MOTION
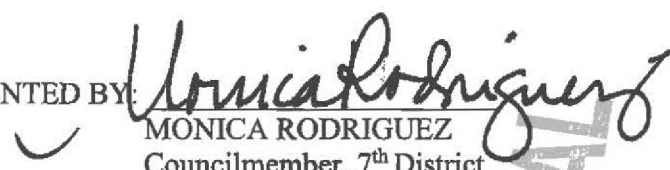
Recent news coverage of the Hong Kong protests have highlighted a number of mobile applications that are being used by protestors to communicate when the authorities disconnect cell and internet service. These applications use the Bluetooth capabilities of mobile phones to create a mesh network, where messages can be sent and received via Bluetooth, without the use of cell data. While these protestors are using these applications to skirt the Hong Kong government's efforts to stop them from organizing, these types of applications could also be very useful during a significant natural or manmade disaster.

An earthquake or major wildfire will impact cell coverage, and individuals may not be able to call or text their loved ones, or get in contact with first responders. A Bluetooth mesh network application, such as those being used in Hong Kong, could potentially help alleviate those issues by providing an alternative method of communicating when internet and cell service are out. The City should look into the feasibility of encouraging residents to download these types of mobile applications, or creating a City-specific application.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Information Technology Agency, with the assistance of the Emergency Management Department, report on the potential uses of Bluetooth mesh network mobile applications for communication during an emergency that impacts cell and internet service. This report should include a discussion of the feasibility of encouraging residents to use existing applications or of the City developing its own application.

PRESENTED BY: MONICA RODRIGUEZ
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SECONDED BY:

jwd

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