

Edgar Filing: STERLING FINANCIAL CORP /WA/ - Form SC 13G/A

STERLING FINANCIAL CORP /WA/  
Form SC 13G/A  
June 10, 2008

UNITED STATES  
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION  
Washington, D.C. 20549

SCHEDULE 13G

Under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934  
(Amendment No. 3)

STERLING FINANCIAL CORPORATION

(Name of Issuer)

Common Stock

(Title of Class of Securities)

859319105

(CUSIP Number)

03/31/2008

(Date of Event Which Requires Filing of this Statement)

Check the appropriate box to designate the rule pursuant to which this Schedule is filed:

Rule 13d-1(b)

Rule 13d-1(c)

Rule 13d-1(d)

CUSIP NO. 859319105

1 NAMES OF REPORTING PERSONS.  
I.R.S. IDENTIFICATION NOS. OF ABOVE PERSONS (ENTITIES ONLY).

EARNEST Partners, LLC

2 CHECK THE APPROPRIATE BOX IF A MEMBER OF A GROUP (SEE INSTRUCTIONS)  
(a)   
(b)

3 SEC USE ONLY

4 CITIZENSHIP OR PLACE OF ORGANIZATION State of Georgia

5 SOLE VOTING POWER 845,903  
NUMBER OF  
SHARES

6 SHARED VOTING POWER 598,565  
BENEFICIALLY  
OWNED BY  
EACH

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REPORTING 7 SOLE DISPOSITIVE POWER 2,558,668  
PERSON WITH -----  
8 SHARED DISPOSITIVE POWER 0  
-----  
9 AGGREGATE AMOUNT BENEFICIALLY OWNED BY EACH REPORTING PERSON 2,558,668  
-----  
10 CHECK BOX IF THE AGGREGATE AMOUNT IN ROW (9) EXCLUDES CERTAIN SHARES  
(SEE INSTRUCTIONS) [ ]  
-----  
11 PERCENT OF CLASS REPRESENTED BY AMOUNT IN ROW (9) 4.9%  
-----  
12 TYPE OF REPORTING PERSON (SEE INSTRUCTIONS)  
-----  
IA  
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Item 1

- (a) Name of Issuer STERLING FINANCIAL CORPORATION
- (b) Address of Issuer's Principal Executive Offices  
111 North Wall Street, Spokane, Washington 99201

Item 2

- (a) Name of Person Filing EARNEST Partners, LLC
- (b) Address of Principal Business Office or, if none, Residence  
1180 Peachtree Street NE, Suite 2300, Atlanta, Georgia 30309
- (c) Citizenship State of Georgia
- (d) Title of Class of Securities Common Stock
- (e) CUSIP Number 859319105

Item 3. If this statement is filed pursuant to 13d-1(b) or 13d-2(b) or (c), check whether the person filing is a:

- (a) [ ] Broker or dealer registered under section 15 of the Act
- (b) [ ] Bank as defined in section 3(a)(6) of the Act
- (c) [ ] Insurance company as defined in section 3(a)(19) of the Act
- (d) [ ] Investment company registered under section 8 of the Investment Company Act of 1940
- (e) [X] An investment adviser in accordance with Rule 13d-1(b)(1)(ii)(E);
- (f) [ ] An employee benefit plan or endowment fund in accordance with Rule 13d-1(b)(1)(ii)(F);

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- (g) [ ] A parent holding company or control person in accordance with Rule 13d-1(b)(1)(ii)(G);
- (h) [ ] A savings associations as defined in Section 3(b) of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (12 U.S.C. 1813);
- (i) [ ] A church plan that is excluded from the definition of an investment company under section 3(c)(14) of the Investment Company Act of 1940
- (j) [ ] Group, in accordance with Rule 13d-1(b)(1)(ii)(J).

Item 4. Ownership.

Provide the following information regarding the aggregate number and percentage of the class of securities of the issuer identified in Item 1.

- (a) Amount beneficially owned: 2,558,668
- (b) Percent of class: 4.9%
- (c) Number of shares as to which the person has:
  - (i) Sole power to vote or to direct the vote 846,903
  - (ii) Shared power to vote or to direct the vote 598,565
  - (iii) Sole power to dispose or to direct the disposition of 2,558,668
  - (iv) Shared power to dispose or to direct the disposition of 0

Item 5. Ownership of Five Percent or Less of a Class.

If this statement is being filed to report the fact that as of the date hereof the reporting person has ceased to be the beneficial owner of more than five percent of the class of securities, check the following: [X]

Item 6. Ownership of More than Five Percent on Behalf of Another Person.

EARNEST Partners, LLC is filing as an investment adviser in accordance with 240.13d-1(b)(1)(ii)(E). No client interest relates to more than five percent of the class.

Item 7. Identification and Classification of the Subsidiary Which Acquired the Security Being Reported on by the Parent Holding Company.

Not Applicable

Item 8. Identification and Classification of Members of the Group.

Not Applicable

Item 9. Notice of Dissolution of a Group

Not Applicable

Item 10. Certification

- (a) The following certification shall be included if the statement is

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filed pursuant to Rule 13d-1(b):

By signing below I certify that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the securities referred to above were acquired and are held in the ordinary course of business and were not acquired and are not held for the purpose of or with the effect of changing or influencing the control of the issuer of the securities and were not acquired and are not held in connection with or as a participant in any transaction having that purpose or effect.

(b) The following certification shall be included if the statement is filed pursuant to Rule 13d-1(c):

By signing below I certify that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the securities referred to above were not acquired and are not held for the purpose of or with the effect of changing or influencing the control of the issuer of the securities and were not acquired and are not held in connection with or as a participant in any transaction having that purpose or effect.

SIGNATURE

After reasonable inquiry and to the best of my knowledge and belief, I certify that the information set forth in this statement is true, complete and correct.

April 10, 2008

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Date

/s/ James M. Wilson

-----

Signature

James M. Wilson  
Chief Compliance Officer

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Name/Title

Attention: Intentional misstatements or omissions of fact constitute Federal criminal violations (See 18 U.S.C. 1001)

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/TD> provisions as to whether conversion will be at the option of the holders of the preferred shares or at our option;

the events requiring an adjustment of the conversion price; and

provisions affecting conversion in the event of the redemption of that series of preferred shares.

**Transfer Agent and Registrar.** We will identify the transfer agent and registrar for any additional series of preferred shares issued through this prospectus in a prospectus supplement.

**Depository Shares**

**General.** We may issue receipts for depositary shares, each of which will represent a fractional interest of a share of a particular series of preferred shares. We will deposit the preferred shares of any series represented by depositary shares with a depositary under a deposit agreement. We will identify the depositary in a prospectus supplement. Subject to the terms of the deposit agreement, if you own a depositary share, you will be entitled, in proportion to the fraction of the preferred share represented by your depositary share, to all of the rights and preferences to which you would be entitled if you owned the preferred share represented by your depositary share directly (including dividend, voting, redemption, conversion, subscription and liquidation rights).

The depositary shares will be represented by depositary receipts issued pursuant to the applicable deposit agreement. Immediately following the issuance and delivery of our preferred shares to the depositary, we will cause the depositary to issue, on our behalf, the depositary receipts. Upon request, we will provide you with copies of the applicable form of deposit agreement and depositary receipt.

**Dividends and Other Provisions.** If you are a record holder (as defined below) of depositary receipts and we pay a cash dividend or other cash distribution with respect to the preferred share represented by your depositary share, the depositary will distribute all cash dividends or other cash distributions it receives in respect of the preferred shares represented by your depositary receipts in proportion to the number of depositary shares you owned on the record date for that dividend or distribution.

If we make a distribution in a form other than cash, the depositary will distribute the property it receives to you and all other record holders of depositary receipts in an equitable manner, unless the depositary determines that it is not feasible to do so. If the depositary decides it cannot feasibly distribute the property, it may sell the property and distribute the net proceeds from the sale to you and the other record holders. The amount the depositary distributes in any of the foregoing cases may be reduced by any amounts that we or the depositary is required to withhold on account of taxes.

A record holder is a person who holds depositary receipts on the record date for any dividend, distribution or other action. The record date for depositary shares will be the same as the record date for the preferred shares represented by those depositary receipts.

**Withdrawal of Preferred Shares.** If you surrender your depositary receipts, the depositary will be required to deliver certificates to you evidencing the number of preferred shares represented by those receipts (but only in whole shares). If you deliver depositary receipts representing a number of depositary shares that is greater than the number of whole shares to be withdrawn, the depositary will deliver to you, at the same time, a new depositary receipt evidencing the fractional shares.

**Redemption of Depositary Shares.** If we redeem a series of preferred shares represented by depositary receipts, the depositary will redeem depositary shares from the proceeds it receives after redemption of the preferred shares. The redemption price per depositary share will equal the applicable fraction of the redemption price per share payable with respect to that series of preferred shares. If fewer than all the depositary shares are to be redeemed, the depositary will select shares to be redeemed by lot, pro rata or by any other equitable method it may determine. After the date fixed for redemption, the depositary shares called for redemption will no longer be outstanding. All rights of the holders of those depositary shares will cease, except the right to receive the redemption price that the holders of the depositary shares were entitled to receive upon redemption. Payments will be made when holders surrender their depositary receipts to the depositary.

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***Voting the Preferred Shares.*** When the depositary receives notice of any meeting at which the holders of preferred shares are entitled to vote, the depositary will mail information contained in the notice to you as a record holder of the depositary shares relating to the preferred shares. As a record holder of the depositary shares on the record date (which will be the same date as the record date for the preferred shares), you will be entitled to instruct the depositary as to how you would like your votes to be exercised. The depositary will endeavor, insofar as practicable, to vote the number of preferred shares represented by your depositary shares in accordance with your instructions. We will agree to take all reasonable action that the depositary may deem necessary to enable the depositary to do this. If you do not send specific instructions the depositary will not vote the preferred shares represented by your depositary shares.

***Liquidation Preference.*** In the event of our liquidation, dissolution or winding up, whether voluntary or involuntary, you will be entitled, as a record holder of depositary shares, to the fraction of the liquidation preference accorded each applicable preferred share, as has been set forth in a prospectus supplement.

***Conversion of Preferred Shares.*** Our depositary shares, as such, are not convertible into common shares or any of our other securities or property. Nevertheless, if so specified in a prospectus supplement, the depositary receipts may be surrendered by their holders to the depositary with written instructions to the depositary to instruct us to cause conversion of the preferred shares represented by the depositary shares into whole common or preferred shares, as the case may be. We will agree that, upon receipt of this type of instructions and any amounts payable, we will convert the depositary shares using the same procedures as those provided for delivery of preferred shares to effect such conversion. If the depositary shares are to be converted in part only, one or more new depositary receipts will be issued for any depositary shares not to be converted. No fractional common shares will be issued upon conversion, and if such conversion will result in issuance of a fractional share, we will pay an amount of cash equal to the value of the fractional interest based upon the closing price of the common shares on the last business day prior to the conversion.

***Amendment and Termination of the Deposit Agreement.*** We and the depositary may amend the form of depositary receipt and any provision of the deposit agreement at any time. However, any amendment which materially and adversely alters your rights as a holder of depositary shares will not be effective unless the holders of at least a majority of the depositary shares then outstanding approve the amendment. The deposit agreement will only terminate if:

we redeem all outstanding depositary shares;

we make a final distribution in respect of the preferred shares to which the depositary shares and agreement relate, including in connection with any liquidation, dissolution or winding up and the distribution has been distributed to the holders of depositary shares; or

each preferred share to which the depositary shares and agreement relate shall have been converted into shares of beneficial interest not represented by depositary shares.

***Resignation and Removal of Depositary.*** The depositary may resign at any time by delivering a notice to us of its election to do so. Additionally, we may remove the depositary at any time. Any resignation or removal will take effect when we appoint a successor depositary and the successor accepts the appointment. We must appoint a successor depositary within 60 days after delivery of the notice of resignation or removal. A successor depositary must be a bank or trust company having its principal office in the U.S. and having a combined capital and surplus of at least \$50

million.

***Charges of Depositary.*** We will pay all transfer and other taxes and governmental charges arising solely from the existence of the depositary arrangements. We will pay charges of the depositary in connection with the initial deposit of the preferred shares and issuance of depositary receipts, all withdrawals of preferred shares by owners of the depositary shares and any redemption of the preferred shares. You will pay other transfer and other taxes, governmental charges and other charges expressly provided for in the deposit agreement.

***Miscellaneous.*** The depositary will forward to you all reports and communications from us that we are required, or otherwise determine, to furnish to the holders of the preferred shares. The holders of depositary receipts shall have the right to inspect the transfer books of the depositary and the list of holders of depositary receipts as provided in the applicable deposit agreement or as required by law.

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Neither we nor the depositary will be liable under the deposit agreement to you other than for the depositary's gross negligence, willful misconduct or bad faith. Neither we nor the depositary will be obligated to prosecute or defend any legal proceeding in respect of any depositary shares or preferred shares unless satisfactory indemnity is furnished. We and the depositary may rely upon written advice of counsel or accountants, or upon information provided by persons presenting preferred shares for deposit, holders of depositary receipts or other persons believed to be competent and on documents believed to be genuine.

## **Restrictions on Ownership and Transfer**

Restrictions on ownership and transfer of shares are important to ensure that we meet certain conditions under the Code to qualify as a REIT. For example, the Code contains the following requirements.

No more than 50% in value of a REIT's shares may be owned, actually or constructively (based on attribution rules in the Code), by five or fewer individuals during the last half of a taxable year or a proportionate part of a shorter taxable year, which we refer to as the 5/50 Rule. Under the Code, individuals include certain tax-exempt entities except that qualified domestic pension funds are not generally treated as individuals.

If a REIT, or an owner of 10% or more of a REIT, is treated as owning 10% or more of a tenant of the REIT's property, the rent received by the REIT from the tenant will not be qualifying income for purposes of the REIT gross income tests of the Code.

A REIT's stock or beneficial interests must be owned by 100 or more persons during at least 335 days of a taxable year of 12 months or during a proportionate part of a shorter taxable year.

In order to maintain our qualification as a REIT, our declaration of trust, subject to certain exceptions described below, provides that no person may own, or be deemed to own by virtue of the attribution provisions of the Code, more than 9.8% (in value or in number of shares, whichever is more restrictive) of the outstanding common shares or more than 9.8% in value of our outstanding capital stock. In this prospectus, the term ownership limitation is used to describe this provision of our declaration of trust.

Any transfer of shares will be null and void, and the intended transferee will acquire no rights in such shares if the transfer:

results in any person owning, directly or indirectly, shares in excess of the ownership limitation;

results in the shares being owned by fewer than 100 persons (determined without reference to any rules of attribution);

results in our being closely held (within the meaning of Section 856(h) of the Code);



causes us to own, directly or constructively, 10% or more of the ownership interests in a tenant of our real property (within the meaning of Section 856(d)(2)(B) of the Code); or

otherwise results in our failure to qualify as a REIT.

***Automatic Transfer of Shares to Trust.*** With certain exceptions described below, if any purported transfer of shares would violate any of the restrictions described in the immediately preceding paragraph, then the transfer will be null and void, and those shares will be designated as shares-in-trust and transferred automatically to a charitable trust. The transfer to the trust is effective as of the end of the business day before the purported transfer of such shares. The record holder of the shares that are designated as shares-in-trust must deliver those shares to us for registration in the name of the trust. We will designate a trustee who is not affiliated with us. The beneficiary of the trust will be one or more charitable organizations named by us.

Any shares-in-trust remain issued and outstanding shares and are entitled to the same rights and privileges as all other shares of the same class or series. The trust receives all dividends and distributions on the shares-in-trust and holds such dividends and distributions in trust for the benefit of the beneficiary. The trustee votes all shares-in-trust. The trustee shall also designate a permitted transferee of the shares-in-trust. The permitted transferee must purchase the shares-in-trust for valuable consideration and acquire the shares-in-trust without resulting in the transfer being null and void.

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The record holder with respect to shares-in-trust must pay the trust any dividends or distributions received by such record holder that are attributable to any shares-in-trust if the record date for those shares-in-trust was on or after the date that such shares became shares-in-trust. Upon sale or other disposition of the shares-in-trust to a permitted transferee, the record holder generally will receive from the trustee, the lesser of:

the price per share, if any, paid by the record holder for the shares; or

if no amount was paid for such shares (e.g., if such shares were received through a gift or devise),

the price per share equal to the market price (which is calculated as defined in our declaration of trust) on the date the shares were received, or

the price per share received by the trustee from the sale of such shares-in-trust.

Any amounts received by the trustee in excess of the amounts paid to the record owner will be distributed to the beneficiary. Unless sooner sold to a permitted transferee, upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up, the record owner generally will receive from the trustee its share of the liquidation proceeds but in no case more than the price per share paid by the record owner or, in the case of a gift or devise, the market price per share on the date such shares were received by the trust.

The shares-in-trust will be offered for sale to us, or our designee, at a price per share equal to the lesser of the price per share in the transaction that created the shares-in-trust (or, in the case of a gift or devise, the market price per share on the date of such transfer) or the market price per share on the date that we, or our designee, accepts such offer. We may accept such offer until the trustee has sold the shares-in-trust as provided above.

Any person who acquires or attempts to acquire shares which would be null and void under the restrictions described above, or any person who owned common shares or preferred shares that were transferred to a trust, must both give us immediate written notice of such event and provide us such other information as requested in order to determine the effect, if any, of such transfer on our status as a REIT.

If a shareholder owns more than 5% of the outstanding common shares or preferred shares, then the shareholder must notify us of its share ownership by January 30 of each year.

The ownership limitation generally does not apply to the acquisition of shares by an underwriter that participates in a public offering of such shares. In addition, the Board of Trustees may exempt a person from the ownership limitation under certain circumstances and conditions. The restrictions on ownership and transfer described in this section of this prospectus will continue to apply until the Board of Trustees determines that it is no longer in our best interests to attempt to qualify, or to continue to qualify, as a REIT.

The Board of Trustees has agreed to exempt from the ownership limitation BlackRock, Inc., or BlackRock, for itself, its subsidiaries and on behalf of investment funds and accounts for whom BlackRock acts as manager or investment advisor with respect to ownership of our equity shares. The Board of Trustees approved an exemption for BlackRock which permits BlackRock and its subsidiaries and investment funds and accounts combined, to the extent they comprise a group under SEC rules, to own up to 15.0% of our outstanding equity or common shares. BlackRock and

each of its subsidiaries and investment funds and accounts will remain individually subject to the ownership limitation. The exemption will terminate upon at least 30 days notice given by us, with such notice not to be given before April 30, 2015.

The Board of Trustees has also agreed to exempt from the ownership limitation Cohen & Steers Capital Management, Inc., or Cohen & Steers, for itself, its affiliates and on behalf of the mutual funds and institutional investor client accounts it advises with respect to ownership of our common shares. The Board of Trustees approved an exemption for Cohen & Steers which permits Cohen & Steers and its affiliates and mutual funds and investor client accounts, combined, to own up to 15.0% of our outstanding common shares. The exemption will expire upon prior notice given by us to Cohen & Steers in the event its mutual funds and investor client accounts no longer own at least 7.0% of our common shares for 180 days in any calendar year.

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The ownership limitation could have the effect of delaying, deferring or preventing a transaction or a change in our control that might involve a premium price for the common shares or preferred shares or otherwise be in the best interest of our shareholders. All certificates representing shares will bear a legend referring to the restrictions described above.

## **Warrants**

**Warrants.** We may issue warrants for the purchase of common or preferred shares. If we offer warrants, we will describe the terms in a prospectus supplement. Warrants may be offered independently, together with other securities offered by any prospectus supplement, or through a dividend or other distribution to shareholders and may be attached to or separate from other securities. Warrants may be issued under a written warrant agreement to be entered into between us or the holder or beneficial owner, or we could issue warrants pursuant to a written warrant agreement with a warrant agent specified in a prospectus supplement. A warrant agent would act solely as our agent in connection with the warrants of a particular series and would not assume any obligation or relationship of agency or trust for or with any holders or beneficial owners of such warrants.

The following are some of the warrant terms that could be described in a prospectus supplement:

the title of the warrant;

the aggregate number of warrants;

the price or prices at which the warrant will be issued;

the designation, number and terms of the preferred shares or common shares that may be purchased on exercise of the warrant;

the date, if any, on and after which the warrant and the related securities will be separately transferable;

the price at which each security purchasable on exercise of the warrant may be purchased;

the dates on which the right to purchase the securities purchasable on exercise of the warrant will begin and end;

the minimum or maximum number of securities that may be purchased at any one time;

any anti-dilution protection;

information with respect to book-entry procedures, if any;

a discussion of certain federal income tax considerations; and

any other warrant terms, including terms relating to transferability, exchange or exercise of the warrant.

**Certain Provisions of Maryland Law and our Declaration of Trust and Bylaws**

The following summary of certain provisions of the Maryland General Corporation Law and our declaration of trust and bylaws is not complete. You should read the Maryland General Corporation Law and our declaration of trust and bylaws for more complete information.

The following provisions, together with the ability of the Board of Trustees to increase the number of authorized shares, in the aggregate or by class, and to issue preferred shares without further shareholder action, the transfer restrictions described under *Restrictions on Ownership and Transfer* and the supermajority voting rights described under *Common Shares Voting Rights*, may delay or frustrate the removal of incumbent trustees or the completion of transactions that would be beneficial, in the short term, to our shareholders. The provisions may also discourage or make more difficult a merger, tender offer, other business combination or proxy contest, the assumption of control by a holder of a large block of our securities or the removal of incumbent management, even if these events would offer our shareholders a premium price on their securities or otherwise be favorable to the interests of our shareholders.

***Business Combinations.*** Applicable Maryland law, as set forth in the Maryland General Corporation Law, limits our ability to enter into *business combinations* and other corporate transactions, including a merger, consolidation, share exchange, or, in certain circumstances, an asset transfer or issuance of equity securities when the combination is between us and an *interested shareholder* (as defined below) or an affiliate of an *interested shareholder*. An *interested shareholder* is:

any person who beneficially owns 10% or more of the voting power of our outstanding voting shares; or

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any of our affiliates that beneficially owned, directly or indirectly, 10% or more of the voting power of our outstanding voting shares at any time within two years immediately prior to the applicable date in question. We may not engage in a business combination with an interested shareholder or any of its affiliates for five years after the interested shareholder becomes an interested shareholder. This prohibition does not apply to business combinations involving us that are exempted by the Board of Trustees before the interested shareholder becomes an interested shareholder.

We may engage in business combinations with an interested shareholder if at least five years have passed since the person became an interested shareholder, but only if the transaction is:

recommended by our Board of Trustees; and

approved by at least,

80% of our outstanding shares entitled to vote; and

two-thirds of our outstanding shares entitled to vote that are not held by the interested shareholder or any of its affiliates.

Shareholder approval will not be required if our common shareholders receive a minimum price (as defined in the statute) for their shares and our shareholders receive cash or the same form of consideration as the interested shareholder paid for its shares.

***Control Share Acquisitions.*** Our bylaws exempt acquisitions of our shares of beneficial interest by any person from control share acquisition requirements discussed below. With the approval of our Board of Trustees, and of shareholders holding at least a majority of shares outstanding and entitled to vote on the matter, however, we could modify or eliminate the exemption in the future. If the exemption were eliminated, control share acquisitions would be subject to the following provisions.

The Maryland General Corporation Law provides that control shares of a Maryland REIT acquired in a control share acquisition have no voting rights unless two-thirds of the shareholders (excluding shares owned by the acquirer and by the officers and trustees who are employees of the Maryland REIT) approve their voting rights.

Control Shares are shares that, if added to all other shares previously acquired, would entitle that person to exercise voting power, in electing trustees, within one of the following ranges of voting power:

one-tenth or more but less than one-third;

one-third or more but less than a majority, or

a majority or more of all voting power.

Control shares do not include shares the acquiring person is entitled to vote with shareholder approval. A control share acquisition means the acquisition of control shares, subject to certain exceptions.

If this provision becomes applicable to us, a person who has made or proposes to make a control share acquisition could, under certain circumstances, compel our Board of Trustees to call a special meeting of shareholders to consider the voting rights of the control shares. We could also present the question at any shareholders meeting on our own.

If this provision becomes applicable to us, subject to certain conditions and limitations, we would be able to redeem any or all control shares. If voting rights for control shares were approved at a shareholders meeting and the acquirer were entitled to vote a majority of the shares entitled to vote, all other shareholders could exercise appraisal rights and exchange their shares for a fair value as defined by statute.

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***Duties of Trustees.*** Under Maryland law, there is a presumption that the act of a trustee satisfies the required standard of care. An act of a trustee relating to or affecting an acquisition or a potential acquisition of control is not subject under Maryland law to a higher duty or greater scrutiny than is applied to any other act of a trustee.

***Number of Trustees.*** The number of trustees may be increased or decreased pursuant to the bylaws, provided that the total number of trustees may not be less than five or more than 10. Under Maryland law and our declaration of trust, trustees are elected for one-year terms.

***Removal of Trustees.*** Under the declaration of trust, and subject to the rights of any holders of preferred shares, our trustees may remove a trustee with cause, as defined in our declaration of trust, by the vote of all the other trustees or the shareholders may remove a trustee, with or without cause, at any meeting of shareholders called for that purpose, either by:

the affirmative vote of the holders of two-thirds of the number of shares outstanding and entitled to vote on that matter if the removal is approved or recommended by a vote of at least two-thirds of the Board of Trustees; or

the affirmative vote of the holders of not less than 80% of the number of shares then outstanding and entitled to vote on that matter if the removal is not approved or recommended by a vote of at least two-thirds of the Board of Trustees.

***Vacancies on the Board of Trustees.*** The bylaws provide that, subject to the rights of any holders of preferred shares, any vacancy on the Board of Trustees, including a vacancy created by an increase in the number of trustees, may be filled by vote of a majority of the remaining trustees, or, if the trustees fail to act, at a meeting called for that purpose by the vote of a majority of the shares entitled to vote on the matter. Each trustee so elected shall serve for the unexpired term of the trustee he is replacing.

***Meetings of Shareholders.*** Our bylaws provide for an annual meeting of shareholders, to be held in May after delivery of the annual report to shareholders, to elect individuals to the Board of Trustees and transact such other business as may properly be brought before the meeting. Special meetings of shareholders may be called by our Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Chief Executive Officer, President or by one-third of the Board of Trustees, and shall be called at the request in writing of the holders of 25% of all votes entitled to be cast at the meeting.

Our declaration of trust provides that any action required or permitted to be taken at a meeting of shareholders may be taken without a meeting, if a majority of shares entitled to vote on the matter (or such larger proportion as shall be required to take the action) consent to the action in writing and the written consents are filed with the records of the meetings of shareholders.

***Advance Notice for Shareholder Nominations and Shareholder New Business Proposals.*** Our bylaws require advance written notice for shareholders to nominate a trustee or bring other business before a meeting of shareholders. For an annual meeting, to nominate a trustee or bring other business before a meeting of shareholders, a shareholder must deliver notice to our Secretary not later than the close of business on the 120<sup>th</sup> day prior to the first anniversary of the date of the proxy statement relating to the preceding year's annual meeting. If the date of the annual meeting is changed by more than 30 days from the date of the preceding year's meeting or if we did not hold an annual meeting the preceding year, notice must be delivered within a reasonable time before we begin to print and mail our proxy materials.



For a special meeting, to nominate a trustee, a shareholder must deliver notice to our Secretary not earlier than the close of business on the 120<sup>th</sup> day prior to the special meeting and not later than the close of business on the later of the 90<sup>th</sup> day prior to the special meeting or the 10<sup>th</sup> day following the date on which public announcement is first made of the special meeting. Nominations for elections to the Board of Trustees may be made at a special meeting by shareholders of record both at the time of giving of notice of the special meeting and at the time of the special meeting and who are entitled to vote at the special meeting and who complied with the notice procedures in our bylaws only (a) pursuant to the notice of special meeting, (b) by or at the direction of the Board of Trustees or (c) if the Board of Trustees has determined that trustees shall be elected at the special meeting.

The postponement or adjournment of an annual or special meeting to a later date or time shall not commence any new time periods for the giving of notice as described above. Our bylaws contain detailed requirements for the contents of shareholder notices of trustee nominations and new business proposals.

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***Shareholder Liability and Indemnification.*** Under Maryland law, you will not be personally liable for any obligation of ours solely because you are a shareholder. Under our declaration of trust, our shareholders are not liable for our debts or obligations by reason of being a shareholder and will not be subject to any personal liability, in tort, contract or otherwise, to any person in connection with our property or affairs by reason of being a shareholder. Under our bylaws, our shareholders shall have similar indemnification and expense advancement rights as our trustees and officers.

In some jurisdictions other than Maryland, however, with respect to tort claims, contractual claims where shareholder liability is not negated by the express terms of the contract, claims for taxes and certain statutory liabilities, our shareholders may be personally liable to the extent that those claims are not satisfied by us. In addition, common law theories of piercing the corporate veil may be used to impose liability on shareholders in certain instances.

***Limitation of Liability of Trustees and Officers.*** Our declaration of trust, to the maximum extent permitted under Maryland law in effect from time to time with respect to liability of trustees and officers of a REIT, provides that no trustee or officer of ours shall be liable to us or to any shareholder for money damages. The Maryland General Corporation Law provides that we may restrict or limit the liability of trustees or officers for money damages except to the extent:

it is proved that the trustee or officer actually received an improper benefit or profit in money, property or services; or

a judgment or other final adjudication adverse to the person is entered in a proceeding based on a finding that the person's action, or failure to act, was material to the cause of action adjudicated and was the result of active and deliberate dishonesty.

Our declaration of trust provides that neither amendment nor repeal or any provision of our declaration of trust, nor adoption of any other provision, shall apply to or affect in any respect the applicability of such limitation of liability with respect to any act or failure to act which occurred prior to such amendment, repeal or adoption.

***Indemnification of Directors and Officers.*** Our declaration of trust permits us to indemnify and advance expenses to, to the maximum extent permitted by Maryland law in effect from time to time, any individual who is a present or former trustee or officer of ours or to any individual who, while a trustee of ours, serves or has served as a director, officer, partner, trustee, employee or agent of another REIT, corporation partnership, joint venture, trust, employee benefit plan or any other enterprise, in connection with any claim or liability to which such person may become subject or which such person may incur by reason of such status.

Our bylaws require us to indemnify: (a) any trustee, officer or former trustee or officer, including any individual who, while a trustee or officer at our express request, serves or served for another REIT, corporation, partnership, limited liability company, joint venture, trust, employee benefit plan or any other enterprise as a director, officer, shareholder, manager, member, partner or trustee of such entity, who has been successful, on the merits or otherwise, in the defense of a proceeding to which he or she was made a party by reason of service in such capacity, against reasonable expenses incurred by him or her in connection with the proceeding; and (b) any trustee or officer or any former trustee or officer against any claim or liability to which he or she may become subject by reason of such status unless it is established that: (i) his or her act or omission was material to the matter giving rise to the proceeding and was committed in bad faith or was the result of active and deliberative dishonesty; (ii) he or she actually received an improper personal benefit in money, property or services; or (iii) in the case of a criminal proceeding, he or she had

reasonable cause to believe that his or her act or omission was unlawful. In addition, our bylaws require us, without requiring a preliminary determination of the ultimate entitlement to indemnification, to pay or reimburse expenses incurred by a trustee, officer or former trustee or officer made a party to a proceeding by reason of such status, provided that we have received from any such trustee or officer an affirmation and written undertaking as required by our bylaws. Our bylaws provide that neither amendment nor repeal or any provision of our bylaws, nor adoption of any other provision, shall apply to or affect in any respect the applicability of such indemnification and expense advancement rights with respect to any act or failure to act which occurred prior to such amendment, repeal or adoption.

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**MATERIAL FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSIDERATIONS**

The following section summarizes the material federal income tax issues that you may consider relevant relating to our taxation as a REIT under the Code, and the acquisition, ownership, and disposition of our common, preferred, and depositary shares. If we offer one or more additional series of common shares or preferred shares, debt securities, depositary shares, or warrants to purchase debt or equity securities, the prospectus supplement would include information about additional material U.S. federal income tax considerations to holders of any of the offered securities.

Because this section is a summary, it does not address all of the tax issues that may be important to you. For example, the discussion of the tax treatment of our shareholders addresses only common or preferred shares held as capital assets (generally property held for investment) within the meaning of Section 1221 of the Code. This discussion is based on current law and does not purport to deal with all aspects of U.S. federal income taxation that may be relevant to a prospective shareholder in light of its particular circumstances. In addition, this section does not address the tax issues that may be important to certain types of shareholders that are subject to special treatment under the federal income tax laws, such as financial institutions, brokers, dealers in securities and commodities, insurance companies, former U.S. citizens or long-term residents, regulated investment companies, real estate investment trusts, tax-exempt organizations (except to the extent discussed in [Taxation of Tax-Exempt U.S. Shareholders](#) below), controlled foreign corporations, passive foreign investment companies, persons that acquire shares in connection with employment or other performance of personal services, persons subject to the alternative minimum tax, persons that are, or that hold their shares through, partnerships or other pass-through entities, persons whose functional currency is not the U.S. dollar, persons that hold shares as part of a straddle, hedge, conversion, synthetic security or constructive sale transaction for U.S. federal income tax purposes, persons that purchase or sell shares as part of a wash sale for tax purposes, or non-U.S. individuals and foreign corporations (except to the extent discussed in [Taxation of Non-U.S. Shareholders](#) below). In addition, this discussion is general in nature and is not exhaustive of all possible tax considerations, nor does it address any aspect of state, local or foreign taxation or any U.S. federal tax other than the income tax and, only to the extent specifically provided herein, certain excise taxes potentially applicable to REITs.

This summary is based upon the Code, the regulations of the U.S. Department of Treasury ( [Treasury](#) ) promulgated thereunder and judicial and administrative rulings now in effect, all of which are subject to change or differing interpretations, possibly with retroactive effect.

If a partnership, including an entity or arrangement that is treated as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes, is a beneficial owner of our shares, the treatment of the partnership, and partners in the partnership, will generally depend on the status of the partner and the activities of the partnership. Partnerships holding shares, and partners in such partnerships, should consult their tax advisors with regard to the U.S. federal income tax treatment of an investment in our shares.

**PROSPECTIVE INVESTORS SHOULD CONSULT THEIR TAX ADVISORS REGARDING THE SPECIFIC FEDERAL, STATE, LOCAL, FOREIGN AND OTHER TAX CONSEQUENCES TO THEM OF THE ACQUISITION, OWNERSHIP AND DISPOSITION OF OUR COMMON OR PREFERRED SHARES, OUR ELECTION TO BE TAXED AS A REIT AND THE EFFECT OF POTENTIAL CHANGES IN APPLICABLE TAX LAWS.**

**Taxation of the Company**

The statements in this section are based on the current federal income tax laws governing our qualification as a REIT. We cannot assure you that new laws, interpretations of laws or court decisions, any of which may take effect

retroactively, will not cause any statement in this section to be inaccurate.

We elected to be taxed as a REIT under the federal income tax laws when we filed our 1962 federal income tax return. We have been organized and have operated in a manner intended to qualify as a REIT and we intend to continue to operate in that manner. This section discusses the laws governing the federal income tax treatment of a REIT and its shareholders. These laws are highly technical and complex.

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In the opinion of our tax counsel, Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP, (i) we qualified as a REIT under Sections 856 through 860 of the Code with respect to each of our taxable years ended through December 31, 2014; and (ii) we are organized in conformity with the requirements for qualification as a REIT under the Code and our current method of operation and ownership will enable us to meet the requirements for qualification and taxation as a REIT for the current taxable year and for future taxable years, provided that we have operated and continue to operate in accordance with various assumptions and factual representations made by us concerning our diversity of share ownership, business, properties and operations. We may not, however, have met or continue to meet such requirements. You should be aware that opinions of counsel are not binding on the Internal Revenue Service ( IRS ) or any court. Our qualification as a REIT depends on our ability to meet, on a continuing basis, certain qualification tests set forth in the federal tax laws. Those qualification tests involve the percentage of income that we earn from specified sources, the percentage of our assets that fall within certain categories, the diversity of the ownership of our shares, and the percentage of our earnings that we distribute. We describe the REIT qualification tests in more detail below. Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP will not monitor our compliance with the requirements for REIT qualification on an ongoing basis. Accordingly, our actual operating results may not satisfy the qualification tests. Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP's opinion does not foreclose the possibility that we may have to use one or more of the REIT savings provisions described below, which would require us to pay an excise or penalty tax (which could be material) in order for us to maintain our REIT qualification. For a discussion of the tax treatment of us and our shareholders if we fail to qualify as a REIT, see Requirements for REIT Qualification Failure to Qualify.

As a REIT, we generally will not be subject to federal income tax on the taxable income that we distribute to our shareholders. The benefit of that tax treatment is that it avoids the double taxation (i.e., at both the corporate and shareholder levels) that generally results from owning shares in a subchapter C corporation. However, we will be subject to federal tax in the following circumstances:

we will pay federal income tax on taxable income (including net capital gain) that we do not distribute to our shareholders during, or within a specified time period after, the calendar year in which the income is earned;

we may be subject to the alternative minimum tax on any items of tax preference that we do not distribute or allocate to our shareholders;

we will pay income tax at the highest corporate rate on (i) net income from the sale or other disposition of property acquired through foreclosure or after a default on a loan secured by the property or a lease of the property ( foreclosure property ) that we hold primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of business and (ii) other non-qualifying income from foreclosure property;

we will pay a 100% tax on net income from certain sales or other dispositions of property (other than foreclosure property) that we hold primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of business ( prohibited transactions );

our subsidiaries that are C corporations, including our taxable REIT subsidiaries, generally will be required to pay federal corporate income tax on their earnings;

we will pay a 100% excise tax on transactions with a taxable REIT subsidiary that are not conducted on an arm's-length basis;

if we fail to satisfy the 75% gross income test or the 95% gross income test (as described below under Requirements for REIT Qualification - Income Tests ), but nonetheless continue to qualify as a REIT because we meet certain other requirements, we will pay a 100% tax on (i) the gross income attributable to the greater of the amount by which we fail, respectively, the 75% or 95% gross income test, multiplied, in either case, by (ii) a fraction intended to reflect our profitability;

if we fail, in more than a de minimis fashion, to satisfy one or more of the asset tests for any quarter of a taxable year, but nonetheless continue to qualify as a REIT because we qualify under certain relief provisions, we may be required to pay a tax of the greater of \$50,000 or a tax computed at the highest corporate rate on the amount of net income generated by the assets causing the failure from the date of failure until the assets are disposed of or we otherwise return to compliance with the asset test;

if we fail to satisfy one or more of the requirements for REIT qualification (other than the income tests or the asset tests), we nevertheless may avoid termination of our REIT election in such year if the failure is due to reasonable cause and not due to willful neglect, but we would also be required to pay a penalty of \$50,000 for each failure to satisfy the REIT qualification requirements;

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if we fail to distribute during a calendar year at least the sum of (i) 85% of our REIT ordinary income for such year, (ii) 95% of our REIT capital gain net income for such year, and (iii) any undistributed taxable income from prior periods, we will pay a nondeductible 4% excise tax on the excess of such required distribution over (A) the amount we actually distributed, plus (B) retained amounts on which corporate-level tax was paid by us;

we may be required to pay monetary penalties to the IRS in certain circumstances, including if we fail to meet record-keeping requirements intended to monitor our compliance with the rules relating to the composition of a REIT's shareholders;

we may elect to retain and pay income tax on our net long-term capital gain; or

if we acquire any asset from a C corporation (i.e., a corporation generally subject to full corporate-level tax) in a merger or other transaction in which we acquire a carryover basis in the asset (i.e., basis determined by reference to the C corporation's basis in the asset (or another asset)) and no election is made for the transaction to be taxable on a current basis, then if we recognize gain on the sale or disposition of such asset during the 10-year period after we acquire such asset, we will pay tax at the highest regular corporate rate applicable on the lesser of (i) the amount of gain that we recognize at the time of the sale or disposition and (ii) the amount of gain that we would have recognized if we had sold the asset at the time we acquired the asset.

**Requirements for REIT Qualification**

To qualify as a REIT, we must meet the following requirements:

1. we are managed by one or more trustees or directors;
2. our beneficial ownership is evidenced by transferable shares, or by transferable certificates of beneficial interest;
3. we would be taxable as a domestic corporation, but for Sections 856 through 860 of the Code;
4. we are neither a financial institution nor an insurance company subject to certain provisions of the Code;
5. at least 100 persons are beneficial owners of our shares or ownership certificates;
6. not more than 50% in value of our outstanding shares or ownership certificates is owned, directly or indirectly, by five or fewer individuals (as defined in the Code to include certain entities) during the last half of any taxable year (the 5/50 Rule );



7. we elect to be a REIT (or have made such election for a previous taxable year) and satisfy all relevant filing and other administrative requirements established by the IRS that must be met to elect and maintain REIT status;
8. we use a calendar year for federal income tax purposes and comply with the record keeping requirements of the Code and the related regulations of the Treasury; and
9. we meet certain other qualification tests, described below, regarding the nature of our income and assets and the amount of our distributions to shareholders.

We must meet requirements 1 through 4 during our entire taxable year and must meet requirement 5 during at least 335 days of a taxable year of 12 months, or during a proportionate part of a taxable year of less than 12 months. If we comply with all the requirements for ascertaining the ownership of our outstanding shares in a taxable year and have no reason to know that we violated the 5/50 Rule, we will be deemed to have satisfied the 5/50 Rule for such taxable year. For purposes of determining share ownership under the 5/50 Rule, an individual generally includes a supplemental unemployment compensation benefits plan, a private foundation, or a portion of a trust permanently set aside or used exclusively for charitable purposes. An individual, however, generally does not include a trust that is a qualified employee pension or profit sharing trust under Code Section 401(a), and beneficiaries of such a trust will be treated as holding our shares in proportion to their actuarial interests in the trust for purposes of the 5/50 Rule.

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We believe we have issued sufficient shares with sufficient diversity of ownership to satisfy requirements 5 and 6 set forth above. In addition, our declaration of trust restricts the ownership and transfer of our shares so that we should continue to satisfy requirements 5 and 6. The provisions of our declaration of trust restricting the ownership and transfer of our shares are described in **Description of Shares of Beneficial Ownership Restrictions on Ownership and Transfer**.

We currently have several direct corporate subsidiaries and may have additional corporate subsidiaries in the future. A corporation that is a qualified REIT subsidiary is not treated as a corporation separate from its parent REIT. All assets, liabilities, and items of income, deduction, and credit of a qualified REIT subsidiary are treated as assets, liabilities, and items of income, deduction, and credit of the REIT. A qualified REIT subsidiary is a corporation, all of the capital stock of which is owned by the parent REIT, unless we and the subsidiary have jointly elected to have it treated as a taxable REIT subsidiary, in which case it is treated separately from us and will be subject to federal corporate income taxation. Thus, in applying the requirements described herein, any qualified REIT subsidiary of ours will be ignored, and all assets, liabilities, and items of income, deduction, and credit of such subsidiary will be treated as our assets, liabilities, and items of income, deduction, and credit. We believe all of our direct corporate subsidiaries are qualified REIT subsidiaries, except for those that would qualify as taxable REIT subsidiaries or subsidiary REITs. Accordingly, our qualified REIT subsidiaries are not subject to federal corporate income taxation, though they may be subject to state and local taxation.

An unincorporated domestic entity, such as a partnership or limited liability company, that has a single beneficial owner generally is not treated as an entity separate from its owner for federal income tax purposes. Similar to a qualified REIT subsidiary, all assets, liabilities, and items of income, deduction, and credit of such a disregarded entity are treated as assets, liabilities, and items of income, deduction, and credit of the owner. An unincorporated domestic entity, such as a partnership or a limited liability company, with two or more beneficial owners is generally treated as a partnership for federal income tax purposes. A REIT is treated as owning its proportionate share of the assets of any partnership (which includes any limited liability company treated as a partnership) in which it is a partner and as earning its allocable share of the gross income of the partnership for purposes of the applicable REIT qualification tests. Thus, our proportionate share of the assets and items of income of any partnership (or limited liability company treated as a partnership) in which we have acquired or will acquire an interest, directly or indirectly, are treated as our assets and gross income for purposes of applying the various REIT qualification requirements. Our proportionate share is generally determined, for these purposes, based on our percentage interest in partnership equity capital, subject to special rules relating to the 10% asset test described below.

***Income Tests.*** We must satisfy two gross income tests annually to maintain our qualification as a REIT:

At least 75% of our gross income (excluding gross income from prohibited transactions, cancellation of indebtedness, certain real estate liability hedges, and certain foreign currency hedges entered into, and certain recognized real estate foreign exchange gains) for each taxable year must consist of defined types of income that we derive, directly or indirectly, from investments relating to real property or mortgages on real property or qualified temporary investment income (the 75% gross income test). Qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test includes rents from real property, interest on debt secured by mortgages on real property or on interests in real property, gain from the sale of real estate assets, and dividends or other distributions on and gain from the sale of shares in other REITs; and

At least 95% of our gross income (excluding gross income from prohibited transactions, cancellation of indebtedness, certain real estate liability hedges, and certain foreign currency hedges entered into, and certain recognized passive foreign exchange gains) for each taxable year must consist of income that is qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test, dividends, other types of interest, gain from the sale or disposition of stock or securities, or any combination of the foregoing (the 95% gross income test ).

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The following paragraphs discuss the specific application of these tests to us.

**Rental Income.** Our primary source of income derives from leasing properties. There are various limitations on whether rent that we receive from real property that we own and lease to tenants will qualify as rents from real property (which is qualifying income for purposes of the 75% and 95% gross income tests) under the REIT tax rules:

If the rent is based, in whole or in part, on the income or profits of any person although, generally, rent may be based on a fixed percentage or percentages of receipts or sales, the rent will not qualify as rents from real property. Our leases provide for either fixed rent, sometimes with scheduled escalations, or a fixed minimum rent and a percentage of gross receipts in excess of some threshold. We have not entered into any lease based in whole or part on the net income of any person and on an ongoing basis will use our best efforts to avoid entering into such arrangements unless, in either instance, we have determined or we determine in our discretion that such arrangements will not jeopardize our status as a REIT;

Except in certain limited circumstances involving taxable REIT subsidiaries, if we or someone who owns 10% or more of our shares owns 10% or more of a tenant from whom we receive rent, the tenant is deemed a related party tenant, and the rent paid by the related party tenant will not qualify as rents from real property. Our ownership and the ownership of a tenant is determined based on direct, indirect and constructive ownership. The constructive ownership rules generally provide that if 10% or more in value of our shares are owned, directly or indirectly, by or for any person, we are considered as owning the shares owned, directly or indirectly, by or for such person. The applicable attribution rules, however, are highly complex and difficult to apply, and we may inadvertently enter into leases with tenants who, through application of such rules, will constitute related party tenants. In such event, rent paid by the related party tenant will not qualify as rents from real property, which may jeopardize our status as a REIT. We believe that we have not leased property to any related party tenant, except where we may rent to certain taxable REIT subsidiaries as described below, or where we have determined in our discretion that the rent received from such related party tenant is not material and will not jeopardize our status as a REIT. On an ongoing basis, we will use our best efforts not to rent any property to a related party tenant (taking into account the applicable constructive ownership rules), unless we determine in our discretion that the rent received from such related party tenant will not jeopardize our status as a REIT;

In the case of certain rent from a taxable REIT subsidiary which would, but for this exception, be considered rent from a related party tenant, the space leased to the taxable REIT subsidiary must be part of a property at least 90% of which is rented to persons other than taxable REIT subsidiaries and related party tenants, and the amounts of rent paid to us by the taxable REIT subsidiary must be substantially comparable to the rents paid by such other persons for comparable space. On an ongoing basis we use and will use our best efforts to ensure that all space leased to our taxable REIT subsidiaries meets these conditions, unless we determine in our discretion that the related party rent received from a taxable REIT subsidiary will not jeopardize our status as a REIT;

If the rent attributable to any personal property leased in connection with a lease of property is more than 15% of the total rent received under the lease, all of the rent attributable to the personal property will fail to qualify as rents from real property. In general, we have not leased a significant amount of personal property

under our current leases. If any incidental personal property has been leased, we believe that rent under each lease from the personal property has been no more than 15% of total rent from that lease, and on an ongoing basis we will use our best efforts to avoid leasing personal property in connection with a future lease except where rent from the personal property is no more than 15% of total rent from that lease, unless, in either instance, we have determined or we determine in our discretion that the amount of disqualified rent attributable to the personal property will not jeopardize our status as a REIT;

In general, if we furnish or render services to our tenants, other than through a taxable REIT subsidiary or an independent contractor who is adequately compensated and from whom we do not derive revenue, the income received from the tenants may not be deemed rents from real property. We may provide services directly, if the services are usually or customarily rendered in connection with the rental of space for occupancy only and are not otherwise considered to be provided for the tenant's convenience. In addition, we may render directly a de minimis amount of non-customary services to the tenants of a property without disqualifying the income as rents from real property, as long as our income from the services does not exceed 1% of our income from the related property. We believe that we have not provided services to leased properties that have caused rents to be disqualified as rents from real property, and on an ongoing basis in the future, we will use our best efforts to determine in our discretion that any services provided will not cause rents to be disqualified as rents from real property, or unless, in either instance, we have determined or we determine in our discretion that the amount of disqualified rent resulting from such services will not jeopardize our status as a REIT.

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Based on, and subject to, the foregoing, we believe that rent from our leases should generally qualify as rents from real property for purposes of the 75% and 95% gross income tests, except in amounts that should not jeopardize our status as a REIT. As described above, however, the IRS may assert successfully a contrary position and, therefore, prevent us from qualifying as a REIT.

**Interest.** For purposes of the gross income tests, the term interest generally does not include any amount received or accrued, directly or indirectly, if the determination of all or some of the amount depends in any way on the income or profits of any person. However, an amount received or accrued generally will not be excluded from the term interest solely by reason of being based on a fixed percentage or percentages of receipts or sales. If a loan contains a provision that entitles us to a percentage of the borrower's gain upon the sale of the real property securing the loan or a percentage of the appreciation in the property's value as of a specific date, income attributable to that loan provision will be treated as gain from the sale of the property securing the loan, which generally is qualifying income for purposes of both gross income tests.

We may from time to time hold mortgage debt. Interest on debt secured by a mortgage on real property or on interests in real property, including, for this purpose, discount points, prepayment penalties, loan assumption fees, and late payment charges that are not compensation for services, generally is qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test. However, in the case of acquisition of an existing loan, if the loan is secured by real property and other property and the highest principal amount of the loan outstanding during a taxable year exceeds the fair market value of the real property securing the loan as of the date we agreed to acquire the loan, then a portion of the interest income from such loan will not be qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test, but will be qualifying income for purposes of the 95% gross income test. The portion of the interest income that will not be qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test will be equal to the portion of the principal amount of the loan that is not secured by real property—that is, the amount by which the loan principal exceeds the value of the real estate that is security for the loan as of the date we agreed to acquire the loan.

**Dividends.** Our share of any dividends received from any corporation (including any taxable REIT subsidiary, but excluding any REIT) in which we own an equity interest will qualify for purposes of the 95% gross income test but not for purposes of the 75% gross income test. Our share of any dividends received from any other REIT in which we own an equity interest will be qualifying income for purposes of both gross income tests.

**Tax on Income From Property Acquired in Foreclosure.** We will be subject to tax at the maximum corporate rate on any income from foreclosure property (other than income that would be qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test), less expenses directly connected to the production of such income. However, gross income from foreclosure property will qualify under the 75% and 95% gross income tests.

Foreclosure property is any real property (including interests in real property) and any personal property incident to such real property:

that is acquired by a REIT at a foreclosure sale, or having otherwise become the owner or in possession of the property by agreement or process of law, after a default (or imminent default) on a lease of such property or on a debt owed to the REIT secured by the property;

for which the related loan was acquired by the REIT at a time when default was not imminent or anticipated; and

for which the REIT makes a proper election to treat the property as foreclosure property. A REIT will not be considered to have foreclosed on a property where it takes control of the property as a mortgagee-in-possession and cannot receive any profit or sustain any loss except as a creditor of the mortgagor. Generally, property acquired as described above ceases to be foreclosure property on the earlier of:

the last day of the third taxable year following the taxable year in which the REIT acquired the property (or longer if an extension is granted by the Secretary of the Treasury);

the first day on which a lease is entered into with respect to such property that, by its terms, will give rise to income that does not qualify under the 75% gross income test or any amount is received or accrued, directly or indirectly, pursuant to a lease entered into on or after such day that will give rise to income that does not qualify under the 75% gross income test;

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the first day on which any construction takes place on such property (other than completion of a building, or any other improvement, where more than 10% of the construction of such building or other improvement was completed before default became imminent); or

the first day that is more than 90 days after the day on which such property was acquired by the REIT and the property is used in a trade or business that is conducted by the REIT (other than through an independent contractor from whom the REIT itself does not derive or receive any income).

***Tax on Prohibited Transactions.*** A REIT will incur a 100% tax on net income (taking into account foreign currency gains and losses) derived from any prohibited transaction. A prohibited transaction generally is a sale or other disposition of property (other than foreclosure property) that the REIT holds primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of a trade or business. The prohibited transaction rules do not apply to property held by a taxable REIT subsidiary of a REIT. We believe that none of our assets (other than certain assets held through our taxable REIT subsidiaries) are held for sale to customers and that a sale of any such asset would not be in the ordinary course of our business. Whether a REIT holds an asset primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of a trade or business depends, however, on the facts and circumstances in effect from time to time, including those related to a particular asset.

The Code provides a safe harbor that, if met by us, allows us to avoid being treated as engaged in a prohibited transaction. In order to meet the safe harbor, (i) we must have held the property for at least 2 years (and, in the case of property which consists of land or improvements not acquired through foreclosure, we must have held the property for 2 years for the production of rental income), (ii) we must not have made aggregate expenditures includible in the basis of the property during the 2-year period preceding the date of sale that exceed 30% of the net selling price of the property, and (iii) during the taxable year the property is disposed of, we must not have made more than 7 property sales or, alternatively, the aggregate adjusted basis or fair market value of all of the properties sold by us during the taxable year must not exceed 10% of the aggregate adjusted basis or 10% of the fair market value, respectively, of all of our assets as of the beginning of the taxable year. If the 7 sale limitation in (iii) above is not satisfied, substantially all of the marketing and development expenditures with respect to the property must be made through an independent contractor from whom we do not derive or receive any income. We believe we have complied with the terms of the safe harbor provision and we will attempt to comply with the terms of the safe harbor in the future, except where we determine in our discretion that a particular transaction will avoid prohibited transaction treatment regardless of the safe harbor. We may fail to comply with the safe-harbor provision and may sell or dispose of property that could be characterized as property held primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of a trade or business.

***Tax and Deduction Limits on Certain Transactions with Taxable REIT Subsidiaries.*** A REIT will incur a 100% tax on certain transactions between a REIT and a taxable REIT subsidiary to the extent the transactions are not on an arms-length basis. In addition, under certain circumstances the interest paid by a taxable REIT subsidiary to the REIT may not be deductible by the taxable REIT subsidiary. We believe that none of the transactions we have had with our taxable REIT subsidiaries will give rise to the 100% tax and that none of our taxable REIT subsidiaries will be subject to the interest deduction limits.

***Hedging Transactions.*** Except to the extent provided by Treasury regulations, any income we derive from a hedging transaction (which may include entering into interest rate swaps, caps, and floors, options to purchase these items, and futures and forward contracts) which is clearly identified as such as specified in the Code and Treasury regulations, including gain from the sale or disposition of such a transaction, will not constitute gross income for purposes of either the 75% or 95% gross income test, and therefore will be exempt from these tests, but only to the extent that the transaction hedges indebtedness incurred or to be incurred by us to acquire or carry real estate assets or is entered into primarily to manage the risk of foreign currency fluctuations with respect to qualifying income under the 75% or 95%



gross income test. Income from any hedging transaction not described above will likely be treated as nonqualifying for both the 75% and 95% gross income tests.

***Like-Kind Exchanges.*** We may dispose of properties in transactions intended to qualify as like-kind exchanges under the Code. Such like-kind exchanges are intended to result in the deferral of gain for federal income tax purposes. The failure of any such transaction to qualify as a like-kind exchange could require us to pay federal income tax, possibly including the 100% prohibited transaction tax, depending on the facts and circumstances surrounding the particular transaction.

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***Relief from Consequences of Failing to Meet Income Tests.*** If we fail to satisfy one or both of the 75% and 95% gross income tests for any taxable year, we nevertheless may qualify as a REIT for such year if we qualify for relief under certain provisions of the Code. Those relief provisions generally will be available if our failure to meet such tests is due to reasonable cause and not due to willful neglect, and we file a schedule of the sources of our income in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Treasury. We may not qualify for the relief provisions in all circumstances. In addition, as discussed above in *Taxation of the Company*, even if the relief provisions apply, we would incur a 100% tax on gross income to the extent we fail the 75% or 95% gross income test (whichever amount is greater), multiplied by a fraction intended to reflect our profitability.

***Asset Tests.*** To maintain our qualification as a REIT, we also must satisfy the following asset tests at the close of each quarter of each taxable year:

At least 75% of the value of our total assets must consist of cash or cash items (including certain receivables and money market funds), U.S. government securities, real estate assets, or qualifying temporary investments (the 75% asset test).

Real estate assets include interests in real property, interests in mortgages on real property and stock in other REITs. We believe that our properties qualify as real estate assets.

Interests in real property include an interest in mortgage loans or land and improvements thereon, such as buildings or other inherently permanent structures (including items that are structural components of such buildings or structures), a leasehold of real property, and an option to acquire real property (or a leasehold of real property).

Qualifying temporary investments are investments in stock or debt instruments during the one-year period following our receipt of new capital that we raise through equity or long-term (at least five-year) debt offerings.

For investments not included in the 75% asset test, (A) the value of our interest in any one issuer's securities (which does not include our equity ownership of other REITs, any taxable REIT subsidiary, or any qualified REIT subsidiary) may not exceed 5% of the value of our total assets (the 5% asset test), (B) we may not own more than 10% of the voting power or value of any one issuer's outstanding securities (which does not include our equity ownership in other REITs, any taxable REIT subsidiary, or any qualified REIT subsidiary (the 10% asset test), (C) the value of our securities in one or more taxable REIT subsidiaries may not exceed 25% of the value of our total assets, and (D) no more than 25% of the value of our total assets may consist of the securities of taxable REIT subsidiaries and our assets that are not qualifying assets for purposes of the 75% asset test. For purposes of the 10% asset test that relates to value, the following are not treated as securities: (i) loans to individuals and estates, (ii) securities issued by REITs, (iii) accrued obligations to pay rent; (iv) certain debt meeting the definition of straight debt if neither we nor a taxable REIT subsidiary that we control hold more than 1% of the issuer's securities that do not qualify as straight debt, and (v) debt issued by a partnership if the partnership meets the 75% gross income test with respect to its own gross income. In addition, solely for purposes of the 10% asset test that relates to value, the determination of our interest in

the assets of a partnership in which we own an interest will be based on our proportionate interest in any securities issued by the partnership, excluding for this purpose certain securities described in the Code. We intend to select future investments so as to comply with the asset tests.

As described above, we may from time to time hold mortgage debt. Mortgage loans will generally qualify as real estate assets for purposes of the 75% asset test to the extent that they are secured by real property. However, if a loan is secured by real property and other property and the highest principal amount of a loan outstanding during a taxable year exceeds the fair market value of the real property securing the loan as of the date we agreed to acquire the loan, then a portion of such loan likely will not be a qualifying real estate asset. Under current law, it is not clear how to determine what portion of such a loan will be treated as a real estate asset. Under recently issued guidance, the IRS has stated that it will not challenge a REIT's treatment of a loan as being, in part, a real estate asset for purposes of the 75% asset test if the REIT treats the loan as being a qualifying real estate asset in an amount equal to the lesser of (i) the greater of (a) the current fair market value of the real property securing the loan or (b) the fair market value of such property on the date the REIT acquires the loan, or (ii) the fair market value of the loan.

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If we fail to satisfy the asset tests at the end of a calendar quarter, we would not lose our REIT status if (i) we satisfied the asset tests at the close of the preceding calendar quarter and (ii) the discrepancy between the value of our assets and the asset test requirements arose from changes in the market values of our assets and was not wholly or partly caused by the acquisition of one or more non-qualifying assets. If we did not satisfy the condition described in clause (ii) of the preceding sentence, we still could avoid disqualification as a REIT by eliminating any discrepancy within 30 days after the close of the calendar quarter in which the discrepancy arose.

***Relief from Consequences of Failing to Meet Asset Tests.*** If we fail to satisfy one or more of the asset tests for any quarter of a taxable year, we nevertheless may qualify as a REIT for such year if we qualify for relief under certain provisions of the Code. Those relief provisions are available for failures of the 5% asset test and the 10% asset test if (i) the failure is due to the ownership of assets that do not exceed the lesser of 1% of our total assets or \$10 million, and (ii) the failure is corrected or we otherwise return to compliance with the applicable asset test within 6 months following the quarter in which it was discovered. In addition, should we fail to satisfy any of the asset tests other than failures addressed in the previous sentence, we may nevertheless qualify as a REIT for such year if (i) the failure is due to reasonable cause and not due to willful neglect, (ii) we file a schedule with a description of each asset causing the failure in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Treasury, (iii) the failure is corrected or we otherwise return to compliance with the asset tests within 6 months following the quarter in which the failure was discovered, and (iv) we pay a tax consisting of the greater of \$50,000 or a tax computed at the highest corporate rate on the amount of net income generated by the assets causing the failure from the date of failure until the assets are disposed of or we otherwise return to compliance with the asset tests. We may not qualify for the relief provisions in all circumstances.

***Distribution Requirements.*** Each taxable year, we must distribute dividends (other than capital gain dividends and deemed distributions of retained capital gain) to our shareholders in an aggregate amount at least equal to (1) the sum of 90% of (A) our REIT taxable income (computed without regard to the dividends paid deduction and our net capital gain) and (B) our net income (after tax), if any, from foreclosure property, minus (2) certain items of non-cash income.

We generally must pay such distributions in the taxable year to which they relate, or in the following taxable year if we (i) declare a dividend in one of the last three months of the calendar year to which the dividend relates which is payable to shareholders of record as determined in one of such months, and pay the distribution during January of the following taxable year, or (ii) declare the distribution before we timely file our federal income tax return for such year and pay the distribution on or before the first regular dividend payment date after such declaration.

We will pay federal income tax at regular corporate rates on taxable income (including net capital gain) that we do not distribute to shareholders. Furthermore, we will incur a 4% nondeductible excise tax if we fail to distribute during a calendar year (or, in the case of distributions with declaration and record dates falling in the last three months of the calendar year, by the end of January following such calendar year) at least the sum of (1) 85% of our REIT ordinary income for such year, (2) 95% of our REIT capital gain income for such year, and (3) any undistributed taxable income from prior periods. The excise tax is on the excess of such required distribution over the amounts we actually distributed. We may elect to retain and pay income tax on the net long-term capital gain we receive in a taxable year. See Taxation of Taxable U.S. Shareholders. For purposes of the 4% excise tax, we will be treated as having distributed any such retained amount. We have made, and we intend to continue to make, timely distributions sufficient to satisfy the annual distribution requirements.

It is possible that, from time to time, we may experience timing differences between (1) the actual receipt of income and actual payment of deductible expenses and (2) the inclusion of that income and deduction of such expenses in arriving at our REIT taxable income. For example, we may not deduct recognized capital losses from our REIT

taxable income. Further, it is possible that, from time to time, we may be allocated a share of partnership net capital gain attributable to the sale of depreciated property that exceeds our allocable share of cash attributable to that sale. As a result of the foregoing, we may have less cash than is necessary to distribute taxable income sufficient to avoid corporate income tax and the excise tax imposed on certain undistributed income or even to meet the 90% distribution requirement. In such a situation, we may need to borrow funds, issue preferred shares or additional common shares to raise the cash necessary to make required distributions or, if possible, pay taxable dividends of our shares or debt securities.

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We may satisfy the 90% distribution requirement with taxable distributions of our shares or debt securities. The IRS has issued private letter rulings to other REITs treating certain distributions that are paid partly in cash and partly in shares as dividends that would satisfy the REIT annual distribution requirement and qualify for the dividends paid deduction for federal income tax purposes. Those rulings may be relied upon only by taxpayers to whom they were issued, but we could request a similar ruling from the IRS. In addition, the IRS previously issued a revenue procedure authorizing publicly traded REITs to make elective cash/share dividends, but that revenue procedure's effectiveness has expired and does not apply to our current and future taxable years. Accordingly, it is unclear whether and to what extent we will be able to make taxable dividends payable in cash and shares. We have no current intention to make a taxable dividend payable in our shares or debt securities.

Under certain circumstances, we may be able to correct a failure to meet the distribution requirement for a year by paying deficiency dividends to our shareholders in a later year. We may include such deficiency dividends in our deduction for dividends paid for the earlier year. Although we may be able to avoid income tax on amounts distributed as deficiency dividends, we will be required to pay interest to the IRS based upon the amount of any deduction we take for deficiency dividends.

***Record Keeping Requirements.*** We must maintain certain records in order to qualify as a REIT. In addition, to avoid a monetary penalty, we must request on an annual basis certain information from our shareholders designed to disclose the actual ownership of our outstanding shares. We have complied, and intend to continue to comply, with such requirements.

***Relief from Other Failures of the REIT Qualification Provisions.*** If we fail to satisfy one or more of the requirements for REIT qualification (other than the income tests or the asset tests), we nevertheless may avoid termination of our REIT election in such year if the failure is due to reasonable cause and not due to willful neglect and we pay a penalty of \$50,000 for each failure to satisfy the REIT qualification requirements. We may not qualify for this relief provision in all circumstances.

***Failure to Qualify.*** If we fail to qualify as a REIT in any taxable year, and no relief provision applied, we would be subject to federal income tax (including any applicable alternative minimum tax) on our taxable income at regular corporate rates. In calculating our taxable income in a year in which we fail to qualify as a REIT, we would not be able to deduct amounts paid out to shareholders and we would not be required to distribute any amounts to shareholders in such year. In such event, to the extent of our current and accumulated earnings and profits, all distributions to shareholders would be taxable as ordinary income. Any such dividends should, however, be qualified dividend income, which is taxable at long-term capital gain rates for individual shareholders who satisfy certain holding period requirements. See *Taxation of Taxable U.S. Shareholders* Current Tax Rates. Furthermore, subject to certain limitations of the Code, corporate shareholders might be eligible for the dividends received deduction. Unless we qualified for relief under specific statutory provisions, we also would be disqualified from taxation as a REIT for the four taxable years following the year during which we ceased to qualify as a REIT. We cannot predict whether in all circumstances we would qualify for such statutory relief.

## **Taxation of Taxable U.S. Shareholders**

As used herein, the term *taxable U.S. shareholder* means a taxable beneficial owner of our common or preferred shares that for U.S. federal income tax purposes is:

a citizen or resident of the United States;

a corporation (including an entity treated as a corporation for federal income tax purposes) created or organized in or under the laws of the United States, any of its states or the District of Columbia;

an estate whose income is subject to U.S. federal income taxation regardless of its source; or

a trust if (A) a U.S. court is able to exercise primary supervision over the administration of such trust and one or more U.S. persons have the authority to control all substantial decisions of the trust, or (B) it has a valid election in effect to be treated as a U.S. person.

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For U.S. federal income tax purposes, holders of depositary share receipts will be treated as if they held the equivalent fraction of the underlying preferred shares. Accordingly, the discussion below with respect to the consequences of holding our preferred shares applies equally to holders of depositary receipts.

***Dividends and Other Taxable U.S. Shareholder Distributions.*** As long as we qualify as a REIT, a taxable U.S. shareholder must take into account distributions on our common or preferred shares out of our current and accumulated earnings and profits (and that we do not designate as capital gain dividends or retained long-term capital gain) as ordinary income. Such distributions will not qualify for the dividends received deduction generally available to corporations. In addition, dividends paid to taxable U.S. shareholders generally will not qualify for the maximum 20% tax rate for qualified dividend income.

In determining the extent to which a distribution constitutes a dividend for U.S. federal income tax purposes, our earnings and profits will be allocated first to distributions with respect to our preferred shares and then to distributions with respect to our common shares. If, for any taxable year, we elect to designate as capital gain dividends any portion of the distributions paid for the year to our shareholders, the portion of the amount so designated (not in excess of our net capital gain for the year) that will be allocable to the holders of each class or series of preferred shares will be the amount so designated, multiplied by a fraction, the numerator of which will be the total dividends (within the meaning of the Code) paid to the holders of such class or series of preferred shares for the year and the denominator of which will be the total dividends paid to the holders of all classes of our shares for the year. The remainder of the designated capital gain dividends will be allocable to holders of our common shares.

A taxable U.S. shareholder will recognize distributions that we designate as capital gain dividends as long-term capital gain (to the extent they do not exceed our actual net capital gain for the taxable year) without regard to the period for which the taxable U.S. shareholder has held its common or preferred shares. See **Capital Gains and Losses** below. Subject to certain limitations, we will designate whether our capital gain dividends are taxable at the usual capital gains rate or at the higher rate applicable to depreciation recapture. A corporate taxable U.S. shareholder, however, may be required to treat up to 20% of certain capital gain dividends as ordinary income.

We may elect to retain and pay income tax on the net long-term capital gain that we receive in a taxable year. In that case, a taxable U.S. shareholder would be taxed on its proportionate share of our undistributed long-term capital gain. The taxable U.S. shareholder would receive a credit or refund for its proportionate share of the tax we paid. The taxable U.S. shareholder would increase the basis in its shares by the amount of its proportionate share of our undistributed long-term capital gain, minus its share of the tax we paid.

A taxable U.S. shareholder will not incur tax on a distribution to the extent it exceeds our current and accumulated earnings and profits if such distribution does not exceed the adjusted basis of the taxable U.S. shareholder's common or preferred shares. Instead, such distribution in excess of earnings and profits will reduce the adjusted basis of such common or preferred shares. To the extent a distribution exceeds both our current and accumulated earnings and profits and the taxable U.S. shareholder's adjusted basis in its common or preferred shares, the taxable U.S. shareholder will recognize long-term capital gain (or short-term capital gain if the shares have been held for one year or less), assuming the shares are a capital asset in the hands of the taxable U.S. shareholder. In addition, if we declare a distribution in October, November, or December of any year that is payable to a taxable U.S. shareholder of record on a specified date in any such month, such distribution shall be treated as both paid by us and received by the taxable U.S. shareholder on December 31 of such year, provided that we actually pay the distribution during January of the following calendar year. We will notify taxable U.S. shareholders after the close of our taxable year as to the portions of the distributions attributable to that year that constitute return of capital, ordinary income or capital gain dividends.



***Taxation of Taxable U.S. Shareholders on the Disposition of Our Shares.*** In general, a taxable U.S. shareholder must treat any gain or loss realized upon a taxable disposition of our common or preferred shares as long-term capital gain or loss if the taxable U.S. shareholder has held the shares for more than one year and otherwise as short-term capital gain or loss. A taxable U.S. shareholder will generally realize gain or loss in an amount equal to the difference between the sum of the fair market value of any property and the amount of cash received in such disposition and the taxable U.S. shareholder's adjusted tax basis. A taxable U.S. shareholder's adjusted tax basis generally will equal the taxable U.S. shareholder's acquisition cost, increased by the excess of net capital gains deemed distributed to the taxable U.S. shareholder (discussed above) less tax deemed paid on such gains and reduced by any returns of capital. However, a taxable U.S. shareholder must treat any loss upon a sale or exchange

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of common or preferred shares held by such shareholder for six months or less (after applying certain holding period rules) as a long-term capital loss to the extent of capital gain dividends and other distributions from us that such taxable U.S. shareholder treats as long-term capital gain.

***Capital Gains and Losses.*** A taxpayer generally must hold a capital asset for more than one year for gain or loss derived from its sale or exchange to be treated as long-term capital gain or loss. The highest marginal individual income tax rate on ordinary income significantly exceeds the maximum tax rate on long-term capital gain applicable to non-corporate taxpayers. The maximum tax rate on long-term capital gain from the sale or exchange of Section 1250 property (i.e., depreciable real property) is, to the extent that such gain would have been treated as ordinary income if the property were Section 1245 property, higher than the maximum long-term capital gain rate otherwise applicable. With respect to distributions that we designate as capital gain dividends and any retained capital gain that is deemed to be distributed, we may designate (subject to certain limits) whether such a distribution is taxable to our non-corporate shareholders at the lower or higher rate. A taxable U.S. shareholder required to include retained long-term capital gains in income will be deemed to have paid, in the taxable year of the inclusion, its proportionate share of the tax paid by us in respect of such undistributed net capital gains. Taxable U.S. shareholders subject to these rules will be allowed a credit or a refund, as the case may be, for the tax deemed to have been paid by such shareholders. Taxable U.S. shareholders will increase their basis in their shares by the difference between the amount of such includible gains and the tax deemed paid by the taxable U.S. shareholder in respect of such gains. In addition, the characterization of income as capital gain or ordinary income may affect the deductibility of capital losses. A non-corporate taxpayer may generally deduct capital losses not offset by capital gains against its ordinary income only up to a maximum annual amount of \$3,000. A non-corporate taxpayer may carry forward unused capital losses indefinitely. A corporate taxpayer must pay tax on its net capital gain at ordinary corporate rates. A corporate taxpayer can deduct capital losses only to the extent of capital gains, with unused losses being carried back three years and forward five years.

***Redemption of Preferred Shares for Cash.*** The treatment accorded to any redemption by us for cash (as distinguished from a sale, exchange or other disposition) of preferred shares can only be determined on the basis of particular facts as to each holder at the time of redemption. As stated above, in general a taxable U.S. shareholder of preferred shares will recognize capital gain or loss measured by the difference between the amount received upon the redemption and such holder's adjusted tax basis in the preferred shares redeemed (provided the preferred shares are held as a capital asset) if such redemption (i) results in a complete termination of the holder's interest in all classes of our shares under Section 302(b)(3) of the Code, (ii) is substantially disproportionate with respect to the holder's interest in our shares under Section 302(b)(2) of the Code (which will not be the case if only preferred shares are redeemed, since they generally do not have voting rights), or (iii) is not essentially equivalent to a dividend with respect to the holder of preferred shares under Section 302(b)(1) of the Code. In applying these tests, there must be taken into account not only the preferred shares owned by the taxable U.S. shareholder, but also such holder's ownership of our common shares and any other options (including share purchase rights) to acquire any of the foregoing. The holder of preferred shares also must take into account any such securities (including options) which are considered to be owned by such holder by reason of the constructive ownership rules set forth in Sections 318 and 302(c) of the Code.

If a particular taxable U.S. shareholder of preferred shares owns (actually or constructively) none of our common shares or an insubstantial percentage of our outstanding common shares, then based upon current law, it is probable that the redemption of preferred shares from such a holder would be considered not essentially equivalent to a dividend. However, whether a dividend is not essentially equivalent to a dividend depends on all of the facts and circumstances, and a taxable U.S. shareholder of preferred shares intending to rely on any of these tests at the time of redemption should consult the holder's own tax advisor to determine their application to the holder's particular situation. If the redemption does not meet any of the tests under Section 302 of the Code, then the redemption proceeds received from the preferred shares will be treated as a distribution on the preferred shares. If the redemption

is taxed as a dividend, the taxable U.S. shareholder's adjusted tax basis in the preferred shares will be transferred to any other shares held by the holder. If the holder of preferred shares owns none of our other shares, under certain circumstances, such basis may be transferred to a related person, or it may be lost entirely.

Under proposed Treasury regulations, if any portion of the amount received by a taxable U.S. shareholder on a redemption of our preferred shares is treated as a distribution with respect to our shares but not as a taxable dividend, then such portion will be allocated to all shares held by the taxable U.S. shareholder just before the redemption on a pro rata, share-by-share, basis. The amount applied to each share will first reduce the taxable U.S.

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shareholder's basis in that share and any excess after the basis is reduced to zero will result in taxable gain. If the holder has different basis in its shares, then the amount allocated could reduce some of the basis in certain shares while reducing all the basis and giving rise to taxable gain in others. Thus the taxable U.S. shareholder could have gain even if the holder's basis in all its shares exceeded such portion. The proposed Treasury regulations permit the transfer of basis in the redeemed shares of the preferred shares to the taxable U.S. shareholder's remaining, unredeemed preferred shares (if any), but not to any other class of shares held (directly or indirectly) by the taxable U.S. shareholder. Instead, any unrecovered basis in the preferred shares would be treated as a deferred loss to be recognized when certain conditions are satisfied. The proposed Treasury regulations would be effective for transactions that occur after the date the regulations are published as final Treasury regulations. There can, however, be no assurance as to whether, when and in what particular form such proposed Treasury regulations will ultimately be finalized. We urge you to consult your tax advisor concerning the treatment of a cash redemption of our preferred shares.

***Redemption or Conversion of Preferred Shares to Common Shares.*** Assuming that preferred shares will not be redeemed or converted at a time when there are distributions in arrears, in general, no gain or loss will be recognized for U.S. federal income tax purposes upon the redemption or conversion of our preferred shares at the option of the holder solely into common shares. The basis that a taxable U.S. shareholder will have for U.S. federal income tax purposes in the common shares received will be equal to the adjusted basis the holder had in the preferred shares so redeemed or converted and, provided that the preferred shares were held as a capital asset, the holding period for the common shares received will include the holding period for the preferred shares redeemed or converted. A holder, however, will generally recognize gain or loss on the receipt of cash in lieu of a fractional common share in an amount equal to the difference between the amount of cash received and the holder's adjusted basis in such fractional share.

If a redemption or conversion occurs when there is a dividend arrearage on the preferred shares and the fair market value of the common shares exceeds the issue price of the preferred shares, a portion of the common shares received might be treated as a dividend distribution taxable as ordinary income.

If, pursuant to the terms of a class of preferred shares, a taxable U.S. shareholder receives alternative consideration such as cash, securities or other property or assets (including any combination thereof) in lieu of common shares in connection with the conversion of the taxable U.S. shareholder's preferred shares, the tax treatment of the receipt of any such other consideration will depend on the nature of the consideration and the structure of the transaction that gives rise to the right to receive such alternative consideration, and it may be a taxable exchange. Taxable U.S. shareholders converting their preferred shares should consult their tax advisors regarding the U.S. federal income tax consequences of any such conversion and of the ownership and disposition of the consideration received upon any such conversion.

***Adjustments to Conversion Price.*** Under Section 305 of the Code, holders of preferred shares may be deemed to have received a constructive distribution of shares that is taxable as a dividend where the conversion ratio is adjusted to reflect a cash or property distribution with respect to the common shares into which it is convertible. An adjustment to the conversion price made pursuant to a *bona fide*, reasonable adjustment formula that has the effect of preventing dilution of the interest of the holders, however, will generally not be considered to result in a constructive distribution of shares. Certain of the possible adjustments that may be provided in issuances of our preferred shares may not qualify as being pursuant to a *bona fide*, reasonable adjustment formula. In such a case, if a nonqualifying adjustment were made, the holders of preferred shares might be deemed to have received a taxable stock dividend.

***Passive Activity and Investment Income Limitations.*** Distributions from us and gain from the disposition of our common or preferred shares will not be treated as passive activity income and, therefore, taxable U.S. shareholders will not be able to apply any passive activity losses against such income. Dividends from us (to the extent they do not

constitute a return of capital or capital gain dividends) and, on an elective basis, capital gain dividends and gain from the disposition of common or preferred shares generally will be treated as investment income for purposes of the investment income limitation.

**Medicare Tax on Unearned Income.** Certain taxable U.S. shareholders who are individuals, estates or trusts are subject to a 3.8% Medicare tax on all or a portion of their net investment income, which may include all or a portion of their dividends on our common or preferred shares and net gains from the taxable disposition of their shares. Taxable U.S. shareholders that are individuals, estates or trusts should consult their tax advisors regarding the applicability of the Medicare tax to any of their income or gains in respect of our common or preferred shares.

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***Current Tax Rates.*** The maximum tax rate on the long-term capital gains of domestic non-corporate taxpayers is 20%. The maximum tax rate on qualified dividend income is the same as the capital gains rate, and is substantially lower than the maximum rate on ordinary income. Because, as a REIT, we are not generally subject to tax on the portion of our REIT taxable income or capital gains distributed to our shareholders, our distributions are not generally eligible for the tax rate on qualified dividend income. As a result, our ordinary REIT distributions are taxed at the higher tax rates applicable to ordinary income. However, with respect to non-corporate taxpayers, the lower qualified dividend income/capital gains tax rate (at a maximum of 20%) does generally apply to:

a shareholder's long-term capital gain, if any, recognized on the disposition of our shares;

distributions we designate as long-term capital gain dividends (except to the extent attributable to real estate depreciation, in which case the 25% tax rate applies);

distributions attributable to dividends we receive from non-REIT corporations (including our taxable REIT subsidiaries); and

distributions to the extent attributable to income upon which we have paid corporate tax (for example, the tax we would pay if we distributed less than all of our taxable REIT income).

In general, to qualify for the reduced tax rate on qualified dividend income, a shareholder must hold our shares for more than 60 days during the 121-day period beginning on the date that is 60 days before the date on which our shares become ex-dividend.

***Information Reporting and Backup Withholding.*** Taxable U.S. shareholders that are exempt recipients (such as corporations) generally will not be subject to U.S. backup withholding and related information reporting on payments of dividends on, and the proceeds from the disposition of, our common or preferred shares unless, when required, they fail to demonstrate their status as exempt recipients. In general, we will report to our other shareholders and to the IRS the amount of distributions we pay during each calendar year, and the amount of tax we withhold, if any. Under the backup withholding rules, a shareholder may be subject to backup withholding (currently at the rate of 28%) with respect to dividends unless such holder (1) is a corporation or comes within certain other exempt categories and, when required, demonstrates this fact, or (2) provides a taxpayer identification number, certifies as to no loss of exemption from backup withholding, and otherwise complies with the applicable requirements of the backup withholding rules. A shareholder who does not provide us with its correct taxpayer identification number also may be subject to penalties imposed by the IRS. In addition, we may be required to withhold a portion of capital gain distributions to any shareholders who fail to certify their non-foreign status to us. Backup withholding is not an additional tax and may be credited against a shareholder's regular U.S. federal income tax liability or refunded by the IRS provided that the shareholder provides the required information to the IRS in a timely manner.

**Taxation of Tax-Exempt U.S. Shareholders**

Tax-exempt entities, including qualified employee pension and profit sharing trusts and individual retirement accounts and annuities (exempt organizations), generally are exempt from federal income taxation. However, they are subject to taxation on their unrelated business taxable income (UBTI). While many investments in real estate generate UBTI, the IRS has issued a published ruling that dividend distributions from a REIT to an exempt employee pension trust do not

constitute UBTI, provided that the exempt employee pension trust does not otherwise use the shares of the REIT in an unrelated trade or business of the pension trust. Based on that ruling, amounts that we distribute to exempt organizations generally should not constitute UBTI. However, if an exempt organization were to finance its acquisition of shares with debt, a portion of the income that they receive from us would constitute UBTI pursuant to the debt-financed property rules. Furthermore, social clubs, voluntary employee benefit associations, supplemental unemployment benefit trusts and qualified group legal services plans that are exempt from taxation under paragraphs (7), (9), (17), and (20), respectively, of Code Section 501(c) are subject to different UBTI rules, which generally will require them to characterize distributions that they receive from us as UBTI unless the organization is able to properly claim a deduction for amounts set aside or placed in reserve for specific purposes so as to offset the income generated by its investment in our shares. Finally, in certain circumstances, a qualified employee pension or profit sharing trust that owns more than 10% of our shares is required to treat a percentage of

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the dividends that it receives from us as UBTI (the UBTI Percentage). The UBTI Percentage is equal to the gross income we derive from an unrelated trade or business (determined as if we were a pension trust) divided by our total gross income for the year in which we pay the dividends. The UBTI rule applies to a pension trust holding more than 10% of our shares only if:

the UBTI Percentage is at least 5%;

we qualify as a REIT by reason of the modification of the 5/50 Rule that allows the beneficiaries of the pension trust to be treated as holding our shares in proportion to their actuarial interests in the pension trust; and

we are a pension-held REIT (i.e., either (1) one pension trust owns more than 25% of the value of our shares or (2) a group of pension trusts individually holding more than 10% of the value of our shares collectively owns more than 50% of the value of our shares).

Tax-exempt entities will be subject to the rules described above, under the heading Taxation of Taxable U.S. Shareholders concerning the inclusion of our designated undistributed net capital gains in the income of our shareholders. Thus, such entities will, after satisfying filing requirements, be allowed a credit or refund of the tax deemed paid by such entities in respect of such includible gains.

## **Taxation of Non-U.S. Shareholders**

The rules governing U.S. federal income taxation of non-U.S. shareholders (defined below) are complex. This section is only a summary of such rules. We urge non-U.S. shareholders to consult their tax advisors to determine the impact of the U.S. federal, state, and local income tax laws on ownership of our common or preferred shares, including any reporting requirements. As used herein, the term non-U.S. shareholder means any taxable beneficial owner of our shares (other than a partnership or entity that is treated as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes) that is not a taxable U.S. shareholder or exempt organization.

**Ordinary Dividends.** A non-U.S. shareholder that receives a distribution that is not attributable to gain from our sale or exchange of U.S. real property interests (as defined below) and that we do not designate as a capital gain dividend or retained capital gain will recognize ordinary income to the extent that we pay such distribution out of our current and accumulated earnings and profits. A withholding tax equal to 30% of the gross amount of the distribution ordinarily will apply to such distribution unless an applicable tax treaty reduces or eliminates the tax. Under some treaties, however, rates below 30% that are applicable to ordinary income dividends from U.S. corporations may not apply to ordinary income dividends from a REIT or may apply only if the REIT meets certain additional conditions. However, if a distribution is treated as effectively connected with the non-U.S. shareholder's conduct of a U.S. trade or business (and, if required by an applicable income tax treaty, attributable to a U.S. permanent establishment maintained by the non-U.S. shareholder), the non-U.S. shareholder generally will be subject to federal income tax on the distribution at graduated rates, in the same manner as taxable U.S. shareholders are taxed with respect to such distributions (and also may be subject to the 30% branch profits tax in the case of a non-U.S. shareholder that is a non-U.S. corporation unless the tax is reduced or eliminated by an applicable income tax treaty). We plan to withhold U.S. income tax at the rate of 30% on the gross amount of any such distribution paid to a non-U.S. shareholder unless (i) a lower treaty rate applies and the non-U.S. shareholder timely provides an IRS Form W-8BEN or W-8BEN-E to us evidencing eligibility for that reduced rate, or (ii) the non-U.S. shareholder timely provides an IRS Form W-8ECI



to us claiming that the distribution is effectively connected income.

***Return of Capital.*** A non-U.S. shareholder will not incur tax on a distribution to the extent it exceeds our current and accumulated earnings and profits if such distribution does not exceed the adjusted basis of its common or preferred shares. Instead, such distribution in excess of earnings and profits will reduce the adjusted basis of such shares. A non-U.S. shareholder will be subject to tax to the extent a distribution exceeds both our current and accumulated earnings and profits and the adjusted basis of its common or preferred shares, if the non-U.S. shareholder otherwise would be subject to tax on gain from the sale or disposition of its shares, as described below. Because we generally cannot determine at the time we make a distribution whether or not the distribution will exceed our current and accumulated earnings and profits, we normally will withhold tax on the entire amount of any distribution just as we would withhold on a dividend. However, a non-U.S. shareholder may obtain a refund of amounts that we withhold if we later determine that a distribution in fact exceeded our current and accumulated earnings and profits.

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If we are treated as a United States real property holding corporation, we will be required to withhold 10% of any distribution that exceeds our current and accumulated earnings and profits. Consequently, although we intend to withhold at a rate of 30% on the entire amount of any distribution, to the extent we do not do so, we may withhold at a rate of 10% on any portion of a distribution not subject to withholding at a rate of 30%.

**Capital Gain Dividends.** Provided that a particular class of our shares is regularly traded on an established securities market in the United States, and the non-U.S. shareholder does not own more than 5% of the shares of such class at any time during the one-year period preceding the distribution, then amounts distributed with respect to those shares that are designated as capital gains from our sale or exchange of U.S. real property interests (defined below) are treated as ordinary dividends taxable as described above under Ordinary Dividends.

If the foregoing exception does not apply, for example because the non-U.S. shareholder owns more than 5% of the relevant class of our shares, or because our shares are not regularly traded on an established securities market, the non-U.S. shareholder will incur tax on distributions that are attributable to gain from our sale or exchange of U.S. real property interests under the provisions of the Foreign Investment in Real Property Tax Act of 1980 ( FIRPTA ). The term U.S. real property interests includes certain interests in real property and stock in corporations at least 50% of whose assets consists of interests in real property, but excludes mortgage loans and mortgage-backed securities. Under FIRPTA, a non-U.S. shareholder is taxed on distributions attributable to gain from sales of U.S. real property interests as if such gain were effectively connected with a U.S. business of the non-U.S. shareholder. A non-U.S. shareholder thus would be taxed on such a distribution at the normal capital gain rates applicable to taxable U.S. shareholders (subject to applicable alternative minimum tax and a special alternative minimum tax in the case of a nonresident alien individual). A corporate non-U.S. shareholder may also be subject to the 30% branch profits tax unless the tax is reduced or eliminated by an applicable income tax treaty. We must withhold 35% of any distribution that we could designate as a capital gain dividend. However, if we make a distribution and later designate it as a capital gain dividend, then (although such distribution may be taxable to a non-U.S. shareholder) it is not subject to withholding under FIRPTA. Instead, we must make-up the 35% FIRPTA withholding from distributions made after the designation, until the amount of distributions withheld at 35% equals the amount of the distribution designated as a capital gain dividend. A non-U.S. shareholder may receive a credit against its FIRPTA tax liability for the amount we withhold.

Distributions to a non-U.S. shareholder that we designate at the time of distribution as capital gain dividends which are not attributable to or treated as attributable to our disposition of a U.S. real property interest generally will not be subject to U.S. federal income taxation, except as described below under Sale of Shares.

**Retention of Net Capital Gains.** Although the law is not clear on the matter, it appears that amounts we designate as retained capital gains in respect of our shares held by shareholders generally should be treated with respect to non-U.S. shareholders in the same manner as actual distributions by us of capital gain dividends. Under this approach, a non-U.S. shareholder would be able to offset as a credit against its U.S. federal income tax liability resulting from its proportionate share of the tax paid by us on such retained capital gains, and to receive from the IRS a refund to the extent of the non-U.S. shareholder's proportionate share of such tax paid by us exceeds its actual U.S. federal income tax liability, provided that the non-U.S. shareholder furnishes required information to the IRS on a timely basis. If we were to designate any portion of our net capital gain as retained net capital gain, a non-U.S. shareholder should consult its tax advisor regarding the taxation of such retained net capital gain.

**Sale of Shares.** A non-U.S. shareholder generally will not incur tax under FIRPTA on gain from the sale of its common or preferred shares as long as we are a domestically controlled REIT. A domestically controlled REIT is a REIT in which at all times during a specified testing period non-U.S. persons held, directly or indirectly, less than 50% in value of our shares. We anticipate that we will continue to be a domestically controlled REIT, but there is no

assurance that we will continue to be so. However, even if we are not, or cease to be, a domestically controlled REIT, a non-U.S. shareholder that owns, actually or constructively, 5% or less of a class of our of outstanding shares at all times during a specified testing period will not incur tax under FIRPTA on a sale of such shares if shares of such class are regularly traded on an established securities market. If neither of these exceptions were to apply, the gain on the sale of the common or preferred shares would be taxed under FIRPTA, in which case a non-U.S. shareholder would be required to file a U.S. federal income tax return and would be taxed in generally the same manner as taxable U.S. shareholders with respect to such gain (subject to applicable alternative minimum tax and a special alternative minimum tax in the case of nonresident alien individuals), and if the shares sold were not regularly traded on an established securities market or we were not a domestically-controlled REIT, the purchaser of the shares may be required to withhold and remit to the IRS 10% of the purchase price.

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A non-U.S. shareholder will incur tax on gain not subject to FIRPTA if (1) the gain is effectively connected with the non-U.S. shareholder's U.S. trade or business (and, if required by an applicable income tax treaty, is attributable to a U.S. permanent establishment maintained by the non-U.S. shareholder), in which case the non-U.S. shareholder will be subject to the same treatment as taxable U.S. shareholders with respect to such gain, or (2) the non-U.S. shareholder is a nonresident alien individual who was present in the U.S. for 183 days or more during the taxable year, in which case the non-U.S. shareholder will incur a 30% tax on his capital gains. Capital gains dividends not subject to FIRPTA will be subject to similar rules. A non-U.S. shareholder that is treated as a corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes and has effectively connected income (as described in the first point above) may also, under certain circumstances, be subject to an additional branch profits tax, which is generally imposed on a foreign corporation on the deemed repatriation from the United States of effectively connected earnings and profits, at a 30% rate, unless the rate is reduced or eliminated by an applicable income tax treaty.

**Wash Sales.** In general, special wash sale rules apply if a shareholder owning more than 5% of our common or preferred shares avoids a taxable distribution of gain recognized from the sale or exchange of U.S. real property interests by selling our shares before the ex-dividend date of the distribution and then, within a designated period, enters into an option or contract to acquire shares of the same or a substantially identical class of our shares. If a wash sale occurs, then the seller/repurchaser will be treated as having gain recognized from the sale or exchange of U.S. real property interests in the same amount as if the avoided distribution had actually been received. Non-U.S. shareholders should consult their own tax advisors on the special wash sale rules that apply to non-U.S. shareholders.

**Information Reporting and Backup Withholding.** We must report annually to the IRS and to each non-U.S. shareholder the amount of distributions paid to such holder and the tax withheld with respect to such distributions, regardless of whether withholding was required. Copies of the information returns reporting such distributions and withholding may also be made available to the tax authorities in the country in which the non-U.S. shareholder resides under the provisions of an applicable income tax treaty.

Backup withholding (currently at the rate of 28%) and additional information reporting will generally not apply to distributions to a non-U.S. shareholder provided that the non-U.S. shareholder certifies under penalty of perjury that the shareholder is a non-U.S. shareholder, or otherwise establishes an exemption. Notwithstanding the foregoing, backup withholding may apply if either we or our paying agent has actual knowledge, or reason to know, that the holder is a U.S. person that is not an exempt recipient. As a general matter, backup withholding and information reporting will not apply to a payment of the proceeds of a sale of common or preferred shares effected at a foreign office of a foreign broker. Information reporting (but not backup withholding) will apply, however, to a payment of the proceeds of a sale of common or preferred shares by a foreign office of a broker that:

is a U.S. person;

derives 50% or more of its gross income for a specified three-year period from the conduct of a trade or business in the U.S.;

is a controlled foreign corporation (generally, a foreign corporation controlled by stockholders that are United States persons) for U.S. tax purposes; or

that is a foreign partnership, if at any time during its tax year more than 50% of its income or capital interests are held by U.S. persons or if it is engaged in the conduct of a trade or business in the U.S., unless the broker has documentary evidence in its records that the holder or beneficial owner is a non-U.S. shareholder and certain other conditions are met, or the shareholder otherwise establishes an exemption. Payment of the proceeds of a sale of common or preferred shares effected at a U.S. office of a broker is subject to both backup withholding and information reporting unless the shareholder certifies under penalty of perjury that the shareholder is a non-U.S. shareholder, or otherwise establishes an exemption. Backup withholding is not an additional tax, and may be credited against a non-U.S. shareholder's U.S. federal income tax liability or refunded to the extent excess amounts are withheld, provided that the required information is timely supplied to the IRS.

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***Reporting and Withholding on Foreign Financial Accounts.*** Certain foreign financial institutions and non-financial foreign entities are subject to a 30% U.S. federal withholding tax on dividends on our common or preferred shares unless (i) in the case of a foreign financial institution (which term generally includes investment funds), such institution enters into an agreement with the U.S. government (unless alternative procedures apply pursuant to an applicable intergovernmental agreement between the United States and the relevant foreign government) to withhold on certain payments and to collect and provide to the U.S. tax authorities substantial information regarding U.S. account holders of such institution (which includes certain equity and debt holders of such institution, as well as certain account holders that are foreign entities with U.S. owners) and to withhold on certain payments, and (ii) in the case of a non-financial foreign entity, such entity provides the withholding agent with a certification identifying any direct and indirect U.S. owners of the entity. In addition, if such disclosure requirements are not satisfied, withholding at a 30% rate on gross proceeds from the sale or other disposition of our common or preferred shares by such foreign financial institutions and non-financial foreign entities will generally begin after December 31, 2016 (or such other date as may be specified in guidance issued by the U.S. Treasury Department). Under certain circumstances, a non-U.S. shareholder might be eligible for refunds or credits of such taxes. Prospective investors should consult their tax advisors regarding the possible implications of these withholding provisions on the acquisition, ownership and disposition of our common or preferred shares. We will not pay any additional amounts in respect of any amounts withheld.

**Other Tax Considerations**

***State and Local Taxes.*** We and/or you may be subject to state and local tax in various states and localities, including those states and localities in which we or you transact business, own property or reside. The state and local tax treatment in such jurisdictions may differ from the federal income tax treatment described above. Consequently, you should consult your tax advisors regarding the effect of state and local tax laws upon an investment in our securities.

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**PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION**

We may sell the securities being offered by this prospectus in one or more of the following ways from time to time: (1) through underwriters or dealers; (2) through agents; (3) in at the market offerings to or through a market maker or into an existing trading market or securities exchange or otherwise; (4) directly to purchasers or shareholders, (5) through a combination of any of these methods of sale or (6) through any other legally available means. In addition, the sales will be made at market prices prevailing at the time of sale, at prices related to such prevailing market prices, at a fixed price or prices, which may be changed or at negotiated prices. We will identify any underwriter, dealer or agent involved in the offer and sale of securities, and any applicable commissions, discounts and other items constituting compensation to such underwriters, dealers or agents, in a prospectus supplement.

The methods by which we may distribute securities include:

a block trade (which may involve crosses) in which the dealer so engaged will attempt to sell the securities as agent but may position and resell a portion of the block as principal to facilitate the transaction;

purchases by a dealer as principal and resale by such dealer for its account pursuant to this prospectus or any prospectus supplement;

ordinary broker transactions and transactions in which the broker solicits purchasers; or

any other legally available means.

Unless we say otherwise in a prospectus supplement, the obligations of any underwriters to purchase securities will be subject to certain conditions and the underwriters will be obligated to purchase all of the applicable securities if any are purchased. If a dealer is used in a sale, we may sell the securities to the dealer as principal. The dealer may then resell the securities to the public at varying prices to be determined by the dealer at the time of resale.

In connection with the sale of securities, underwriters or agents may receive compensation (in the form of discounts, concessions or commissions) from us or from purchasers of securities for whom they may act as agents. Underwriters may sell securities to or through dealers, and such dealers may receive compensation in the form of discounts, concessions or commissions, that may be in excess of those customary in the types of transactions involved, from the underwriters and/or commissions from the purchasers for whom they may act as agents. Underwriters, dealers and agents that participate in the distribution of securities may be deemed to be underwriters as that term is defined in the Securities Act, and any discounts or commissions received by them from us and any profits on the resale of the securities by them may be deemed to be underwriting discounts and commissions under the Securities Act. We will identify any such underwriter or agent, and we will describe any such compensation we pay, in the related prospectus supplement.

Underwriters, dealers and agents may be entitled, under agreements with us, to indemnification against and contribution toward certain civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act.

If we tell you in a prospectus supplement, we will authorize agents and underwriters to solicit offers by certain specified institutions or other persons to purchase securities at the public offering price set forth in the prospectus

supplement pursuant to delayed delivery contracts providing for payment and delivery on a specified date in the future. Institutions with whom such contracts may be made include commercial and savings banks, insurance companies, pension funds, investment companies, educational and charitable institutions, and other institutions but shall in all cases be subject to our approval. Such contracts will be subject only to those conditions set forth in the prospectus supplement and the prospectus supplement will set forth the commission payable for solicitation of such contracts. The obligations of any purchaser under any such contract will be subject to the condition that the purchase of the securities shall not be prohibited at the time of delivery under the laws of the jurisdiction to which the purchaser is subject. The underwriters and other agents will not have any responsibility in respect of the validity or performance of such contracts.

The securities may or may not be listed on a national securities exchange or traded in the over-the-counter market (other than the common shares, which are quoted on the New York Stock Exchange). No assurance can be given as to the liquidity of the trading market for any such securities.

If underwriters or dealers are used in the sale, until the distribution of the securities is completed, SEC rules may limit the ability of any such underwriters and selling group members to bid for and purchase the securities. As an



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exception to these rules, representatives of any underwriters are permitted to engage in certain transactions that stabilize the price of the securities. Such transactions may consist of bids or purchases for the purpose of pegging, fixing or maintaining the price of the securities. If the underwriters create a short position in the securities in connection with the offerings (in other words, if they sell more securities than are set forth on the cover page of the prospectus supplement) the representatives of the underwriters may reduce that short position by purchasing securities in the open market. The representatives of the underwriters may also elect to reduce any short position by exercising all or part of any over-allotment option described in the prospectus supplement. The representatives of the underwriters may also impose a penalty bid on certain underwriters and selling group members. This means that if the representatives purchase securities in the open market to reduce the underwriters' short position or to stabilize the price of the securities, they may reclaim the amount of the selling concession from the underwriters and selling group members who sold those securities as part of the offering. In general, purchases of a security for the purpose of stabilization or to reduce a short position could cause the price of the security to be higher than it might be in the absence of such purchases. The imposition of a penalty bid might also have an effect on the price of the securities to the extent that it discourages resales of the securities. We make no representation or prediction as to the direction or magnitude of any effect that the transactions described above may have on the price of the securities. In addition, the representatives of any underwriters may determine not to engage in such transactions and such transactions, once commenced, may be discontinued without notice.

Certain of the underwriters or agents and their affiliates may engage in transactions with and perform services for us or our affiliates in the ordinary course of their respective businesses.

## **LEGAL MATTERS**

The validity of the offered securities and the accuracy of the discussion under Material Federal Income Tax Considerations contained in this prospectus will be passed upon for us by Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP, Washington D.C. If any portion of the offered securities is distributed in an underwritten offering or through agents, certain legal matters may be passed upon for any agents or underwriters by counsel for such agents or underwriters identified in the applicable prospectus supplement.

## **EXPERTS**

The financial statements and management's assessment of the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting incorporated by reference in this prospectus and elsewhere in the registration statement have been so incorporated by reference in reliance upon the reports of Grant Thornton LLP, independent registered public accountants, upon the authority of said firm as experts in accounting and auditing in giving said reports.

## **WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION**

We file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. Our SEC filings are available to the public at the SEC's website at [www.sec.gov](http://www.sec.gov). You may also read and copy any document we file at the SEC's Public Reference Room at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the operating rules and procedures for the Public Reference Room. Reports, proxy statements and other information concerning Federal Realty Investment Trust may also be inspected at the offices of the New York Stock Exchange, which are currently located at 20 Broad Street, New York, NY 10005.

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference the information we file with them, which means we can disclose important information to you by referring you to those documents. The information we incorporate by reference is an important part of this prospectus, and all information that we will later file with the SEC will automatically update and

supersede this information. Any statement contained in this prospectus or a document incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference in this prospectus will be deemed to have been modified or superseded to the extent that a statement contained in this prospectus, or in any subsequently filed document that also is or is deemed to be incorporated by reference in this prospectus, modifies or supersedes that statement. Any statement so modified or superseded will not be deemed, except as so modified or superseded, to constitute a part of this prospectus. We incorporate by reference the documents listed below as well as any future documents that are deemed to be filed with the SEC under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14, or 15(d) of the Exchange Act (File No. 1-07533) from the date of this prospectus until the termination of the offering of the securities described in this prospectus or the expiration of the registration statement.

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Our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2014, filed with the SEC on February 10, 2015;

Our Definitive Proxy Statement for our 2015 Annual Meeting of Shareholders, filed with the SEC on March 27, 2015;

Our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the fiscal quarter ended March 31, 2015, filed with the SEC on May 7, 2015;

Our Current Reports on Form 8-K filed with the SEC on February 10, 2015 (with disclosures under Item 5.02) and March 17, 2015; and

Description of our common shares contained in the Registration Statement on Form 8-A/A, filed with the SEC on June 6, 2002.

We have filed with the SEC a registration statement, of which this prospectus is a part, with respect to the securities to be offered by this prospectus. This prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement do not contain all of the information set forth in the registration statement and its exhibits and schedules, certain parts of which are omitted as permitted by the rules and regulations of the SEC. For further information with respect to us or the securities offered by this prospectus, please review the registration statement and its exhibits and schedules. Statements contained in this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement regarding the contents of any contract or other document are not necessarily complete and, in each instance, we refer you to the copy of the contract or document filed as an exhibit to the registration statement. Each of these statements is qualified in its entirety by this reference.

Copies of our SEC filings are available at no cost at our website, [www.federalrealty.com](http://www.federalrealty.com). In addition, you may request a copy of any report or document incorporated by reference in this prospectus, except the exhibits, unless such exhibits are specifically incorporated by reference in this prospectus or in those documents, at no cost. Any such request may be made by writing or by telephone and shall be directed to the following address:

Federal Realty Investment Trust

1626 East Jefferson Street

Rockville, Maryland 20852

Attention: Investor Relations

(301) 998-8100

You should rely only on the information in our prospectus, any prospectus supplement and the documents that are incorporated by reference. We have not authorized anyone else to provide you with different information. We are not offering these securities in any state or jurisdiction where the offer is prohibited by law. You should not assume that the information in this prospectus, any prospectus supplement or any incorporated document is accurate as of any date other than the date of the document.



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**6,000,000 Depositary Shares**

**Each Representing 1/1000 of a 5.000% Series C**

**Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Share of Beneficial Interest**

**PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT**

**BofA Merrill Lynch**

**UBS Investment Bank**

**Wells Fargo Securities**

**Raymond James**

**Citigroup**

**Jefferies**

**J.P. Morgan**

**September 25, 2017**

