



## CITY COUNCIL NORTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS

February 22, 2016

Members of the Committee on Community Resources,

Section 2.3.8 of the Council Rules provides that the Council President shall have the power to *“issue a Committee Study Request to any committee. Such a request shall require a committee to report to the full Council on a particular policy or issue area within 120 days optionally accompanied by legislation.”*

Pursuant this rule, please consider this request that the City Council Committee on Community Resources study issues relative to the local economy, with a focus on businesses and workers in downtown Northampton and downtown Florence, for the purpose of identifying practical recommendations, if any, that the City Council could pursue to strengthen the local economy.

Because this is a large and multifaceted topic, the Committee should choose which issues and policies are most important to address. Such issues may include the challenges facing businesses generally, commercial space vacancy rates and co-called “high rent blight,” energy costs, licensing, city infrastructure, high speed internet connectivity, and issues of workers’ rights, wages and working conditions, among others.

Further, the Committee should substantially involve the public by convening hearings and community meetings, soliciting testimony and inviting discussion among citizens representing a broad cross-section of Northampton’s economy, including business owners, property owners, workers, academics and residents.

Sincerely,

William H. Dwight  
City Council President

Ryan R. O’Donnell  
City Council Vice President