TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: CITY MANAGER

DATE: SEPTEMBER 11, 2006

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF A RESOLUTION RATIFYING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (NIMS)

RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that Council adopt the attached resolution ratifying the adoption of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) so the City remains eligible for future Homeland Security grants and improves its emergency preparedness capabilities.

BACKGROUND
California local and state government pioneered the development of standardized incident management systems to respond to a variety of catastrophic disasters. The state fire service developed the Incident Command System (ICS) in the 1970s, and California was the first state to adopt a statewide Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) for use by all emergency response organizations within the state. ICS and SEMS have become models for incident management nationwide. Palo Alto formally adopted SEMS on June 8, 1998.

DISCUSSION
In early 2003, following the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, President Bush directed the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop and administer a National Incident Management System (NIMS), which would provide a consistent nationwide approach for federal, state, local, and tribal governments to work together more effectively to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters, regardless of cause, size, or complexity. The system, which is very similar to SEMS, was eventually introduced on March 1, 2004.

The National Commission on Terrorist Attacks (also known as the 9-11 Commission) also recommended adoption of such a system. Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, in Executive Order S-2-05, directed the state Office of Emergency Services and Office of Homeland Security to develop a program to integrate NIMS into the state’s emergency management system.

To be better equipped for emergencies, it is essential that federal, state, local and tribal organizations utilize uniform terminology; communication equipment; planning, training, and exercising standards; personnel qualifications; and organization and command structures. NIMS provides a framework for standardized disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and training procedures and will coordinate the City’s current response protocols with the response systems
of agencies and organizations nationwide. Adopting NIMS will bring the City in line with the state and federal policies. Moreover, to continue to receive Homeland Security Grant Program funding, the City must adopt the system.

In January, 2006, the City of Palo Alto initiated a training program to ensure the City will meet the Sep. 26, 2006 federal deadline for NIMS compliance.

**RESOURCE IMPACT**
The Department of Homeland Security requires local governments to adopt NIMS in order to be eligible for future Homeland Security Grant Program funding.

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**
The request is not a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act.

**ATTACHMENT**
Attachment A: Resolution

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CITY MANAGER APPROVAL: EMILY HARRISON
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