet 21st century needs. The future facility at 65 Main Street will capitalize on these traditions and local resources.

A key component of the planning process under the USDA grant has been a year-long public workshop series to determine the specific needs of Thompson's small business community, identify deficits in local food security, and imagine ways in which the future facility at 65 Main Street can show the highest community utility.

Lord Thompson Manor

Andrew Silverston, CEO & President

“While we’re a wedding venue, we do weekend events. Rehearsals are Friday night, the wedding and after party on Saturday, then the farewell breakfast on Sunday. Essentially, we have three or four weddings every weekend, each with 130 to 220 guests.

We’re marketing to couples who want to have a great party, along with a great weekend where they can spend time with friends and family, informally celebrating their wedding.

Our clients come from Boston, New York City and other drivable locations. We have to be accessible from throughout New England and New York. We craft the message around being a small, intimate venue and the fact that we’re an hour from Boston, 40 minutes from Providence, two hours from Fairfield County, and just a minute off the highway.

We have guest rooms in some of our properties that can accommodate up to about 40 people. So we depend on having other suitable hotel rooms nearby. **Any B&B that wants to have a business in Thompson would really be great for us.** When you have 130 guests here, they’re also looking for something to do nearby before the wedding starts, so **it’s nice to be able to visit a cool café** or hike a trail in town.



“Lord Thompson Manor is focused on a personalized approach to weddings and every wedding we do is a unique production.”



There is another place in town that does weddings and that’s good for us, too. If you’re making a special trip to see a venue, having another great property attracts more people that will come to see both.

A number of years ago, the Town of Thompson revised the zoning regulations, which were very much not in our favor and now are in our favor. We’ve worked collaboratively to get that done. **The benefit to somebody who’s thinking of relocating a business here is that you don’t have the kind of regulatory environment that is looking over your shoulder all the time.** I’m not over at Town Hall a lot but when I am, I get responsive attention.”

SUCCESS STORY

Thompson Liquors

Neil Patel, Owner

"I opened my first business in Thompson in 2011 when I was 24 years old. I chose Thompson because, at the time, there was virtually nobody here in terms of retail.

I found the Town employees to be very business friendly and helpful – especially with assistance to obtain my liquor license."

"I've grown to owning three businesses in Thompson now – three retail, two commercial rentals, and several residential apartment units. **I'm in the process of constructing a new retail building next to the liquor store.**

In-town consumers represent about 95% of my transactions at the liquor store. I also find that the affordability of housing in Thompson makes it an attractive place to live. Rents are less than in the neighboring towns of Webster and Putnam. Those towns have the big grocery and Walmart stores that people travel out of town for – but the savings on rent outweighs the extra cost on gas.

I know that the Town has plans to make the Route 12 corridor more attractive to businesses and commercial development.

When I've worked with the Town regarding my businesses, they've been very fast and responsive. For everything and anything, I've received an instant response. I think this is helpful to know for any other business looking to come into Town."



SUCCESS STORY

Raceway Golf Club/Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park

Jonathan Hoenig, Managing Partner

“Our family has been operating on this property for six generations. It’s been in our family for over 100 years. The motorsports business has been here since 1940 and we’ve been in the golf business here since 1947.

We’ve had our ups and downs over the years but now we have a product that people know and trust. Where I’ve seen Thompson change is the demographic has shifted. It’s become more of a bedroom community to the greater metros and now, because more people can work from home, we’ve seen them spending more time with leisure activities. It’s a very nice place to live if you like a quiet life and want easy access to other places. For us, we’re seeing the population grow here. We’re seeing more traffic and more new faces. Situated in this corner of the state, Thompson gives you access to other areas with a large population.

So, I think where the opportunity lies is that Thompson is not like some of these other land-locked communities in Connecticut. Here, you’re right on the highway and you can get to Auburn or Worcester in 30 minutes and to Boston, Hartford or Providence in an hour. Thompson has the accessibility and the leisure market population has grown around us here. However, it’s a place that hasn’t been completely found yet for business development. The good news is it’s a centralized location and you don’t have to go build the infrastructure to get to it.

“Situated in this corner of the state, Thompson gives you access to other areas with a larger population – Boston, Providence, central Massachusetts.”



For us, being in the leisure market, we’ve worked really hard at offering people a really good product that’s still affordable, even in today’s inflationary environment. We saw the shift coming in our motorsports customer demand years ago. That’s why we invested in rebuilding the road racing facility in 2013. Now, we’re operating the entire facility six days a week on average from late March to early December, including events and rental agreements that attract groups from all over the northeast.

We are a large local employer and employment for years was a challenge. **Post-pandemic, we’ve seen more available workforce around us, including more young people and higher-quality, full-time employment obtainable.** The economy for us has been strong, especially for golf.”

Starting a Business in Thompson

The Town of Thompson is here to help you find your way to develop and grow your business, and to guide you through the process. Here are the general steps:



When you have a project plan and location in mind, you can make an appointment with the Planning and Development office or Zoning office. They can inform you whether your proposed business use is allowed in the zoning district, and on the specific property you are interested in.

Some permits can be issued at the staff level (e.g., zoning permits, wetlands agent approvals for certain activities in upland review areas); others require applying to one or more land use boards and commissions (e.g., special permits, subdivision approvals, variances, wetland permits). Some applications may involve a public hearing; some may not.

A pre-application meeting is highly recommended to guide you through the plans and information you'll need, the permitting procedure and the timeline involved. The reviewing staff and inspectors are available to answer your questions on the state laws, zoning regulations, wetlands regulations, building code, fire code, and other agencies or departments you may need to contact.



Approvals and Permits

In order to promote the health, welfare, safety and convenience of the community, development projects and proposed uses of land and buildings require permits before businesses can open or expand.

Zoning Approvals: If you are planning to construct or alter a structure on your property as part of your business or home occupation, you will be required to apply for the necessary building and zoning permits obtained through the Building and Planning & Zoning offices. A site plan is required to ensure that the size of the structure/addition/renovation complies with Zoning Regulations and meets the required distances from the road frontage, back and side boundary lines. A detached structure under 200 square feet will require a zoning permit only. A scaled site plan will be required as part of the application. Work involving the removal of earth material from a site is allowed provided not more than 3,000 cubic yards is removed.

Special Permits: The Zoning regulations authorize the Planning & Zoning Commission to act on special permits. All Special Permit applications require a public hearing; the public hearing process takes a minimum of two months; complicated applications may take longer. A Special Permit is not valid until the approval is filed in the Town Clerk's office.

Zoning Board of Appeals: The ZBA has the power and duty to hear and decide appeals where it is alleged that there is an error in any order from, or in a decision by, the official charged with enforcement of the regulations. The board also has the power to determine and vary the application of the Zoning Regulations, keeping in harmony with the general purpose and intent of Thompson's Plan of Conservation and Development. Due consideration for conserving the public health, safety, convenience, welfare and property value is expected. A public hearing is required. If the appeal is upheld or the variance is granted, you, the applicant, will receive a certificate of approval which shall be filed on land records in the Town Clerk's office. A variance is not valid until the approval is filed with the Town Clerk.



Building Permits: The purpose of the State Building Code is to establish minimum requirements to safeguard the public safety, health and general welfare through affordability, structural strength, means of egress of facilities, stability, sanitation, light and ventilation, and energy conservation. A building permit is required and shall apply to the construction, alteration, enlargement, replacement, repair, use and occupancy, removal and demolition of one- and two- family dwellings and townhouses not more than three stories in height, accessory structures, as well as commercial and industrial facilities.

Inland Wetlands and Watercourse Approvals:

Inland wetlands are identified by soil type and watercourses as any river, stream, brook, waterway, lake, pond, marsh, swamp, bog and all other bodies of water, natural or artificial, vernal or intermittent, public or private, which are contained within, flow through or border upon the Town of Thompson. Thompson has a variable upland review area of 100' and 200' from the wetland/watercourse boundary within which certain activities are regulated. If your property has any wetlands or watercourses or upland review area, be sure to review your proposal with Thompson Wetlands Agent prior to submitting your application

Taxation and Registrations

If you intend to operate a business in the Town of Thompson, you need to file the appropriate tax forms with the State of Connecticut Department of Revenue Services. If you plan to sell tangible goods, you must file a form to pay Connecticut state sales tax.

Register your trade name in the Town Clerk's office, 1st floor, Town Hall. Trade name does not apply to partnerships, if the partnership name includes the true surname of at least one of the persons composing the partnership; limited partnerships which have registered with the state; or limited liability companies which have registered with the state. Personal property declarations are sent to business owners on file on October 1st. Property/equipment used for your business is taxable by the Town. You must file the declaration with the Assessor's office. Failure to do so results in a 25% penalty.

General Checklist

The general checklist below may be used in planning for the approval process with the Town of Thompson. Staff in the various offices will assist in reviewing the list to determine which steps you will need to take for your business development.

- 1. Is the business use allowed in the zone I want to locate my business?
- 2. Did I schedule a Pre-application meeting with Planning, Zoning and/or building staff?
- 3. For re-occupations and renovations, did I schedule a preliminary walk-through with the Building Official, Fire Marshal & Zoning Enforcement Officer?
- 4. What land use permits are required?
 - ___ a. Zoning permit: Zoning Enforcement Officer
 - ___ b. Home Occupation (Neighborhood Limited Enterprises): Zoning Enforcement Officer
 - ___ c. Site Plan Review: P&Z Commission
 - ___ d. Special Permit: P&Z Commission (public hearing required)
 - ___ e. Appeal of ZEO Decision: Zoning Board of Appeals (public hearing required)
 - ___ f. Zoning Variance: Zoning Board of Appeals (public hearing required)
 - ___ g. Subdivision or Re-subdivision: P&Z Commission (public hearing required)
 - ___ h. Inland Wetlands Permit: Inland Wetlands Commission
 - ___ i. Wetlands Agent Approval: Wetlands Agent
 - ___ j. Building Permit: Building Official
- 5. Will I need consultants to assist in preparation of professional plans?
- 6. Did I record land use approvals in the Town Clerk's office (if required by state law)?
- 7. Did I contact other agencies, utilities, and departments to comply with their requirements?
- 8. Did I obtain a building permit and comply with all building and fire code requirements?
- 9. Before making any changes to my plans during construction, did I review those with Planning, Zoning and/or Building staff?
- 10. Did I provide a minimum of two weeks' notice to the Zoning Enforcement Officer for a Certificate of Zoning Compliance?
- 11. Following the Certificate of Zoning Compliance, was a Certificate of Occupancy issued by the Building Official?
- 12. Is my trade name filed in the Town Clerk's Office?
- 13. Did I complete a declaration of property in the Assessor's office?
- 14. Have I listed my business in the Economic Development Directory?



Helpful Websites

Town of Thompson

www.thompsonct.org

Thompson Business Association

www.thompsonbusinessassociation.com

AdvanceCT

www.advancect.org

CT's Business Response and Licensing Center

www.ct-clic.com

CT Dept. of Energy & Environmental Protection

www.ct.gov/deep

CT Dept. of Motor Vehicles

www.ct.gov/dmv

CT Secretary of State

www.sots.ct.gov

CT Small Business Development Center

<https://ctsdbc.uconn.edu>

Franchise Registry

www.franchiseregistry.com

Northeastern Connecticut Chamber of Commerce

www.nectchamber.com

Northeast District Department of Health

www.nddh.org

SCORE

www.score.org

U.S. Small Business Administration

www.sba.gov



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 Phone: (860) 923-9561

www.thompsonct.org

Assessor	860-923-2259	assessor@thompsonct.org
Building Official	860-923-9002	.....	buildingoffice@thompsonct.org
Conservation Officer	860-923-1852	.....	conservation@thompsonct.org
Fire Marshall	860-928-6152	.....	firemarshall@thompsonct.org
Planning & Development	860-923-9475	.....	planner@thompsonct.org
Selectmen's Office	860-923-9561	.....	selectmensoffice@thompsonct.org
Tax Collector	860-923-2119	.....	taxcollector@thompsonct.org
Town Clerk	860-923-9900	.....	townclerk@thompsonct.org
Inland Wetlands Officer	860-923-1852	.....	wetlands@thompsonct.org
Zoning Officer	860-923-9475	.....	zeo@thompsonct.org
NE Dist. Dept. of Health	860-774-7350	.....	email@nddh.org