Summary of Ordinance O2018-974

Ordinance O2018-974 is a comprehensive update and reorganization of requirements for elevators, escalators, and other conveyance devices, drafted over the past 2 years by the Department of Buildings with the assistance of a distinguished advisory committee of elevator industry experts. These requirements were last updated in 2009.

This ordinance will move Chicago closer to national standards in several areas, while maintaining Chicago-specific requirements that help the Chicago Fire Department to respond quickly in buildings with elevators. By aligning with the latest national standards, Chicago will be among the first cities to allow newer elevator technologies that use less energy – which saves money – and include enhanced performance and safety features. Better alignment with national standards also furthers our ongoing efforts to streamline the permitting and inspection processes.

The ordinance aligns Chicago’s requirements for conveyance devices with the latest version of 9 national standards. By aligning with the latest edition of the *Safety Code for Elevators and Escalators*, which is produced by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, this ordinance will:

• Allowances for variable speed escalators and moving walks that reduce energy usage for building owners when no users are present

• Enhanced elevator emergency communication monitoring requirements (in new elevators)

• Enhanced safety requirements for vertical sliding doors and gates in new installations

• New requirements to allow state-of-the-art suspension systems, including steel wire ropes, coated steel belts, and aramid fiber ropes, allowing high-end projects to use the latest elevator technologies

• Clearer requirements on recordkeeping related to periodic elevator maintenance

The new requirements will take effect for permits applied for beginning October 1, 2018. While the ordinance will clarify minimum safety requirements for existing conveyance devices, it will not impose any new requirements or mandates on existing elevators.

Toward the end of the ordinance are several minor technical cleanups to the building code to remove redundant or conflicting provisions.

The ordinance has strong support from BOMA-Chicago and the National Elevator Industry, Inc. (NEII).