

Alpha Natural Resources, Inc.
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Subject Company: Alpha Natural Resources, Inc.

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NEWS RELEASE

Cleveland-Cliffs Inc Reports Record Second-Quarter and First-Half 2008 Results

Company Achieves Second-Quarter Net Income of \$270 Million and Diluted EPS of \$2.57 on Sales of \$1 Billion

First-Half 2008 Revenues Surge 72% to a Record \$1.5 Billion; Net Income Reaches \$287 Million, or \$2.73 Per Diluted Share

Empire and Tilden Expansion, United Taconite Minority Interest Purchase and Portman Limited Share Repurchase Position Cliffs for 33 Million Tons of Iron Ore Sales Volume in 2009

Company Enters Agreement to Merge with Alpha Natural Resources

CLEVELAND July 30, 2008 Cleveland-Cliffs Inc (NYSE: CLF), which will be renamed Cliffs Natural Resources in conjunction with its planned merger with Alpha Natural Resources, Inc. (NYSE: ANR), today reported financial results for the three- and six-month periods ended June 30, 2008. Consolidated second-quarter revenues increased 84% to a second-quarter record of \$1 billion, up from \$548 million in the same quarter last year. For the 2008 second quarter, net earnings were up 211% to \$270 million, and diluted earnings per share increased 210% to \$2.57, versus the comparable quarter in 2007.

In addition to its agreement to merge with Alpha Natural Resources, Cliffs also completed other significant corporate development achievements since last reporting quarterly results. These included the previously announced expansion project at its Empire and Tilden mines and purchasing the minority partner's interest in United Taconite. Cliffs' Australian subsidiary, Portman Limited, also completed a share repurchase, which raised Cliffs' interest to 85%. These projects will position Cliffs for 33 million tons of iron ore sales volume in 2009.

The record sales and earnings generated during the quarter and first half reflect successful execution of Cliffs' ongoing strategy, commented Joseph A. Carrabba, Cliffs' chairman, president and chief executive officer. "We continue to grow and expand in the areas that we have identified as integral to sustaining our leadership position in the North American mining sector and around the world. Moreover, we have recently made

significant strides in reinforcing

our platform to serve the faster growing international markets and to meet the robust demand for steelmaking materials in North America and globally.

Second-Quarter Results

Cleveland-Cliffs achieved record second-quarter revenues of \$1.01 billion, an increase of 84% compared with \$548 million in the second quarter of 2007. The dramatic increase in revenues year over year was the result of the strong market environment for iron ore and metallurgical coal. In addition, this year's revenues include sales contributions from Cleveland-Cliffs' North American Coal segment acquired in the second half of 2007 and initial coal sales at the Sonoma coal project in Australia, which began shipments earlier this year.

Operating income for the second quarter was \$409 million. This represents an increase of 253% from the \$116 million reported in 2007. The marked improvement in operating income for the quarter was largely the result of higher sales margins across the Company's North American Iron Ore and Asia-Pacific Iron Ore segments, as well as the contribution from Sonoma. The improvement was slightly offset by higher costs and negative sales margin of \$23 million in the Company's North American Coal segment. The impact from North American Coal stemmed from a decrease in sales volume resulting from previously announced production impediments during the first half of 2008. Operating income during the quarter also benefited from \$29.5 million in casualty recoveries and gain on sale of assets.

Net earnings for the quarter were up 211% to \$270 million, and diluted earnings per share increased 210% to \$2.57, versus the comparable quarter in 2007.

Cleveland-Cliffs indicated its second-quarter results reflect retroactive adjustments to first-quarter sales due to timing of international pricing settlements for iron ore. These adjustments positively impacted second-quarter reported revenue by \$70 million, operating income by \$66 million, net income by \$38 million and earnings per diluted share by \$0.36. Notwithstanding these adjustments, second-quarter 2008 represented record revenue and earnings levels for the Company.

First-Half Results

For the first half of 2008, revenues increased sharply, reaching \$1.5 billion, compared with the \$873 million reported in the same period last year.

Operating income for the first half was \$452 million. This represents an increase of 181% from the \$161 million reported for the first half in 2007.

Net income for the half rose to \$287 million, compared with \$119 million in last year's first half. Diluted earnings per share in the first six months were \$2.73, versus \$1.14 in the first half of 2007 – an increase of 139%.

Business Segment Results

Cliffs indicated that the six-month per-ton comparisons for its iron ore businesses are more indicative of actual operating results than reported second-quarter figures, because of the retroactive adjustments described above. First half price-realization-per-ton comparisons for all business segments are included below.

North American Iron Ore

	Three Months Ended June 30,		Six Months Ended June 30,	
	2008	2007	2008	2007
North American Iron Ore Sales (Long Tons) - In				
Thousands	5,479	5,439	8,223	7,936
Sales Margin - In Millions				
Revenues from iron ore sales and services	\$ 643.4	\$ 432.8	\$ 922.2	\$ 658.0
Cost of goods sold and operating expenses	370.8	328.4	585.0	516.3
Sales margin	\$ 272.6	\$ 104.4	\$ 337.2	\$ 141.7
Sales Margin - Per Ton				
Revenues from iron ore sales and services*	\$ 103.12	\$ 66.15	\$ 94.17	\$ 66.20
Cash cost**	51.33	45.08	50.62	45.86
Depreciation, depletion and amortization	2.04	1.88	2.54	2.49
Cost of goods sold and operating expenses*	53.37	46.96	53.16	48.35
Sales margin	\$ 49.75	\$ 19.19	\$ 41.01	\$ 17.85

* Excludes revenues and expenses related to freight and venture partners' cost reimbursement, which are offsetting and have no impact on operating results

** Cash cost per ton is defined as Cost of goods sold and operating expenses per ton less Depreciation, Depletion and Amortization per ton.

Second-quarter 2008 North American Iron Ore pellet sales volume was 5.5 million tons, up slightly from the 5.4 million tons sold in the prior-year second quarter.

Revenues per ton for the Company's North American Iron Ore pellets were \$103.12, up significantly from the comparable quarter in 2007. This increase in reported per-ton revenues was primarily due to higher price settlements for blast furnace pellets, higher steel prices, renegotiated and new supply agreements with certain customers and other price adjustment factors in Cliffs' supply contracts.

Cost per ton increased 14% in the second quarter to \$53.37, versus \$46.96 in 2007's comparable quarter. Cost per ton increased due to higher fuel and energy costs versus 2007, increased royalty costs as a result of price increases and the impact of furnace repairs at the Company's Empire and United Taconite mines.

North American Iron Ore Production

**(Long Tons of Pellets of
2,240 Pounds - In Millions)**

Mine	Three Months Ended		Six Months Ended		Year Ended	
	June 30, 2008	2007	June 30, 2008	2007	December 31, 2008*	2007
Empire	1.4	1.3	2.6	2.5	4.2	4.9
Tilden	2.2	2.3	3.8	3.7	8.4	7.2
Hibbing	2.0	2.1	4.0	3.3	8.1	7.4
Northshore	1.5	1.3	2.8	2.6	5.7	5.2
United Taconite	1.5	1.4	2.7	2.6	5.5	5.3
Wabush	1.1	1.1	2.1	2.2	4.6	4.6
Total	9.7	9.5	18.0	16.9	36.5	34.6
Cliffs' share of total	6.3	6.0	11.5	10.8	24.0	21.8

* Estimate

All of Cliffs' North American Iron Ore mines are producing at or near capacity. Due to market conditions, Cliffs has increased its rate of production at Empire and expects to produce approximately 4.2 million tons in 2008, up from its previous expectation of 4.0 million tons. As part of the previously announced capacity expansion at the Empire and Tilden mines, Cliffs is shifting additional Tilden iron ore processing to the Empire facility, thereby enabling Tilden to increase its total production in 2008 to 8.4 million tons from previous guidance of 7.9 million tons.

The first-half production increase at Hibbing was related to last year's first-quarter output being reduced due to a weather-related plant shutdown. The increase at Northshore reflected the previously announced restart of Furnace No. 5, which commenced production at the end of March.

North American Coal

	Three Months Ended June 30,		Six Months Ended June 30,	
	2008	2007	2008	2007
North American Coal (Short Tons) - In				
Thousands	576	-	1,574	-

Sales Margin - In Millions

Revenues from coal sales and services	\$ 61.5	\$ -	\$ 155.4	\$ -
Cost of goods sold and operating expenses	84.5	-	180.9	-
Sales margin	\$ (23.0)	\$ -	\$ (25.5)	\$ -

Sales Margin - Per Ton

Revenues from coal sales and services*	\$ 91.67	\$ -	\$ 84.94	\$ -
Cash cost**	106.95	-	83.61	-
Depreciation, depletion and amortization	24.65	-	17.53	-
Cost of goods sold and operating expenses*	131.60	-	101.14	-
Sales margin	\$ (39.93)	\$ -	\$ (16.20)	\$ -

* Excludes revenues and expenses related to freight, which is offsetting and has no impact on operating results

**Cash cost per ton is defined as Cost of goods sold and operating expenses per ton less Depreciation, Depletion and Amortization per ton.

Metallurgical coal sales volume in the second quarter was 576,000 short tons. Average realized revenue per ton was \$91.67.

Cost per ton for the second quarter was \$131.60. The unusually high cost per ton was the result of the extended development of a longwall panel, as well as slowed production stemming from encountering a fault area within a coal panel being mined at the Pinnacle Mine. Longwall development timing at Oak Grove Mine has been extended due to the difficulty in obtaining additional equipment and personnel. The Company expects the cost per ton to decline significantly in the year's second half as volumes increase.

North American Coal Production**(Short Tons of Coal of 2,000 Pounds -
In Thousands)**

	Three Months Ended June 30,		Six Months Ended June 30,		Year Ended Dec. 31,
Mine	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008*
Pinnacle Complex	618	-	1,250	-	2,900
Oak Grove Mine	115	-	492	-	1,100
Total	733	-	1,742	-	4,000

* Estimate

Asia-Pacific Iron Ore

	Three Months Ended June 30,		Six Months Ended June 30,	
	2008	2007	2008	2007
Asia-Pacific Iron Ore Sales (Tonnes) - In Thousands	1,810	2,158	3,904	4,082

Sales Margin - In Millions

Revenues from iron ore sales and services	\$ 268.2	\$ 114.8	\$ 385.7	\$ 215.1
Cost of goods sold and operating expenses	107.3	89.6	203.4	165.4
Sales margin	\$ 160.9	\$ 25.2	\$ 182.3	\$ 49.7

Sales Margin - Per Tonne

Revenues from iron ore sales and services	\$ 148.18	\$ 53.20	\$ 98.80	\$ 52.69
Cash cost*	52.04	36.19	45.18	34.98
Depreciation, depletion and amortization	7.24	5.33	6.92	5.54
Cost of goods sold and operating expenses	59.28	41.52	52.10	40.52
Sales margin	\$ 88.90	\$ 11.68	\$ 46.70	\$ 12.17

*Cash cost per tonne is defined as Cost of goods sold and operating expenses per tonne less Depreciation, Depletion and Amortization per tonne.

Asia-Pacific Iron Ore sales volume decreased 16% to 1.8 million tonnes during the 2008 second quarter. The lower volume was primarily due to timing of shipments near quarter end.

Revenues per tonne for the quarter were reported at \$148.18, up 179% from the \$53.20 reported in the second quarter of 2007. The increase was primarily the result of higher Australian price settlements for lump and fines iron ore. The retroactive adjustments described above positively impacted per-tonne revenues by \$35.91.

Per-tonne cost in Asia-Pacific Iron Ore for the 2008 second quarter increased 43% to \$59.28, versus the comparable period in 2007. Foreign exchange rates, as the U.S. dollar weakened further relative to the Australian dollar, and higher energy and contract labor expenditures due to inflationary pressures contributed to the cost increases.

Asia-Pacific Iron Ore Production**(Tonnes of Lump or Fines of**

	Three Months Ended		Six Months Ended		Year Ended	
	June 30,	June 30,	June 30,	June 30,	Dec. 31,	Dec. 31,
2,205 Pounds - In Millions)	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008*	2007
Mine	1.9	2.1	3.7	3.9	7.7	7.7
Koolyanobbing						

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Cockatoo Island**	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.7
Total	2.1	2.2	4.0	4.2	8.0	8.4

* Estimate

** Cockatoo Island production reflects Portman Limited's 50% share

Second-quarter production in Asia-Pacific Iron Ore of 2.1 million tonnes was relatively consistent with the second quarter of 2007. Production at Cockatoo Island is expected to end in the third quarter and final shipments from the facility also will be made in the third quarter in

conjunction with the closing of the mine. Production was lower at Koolyanobbing due to reduced rail availability to the shipping port.

Liquidity

Cliffs had \$320.4 million of cash and cash equivalents at June 30, 2008, up from \$157.1 million at Dec. 31, 2007. The increase in cash on hand is primarily from the Company's previously announced \$325 million private placement and cash generated from operations. This increase was partially offset by higher levels of inventory, retiring debt from the Company's revolving credit facility, Portman's share repurchase program and capital expenditures. At quarter end, Cliffs had \$685 million in borrowings outstanding including the private placement and under its credit facility, compared with \$440 million of borrowings outstanding at Dec. 31, 2007. Cliffs generated \$203 million in cash from operations during the second quarter and \$83 million year to date. The Company expects to generate approximately \$750 million in cash from operations for the full year.

At June 30, 2008, Cliffs had 6.7 million tons of pellets in its North American Iron Ore inventory, 0.3 million tons of metallurgical coal in its North American Coal inventory and 1.3 million tonnes of finished product inventory in Asia-Pacific Iron Ore. This compares with inventory in the respective business segments of 3.4 million, 0.1 million and 1.1 million at Dec. 31, 2007.

North American Iron Ore Outlook

The Company updated its guidance for expected full-year 2008 per-ton pricing and costs and currently expects to realize average per-ton prices of \$90, up from its previous estimate of \$85 and an increase of 36% from the average price per ton of \$66 realized in 2007. This expectation is based on an annual average hot band steel price of \$775 per ton at certain steelmaking facilities. Cost per ton is estimated to average \$57 for the full year up from the previous estimate of \$56, and an increase of 19% compared with the \$48 per-ton average reported for 2007. The higher cost per ton estimate is the result of increasing royalty payments, energy costs and maintenance activities associated with the Company's recently announced expansion at the Empire and Tilden mines in Michigan.

In 2008, Cliffs expects to have equity production of approximately 24 million tons and sales volume of an estimated 25 million tons as it sells through some inventory. The increases in Cliffs' equity production and sales volume are a result of the Michigan operations expansion and the mid-year acquisition of the remaining 30% interest in United Taconite, combined with continued market strength.

North American Coal Outlook

North American Coal is expected to produce and sell approximately 4.0 million tons of metallurgical coal in 2008, a 300,000 ton reduction from previous guidance. The decrease is a result of extended longwall development due to the timing of adding additional equipment and personnel. Average sales realization per ton is still expected to be approximately \$94. Cost per ton for the year is expected to be \$89, a \$3 increase from previous guidance, due to the reduced production outlook.

Asia-Pacific Iron Ore Outlook

Cliffs Asia-Pacific Iron Ore segment is expected to achieve average revenue per tonne of approximately \$102 in 2008. This is an 85% increase from the previous year's per-tonne average of \$55, and is primarily due to recent iron ore settlements in Australia of an 80% increase for fines and a 97% increase for lump ore.

The Company expects cost per tonne in Asia-Pacific Iron Ore to average \$58 in 2008, up 35% from the \$43 per-tonne average in 2007. The cost increase is primarily the result of higher expected royalty payments related to higher-than-expected year-over-year price increases, rising fuel costs and the impact of foreign exchange. Production and sales volumes are both expected to be 8 million tonnes.

Sonoma Coal Project Outlook

Cliffs has a 45% economic interest in the project and expects total production of approximately 2.0 million tonnes for 2008. With recent reports of significant year-over-year increases in pricing for metallurgical coal, Sonoma is expected to benefit and generate average revenue of \$142 per tonne in 2008, an increase from the Company's previous guidance of \$129 per tonne. Cliffs indicated its outlook for Sonoma includes a mix of metallurgical and thermal coal.

Costs at Sonoma are projected at approximately \$92 per tonne for 2008, up from the previous estimate of \$83 per tonne. The higher cost is the result of expenses attributed to changes in mine operations related to increasing the production ratio of metallurgical versus thermal coal.

Amapá Iron Ore Project

The Amapá Project, a project between MMX and Cliffs, began production in late December 2007. Cliffs owns a 30% interest in the project. MMX, which has agreed to sell its stake in Amapá to Anglo American, has management control over the venture. MMX has indicated plans to complete construction of the concentrator and ramp up operations during 2008, with production and sales expected to total approximately 3 million tonnes for the full year. Based on

start-up delays and production levels, Cliffs expects to incur equity losses in 2008. MMX expects Amapá to produce at the 6.5 million tonne design level in 2009.

Other Expectations

Total operating expenses are anticipated to be approximately \$140 million in 2008, comprised of SG&A offset by casualty recoveries, royalties and gain on sale of assets. Cliffs anticipates an effective tax rate of approximately 26% for the year. Cliffs also expects 2008 capital expenditures of approximately \$250 million and depreciation and amortization of approximately \$190 million. The increase from the previous estimate of \$200 million for expected capital expenditures is related to the recently announced Empire and Tilden mine-expansion project, upgrades on the rail line at Portman between the operations and the port, and longwall system down payments at the Pinnacle Mine.

Alpha Natural Resources Merger Update

On July 16, Cleveland-Cliffs and Alpha Natural Resources jointly announced the signing of a definitive merger agreement under which Cleveland-Cliffs agreed to acquire all outstanding common stock of Alpha in a stock and cash transaction. Under the terms of the agreement, for each share of Alpha common stock, Alpha stockholders would receive 0.95 Cleveland-Cliffs common shares and \$22.23 in cash.

The transaction is subject to approval by Cleveland-Cliffs and Alpha shareholders, as well as the satisfaction of customary closing conditions and regulatory approvals, including expiration or termination of the applicable waiting period under the Hart-Scott-Rodino Antitrust Improvements Act of 1976.

Cliffs stated that it continues to meet with investors and is receiving positive feedback from the majority of its largest shareholders regarding its proposed merger with Alpha. Investors of both Cleveland-Cliffs and Alpha Natural Resources should expect to receive a proxy statement/prospectus that will provide additional details regarding the proposed merger.

Cliffs indicated that, based on its and Alpha's recently announced financial results, current financial conditions and future prospects, it believes that the acquisition of Alpha Natural Resources is compelling and provides both companies with enhanced opportunity for continued growth. In 2009, the combined company, Cliffs Natural Resources, is expected to achieve revenues of \$10 billion and EBITDA of approximately \$4.7 billion, with Cleveland-Cliffs' operations contributing an expected \$2.5 billion to \$2.9 billion in EBITDA.

Cleveland-Cliffs is committed to providing the most shareholder value over the long term and firmly believes the proposed transaction is in the best interests of all of its shareholders. By

combining the complementary operations and management capabilities of Cleveland-Cliffs and Alpha Natural Resources, Cliffs Natural Resources will be well positioned to meet increasing demand for raw materials from steelmakers in North America and globally.

Cleveland-Cliffs will host a conference call to discuss its second-quarter and first-half 2008 results tomorrow, July 31, 2008, at 10 a.m. ET. The call will be broadcast live on Cliffs' website at www.cleveland-cliffs.com. A replay of the call will be available on the website for 30 days.

To be added to Cleveland-Cliffs' e-mail distribution list, please click on the link below:

<http://www.cpg-llc.com/clearsite/clf/emailoptin.html>

Cleveland-Cliffs Inc, headquartered in Cleveland, Ohio, is an international mining company, the largest producer of iron ore pellets in North America and a major supplier of metallurgical coal to the global steelmaking industry. The Company operates six iron ore mines in Michigan, Minnesota and Eastern Canada, and three coking coal mines in West Virginia and Alabama. Cliffs also owns 85% of Portman Limited, a large iron ore mining company in Australia, serving the Asian iron ore markets with direct-shipping fines and lump ore. In addition, the Company has a 30% interest in the Amapá Project, a Brazilian iron ore project, and a 45% economic interest in the Sonoma Project, an Australian coking and thermal coal project.

News releases and other information on the Company are available on the Internet at:

<http://www.cleveland-cliffs.com>

or <http://www.cleveland-cliffs.com/Investors/Pages/default.aspx?b=1041&l=1>

SOURCE: Cleveland-Cliffs Inc

Safe Harbor Statement Under the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995

A number of the matters discussed in this document that are not historical or current facts deal with potential future circumstances and developments, in particular, information regarding expected synergies resulting from the merger of Cleveland-Cliffs and Alpha, combined operating and financial data, the combined company's plans, objectives, expectations and intentions and whether and when the transactions contemplated by the merger agreement will be consummated. The discussion of such matters is qualified by the inherent risks and uncertainties surrounding future expectations generally, and also may materially differ from actual future experience involving any one or more of such matters. Such risks and uncertainties include: the risk that the businesses will not be integrated successfully; the risk that the cost savings and any other synergies from the transaction may not be fully realized or may take longer to realize than expected; changes in demand for iron ore pellets by integrated steel producers, or changes in iron ore demand due to changes in steel utilization rates, operational factors, electric furnace production or imports into the United States and Canada of semi-finished steel or pig iron; the impact of consolidation and rationalization in the steel industry; timing of changes in customer inventories; changes in, renewal of and acquiring new long-term supply arrangements; inherent risks of mining beyond the combined company's control; environmental laws, including those directly affecting mining production, and those affecting customers' iron ore or coal usage; competition in relevant markets; railroad, barge, truck and other transportation performance and costs; the geological characteristics of Central and Northern Appalachian coal reserves; availability of mining and processing equipment and parts; the combined company's assumptions concerning economically recoverable iron ore or coal reserve estimates; disruption from the merger making it more difficult to maintain relationships with customers, employees or suppliers; the failure to obtain governmental approvals of the merger on the proposed terms and schedule, and any conditions imposed on the combined company in connection with consummation of the merger; the failure to obtain approval of the merger by the stockholders of Cleveland-Cliffs and Alpha and the failure to satisfy various other conditions to the closing of the merger contemplated by the merger agreement; and the risks that are described from time to time in Cleveland-Cliffs' and Alpha's respective reports filed with the SEC, including each of Cleveland-Cliffs' and Alpha's annual report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2007, and

quarterly report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2008, as such reports may have been amended. This document speaks only as of its date, and Cleveland-Cliffs and Alpha each disclaims any duty to update the information herein.

Additional Information and Where to Find It

In connection with the proposed transaction, a registration statement on Form S-4 will be filed with the SEC. CLEVELAND-CLIFFS AND ALPHA SHAREHOLDERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO READ THE REGISTRATION STATEMENT AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTS FILED WITH THE SEC, INCLUDING THE JOINT PROXY STATEMENT/PROSPECTUS THAT WILL BE PART OF THE REGISTRATION STATEMENT, WHEN THEY BECOME AVAILABLE, BECAUSE THEY WILL CONTAIN IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROPOSED MERGER. The final joint proxy statement/prospectus will be mailed to shareholders of Cleveland-Cliffs and shareholders of Alpha. Investors and security holders will be able to obtain the documents free of charge at the SEC's web site, www.sec.gov, from Cleveland-Cliffs Inc, Investor Relations, 1100 Superior Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44114-2544, or call (216) 694-5700, or from Alpha Natural Resources, Inc., One Alpha Place, P.O. Box 2345, Abingdon, Virginia 24212, attention: Investor Relations, or call (276) 619-4410.

Participants In Solicitation

Cleveland-Cliffs and Alpha and their respective directors and executive officers and other members of management and employees may be deemed to be participants in the solicitation of proxies in respect of the proposed merger. Information concerning Cleveland-Cliffs participants is set forth in the proxy statement dated March 26, 2008, for Cleveland-Cliffs' 2008 annual meeting of shareholders as filed with the SEC on Schedule 14A. Information concerning Alpha's participants is set forth in the proxy statement, dated April 2, 2008, for Alpha's 2008 annual meeting of stockholders as filed with the SEC on Schedule 14A. Additional information regarding the interests of participants of Cleveland-Cliffs and Alpha in the solicitation of proxies in respect of the proposed merger will be included in the registration statement and joint proxy statement/prospectus and other relevant materials to be filed with the SEC when they become available.

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FINANCIAL RESULTS FOLLOW

CLEVELAND-CLIFFS INC

STATEMENTS OF CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED OPERATIONS

(UNAUDITED)

Three Months Ended June 30,	Six Months Ended June 30,
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The terms "COPT," "Company," "we," "our" and "us" refer to Corporate Office Properties Trust and its subsidiaries, including Corporate Office Properties, L.P., which we refer to as our operating partnership, Corporate Office Management, Inc. ("COMI"), Corporate Development Services, LLC, Corporate Office Services, LLC, Corporate Realty Management, LLC and Corporate Cooling & Controls, LLC, unless the context suggests otherwise. The term "you" refers to a prospective investor.

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ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of a registration statement that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or SEC, using a "shelf" registration process, which enables us, from time to time, to offer and sell in one or more offerings common shares, preferred shares, depository shares and warrants to purchase common shares and/or preferred shares or any combination of these securities. The aggregate public offering price of the securities we sell in these offerings will not exceed \$400,000,000. This prospectus contains a general description of the securities that we may offer. Each time we sell any securities pursuant to this prospectus, we will provide a prospectus supplement that will contain specific information about the terms of that offering. The prospectus supplement also may add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. You should read this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement, together with the additional information described below under the heading "Where You Can Find More Information," before you decide whether to invest in the securities.

FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus contain "forward-looking" statements, as defined in the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995, that are based on our current expectations and estimates about future events and financial trends affecting our business. Statements that are not historical facts, including statements about our beliefs and expectations, are forward-looking statements. These statements are not guarantees of future performance, events or results and involve potential risks and uncertainties. Accordingly, actual results may differ materially from those addressed in the forward-looking statements. We undertake no obligation to publicly update forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise.

Important factors that may affect these expectations, estimates or projections include, but are not limited to:

our ability to borrow on favorable terms;

general economic and business conditions, which will, among other things, affect office property demand and rents, tenant creditworthiness, interest rates and financing availability;

adverse changes in the real estate markets including, among other things, competition with other companies;

risks relating to real estate acquisitions and development;

governmental actions and initiatives;

environmental requirements; and

the other factors described in this prospectus beginning on page 3 under the heading "Risk Factors."

SUMMARY

This summary highlights selected information about us. Because it is a summary, it does not contain all of the information that you should consider before reaching an investment decision. To understand us and the securities that may be offered pursuant to this prospectus, you should read the entire prospectus carefully, especially the "Risk Factors" section beginning on page 3 and the documents we refer you to in the section called "Where You Can Find More Information" beginning on page 39.

Our Company

We are a fully-integrated and self-managed real estate investment trust, or REIT, that focuses on the ownership, management, leasing, acquisition and development of suburban office properties located in the Mid-Atlantic region. Our strategy is to operate in select, demographically strong submarkets where we can achieve operating synergies and key competitive advantages, including attracting high quality tenants and securing acquisition and development opportunities. As of June 30, 2003, we owned 113 operating properties, including three properties owned through joint ventures, encompassing 9.5 million square feet.

We focus on leasing our office properties to large, financially sound entities with significant, long-term space requirements. As of June 30, 2003, our portfolio was 92.0% leased. Our top twenty tenants, which represented 63.2% of our total annualized revenue as of June 30, 2003 had a weighted average lease term of 5.9 years and an average lease size of 58,544 square feet.

We believe our extensive experience, market knowledge and network of industry contacts within the Mid-Atlantic region provide us with an important competitive advantage in establishing, maintaining and enhancing our prominence within our targeted submarkets. Our six executive officers have an average of 26 years of real estate experience, specifically in the Mid-Atlantic region. In addition, as of June 30, 2003, our executive officers and trustees collectively owned 22.0% of our common equity interests, on a fully diluted basis.

We are organized as a REIT under the laws of the State of Maryland. Our principal executive offices are located at 8815 Centre Park Drive, Suite 400, Columbia, Maryland 21045 and our telephone number is (410) 730-9092.

Recent Developments

Since the quarter ended June 30, 2003, we completed the following transactions:

acquired a five office property portfolio in Northern Virginia on July 25 2003, which was 96.3% occupied as of June 30, 2003 and contains 433,814 square feet, for \$75.5 million. We funded this acquisition using proceeds from a \$45.0 million mortgage loan, \$30.0 million in borrowings under our secured revolving credit facility and cash reserves for the balance. The \$45.0 million mortgage loan closed simultaneously with the acquisition, bears interest at an annual rate of LIBOR plus 2.0% and matures in July 2004, subject to our ability to extend the maturity date pursuant to two six-month extension options.

sold 2,200,000 shares of our 8% Series G Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Shares in an underwritten public offering, raising \$53.2 million in net proceeds. We used the net proceeds from this offering plus cash reserves to repay \$58.0 million in borrowings under our \$150.0 million secured revolving credit facility.

RISK FACTORS

You should carefully consider the risks and uncertainties described below before purchasing our securities. While our most significant risks and uncertainties are described below, these are not the only risks that we face. If any of the following actually occurs, our business, financial condition or operating results could be materially harmed, the trading price of our securities, to the extent such securities are listed on any exchange, inter-dealer quotation system or over-the-counter market, could decline and you may lose all or part of your investment. In addition to the risks and uncertainties described below, you should carefully consider all of the information in this prospectus and the documents we refer you to in the section in this prospectus called "Where You Can Find More Information."

We may suffer adverse consequences as a result of our reliance on rental revenues for our income.

We earn revenue from renting our properties. Our operating costs do not necessarily fluctuate in relation to changes in our rental revenue. This means that our costs will not necessarily decline and may increase even if our revenues decline.

For new tenants or upon lease expiration for existing tenants, we generally must make improvements and pay other tenant-related costs for which we may not receive increased rents. We also make building-related capital improvements for which tenants may not reimburse us.

If our properties do not generate revenue sufficient to meet our operating expenses and capital costs, we may have to borrow additional amounts to cover these costs. In such circumstances, we would likely have lower profits or possibly incur losses. We may also find in such circumstances that we are unable to borrow to cover such costs, in which case our operations could be adversely affected. Moreover, there may be less or no cash available for distributions to our shareholders.

Adverse developments concerning some of our key tenants could have a negative impact on our revenue.

As of June 30, 2003, twenty tenants accounted for approximately 63.2% of our total annualized rental revenue, and five of these tenants accounted for approximately 36.0% of our total annualized rental revenue. Information regarding our five largest tenants is set forth below:

Tenant	Total Annualized Rental Revenue at June 30, 2003	Percentage of Total Annualized Rental Revenue	Number of Buildings in Which Tenant Leased Space
(in thousands)			
United States Government(1)	\$ 22,104	13.6%	21
Computer Sciences Corporation(2)	10,600	6.5%	3
AT&T Local Services(2)	9,100	5.6%	6
VeriSign, Inc.(3)	8,985	5.5%	1
Unisys(4)	7,593	4.7%	3

(1) Generally, the leases with the United States Government provide for one-year terms or provide for early termination rights. The United States Government may terminate its leases if, among other reasons, the United States Congress fails to provide funding. Congress has appropriated funds for these leases through September 2003.

(2) Includes affiliated companies and organizations.

(3) VeriSign, Inc. has the right to terminate the lease with respect to a maximum of 232,268 rentable square feet at designated times from June 2005 through September 2006.

(4) Unisys subleases some of its space to Merck and Co., Inc. Revenue from this subleased space is not included in total annualized rental revenue for Unisys.

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If any of our five largest tenants fail to make rental payments to us, or if the United States Government elects to terminate several of its leases and the space cannot be re-leased on satisfactory terms, there would be an adverse effect on our financial performance and ability to make distributions to our shareholders.

We classify the revenue from our leases into industry groupings based solely on management's knowledge of the tenants' operations in leased space. Occasionally, classifications require subjective and complex judgments. For example, we have a tenant that is considered by many to be in the computer industry; however, since the nature of that tenant's operations in the space leased from us is focused on providing service to the United States Government's defense department, we classify the revenue we earn from the lease as United States Government defense/defense contractor industry revenue. We do not use independent sources such as Standard Industrial Classification codes for classifying our revenue into industry groupings and if we did, the resulting groupings would be materially different. As of June 30, 2003, the United States defense industry (comprised of the United States Government and defense contractors) accounted for approximately 39.2% of our total annualized rental revenue. Most of the 13.6% of our total annualized rental revenue that we derived from leases with agencies of the United States Government as of June 30, 2003 is included in the 39.2% of our total annualized revenue from the United States defense industry.

We have become increasingly reliant on defense industry tenants, particularly due to the increased activity in that sector following the events of September 11, 2001. Furthermore, we expect that the percentage of our total annualized rental revenue derived from the defense industry will continue to increase. A reduction in government spending for defense could affect the ability of these tenants to fulfill lease obligations or decrease the likelihood that these tenants will renew their leases. In the case of the United States Government, a reduction in government spending could result in the early termination of leases. Such occurrences could have an adverse effect on our results of operations, financial condition, cash flows and ability to make distributions to our shareholders.

We rely on the ability of our tenants to pay rent and would be harmed by their inability to do so.

Our performance depends on the ability of our tenants to fulfill their lease obligations by paying their rental payments in a timely manner. We believe that the recent economic slowdown in the United States has, and could continue to, adversely affect a number of our tenants. In addition, as noted above, we rely on a few major tenants for a large percentage of our total rental revenue. If one of our major tenants, or a number of our smaller tenants, were to experience financial difficulties, including bankruptcy, insolvency or general downturn of business, there could be an adverse effect on our financial performance and distributions to shareholders.

Our properties are geographically concentrated in the Mid-Atlantic region, particularly in the Baltimore/Washington corridor. We believe that our occupancy rates have been affected as a result of adverse conditions in that region, as well as in the United States generally, and we may suffer economic harm if these conditions continue.

All of our properties are located in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States. As of June 30, 2003, our properties located in the Baltimore/Washington corridor accounted for 55.3% of our total annualized rental revenue. Our properties are also typically concentrated in office parks in which we own most of the properties. Consequently, we do not have a broad geographic distribution of our properties. As a result, a decline in the real estate market or general economic conditions in the Mid-Atlantic region, the Baltimore/Washington corridor or the office parks in which our properties are located could have an adverse effect on our financial position, results of operations, cash flows and ability to make distributions to our shareholders.

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We believe that the recent economic slowdown in the United States has adversely affected occupancy rates in the Mid-Atlantic region and our properties and, in turn, led to downward pressure on rental rates. Occupancy in our portfolio decreased from 94.1% at June 30, 2002 to 91.6% at June 30, 2003; this decrease reflected a somewhat larger decline in our Baltimore/Washington corridor properties, where occupancy decreased from 93.3% at June 30, 2002 to 90.3% at June 30, 2003. Lower occupancy rates and the resulting increased competition for tenants in our operating regions placed downward pressure on rental rates in most of these regions, a trend that we believe will affect us further as we attempt to lease vacant space and renew leases scheduled to expire on occupied space. If occupancy rates in our regions do not improve or further decline, we may have difficulty leasing both existing vacant space and space associated with future lease expirations at rental rates that are sufficient to meet our short term capital needs, which could adversely affect our financial position, results of operations, cash flows and ability to make distributions to shareholders.

We would suffer economic harm if we were unable to renew our leases on favorable terms.

When leases for our properties expire, our tenants may not renew or may renew on terms less favorable to us than the terms of their original leases. If a tenant leaves, we can expect to experience a vacancy for some period of time as well as higher capital costs than if a tenant renews. As a result, our financial performance and ability to make distributions to our shareholders could be adversely affected if we experience a high

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volume of tenant departures at the end of their lease terms. Set forth below are the percentages of total annualized rental revenue as of June 30, 2003 that were subject to scheduled lease expirations for the six month period from July 1, 2003 through December 31, 2003 and in each of the next four calendar years:

2003 (from July 1, 2003)	2.3%
2004	9.4%
2005	11.0%
2006	11.1%
2007	15.0%

Our government leases generally provide for early termination rights; the percentages reported above assume no exercise of such early termination rights. Government leases that provide for early termination rights accounted for 13.6% of our total annualized rental revenue at June 30, 2003.

We may not be able to compete successfully with other entities that operate in our industry.

The commercial real estate market is highly competitive. We compete for the purchase of commercial property with many entities, including other publicly traded commercial REITs. Many of our competitors have substantially greater financial resources than we do. If our competitors prevent us from buying properties that we target for acquisition, we may not be able to meet our property acquisition and development goals. Moreover, numerous commercial properties compete for tenants with our properties. Some of the properties competing with ours may have newer or more desirable locations, or the competing properties' owners may be willing to accept lower rates than are acceptable to us. Competition for property acquisitions, or for tenants in properties that we own, could have an adverse effect on our financial performance and distributions to our shareholders.

We may be unable to execute our plans to develop and construct additional properties.

Although the majority of our investments are in currently leased properties, we also develop and construct properties, including some that are not fully pre-leased. When we develop and construct properties, we assume the risk that actual costs will exceed our budgets, that we will experience construction or development delays and that projected leasing will not occur, any of which could adversely affect our financial performance and our ability to make distributions to our shareholders. In

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addition, we generally do not obtain construction financing commitments until the development stage of a project is complete and construction is about to commence. We may find that we are unable to obtain financing needed to continue with the construction activities for such projects.

We may suffer economic harm as a result of the actions of our joint venture partners.

We invest in certain entities in which we are not the exclusive investor or principal decision maker. As of June 30, 2003, we owned a total of 113 properties, three of which were held through joint ventures. Aside from our inability to unilaterally control the operations of these joint ventures, our investments entail the additional risks that (1) the other parties to these investments may not fulfill their financial obligations as investors, in which case we may need to fund such parties' share of additional capital requirements and (2) the other parties to these investments may take actions that are inconsistent with our objectives, either of which could have an adverse effect on our financial condition, results of operations, cash flows and ability to make distributions to our shareholders.

We are subject to possible environmental liabilities.

We are subject to various federal, state and local environmental laws. These laws can impose liability on property owners or operators for the costs of removal or remediation of hazardous substances released on a property, even if the property owner was not responsible for the release of the hazardous substances. Costs resulting from environmental liability could be substantial. The presence of hazardous substances on our properties may also adversely affect occupancy and our ability to sell or borrow against those properties. In addition to the costs of government claims under environmental laws, private plaintiffs may bring claims for personal injury or other reasons. Additionally, various laws impose liability for the costs of removal or remediation of hazardous substances at the disposal or treatment facility. Anyone who arranges for the disposal or treatment of hazardous substances at such a facility is potentially liable under such laws. These laws often impose liability on an entity even if the facility was not owned or operated by the entity.

Real estate investments are illiquid, and we may not be able to sell our properties on a timely basis when we determine it is appropriate to do so.

Equity real estate investments such as our properties are relatively difficult to sell and convert to cash quickly, especially if market conditions are depressed. Such illiquidity will tend to limit our ability to vary our portfolio of properties promptly in response to changes in economic or other conditions. Moreover, under certain circumstances, the Internal Revenue Code imposes certain penalties on a REIT that sells property held for less than four years. In addition, for certain of our properties that we acquired by issuing units in our operating partnership, we are restricted for a certain period of time from entering into transactions (such as the sale or refinancing of the acquired property) that will result in a taxable gain to the sellers without the sellers' consent. Due to all of these factors, we may be unable to sell a property at an advantageous time.

Our methodology for accounting for property acquisitions with in-place leases may be affected by future interpretive guidance issued by the SEC, which could have an adverse impact on our operating results and our funds from operations.

We believe that the SEC has expressed concerns regarding the application by many public companies of Financial Accounting Standards Board ("FASB") Statement No. 141, Business Combinations, to acquisitions of properties with in-place leases. We further believe that the SEC is in the process of proposing additional interpretive guidance relating to the application of Statement No. 141. While we believe that our current approach to accounting for property acquisitions is consistent with the current methodology suggested by FASB under Statement No. 141, as well as with industry-wide practice, any additional interpretive guidance issued by the SEC regarding Statement

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No. 141 may result in a modification of our accounting for property acquisitions, which modification could have an adverse impact on our operating results and determination of funds from operations, or FFO.

We are subject to other possible liabilities that would adversely affect our financial position and cash flows.

Our properties may be subject to other risks related to current or future laws, including laws benefiting disabled persons, and state or local laws relating to zoning, construction and other matters. These laws may require significant property modifications in the future for which we may not have budgeted and could result in the levy of fines against us. In addition, although we believe that we adequately insure our properties, we are subject to the risk that our insurance may not cover all of the costs to restore a property that is damaged by a fire or other catastrophic events, including acts of war or terrorism. The occurrence of any of these events could have an adverse effect on our financial condition, results of operations, cash flows and ability to make distributions to our shareholders.

As a result of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, we may be subject to increased costs of insurance and limitations on coverage.

Our portfolio of properties is insured for losses under our property, casualty and umbrella insurance policies through September 2003. Due largely to the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the insurance industry has changed its risk assessment approach and cost structure. We renew our insurance policies on an annual basis, and experienced an increase in our policy premiums in October 2002, at which time we maintained our coverage relating to terrorism. Continuing changes in the insurance industry may increase the cost of insuring our properties and decrease the scope of insurance coverage, either of which could adversely affect our financial position and operating results.

We may suffer adverse effects as a result of the indebtedness that we carry and the terms and covenants that relate to this debt.

Our strategy is to operate with higher debt levels than most REITs. However, these high debt levels could make it difficult to obtain additional financing when required and could also make us more vulnerable to an economic downturn. Most of our properties have been mortgaged to collateralize indebtedness. In addition, we rely on borrowings to fund some or all of the costs of new property acquisitions, construction and development activities and other items. Our organizational documents do not limit the amount of indebtedness that we may incur.

As of June 30, 2003, our total outstanding debt was \$736.1 million, and our debt to undepreciated book value of real estate assets was 60.4%. We define debt to undepreciated book value of real estate assets as mortgage loans payable divided by gross investment in real estate as computed by adding accumulated depreciation to the net investment in real estate as presented on our balance sheet. Our debt to total market capitalization was 49.4% based upon the \$16.93 closing per share market price of our common shares on June 30, 2003. Total market capitalization is the sum of (1) total debt, (2) the value of all outstanding common shares and common units in our operating partnership not owned by us at the \$16.93 market price and (3) the total liquidation value of preferred shares.

Payments of principal and interest on our debt may leave us with insufficient cash to operate our properties or pay distributions to our shareholders as required to maintain our qualification as a REIT. We are also subject to the risks that:

we may not be able to refinance our existing indebtedness or refinance on terms as favorable as the terms of our existing indebtedness;

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certain debt agreements of our operating partnership could restrict the ability of our operating partnership to make cash distributions to us, which could result in reduced distributions to our shareholders or the need to incur additional debt to fund these distributions; and

if we are unable to pay our debt service on time or are unable to comply with restrictive financial covenants in certain of our mortgage loans, our lenders could foreclose on our properties securing such debt and in some cases other properties and assets that we own.

A number of our loans are cross-collateralized, which means that separate groups of properties from our portfolio secure each of these loans. More importantly, many of our loans are cross-defaulted, which means that failure to pay interest or principal on any of our loans will create a default on certain of our other loans. Any foreclosure of our properties would result in loss of income and asset value that would negatively affect our financial condition, results of operations, cash flows and ability to make distributions to our shareholders. In addition, if we are in default and the value of the properties securing a loan is less than the loan balance, the lender may require payment from our other assets.

We use interest rate swap agreements to reduce the impact of changes in interest rates. As of June 30, 2003, we had two interest rate swap agreements in place, each of which is for a notional amount of \$50.0 million. These agreements expire in January 2004 and January 2005. Decreases in interest rates would result in increased interest payments due under interest rate swap agreements in place and could result in the Company recognizing a loss and remitting a payment to unwind such agreements. As of June 30, 2003, approximately 32.9% of our total debt had variable interest rates, excluding effects of the outstanding interest rate swap agreements. This percentage decreases to 19.3% when including the effect of the interest rate swap agreements in effect at June 30, 2003. If short-term interest rates were to rise, our debt service payments on adjustable rate debt would increase, which would lower our net income and could decrease our distributions to our shareholders.

We must refinance our mortgage debt in the future. Our scheduled debt payments for the six month period from July 1, 2003 through December 31, 2003 and in each of the next four calendar years, including maturities, are as follows:

Year	Amount (in thousands)
2003 (from July 1, 2003)	\$ 59,925(1)
2004	185,256(2)
2005	69,611(3)
2006	73,281
2007	65,898

(1) Includes a \$36.0 million maturity in November, which may be extended for a one-year period, subject to certain conditions.

(2) Includes maturities of \$89.0 million in March and \$25.8 million in August, each of which may be extended for a one-year period, subject to certain conditions.

(3) Includes a \$40.0 million maturity in January, which may be extended for two six-month periods, subject to certain conditions.

Our operations likely will not generate enough cash flow to repay some or all of this debt without additional borrowings or new equity financings. If we cannot refinance our debt, extend the repayment dates, or raise additional equity prior to the date when our debt matures, we would default on our existing debt, which would have an adverse effect on our financial position, results of operations, cash flows and ability to make distributions to our shareholders.

We may be unable to continue to make shareholder distributions at expected levels.

We intend to make regular quarterly cash distributions to our shareholders. However, distribution levels depend on a number of factors, some of which are beyond our control.

Our loan agreements contain provisions that could restrict future distributions. Our ability to sustain our current distribution level will also be dependent, in part, on other matters including:

continued property occupancy and timely payment by tenants of rent obligations;

the amount of future capital expenditures and expenses relating to our properties;

the level of leasing activity and future rental rates;

the strength of the commercial real estate market;

competition;

the costs of compliance with environmental and other laws;

our corporate overhead levels;

the amount of uninsured losses; and

our decision to reinvest in operations rather than distribute available cash.

In addition, we can make distributions to the holders of our common shares only after we make preferential distributions to holders of our preferred shares.

Our ownership limits are important factors that may prevent a change of control or otherwise affect the ownership of our common and preferred shares.

Our Declaration of Trust limits ownership of our common shares by any single shareholder to 9.8% of the number of the outstanding common shares or 9.8% of the value of the outstanding common shares, whichever is more restrictive. Our Declaration of Trust also limits ownership by any single shareholder of our common and preferred shares in the aggregate to 9.8% of the aggregate value of the outstanding common and preferred shares. We call these restrictions the "Ownership Limit." Our Declaration of Trust allows our Board of Trustees to exempt shareholders from the Ownership Limit, and our Board of Trustees has exempted the foreign trust owning all of our 4% Series D Cumulative Convertible Redeemable Preferred Shares from the Ownership Limit.

Our Declaration of Trust includes other provisions that may prevent or delay a change of control.

Subject to the requirements of the New York Stock Exchange, our Board of Trustees has the authority, without shareholder approval, to issue additional securities on terms that could delay or prevent a change in control. In addition, our Board of Trustees has the authority to reclassify any of our unissued common shares into preferred shares. Our Board of Trustees may issue preferred shares with such preferences, rights, powers and restrictions as our Board of Trustees may determine, which could also delay or prevent a change in control.

Our Board of Trustees is divided into three classes of Trustees, which could delay a change of control.

Our Declaration of Trust divides our Board of Trustees into three classes. The term of one class of the Trustees expires each year, at which time a successor class is elected for a term ending at the third succeeding annual meeting of shareholders. Such staggered terms make it more difficult for a third party to acquire control of us.

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The Maryland business statutes also impose potential restrictions on a change of control of our company.

Various Maryland laws may have the effect of discouraging offers to acquire us, even if the acquisition would be advantageous to shareholders. Our bylaws exempt us from such laws, but our Board of Trustees can change our bylaws at any time to make these provisions applicable to us.

Our failure to qualify as a REIT would have adverse tax consequences.

We believe that since 1992 we have qualified for taxation as a REIT for federal income tax purposes. We plan to continue to meet the requirements for qualification taxation as a REIT. Many of these requirements, however, are highly technical and complex. The determination that we are a REIT requires an analysis of various factual matters and circumstances that may not be totally within our control. For example, to qualify as a REIT, at least 95% of our gross income must come from certain sources that are itemized in the REIT tax laws. We are also required to distribute to shareholders at least 90% of our REIT taxable income (excluding capital gains). The fact that we hold most of our assets through our operating partnership and its subsidiaries further complicates the application of the REIT requirements. Even a technical or inadvertent mistake could jeopardize our REIT status. Furthermore, Congress and the IRS might make changes to the tax laws and regulations, and the courts might issue new rulings that make it more difficult, or impossible for us to remain qualified as a REIT.

If we fail to qualify as a REIT, we would be subject to federal income tax at regular corporate rates. Also, unless the IRS granted us relief under certain statutory provisions, we would remain disqualified as a REIT for four years following the year we first fail to qualify. If we fail to qualify as a REIT, we would have to pay significant income taxes and would therefore have less money available for investments or for distributions to our shareholders. This would likely have a significant adverse effect on the value of our securities. In addition, we would no longer be required to make any distributions to our shareholders.

We have certain distribution requirements that reduce cash available for other business purposes.

As a REIT, we must distribute 90% of our annual taxable income (excluding capital gains), which limits the amount of cash we have available for other business purposes, including amounts to fund our growth. Also, it is possible that because of the differences between the time that we actually receive revenue or pay expenses and the period we report those items for distribution purposes, we may have to borrow funds on a short-term basis to meet the 90% distribution requirement. We may become subject to tax liabilities that adversely affect our operating cash flow and available cash for distribution to shareholders.

A number of factors could cause our security prices to decline.

As is the case with any publicly-traded securities, certain factors outside of our control could influence the value of our common and preferred shares. These conditions include, but are not limited to:

market perception of REITs in general and office REITs in particular;

market perception of REITs relative to other investment opportunities;

the level of institutional investor interest in our company;

general economic and business conditions;

prevailing interest rates; and

market perception of our financial condition, performance, dividends and growth potential.

Generally, REITs are tax-advantaged relative to C corporations because they are not subject to corporate-level federal income tax on income that they distribute to shareholders. However, Congress recently made changes to the tax laws and regulations that could make it less advantageous for

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investors to invest in REITs. The Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2003, or the 2003 Act, provides that generally for taxable years beginning after December 31, 2002 and before December 31, 2008, certain dividends received by domestic individual shareholders from certain C corporations are subject to a reduced rate of tax of up to 15%. Prior to this Act, such dividends received by domestic individual shareholders were generally subject to tax at ordinary income rates, which were as high as 38.6%. In general, the provisions of the Act do not benefit individual shareholders of REITs and could make an investment in a C corporation that is not a REIT more attractive than an investment in a REIT. We cannot predict the effects that this Act may have on the market price for our common or preferred shares.

The average daily trading volume of our common shares during the three months ended June 30, 2003 was approximately 121,000 shares, and the average trading volume of our publicly-traded preferred shares was generally insignificant. As a result, relatively small volumes of transactions could have a pronounced effect on the market price of such shares.

We are dependent on external sources of capital for future growth.

As noted above, because we are a REIT, we must distribute 90% of our annual taxable income. Due to this requirement, we will not be able to fund our acquisition, construction and development activities using cash flow from operations. Therefore, our ability to fund these activities is dependent on our ability to access capital funded by third parties. Such capital could be in the form of new loans, equity issuances of common shares, preferred shares, common and preferred units in our operating partnership or joint venture funding. Such capital may not be available on favorable terms or at all. Moreover, additional debt financing may substantially increase our leverage and subject us to covenants that restrict management's flexibility in directing our operations, and additional equity offerings may result in substantial dilution of our shareholders' interests. Our inability to obtain capital when needed could have a material adverse effect on our ability to expand our business and fund other cash requirements.

Certain of our officers and Trustees have potential conflicts of interest.

Certain of our officers and members of our Board of Trustees own partnership units in our operating partnership. These individuals may have personal interests that conflict with the interests of our shareholders. For example, if our operating partnership sells or refinances certain of the properties that these officers or Trustees contributed to the operating partnership, the officers or Trustees could suffer adverse tax consequences. Their personal interest could conflict with our interests if such a sale or refinancing would be advantageous to us. We have certain policies in place that are designed to address conflicts of interest. We cannot guarantee, however, that these policies will be successful in eliminating the influence of such conflicts, and if they are not successful, decisions could be made that might fail to reflect fully the interests of all of our shareholders.

We are dependent on our key personnel, and the loss of any key personnel could have an adverse effect on our operations.

We are dependent on the efforts of our executive officers. The loss of any of their services could have an adverse effect on our operations. Although certain of our officers have entered into employment agreements with us, we cannot guarantee that they will remain employed with us.

We may change our policies without shareholder approval, which could adversely affect our financial condition, results of operations, market price of our securities or distributions.

Our Board of Trustees determines all of our policies, including our investment, financing and distribution policies. Although our Board of Trustees has no current plans to do so, it may amend or revise these policies at any time without a vote of our shareholders. Policy changes could adversely affect our financial condition, results of operations, the market price of our securities or distributions.

USE OF PROCEEDS

Unless otherwise set forth in a prospectus supplement accompanying this prospectus, we intend to use the net proceeds of any sale of the securities that we may offer under this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement for working capital and other general business purposes, which may include capital expenditures, acquisition or development of additional properties, repayment of indebtedness and repurchases of outstanding shares.

RATIOS OF EARNINGS TO COMBINED FIXED CHARGES AND PREFERRED SHARE DIVIDENDS

The following table sets forth our ratios of earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred share dividends for the six months ended June 30, 2003 and for each of the last five calendar years. For purposes of calculating the ratio of earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred share dividends, earnings were calculated by adding fixed charges (excluding preferred share dividends and capitalized interest) and minority interest of holders of common units in our operating partnership to income before minority interests, income taxes, and discontinued operations. Fixed charges consist of interest costs, debt issuance costs and distributions to preferred shareholders and unitholders.

	Six Months Ended June 30, 2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998
Ratio of earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred share dividends	(1)	1.25x	1.26x	1.30x	1.41x	1.30x

(1)

During the six months ended June 30, 2003, our fixed charges and preferred share dividends included a nonrecurring deemed distribution of approximately \$11.2 million in connection with the repurchase of Series C preferred units in our operating partnership at an amount in excess of the recorded book value of the units. As a result, earnings were inadequate to cover fixed charges and preferred share dividends by approximately \$3.1 million in the six months ended June 30, 2003.

DESCRIPTION OF SHARES

The following summary of the terms and provisions of our common shares, preferred shares and depositary shares representing interests in preferred shares does not purport to be complete and is subject to and qualified in its entirety by reference to our Declaration of Trust and the Articles Supplementary to our Declaration of Trust relating to the designation of each series of our preferred shares, each of which is available from us as described in "Where You Can Find More Information."

General

Under our Declaration of Trust, we are authorized to issue up to 45,000,000 common shares and 15,000,000 preferred shares. As of August 31, 2003, there were 29,491,751 common shares issued and outstanding; 1,725,000 preferred shares were designated as 10% Series B Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Shares (the "Series B Preferred Shares"), 1,250,000 of which were issued and outstanding; 544,000 preferred shares were designated as 4% Series D Cumulative Convertible Redeemable Preferred Shares (the "Series D Preferred Shares"), all of which were issued and outstanding; 1,265,000 shares were designated as 10.25% Series E Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Shares (the "Series E Preferred Shares"), 1,150,000 of which were issued and outstanding; 1,425,000 shares were designated as 9.875% Series F Cumulative

Redeemable Preferred Shares (the "Series F Preferred Shares"), all of which were issued and outstanding; and 2,200,000 shares were designated as 8% Series G Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Shares (the "Series G Preferred Shares"), all of which were issued and outstanding. All previously issued and outstanding Series A Preferred Shares have been reacquired by us and restored to the status of undesignated preferred shares under our Declaration of Trust.

Our Board of Trustees may increase the authorized number of common shares and preferred shares without shareholder approval. We are authorized to issue preferred shares in one or more series, with such designations, preferences, conversion and other rights, voting powers, restrictions, limitations as to dividends, qualifications and terms and conditions of redemption, in each case, as are permitted by Maryland law and as our Board of Trustees may determine by resolution.

Common Shares

All common shares offered hereby will be duly authorized, fully paid and nonassessable. Subject to the preferential rights of the Series B, D, E, F and G Preferred Shares (collectively referred to as the "Outstanding Preferred Shares") and any other series of preferred shares that we may issue in the future, and to the provisions of our Declaration of Trust regarding the restriction on transfer of common shares, holders of common shares are entitled to receive dividends on such shares if and when authorized and declared by the Board of Trustees out of assets legally available therefor and to share ratably in the assets of the Company legally available for distribution to our shareholders in the event of our liquidation, dissolution or winding-up after payment of, or adequate provision for, all known debts and liabilities of the Company. Holders of common shares have no preference, conversion, sinking fund, redemption or appraisal rights and have no preemptive rights to subscribe for any securities of the Company. Subject to the provisions of our Declaration of Trust regarding the restriction on transfer of common shares, the common shares have equivalent dividend, distribution, liquidation and other rights.

Subject to the provisions of our Declaration of Trust regarding restrictions on transfer of shares, each outstanding common share entitles the holder thereof to one vote on all matters submitted to a vote of shareholders, including the election of Trustees, and, except as provided with respect to any other class or series of shares, the holders of such common shares possess the exclusive voting power. There is no cumulative voting in the election of Trustees, which means that, except as provided with respect to any other class or series of shares, the holders of a majority of the outstanding common shares can elect all of the Trustees then standing for election.

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Our Declaration of Trust provides for approval by a majority of the votes cast by holders of common shares entitled to vote on the matter in all situations permitting or requiring action by the shareholders, except with respect to: (i) the election of Trustees (which requires a plurality of all the votes cast at a meeting of shareholders at which a quorum is present), (ii) the removal of Trustees (which requires the affirmative vote of the holders of two-thirds of the outstanding shares entitled to vote generally in the election of Trustees, which action can only be taken for cause by vote at a shareholder meeting), (iii) the merger of the Company with another entity or the sale (or other disposition) of all or substantially all of the assets of the Company (which requires the affirmative vote of the holders of two-thirds of the outstanding shares entitled to vote on the matter), (iv) the amendment of our Declaration of Trust (which requires the affirmative vote of two-thirds of all the votes entitled to be cast on the matter), and (v) the termination of the Company (which requires the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the outstanding shares entitled to be cast on the matter). Our Declaration of Trust permits the Trustees, without any action by the holders of common shares, (a) by a two-thirds vote, to amend our Declaration of Trust from time to time to qualify as a REIT under the Internal Revenue Code or Title 8 of the Corporations and Associations Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, as amended (the "Maryland REIT Law") and (b) by a majority vote to amend our Declaration of Trust to increase or decrease the aggregate number of shares, or the number of shares of any class of shares, that we have authority to issue.

Units in Our Operating Partnership

We conduct almost all of our operations through our operating partnership, for which we are the managing general partner. Interests in our operating partnership are in the form of common and preferred units. As of August 31, 2003, we owned approximately 75.4% of the outstanding common units and the 1,250,000 Series B Preferred Units, 544,000 Series D Preferred Units, 1,150,000 Series E Preferred Units, 1,425,000 Series F Preferred Units and 2,200,000 Series G Preferred Units issued by our operating partnership. Our operating partnership repurchased all of the outstanding Series C Preferred Units in June 2003.

The Series B Preferred Units, Series D Preferred Units, Series E Preferred Units, Series F Preferred Units and Series G Preferred Units have economic terms substantially equivalent to the economic terms of the corresponding Series B Preferred Shares, Series D Preferred Shares, Series E Preferred Shares, Series F Preferred Shares and Series G Preferred Shares, respectively, that we have issued, which terms are described in more detail below.

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The Series B, Series D, Series E, Series F and Series G Preferred Units of our operating partnership are *pari passu* (i.e., are treated equivalently) in priority over the common units in our operating partnership with respect to quarterly distributions. Distributions on these preferred units are the source of funds for the payment of dividends on our preferred shares.

Preferred Shares

The Series B Preferred Shares, Series E Preferred Shares, Series F Preferred Shares and Series G Preferred Shares were issued in underwritten public offerings in July 1999, April 2001, September 2001 and August 2003 respectively. The Series D Preferred Shares were issued in a private placement to a private investor in January 2001. We contributed the proceeds from each of these offerings to our operating partnership in exchange for a number of preferred units of our operating partnership equal in number to, and of a series having designations, rights and preferences substantially similar to, the preferred shares that we sold in the above-described public offerings and private placement. All previously issued and outstanding Series A Preferred Shares have been reacquired by us and have been restored to the status of undesignated preferred shares under our Declaration of Trust.

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The terms of each series of the Outstanding Preferred Shares are substantially similar to one another and any difference among the terms is noted in the following summary.

Ranking. Each series of the Outstanding Preferred Shares, as to dividend rights and rights upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up, ranks (1) prior or senior to the common shares and any other class or series of our equity securities authorized or designated in the future if the holders of Outstanding Preferred Shares shall be entitled to the receipt of dividends or of amounts distributable upon liquidation, dissolution or winding-up in preference or priority to the holders of shares of such class or series (the "Junior Shares"); (2) on a parity with any other series of Outstanding Preferred Shares and any other class or series of our equity securities authorized or designated in the future if, by the terms of such class or series, the holders of such class or series of securities and Outstanding Preferred Shares shall be entitled to the receipt of dividends and of amounts distributable upon liquidation, dissolution or winding-up in proportion to their respective amounts of accrued and unpaid dividends per share or liquidation preferences, without preference or priority of one over the other (the "Parity Shares"); and (3) junior to any class or series of our equity securities authorized or designated in the future if, by the terms of such class or series, the holders of such class or series shall be entitled to the receipt of dividends and amounts distributable upon liquidation, dissolution or winding-up in preference or priority to the holders of Outstanding Preferred Shares (the "Senior Shares").

Dividends. Holders of Outstanding Preferred Shares are entitled to receive, when and as declared by our Board of Trustees, out of our funds legally available for payment, quarterly cash dividends on each series of the Outstanding Preferred Shares at the annual rates indicated in the table below.

Series	Annual Dividend Rate	Annual Per Share Dividend Payment	Aggregate Annual Dividend Payment
B	10.0%	\$ 2.50	\$ 3,125,000
D	4.0%	\$ 1.00	\$ 544,000
E	10.25%	\$ 2.5625	\$ 2,946,875
F	9.875%	\$ 2.46875	\$ 3,517,969
G	8.0%	\$ 2.00	\$ 4,400,000

These dividends are cumulative from the date of original issue, whether or not in any dividend period or periods these dividends have been declared or there are funds legally available for the payment of such dividends, and are payable quarterly on January 15, April 15, July 15 and October 15 of each year, or, if not a business day, the next succeeding business day (each a "Dividend Payment Date" and collectively, the "Dividend Payment Dates"). Any dividend payable on any series of the Outstanding Preferred Shares for any partial dividend period will be computed ratably on the basis of twelve 30-day months and a 360-day year. Dividends are payable in arrears to holders of record as they appear on our share records at the close of business on the applicable record dates, which are fixed by our Board of Trustees and which are not more than 60 nor less than 10 days prior to the related Dividend Payment Dates. Holders of Outstanding Preferred Shares are not entitled to receive any dividends in excess of cumulative dividends on the particular series of Outstanding Preferred Shares. No interest, or sum of money in lieu of interest, will be payable in respect of any dividend payment or payments on a series of Outstanding Preferred Shares that may be in arrears.

When dividends are not paid in full upon any series of Outstanding Preferred Shares or any other class or series of Parity Shares, or a sum sufficient for this payment is not set apart, all dividends declared upon such series of the Outstanding Preferred Shares and any Parity Shares will be declared ratably in proportion to the respective amounts of dividends accrued and unpaid on such series of Outstanding Preferred Shares and

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accrued and unpaid on such Parity Shares. Except as set forth in the preceding sentence, unless dividends on a series of the Outstanding Preferred Shares equal to the full amount of accrued and unpaid dividends have been or contemporaneously are declared and paid or declared, and a sum sufficient for the payment thereof has been or contemporaneously is set apart for

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such payment for all past dividend periods, no dividends will be declared or paid or set apart for payment by us and no other distribution of cash or other property may be declared or made, directly or indirectly, by us with respect to any Parity Shares. Unless dividends equal to the full amount of all accrued and unpaid dividends on the Outstanding Preferred Shares have been paid, or declared and set apart for payment for all past dividend periods, no dividends (other than dividends or distributions paid with respect to Junior Shares or options, warrants or rights to subscribe for or purchase Junior Shares) may be declared or paid or set apart for payment by us and no other distribution of cash or other property may be declared or made, directly or indirectly, by us with respect to any Junior Shares, and no Junior Shares will be redeemed, purchased or otherwise acquired (except for a redemption, purchase or other acquisition of common shares made for purposes of our employee incentive or benefit plan or any such plan of any of our subsidiaries) for any consideration, and no monies will be paid to or made available for a sinking fund for the redemption of any such Junior Shares, directly or indirectly, by us (except by conversion into or exchange for Junior Shares, or options, warrants or rights to subscribe for or purchase Junior Shares), nor will any other cash or other property be paid or distributed to or for the benefit of holders of Junior Shares. Regardless of the provisions described above, if this declaration, payment, redemption, purchase or other acquisition is necessary to maintain our qualification as a REIT, we will not be prohibited from (i) declaring or paying or setting apart for payment any dividend or distribution on any Parity Shares or (ii) redeeming, purchasing or otherwise acquiring any Parity Shares.

Liquidation Preference. Upon any voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up, before any payment or distribution by us will be made to or set apart for the holders of any Junior Shares, the holders of each series of Outstanding Preferred Shares will be entitled to receive a liquidation preference of \$25.00 per share (the "Outstanding Preferred Shares Liquidation Preference"), plus an amount equal to all accrued and unpaid dividends (whether or not earned or declared) to the date of final distribution to such holders. Such holders will not be entitled to any further payment. The aggregate amount of the liquidation preference for each series of Outstanding Preferred Shares, exclusive of accrued and unpaid dividends, is as follows:

Series	Liquidation Preference
B	\$ 31,250,000
D	\$ 13,600,000
E	\$ 28,750,000
F	\$ 35,625,000
G	\$ 55,000,000

Until all holders of each series of Outstanding Preferred Shares have been paid the Outstanding Preferred Shares Liquidation Preference in full, plus an amount equal to all accrued and unpaid dividends (whether or not earned or declared) to the date of final distribution to such holders, no payment will be made to any holder of Junior Shares upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up. If upon any liquidation, dissolution or winding up, our assets, or proceeds thereof, distributable among the holders of Outstanding Preferred Shares will be insufficient to pay in full the above-described preferential amount and liquidating payments on any other shares of any class or series of Parity Shares, then our assets, or the proceeds thereof, will be distributed among all of the holders of Outstanding Preferred Shares and any such other Parity Shares ratably in the same proportion as the respective amounts that would be payable on such Outstanding Preferred Shares and any such other Parity Shares if all amounts payable thereon were paid in full.

A voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up will not include a consolidation or merger of us with or into one or more other entities, a sale or transfer of all or substantially all of our assets, or a statutory share exchange. Upon any liquidation, dissolution or winding up, after payment has been made in full to the holders of Outstanding Preferred Shares and any Parity Shares, any other

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series or class or classes of Junior Shares will be entitled to receive any and all of our assets remaining to be paid or distributed, and the holders of the Outstanding Preferred Shares and any Parity Shares will not be entitled to share in that payment or distribution.

Optional Redemption. Each series of Outstanding Preferred Shares will not be redeemable by us prior to the date indicated in the table below (except in certain limited circumstances relating to our maintenance of our ability to qualify as a REIT as described under "Description of Shares Restrictions on Ownership and Transfer").

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Series	Redemption Date
B	July 15, 2004
D	January 25, 2006
E	July 15, 2006
F	October 15, 2006
G	August 11, 2008

On or after the indicated redemption date, we may, at our option, redeem such series of Outstanding Preferred Shares, in whole or from time to time in part, at a cash redemption price equal to 100% of the Outstanding Preferred Shares Liquidation Preference for each series, plus all accrued and unpaid dividends, if any, to the redemption date. The redemption price for the Series B, D, E and F Shares (other than any portion thereof consisting of accrued and unpaid dividends) will be payable solely with the proceeds from the sale of equity securities by us or our operating partnership (whether or not such sale occurs concurrently with such redemption). For purposes of the preceding sentence, "equity securities" means any common shares, preferred shares, depositary shares, partnership or other interests, participations or other ownership interests (however designated) and any rights (other than debt securities convertible into or exchangeable at the option of the holder for equity securities (unless and to the extent such debt securities are subsequently converted into equity securities)) or options to purchase any of the foregoing in us or in our operating partnership.

In the event of a redemption of any series of Outstanding Preferred Shares, if the redemption date occurs after a dividend record date and on or prior to the related Dividend Payment Date, the dividend payable on such Dividend Payment Date in respect of such series of Outstanding Preferred Shares called for redemption will be payable on such Dividend Payment Date to the holders of record at the close of business on such dividend record date, and will not be payable as part of the redemption price for such series of Outstanding Preferred Shares. The redemption date will be selected by us and shall not be less than 30 days nor more than 60 days after the date that notice of redemption is sent by us. If full cumulative dividends on any series of Outstanding Preferred Shares have not been paid or declared and set apart for payment, no Outstanding Preferred Shares of such series may be redeemed unless all Outstanding Preferred Shares of such series are simultaneously redeemed and neither we nor any of our affiliates may purchase or acquire such series of Outstanding Preferred Shares otherwise than pursuant to a purchase or exchange offer made on the same terms to all holders of that series of Outstanding Preferred Shares.

If fewer than all of a series of Outstanding Preferred Shares are to be redeemed, we will select the Outstanding Preferred Shares of such series to be redeemed pro rata in proportion to the number of Outstanding Preferred Shares of such series held by holders of such series (with adjustment to avoid redemption of fractional shares) or by lot or in such other manner as our Board of Trustees may determine.

Notice of redemption with respect to the Series B, E, F and G Preferred Shares will be given by publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the City of New York, such publication to be made once a week for two consecutive weeks commencing not less than 30 nor more than 60 days prior to the redemption date. In addition, notice of redemption of any of the Outstanding Preferred Shares

must be mailed by us not less than 30 days nor more than 60 days prior to the redemption date to each holder of such series of Outstanding Preferred Shares to be redeemed by first class mail, postage prepaid at such holder's address as the same appears on our share records. Any notice which was mailed as described above will be conclusively presumed to have been duly given on the date mailed whether or not the holder receives the notice. Each notice will state: (i) the redemption date, (ii) the number of Outstanding Preferred Shares of the relevant series to be redeemed, (iii) the place or places where certificates for such Outstanding Preferred Shares are to be surrendered for cash and (iv) the redemption price payable on such redemption date, including, without limitation, a statement as to whether or not accrued and unpaid dividends will be (x) payable as part of the redemption price or (y) payable on the next Dividend Payment Date to the record holder at the close of business on the relevant record date as described above. From and after the redemption date (unless we default in the payment of our redemption obligation), dividends on the Outstanding Preferred Shares to be redeemed will cease to accrue, such shares will no longer be deemed to be Outstanding Preferred Shares and all rights of the holders thereof shall cease (except (a) the right to receive the cash payable upon such redemption without interest thereon and (b) if the redemption date occurs after a dividend record date and on or prior to the related Dividend Payment Date, the right of record holders at the close of business on such record date to receive the dividend payable on such Dividend Payment Date). The full dividend payable on such Dividend Payment Date with respect to such Outstanding Preferred Shares called for redemption will be payable on such Dividend Payment Date to the holders of record of such shares at the close of business on the corresponding dividend record date notwithstanding the prior redemption of such shares.

None of the Outstanding Preferred Shares have a stated maturity or are subject to any sinking fund or mandatory redemption provisions except as provided under "Description of Shares Restrictions on Ownership and Transfer."

Subject to applicable law and the limitation on purchases when dividends on the Outstanding Preferred Shares are in arrears, we may, at any time and from time to time, purchase any of the Series B, E, F and G Preferred Shares in the open market, by tender or by private agreement.

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The Series D Preferred Shares are not publicly traded and may only be purchased by private agreement.

Voting Rights. Holders of any series of Outstanding Preferred Shares will not have any voting rights, except as set forth below and except as otherwise required by applicable law.

If and whenever dividends on any series of Outstanding Preferred Shares or any series or class of Parity Shares shall be in arrears for six or more quarterly periods (whether or not consecutive), the number of Trustees then constituting our Board of Trustees will be increased by two (if not already increased by reason of similar types of provisions with respect to Voting Parity Shares (as defined below)) and the holders of such series of Outstanding Preferred Shares, together with any class or series of our equity securities then entitled to exercise similar voting rights (the "Voting Parity Shares"), voting as a single class regardless of series or class, will be entitled to vote for the election of the two additional Trustees at any annual meeting of shareholders or at a special meeting of the holders of such series of Outstanding Preferred Shares and of the Voting Parity Shares called, for that purpose. At any time when such right to elect Trustees separately shall have so vested, we must call such special meeting upon the written request of the holders of record of not less than 20% of the total number of such series of Outstanding Preferred Shares and shares of any series or class of Voting Parity Shares then outstanding. Such special meeting shall be held, in the case of such written request, within 90 days after the delivery of such request, provided that we will not be required to call such a special meeting if such request is received less than 120 days before the date fixed for the next ensuing annual meeting of shareholders and the holders of such series of Outstanding Preferred Shares and such other Voting Parity Shares are offered the opportunity to elect such Trustees at such annual meeting of shareholders. If, prior to the end of the term of any trustee so elected, a vacancy in the office of such trustee shall occur by reason of death, resignation, or disability, a successor will be elected to the Board of Trustees,

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upon the nomination by the remaining trustee elected by the holders of such series of Outstanding Preferred Shares and the Voting Parity Shares or the successor to the remaining trustee, to serve until the next annual meeting of shareholders or special meeting held in place of the annual meeting if such office has not previously been terminated as described below. Whenever dividends in arrears on such series of Outstanding Preferred Shares and Voting Parity Shares shall have been paid and dividends thereon for the current dividend period shall have been paid or declared and set apart for payment, then the right of the holders of such series of Outstanding Preferred Shares and Voting Parity Shares to elect such additional two Trustees shall cease and the terms of office of such Trustees shall terminate and the number of Trustees constituting our Board of Trustees shall be reduced accordingly.

The affirmative vote or consent of at least two-thirds of the votes entitled to be cast by the holders of each series of Outstanding Preferred Shares and the holders of all other classes or series of Voting Parity Shares entitled to vote on such matters, voting as a single class, will be required to (i) authorize, create, increase the authorized amount of, or issue any shares of any class of Senior Shares or any security convertible or exchangeable into shares of any class of Senior Shares or (ii) amend, alter or repeal any provision of, or add any provision to, our Declaration of Trust or bylaws, if such action would materially adversely affect the voting powers, rights or preferences of any of the holders of the Outstanding Preferred Shares; provided, however, that no such vote of the holders of each series of Outstanding Preferred Shares will be required if, at or prior to the time such amendment, alteration or repeal is to take effect or the issuance of any such Senior Shares or convertible or exchangeable security is to be made, as the case may be, provisions are made for the redemption of all of the outstanding shares of such series of Outstanding Preferred Shares. The amendment of or supplement to our Declaration of Trust to authorize, create, increase or decrease the authorized amount of or to issue Junior Shares, any series of Outstanding Preferred Shares or any shares of any class of Parity Shares will not be deemed to materially adversely affect the voting powers, rights or preferences of any of the holders of Outstanding Preferred Shares.

With respect to the exercise of the above-described voting rights, each Outstanding Preferred Share will have one vote per share, except that when any other class or series of preferred shares will have the right to vote with the Outstanding Preferred Shares as a single class, then the Outstanding Preferred Shares and such other class or series will have one quarter of one (0.25) vote per \$25.00 of liquidation preference.

Conversion. The Series D Preferred Shares are convertible into our common shares at any time by the holder after December 31, 2003 at the rate of 2.2 common shares for every one Series D Preferred Share ("Conversion Rate"). This Conversion Rate is subject to adjustment in the event that we effect a share split, subdivision of our then outstanding common shares, or distribution of common shares in the form of a dividend. In addition, in the event that we effect a distribution of securities other than common shares in the form of a dividend, then the Series D Preferred Shares shall be entitled to receive upon conversion, in addition to the number of common shares receivable upon such conversion, the amount of our other securities that they would have otherwise received had their Series D Preferred Shares been converted into common shares on the date of the distribution. The Series B, E, F and G Preferred Shares are not convertible into or exchangeable for any other property or securities.

Depositary Shares

We may, at our option, elect to offer fractional preferred shares, rather than full preferred shares. In the event such option is exercised, we will issue receipts for depositary shares, each of which will represent a fraction (to be set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to the preferred shares) of a share of that series of preferred shares. The preferred shares represented by depositary shares will be deposited under a deposit agreement between us and a bank or trust company selected by us having its principal office in the United States and having a combined capital and surplus of at least \$50,000,000.

Subject to the terms of the deposit agreement, each owner of a depositary share will be entitled, in proportion to the applicable fraction of a preferred share represented by the depositary share, to all the rights and preferences of the preferred share, represented thereby (including dividend, voting, redemption, conversion and liquidation rights). The above description of the depositary shares is only a summary, is not complete and is subject to, and is qualified in its entirety by, the description in the related prospectus supplement and the provisions of the deposit agreement, which will contain the form of depositary receipt. A copy of the deposit agreement will be filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC") as an exhibit to, or incorporated by reference in, the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part.

Restrictions on Ownership and Transfer

For us to qualify as a REIT as defined in the Internal Revenue Code, our shares generally must be beneficially 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. Also, not more than 50% of the value of the outstanding shares may be owned, directly or indirectly, by five or fewer individuals at any time during the last half of a taxable year (other than the first year for which an election to be a REIT has been made). This test is applied by "looking through" certain shareholders which are not individuals (e.g., corporations or partnerships) to determine indirect ownership of us by individuals.

Our Declaration of Trust contains certain restrictions on the number of our shares that a person may own, subject to certain exceptions. Our Declaration of Trust provides that no person may own, or be deemed to own by virtue of the attribution provisions of the Internal Revenue Code, more than 9.8% (the "Aggregate Share Ownership Limit") of the number or value of our outstanding shares. In addition, our Declaration of Trust prohibits any person from acquiring or holding, directly or indirectly, in excess of 9.8% of our total outstanding common shares, in value or in number of shares, whichever is more restrictive (the "Common Share Ownership Limit"). Our Board of Trustees, in its sole discretion, may exempt a proposed transferee from the Aggregate Share Ownership Limit and the Common Share Ownership Limit (an "Excepted Holder"). However, our Board of Trustees may not grant such an exemption to any person if such exemption would result in the Company being "closely held" within the meaning of Section 856(h) of the Internal Revenue Code or otherwise would result in our failing to qualify as a REIT. In order to be considered by our Board of Trustees as an Excepted Holder, a person also must not own, directly or indirectly, an interest in a tenant of ours (or a tenant of any entity owned or controlled by us) that would cause us to own, directly or indirectly, more than a 9.9% interest in such a tenant. The person seeking an exemption must represent to the satisfaction of our Board of Trustees that it will not violate the two aforementioned restrictions. The person also must agree that any violation or attempted violation of any of the foregoing restrictions will result in the automatic transfer of the shares causing such violation to the Share Trust (as defined below). Our Board of Trustees may require a ruling from the Internal Revenue Service or an opinion of counsel, in either case in form and substance satisfactory to our Board of Trustees, in its sole discretion, in order to determine or ensure our status as a REIT. Our Board of Trustees has exempted the foreign trust owning all of our Series D Preferred Shares from the Aggregate Share Ownership Limit and the Common Share Ownership Limit.

Our Declaration of Trust further prohibits (i) any person from beneficially or constructively owning our shares that would result in us being "closely held" under Section 856(h) of the Internal Revenue Code or otherwise cause us to fail to qualify as a REIT and (ii) any person from transferring shares if such transfer would result in our shares being owned by fewer than 100 persons. Any person who acquires or attempts or intends to acquire beneficial or constructive ownership of our shares that will or may violate any of the foregoing restrictions on transferability and ownership, or any person who would have owned our shares that resulted in a transfer of shares to the Share Trust, as defined below, is required to give notice immediately to us and provide us with such other information as we may

request in order to determine the effect of such transfer on our status as a REIT. The foregoing restrictions on transferability and ownership will not apply if our 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.

If any transfer of our shares occurs which, if effective, would result in any person beneficially or constructively owning shares in excess or in violation of the above transfer or ownership limitations (a "Prohibited Owner"), then that number of our shares, the beneficial or constructive ownership of which otherwise would cause such person to be in excess of the ownership limit (rounded to the nearest whole share) will

automatically be transferred to a trust (the "Share Trust") for the exclusive benefit of one or more charitable beneficiaries (the "Charitable Beneficiary"), and the Prohibited Owner will not acquire any rights in such shares. This automatic transfer will be deemed to be effective as of the close of business on the Business Day (as defined in our Declaration of Trust) prior to the date of such violative transfer. Shares held in the Share Trust will be issued and outstanding shares in us. The Prohibited Owner may not benefit economically from ownership of any shares held in the Share Trust, may have no rights to dividends and may not possess any other rights attributable to the shares held in the Share Trust. The trustee of the Share Trust (the "Share Trustee") will have all voting rights and rights to dividends or other distributions with respect to shares held in the Share Trust, which rights will be exercised for the exclusive benefit of the Charitable Beneficiary. Any dividend or other distribution paid prior to the discovery by us that shares have been transferred to the Share Trust will be paid by the recipient of such dividend or distribution to the Share Trustee upon demand, and any dividend or other distribution authorized but unpaid will be paid when due to the Share Trustee. Any dividend or distribution so paid to the Share Trustee will be held in the Share Trust for the Charitable Beneficiary. The Prohibited Owner will have no voting rights with respect to shares held in the Share Trust and, subject to Maryland law, effective as of the date that such shares have been transferred to the Share Trust, the Share Trustee will have the authority (at the Share Trustee's sole discretion) (i) to rescind as void any vote cast by a Prohibited Owner prior to the discovery by us that such shares have been transferred to the Share Trust and (ii) to recast such vote in accordance with the desires of the Share Trustee acting for the benefit of the Charitable Beneficiary. However, if we have already taken irreversible trust action, then the Share Trustee will not have the authority to rescind and recast such vote.

Within 20 days after receiving notice from us that shares have been transferred to the Share Trust, the Share Trustee will sell the shares held in the Share Trust to a person, designated by the Share Trustee, whose ownership of the shares will not violate the ownership limitations set forth in our Declaration of Trust. Upon such sale, the interest of the Charitable Beneficiary in the shares sold will terminate and the Share Trustee will distribute the net proceeds of the sale to the Prohibited Owner and to the Charitable Beneficiary as described below. The Prohibited Owner will receive the lesser of (i) the price paid by the Prohibited Owner for the shares or, if the Prohibited Owner did not give value for the shares in connection with the event causing the shares to be held in the Share Trust (e.g., a gift, devise or other such transaction), the Market Price (as defined in our Declaration of Trust) of such shares on the day of the event causing the shares to be received by the Share Trustee and (ii) the price per share received by the Share Trustee from the sale or other disposition of the common shares held in the Share Trust. Any net sale proceeds in excess of the amount payable to the Prohibited Owner will be paid immediately to the Charitable Beneficiary. If, prior to the discovery by us that shares of beneficial interest have been transferred to the Share Trust, such shares are sold by a Prohibited Owner, then (i) such shares will be deemed to have been sold on behalf of the Share Trust and (ii) to the extent that the Prohibited Owner received an amount for shares that exceeds the amount that such Prohibited Owner was entitled to receive as described above, such excess will be paid to the Share Trustee upon demand.

In addition, shares held in the Share Trust will be deemed to have been offered for sale to us, or our designee, at a price per share equal to the lesser of (i) the price per share in the transaction that

resulted in such transfer to the Share Trust (or, in the case of a devise or gift, the Market Price at the time of such devise or gift) and (ii) the Market Price on the date we, or our designee, accept such offer. We will have the right to accept such offer until the Share Trustee has sold the shares held in the Share Trust. Upon such a sale to us, the interest of the Charitable Beneficiary in the shares sold will terminate and the Share Trustee will distribute the net proceeds of the sale to the Prohibited Owner.

All certificates representing the common shares will bear a legend referring to the restrictions described above.

Every owner of more than 5% (or such other percentage as required by the Internal Revenue Code or the regulations promulgated thereunder) of all classes or series of our shares of beneficial interest, including the common shares, is required to give written notice to us, within 30 days after the end of each taxable year, stating the name and address of such owner, the number of shares of each class and series of shares of beneficial interest of us which the owner beneficially owns and a description of the manner in which such shares are held. Each such owner will provide to us such additional information as we may request in order to determine the effect, if any, of such beneficial ownership on our status as a REIT and to ensure compliance with the Aggregate Share Ownership Limit. In addition, each shareholder will upon demand be required to provide to us such information as we may request, in good faith, in order to determine our status as a REIT and to comply with the requirements of any taxing authority or governmental authority or to determine such compliance.

These ownership limitations could delay, defer or prevent a change in control of us or other transaction that might involve a premium over the then prevailing market price for the common shares or other attributes that the shareholders may consider to be desirable.

Classification or Reclassification of Common Shares or Preferred Shares

Our Declaration of Trust authorizes the Board of Trustees to reclassify any unissued shares of common or preferred shares into other classes or series of shares and to establish the number of shares in each class or series and to set the preferences, conversion and other rights, voting powers, restrictions, limitations and restrictions on ownership, limitations as to dividends or other distributions, qualifications and terms or conditions of redemption for each such class or series. Therefore, in addition to the Series B Preferred Shares, Series D Preferred Shares, Series E Preferred Shares, Series F Preferred Shares and Series G Preferred Shares, the Board of Trustees could authorize the issuance of other preferred shares with terms and conditions that could also have the effect of delaying, deferring or preventing a change in control of the Company or other transaction that might involve a premium over the then prevailing market price for common shares or other attributes that the shareholders may consider to be desirable.

Classification of Board, Vacancies and Removal of Trustees

The Declaration of Trust provides for a staggered Board of Trustees. At the conclusion of our annual meeting of shareholders on May 15, 2003, we had eight Trustees divided into three classes, with terms ending upon the third succeeding annual meeting. The number of Trustees in each class and the expiration of each class' term is as follows:

Class 1	2 Trustees	Expires 2005
Class 2	3 Trustees	Expires 2006
Class 3	3 Trustees	Expires 2004

At each annual meeting of shareholders, successors of the class of Trustees whose term expires at that meeting will be elected for a term ending upon the third succeeding annual meeting and the Trustees in the other two classes will continue in office. A classified board may delay, defer or prevent a change in control of the Company or other transaction that might involve a premium over the then prevailing

market price for the Common Shares or other attributes that the shareholders may consider to be desirable. In addition, a classified board could prevent shareholders who do not agree with the policies of the Board of Trustees from replacing a majority of the Board of Trustees for two years, except in the event of removal for cause.

Our bylaws provide that any vacancy on the Board of Trustees may be filled by a majority of the remaining Trustees. Any individual so elected Trustee will hold office for the unexpired term of the Trustee he or she is replacing. The Declaration of Trust provides that a Trustee may be removed at any time only for cause upon the affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the votes entitled to be cast in the election of Trustees, but only by a vote taken at a shareholder meeting. These provisions preclude shareholders from removing incumbent Trustees, except for cause and upon a substantial affirmative vote, and filling the vacancies created by such removal with their own nominees. Moreover, these provisions preclude the removal of any Trustee by written consent of shareholders.

Advance Notice of Nominations and New Business

Our bylaws provide that, with respect to an annual meeting of shareholders, nominations of persons for election to the Board of Trustees and the proposal of business to be considered by shareholders may be made only (a) pursuant to the Company's notice of the meeting, (b) by the Board of Trustees or (c) by a shareholder who is entitled to vote at the meeting and has complied with the advance notice procedures set forth in the bylaws. With respect to special meetings of shareholders, the bylaws provide that only the business specified in the Company's notice of meeting may be brought before the meeting of shareholders, and nominations of persons for election to the Board of Trustees may be made only (a) pursuant to the Company's notice of the meeting, (b) by the Board of Trustees or (c) provided that the Board of Trustees has determined that Trustees shall be elected at such meeting, by a shareholder who is entitled to vote at the meeting and has complied with the advance notice provisions set forth in the bylaws. Our bylaws allow special meetings of shareholders to be called by the chairman of the Board, the president, a majority of the Trustees or by our secretary upon the written request of the holders of shares entitled to cast not less than a majority of all votes entitled to be cast at such meeting.

Possible Antitakeover Effect of Certain Provisions of Maryland Law

The Maryland General Corporations Law ("MGCL") contains provisions that may be deemed to have an antitakeover effect. The provisions are set forth below. As noted below, these provisions do not currently apply to us, but the Board of Trustees can take action that would cause these provisions to become applicable.

Certain Business Combinations. Under the MGCL, as applicable to Maryland real estate investment trusts, certain business combinations (including certain mergers, consolidations, share exchanges and asset transfers and certain issuances and reclassifications of equity securities) between a Maryland real estate investment trust and any person who beneficially owns ten percent or more of the voting power of the trust's

shares or an affiliate of the trust who, at any time within the two-year period prior to the date in question, was the beneficial owner of ten percent or more of the voting power of the then outstanding voting shares of such trust (an "Interested Shareholder"), or an affiliate of such an Interested Shareholder, are prohibited for five years after the most recent date on which the Interested Shareholder becomes an Interested Shareholder. Thereafter, any such business combination must be recommended by the Board of Trustees of such trust and approved by the affirmative votes of at least (i) 80% of the votes entitled to be cast by holders of outstanding voting shares of the trust and (ii) two-thirds of the votes entitled to be cast by holders of voting shares of the trust other than shares held by the Interested Shareholder with whom (or with whose affiliate) the business combination is to be effected, unless, among other conditions, the trust's common shareholders receive a minimum price (as defined in the MGCL) for their shares and the consideration is received in cash or in the same

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form as previously paid by the Interested Shareholder for its shares. These provisions of Maryland law do not apply, however, to business combinations that are approved or exempted by the Board of Trustees of the trust prior to the time that the Interested Shareholder becomes an Interested Shareholder. The Board of Trustees has opted out of this statute by resolution and our bylaws contain a provision exempting from these business combination provisions any of our shares owned by any person. The Board of Trustees may, however, rescind its resolution at any time to make these provisions of Maryland law applicable to us.

Control Share Provisions. The MGCL generally provides that control shares of a Maryland real estate investment trust acquired in a control share acquisition have no voting rights unless those rights are approved by a vote of two-thirds of the disinterested shares (generally shares held by persons other than the acquiror, officers of the trust or Trustees of the trust who are employees of the trust). An acquiror is deemed to own control shares the first time that the acquiror's voting power in electing Trustees equals or exceeds 20% of all such voting power. Control shares do not include shares the acquiring person is then entitled to vote as a result of having previously obtained shareholder approval, as described below. A control share acquisition means the acquisition of control shares, subject to certain exceptions.

A person who has made or proposes to make a control share acquisition, upon satisfaction of certain conditions (including an undertaking to pay expenses), may compel the Board of Trustees to call a special meeting of shareholders to be held within 50 days of a demand for the special meeting to consider whether the control shares will have voting rights. The trust may present the question at any shareholders' meeting on its own initiative.

If voting rights are not approved at the meeting or if the acquiring person does not deliver an acquiring person statement as required by the statute, then, subject to certain conditions and limitations, the trust may redeem any or all of the control shares (except those for which voting rights have previously been approved) for fair value, determined without regard to the absence of voting rights for the control shares. Fair value will be determined as of the date of the last control share acquisition by the acquiror or of any meeting of shareholders at which the voting rights of such shares are considered and not approved. If voting rights for control shares are approved at a shareholders' meeting and the acquiror becomes entitled to vote a majority of the shares entitled to vote, all other shareholders may exercise appraisal rights. The fair value of the shares as determined for purposes of such appraisal rights may not be less than the highest price per share paid by the acquiror in the control share acquisition.

The control share provisions do not apply (a) to shares acquired in a merger, consolidation or share exchange if the trust is a party to the transaction or (b) to acquisitions approved or exempted by the declaration of trust or bylaws of the trust. The bylaws contain a provision exempting from the control share acquisition statute any and all acquisitions by any person of our shares. The Board of Trustees may, however, amend the bylaws at any time to eliminate such provision, either prospectively or retroactively.

Dissolution of the Company; Termination of REIT Status

Our Declaration of Trust permits the termination of COPT and the discontinuation of the operations of COPT by the affirmative vote of the holders of not less than two-thirds of the outstanding common shares entitled to be cast on the matter at the meeting of shareholders or by written consent. In addition, our Declaration of Trust permits the termination of COPT's qualification as a REIT if such qualification, in the opinion of the Board of Trustees, is no longer advantageous to our shareholders.

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DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS

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We may issue separately, or together with any preferred shares or common shares offered by any prospectus supplement, warrants for the purchase of other preferred shares and common shares. The warrants may be issued under warrant agreements to be entered into between us and a bank or trust company, as warrant agent, and may be represented by certificates evidencing the warrants, all as set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to the particular series of warrants. The following summaries of certain provisions of the warrants are not complete and are subject to, and are qualified in their entirety by reference to, all the provisions of any related warrant agreement and warrant certificate, respectively, which will be filed with the SEC as an exhibit to, or incorporated by reference in, the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part.

A prospectus supplement will describe the terms of the warrants in respect of which this prospectus is being delivered including, where applicable, the following:

the title of the warrants;

the aggregate number of the warrants;

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

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

the designation and terms of the securities, if any, with which the warrants are issued and the number of the warrants issued with each such offered security;

the date, if any, on and after which the warrants and related preferred shares or common shares with which the warrants are issued will be separately transferable;

the price (or manner of calculation of the price) at which each common share or preferred share may be purchased upon exercise of the warrant;

the date on which the right to exercise the warrants will commence and the date on which the right will expire;

the minimum or maximum amount of the warrants which may be exercised at any one time;

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

a discussion of certain material federal income tax considerations; and

any other terms of the warrants, including terms, procedures and limitations relating to the exchange and exercise of the warrants.

The exercise of any warrants will be subject to, and limited by, the transfer and ownership restrictions in our Declaration of Trust. See "Description of Shares Restrictions on Ownership and Transfer."

COPT was organized in 1988 and elected to be taxed as a REIT commencing with its taxable year ended December 31, 1992. COPT believes that it was organized and has operated in a manner that permits it to satisfy the requirements for taxation as a REIT under the applicable provisions of the Internal Revenue Code and intends to continue to operate in such a manner. No assurance can be given, however, that such requirements have been or will continue to be met. The following is a summary of the material federal income tax considerations that may be relevant to COPT and its shareholders, including the continued treatment of COPT as a REIT for federal income tax purposes. For purposes of this discussion of "Federal Income Tax Matters" the term "COPT" refers only to Corporate Office Properties Trust and not to any other affiliated entities.

The following discussion is based on the law existing and in effect on the date hereof, and COPT's qualification and taxation as a REIT will depend on compliance with such law and with any future amendments or modifications to such law. The qualification and taxation as a REIT will further depend upon the ability to meet, on a continuing basis through actual operating results, the various qualification tests imposed under the Internal Revenue Code discussed below. No assurance can be given that COPT will satisfy such tests on a continuing basis.

In brief, an entity that invests primarily in real estate can, if it meets the REIT provisions of the Internal Revenue Code described below, claim a tax deduction for the dividends it pays to its shareholders. Such an entity generally is not taxed on its "REIT taxable income" to the extent such income is currently distributed to shareholders, thereby substantially eliminating the "double taxation" (i.e., at both the entity and shareholder levels) that generally results from an investment in an entity which is taxed as a corporation. However, as discussed in greater detail below, such an entity remains subject to tax in certain circumstances even if it qualifies as a REIT. Further, if the entity were to fail to qualify as a REIT in any year, it would not be able to deduct any portion of the dividends it paid to its shareholders and would be subject to full federal corporate income taxation on its earnings, thereby significantly reducing or eliminating the cash available for distribution to its shareholders.

Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP has opined that, for federal income tax purposes, COPT has properly elected and otherwise qualified to be taxed as a REIT under the Internal Revenue Code for taxable years commencing on or after June 1, 1992 and that its proposed method of operations as described in this prospectus and as represented to Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP by COPT will enable COPT to continue to satisfy the requirements for such qualification and taxation as a REIT under the Internal Revenue Code for future taxable years. This opinion, however, is based upon certain factual assumptions and representations made by COPT. Moreover, such qualification and taxation as a REIT depends upon the ability of COPT to meet, for each taxable year, various tests imposed under the Internal Revenue Code as discussed below, and Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP has not reviewed in the past, and may not review in the future, COPT's compliance with these tests. Accordingly, no assurance can be given that the actual results of the operations of COPT for any particular taxable year will satisfy such requirements.

Taxation of COPT

General. In any year in which COPT qualifies as a REIT, it will not generally be subject to federal income tax on that portion of its REIT taxable income or capital gain that is distributed to shareholders. COPT will, however, be subject to tax at normal corporate rates upon any taxable income or capital gains not distributed. Shareholders are required to include their proportionate share of the REIT's undistributed long-term capital gain in income, but would receive a credit for their share of any taxes paid on such gain by the REIT.

Notwithstanding its qualification as a REIT, COPT also may be subject to taxation in certain other circumstances. If COPT should fail to satisfy either the 75% or the 95% gross income test (each as

discussed below), and nonetheless maintains its qualification as a REIT because certain other requirements are met, it will be subject to a 100% tax on the greater of the amount by which COPT fails either the 75% or the 95% gross income test (substituting for this purpose only, 90% for 95%), multiplied by a fraction intended to reflect COPT's profitability. COPT will also be subject to a tax of 100% on net income from any "prohibited transaction" (as described below), and if COPT has (i) net income from the sale or other disposition of "foreclosure property" which is held primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of business or (ii) other non-qualifying income from foreclosure property, it will be subject to tax on such income from foreclosure property at the highest corporate rate. In addition, if COPT should fail to distribute during each calendar year at least the sum of (i) 85% of its REIT ordinary income for such year, (ii) 95% of its REIT capital gain net income for such year and (iii) any undistributed taxable income from prior years, COPT would be subject to a 4% excise tax on the excess of such required distribution over the amounts actually distributed. COPT also may be subject to the corporate alternative minimum tax, as well as to tax in certain situations not presently contemplated. COPT will use the calendar year both for federal income tax purposes, as is required of a REIT under the Internal Revenue Code, and for financial reporting purposes. Finally, in the event that items of rent, interest or other deductible expenses are paid to a REIT by a "taxable REIT subsidiary" (as defined below) of such REIT, and such amounts are determined to be other than at arm's length, a REIT may be subject to a 100% tax on the portion of such amounts treated as excessive. Safe harbors exist for certain rental payments.

Failure to Qualify. If COPT fails to qualify for taxation as a REIT in any taxable year and the relief provisions do not apply, COPT will be subject to tax (including any applicable alternative minimum tax) on its taxable income at regular corporate rates. Distributions to shareholders in any year in which COPT fails to qualify as a REIT will not be deductible by COPT, nor generally will they be required to be made under the Internal Revenue Code. In such event, to the extent of current and accumulated earnings and profits, all distributions to shareholders will be taxable as ordinary income, and subject to certain limitations in the Internal Revenue Code, corporate distributees may be eligible for the dividends received deduction. Unless entitled to relief under specific statutory provisions, COPT also will be disqualified from reelecting taxation as a REIT for the four taxable years following the year during which qualification was lost.

REIT Qualification Requirements

In order to qualify as a REIT, COPT must meet the following requirements, among others:

Share Ownership Tests. COPT's shares of beneficial interest must be held by a minimum of 100 persons for at least 335 days in each taxable year (or a proportionate number of days in any short taxable year). In addition, at all times during the second half of each taxable year, no more than 50% in value of the outstanding shares of beneficial interest of COPT may be owned, directly or indirectly and taking into account the effects of certain constructive ownership rules, by five or fewer individuals, which for this purpose includes certain tax-exempt entities (the "50% Limitation"). However, for purposes of this test, any shares of beneficial interest held by a qualified domestic pension or other retirement trust will be treated as held directly by its beneficiaries in proportion to their actuarial interest in such trust rather than by such trust. In addition, for purposes of the 50% Limitation, shares of beneficial interest owned, directly or indirectly, by a corporation will be considered as being owned proportionately by its shareholders.

In order to attempt to ensure compliance with the foregoing share ownership tests, COPT's Declaration of Trust places certain restrictions on the transfer of its shares of beneficial interest to prevent additional concentration of share ownership. Moreover, to evidence compliance with these requirements, Treasury Regulations require COPT to maintain records which disclose the actual ownership of its outstanding shares of beneficial interest. In fulfilling its obligations to maintain records, COPT must and will demand written statements each year from the record holders of

designated percentages of its shares of beneficial interest disclosing the actual owners of such shares of beneficial interest (as prescribed by Treasury Regulations). A list of those persons failing or refusing to comply with such demand must be maintained as part of COPT's records. A shareholder failing or refusing to comply with COPT's written demand must submit with his tax return a similar statement disclosing the actual ownership of COPT shares of beneficial interest and certain other information.

Asset Tests. At the close of each quarter of COPT's taxable year, COPT must satisfy two tests relating to the nature of its assets (determined in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles). First, at least 75% of the value of COPT's total assets must be represented by interests in real property, interests in mortgages on real property, shares in other REITs, cash, cash items, government securities and qualified temporary investments. Second, although the remaining 25% of COPT's assets generally may be invested without restriction, securities in this class may not exceed (i) in the case of securities of any one non-government issuer, 5% of the value of COPT's total assets (the "REIT Value Test") or (ii) 10% of the outstanding voting securities or outstanding value of any one such issuer (collectively, the "Issuer Tests").

The REIT Value Test and the Issuer Tests will not, however, apply to securities held by a REIT in a "taxable REIT subsidiary." A taxable REIT subsidiary is any corporation in which the REIT owns stock and with which the REIT makes a joint election to be so treated. Any corporation in which a REIT owns, directly or indirectly, shares possessing more than 35% of the voting power or value of such corporation will automatically be treated as a taxable REIT subsidiary (other than certain corporations which are wholly-owned by the REIT and are treated as "qualified REIT subsidiaries"). Taxable REIT subsidiaries are subject to full corporate level taxation on their earnings, but are permitted to engage in certain types of real estate management activities and certain other activities which cannot currently be performed by REITs or their controlled subsidiaries without jeopardizing REIT status. On January 1, 2001, our operating partnership acquired all of the stock in Corporate Office Management, Inc. ("COMI") that was not previously owned by it, and we elected to treat COMI as a "taxable REIT subsidiary" effective January 1, 2001. Thus, COMI will remain fully taxable with respect to its earnings. The election will, however, generally allow COMI to continue its real estate management activities without jeopardizing our REIT status.

In addition, certain debt securities held by a REIT will not be taken into account for purposes of the Issuer Value Test. Finally, certain "grandfathering" rules also exempt from the Issuer Value Test securities owned by the REIT on July 12, 1999. Where COPT invests in a partnership (such as the operating partnership), it will be deemed to own a proportionate share of the partnership's assets, and the partnership interest will not constitute a security for purposes of these tests. Accordingly, COPT's investment in real properties through its interests in the operating partnership (which itself holds real properties through other partnerships) will constitute an investment in qualified assets for purposes

of the 75% asset test.

Gross Income Tests. There are two separate percentage tests relating to the sources of COPT's gross income which must be satisfied for each taxable year. For purposes of these tests, where COPT invests in a partnership, COPT will be treated as receiving its share of the income and loss of the partnership, and the gross income of the partnership will retain the same character in the hands of COPT as it has in the hands of the partnership. The two tests are described below.

The 75% Test. At least 75% of COPT's gross income for the taxable year must be "qualifying income." Qualifying income generally includes: (i) rents from real property (except as modified below); (ii) interest on obligations secured by mortgages on, or interests in, real property; (iii) gains from the sale or other disposition of interests in real property and real estate mortgages, other than gain from property held primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of COPT's trade or business ("dealer property"); (iv) dividends or other distributions on shares in other REIT, as well as gain from the sale of such shares; (v) abatements and refunds of real property taxes; (vi) income from the

operation, and gain from the sale, of property acquired at or in lieu of a foreclosure of the mortgage secured by such property ("foreclosure property"); and (vii) commitment fees received for agreeing to make loans secured by mortgages on real property or to purchase or lease real property.

Rents received from a tenant will not, however, qualify as rents from real property in satisfying the 75% gross income test (or the 95% gross income test described below) if COPT, or an owner of 10% or more of COPT, directly or constructively owns 10% or more of such tenant, unless such rents are received from a taxable REIT subsidiary provided that either (i) at least 90% of the leased property in respect of which COPT is receiving such rents is occupied by persons other than such taxable REIT subsidiary or (ii) such rents are received in respect of a "qualified lodging facility." In addition, if rent attributable to personal property leased in connection with a lease of real property is greater than 15% of the total rent received under the lease, then the portion of rent attributable to such personal property will not qualify as rents from real property. Moreover, an amount received or accrued will not qualify as rents from real property (or as interest income) for purposes of the 75% and 95% gross income tests if it is based in whole or in part on the income or profits of any person, although an amount received or accrued generally will not be excluded from "rents from real property" solely by reason of being based on a fixed percentage or percentages of receipts or sales. Finally, for rents received to qualify as rents from real property for purposes of the 75% and 95% gross income tests, COPT generally must not operate or manage the property or furnish or render services to customers, other than through an "independent contractor" from whom COPT derives no income, or through a taxable REIT subsidiary, except that the "independent contractor" or taxable REIT subsidiary requirement does not apply to the extent that the services provided by COPT are "usually or customarily rendered" in connection with the rental of space for occupancy only, and are not otherwise considered "rendered to the occupant for his convenience." In addition, COPT may directly perform a *de minimis* amount of non-customary services. COPT believes that the services provided with regard to COPT's properties by the operating partnership (or its agents) are now (and, it is believed, will in the future be) usual or customary services. Any services that cannot be provided directly by the operating partnership will be performed by independent contractors.

The 95% Test. In addition to deriving 75% of its gross income from the sources listed above, at least 95% of COPT's gross income for the taxable year must be derived from the above-described qualifying income or from dividends, interest, or gains from the sale or other disposition of stock or other securities that are not dealer property. Dividends and interest on obligations not collateralized by an interest in real property are included for purposes of the 95% test, but not for purposes of the 75% test. COPT intends to monitor closely its non-qualifying income and anticipates that non-qualifying income from its activities will not result in COPT failing to satisfy either the 75% or 95% gross income test.

For purposes of determining whether COPT complies with the 75% and the 95% gross income tests, gross income does not include income from prohibited transactions. A "prohibited transaction" is a sale of dealer property (excluding foreclosure property); however, a sale of property will not be a prohibited transaction if such property is held for at least four years and certain other requirements (relating to the number of properties sold in a year, their tax bases and the cost of improvements made thereto) are satisfied.

Even if COPT fails to satisfy one or both of the 75% and 95% gross income tests for any taxable year, it may still qualify as a REIT for such year if it is entitled to relief under certain provisions of the Internal Revenue Code. These relief provisions will generally be available if: (i) COPT's failure to comply is due to reasonable cause and not to willful neglect; (ii) COPT reports the nature and amount of each item of its income included in the tests on a schedule attached to its tax return; and (iii) any incorrect information on this schedule is not due to fraud with intent to evade tax. If these relief provisions apply, however, COPT will nonetheless be subject to a 100% tax on the greater of the

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amount by which it fails either the 75% or 95% gross income test (substituting for this purpose only 90% for 95%), multiplied by a fraction intended to reflect COPT's profitability.

Compliance with Income Tests. COPT intends to continue to monitor its operations and investments so as to continue to satisfy the 75% and 95% gross income tests. While the operating partnership or its affiliates provide certain services with respect to the properties in which COPT owns interests and possibly with respect to any newly acquired properties, COPT believes that for purposes of the 75% and 95% gross income tests the services provided at such properties and any other services and amenities provided by the operating partnership or its agents with respect to such properties will be of the type usually or customarily rendered in connection with the rental of space for occupancy only and not rendered to the occupants of such properties. COPT intends that services that cannot be provided directly by the operating partnership or other agents will be performed by independent contractors.

Annual Distribution Requirements. In order to qualify as a REIT, COPT is required to distribute dividends to its shareholders each year in an amount at least equal to (A) the sum of (i) 90% of COPT's REIT taxable income (computed without regard to the dividends received deduction and COPT's net capital gain) and (ii) 90% of the net income (after tax), if any, for foreclosure property, minus (B) the sum of certain items of non-cash income. Such distributions must be paid in the taxable year to which they relate, or in the following taxable year if declared before COPT timely files its tax return for the prior year and if paid on or before the first regular dividend payment after the declaration.

COPT intends to make timely distributions sufficient to satisfy the annual distribution requirements. In this regard, the operating partnership agreement authorizes COPT in its capacity as General Partner to take such steps as may be necessary to cause the operating partnership to distribute to its partners an amount sufficient to permit COPT to meet the distribution requirements. It is possible that COPT may not have sufficient cash or other liquid assets to meet the above-described distribution requirement, either due to timing differences between the actual receipt of income and actual payment of expenses on the one hand, and the inclusion of such income and deduction of such expenses in computing COPT's REIT taxable income on the other hand, or for other reasons. COPT will monitor closely the relationship between its REIT taxable income and cash flow and, if necessary, intends to borrow funds (or cause the operating partnership or other affiliates to borrow funds) in order to satisfy the distribution requirement. However, there can be no assurance that such borrowing would be available at such time.

If COPT fails to meet the above-described distribution requirement as a result of an adjustment to COPT's tax return by the Service, COPT may retroactively cure the failure by paying a "deficiency dividend" (plus applicable penalties and interest) within a specified period.

Taxation of Shareholders

Taxation of Taxable Domestic Shareholders. As long as COPT qualifies as a REIT, distributions made to its taxable domestic shareholders out of current or accumulated earnings and profits (and not designated as capital gain dividends) will constitute dividends taxable as ordinary income, and corporate shareholders will not be eligible for the dividends received deduction as to such amounts. Distributions that are designated as capital gain dividends will be taxed as gain from the sale or exchange of a capital asset (to the extent they do not exceed COPT's actual net capital gain for the taxable year) without regard to the period for which the shareholder has held its shares. In the event COPT designates any portion of a dividend as a capital gain dividend, a shareholder's share of such capital gain dividend would be an amount which bears the same ratio to the total amount of dividends paid to such shareholder for the taxable year as the total amount of capital gain dividends bears to the total amount of all dividends paid on all classes of shares for the taxable year. However, corporate shareholders may

be required to treat up to 20% of certain capital gain dividends as ordinary income. COPT may elect to retain and pay income tax on any net long-term capital gain, in which case its domestic shareholders would include in their income as long-term capital gain their proportionate share of such undistributed net long-term capital gain. A domestic shareholder would also receive a refundable tax credit for such shareholder's proportionate share of the tax paid by COPT on such retained capital gains and an increase in its basis in its shares in an amount equal to the difference between the undistributed long-term capital gains and the amount of tax paid by COPT. See the section below entitled "Capital Gains and Losses."

Distributions in excess of current and accumulated earnings and profits will not be taxable to a shareholder to the extent that they do not exceed the adjusted basis of the shareholder's shares of beneficial interest, but rather will reduce the adjusted basis of such shares. To the extent that such distributions exceed the adjusted basis of a shareholder's shares of beneficial interest, they will be included in income as short-term or long-term capital gain (depending on the length of time the shares have been held), assuming the shares are capital assets in the hands of the shareholder. In addition, any dividend declared by COPT in October, November or December of any year and payable to a shareholder of record on a specific date in any such month shall be treated as both paid by COPT and received by the shareholder on December 31 of such year, provided that the dividend is actually paid by COPT during January of the following calendar year.

Domestic shareholders may not include in their individual income tax returns any of COPT's net operating losses or capital losses. Instead, such losses would be carried over by COPT for potential offset against future income (subject to certain limitations). Distributions made by COPT and gain arising from the sale or exchange of shares will not be treated as passive activity income, and, as a result, shareholders generally will not be able to apply any "passive losses" against such income and gain. In addition, taxable distributions from COPT generally will be treated as investment income. Capital gain dividends (including distributions treated as such) and capital gain from the disposition of shares, however, will be treated as investment income only if a shareholder so elects, in which case such capital gain will be taxed at ordinary income rates. COPT will notify shareholders after the close of its taxable year as to the portions of distributions attributable to that year that constitute ordinary income, return of capital and capital gain.

In general, a domestic shareholder will realize capital gain or loss on the disposition of COPT's shares of beneficial interest equal to the difference between (i) the amount of cash and the fair market value of any property received on such disposition, and (ii) the shareholder's adjusted basis of such shares of beneficial interest. Such gain or loss generally will constitute short-term capital gain or loss if the shareholder has not held such shares for more than one year and long-term capital gain or loss if the shareholder has held such shares for more than one year. See the section below entitled "Capital Gains and Losses." Loss upon a sale or exchange of COPT's shares of beneficial interest by a shareholder who has held such shares for six months or less (after applying certain holding period rules) will be treated as a long-term capital loss to the extent of distributions from COPT required to be treated by such shareholder as long-term capital gain.

Capital Gains and Losses. The maximum marginal individual income tax rate is 35%. The maximum tax rate on net capital gains applicable to individuals, trusts and estates from the sale or exchange of capital assets held for more than one year is 15%. For individuals, trusts and estates that would be subject to a maximum tax rate of 10%, the rate on net capital gains is reduced to 5%. Accordingly, the tax rate differential between capital gain and ordinary income for noncorporate taxpayers may be significant. In addition, the characterization of income as capital or ordinary may affect the deductibility of capital losses. Capital losses not offset by capital gains may be deducted against a noncorporate taxpayer's ordinary income only up to a maximum annual amount of \$3,000. Unused capital losses may be carried forward. All net capital gain of a corporate taxpayer is subject to

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tax 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.

Backup Withholding. COPT will report to its domestic shareholders and the IRS the amount of dividends paid during each calendar year and the amount of tax withheld, if any, with respect thereto. Under the backup withholding rules, a shareholder may be subject to backup withholding at the rate of 28% with respect to dividends paid unless such holder (i) is a corporation or comes within certain other exempt categories and, when required, demonstrates this fact or (ii) provides a taxpayer identification number, certifies as to no loss of exemption and otherwise complies with the applicable requirements of the backup withholdings rules. Any amount paid as backup withholding will be creditable against the shareholder's income tax liability.

In addition, COPT may be required to withhold a portion of capital gain distributions made to shareholders that fail to certify their non-foreign status to COPT. See section below entitled "Taxation of Foreign Shareholders."

Taxation of Tax-Exempt Shareholders. The IRS has ruled that amounts distributed as dividends by a REIT generally do not constitute unrelated business taxable income ("UBTI") when received by a tax-exempt entity. Based on that ruling, dividend income from COPT's shares of beneficial interest will not be UBTI to a tax-exempt shareholder, provided that the tax-exempt shareholder has not held its shares as "debt financed property" within the meaning of the Internal Revenue Code and such shares are not otherwise used in a trade or business. Similarly, income from the sale of COPT's shares of beneficial interest will not constitute UBTI unless such tax-exempt shareholder has held such shares as "debt financed property" within the meaning of the Internal Revenue Code or has used the shares in a trade or business.

Notwithstanding the above, however, a portion of the dividends paid by a "pension held REIT" will be treated as UBTI as to any trust which is described in Section 401(a) of the Internal Revenue Code, is tax-exempt under Section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code (a "qualified trust") and which holds more than 10% (by value) of the interests in the REIT. A REIT is a "pension held REIT" if (i) it would not have qualified as a REIT but for the application of a "look-through" exception to the 50% Limitation applicable to qualified trusts, and (ii) either (1) at least one such qualified trust holds more than 25% (by value) of the interests in the REIT, or (2) one or more such qualified trusts, each of which owns more than 10% (by value) of the interests in the REIT, hold in the aggregate more than 50% (by value) of the interests in the REIT. The percentage of any REIT dividend treated as UBTI is equal to the ratio of (i) the gross income (less direct expenses related thereto) of the REIT from unrelated trades or businesses (determined as if the REIT were a qualified trust) to (ii) the total gross income (less direct expenses related thereto) of the REIT. A *de minimis* exception applies where this percentage is less than 5% for any year. The provisions requiring qualified trusts to treat a portion of REIT distributions as UBTI will not apply if the REIT is able to satisfy the 50% Limitation without relying

upon the "look-through" exception with respect to qualified trusts. As a result of certain limitations on transfer and ownership of COPT's shares of beneficial interest contained in the Charter, COPT does not expect to be classified as a "pension held REIT."

Taxation of Foreign Shareholders. The rules governing the United States federal income taxation of the ownership and disposition of COPT's shares of beneficial interest by persons that are, for purposes of such taxation, nonresident alien individuals, foreign corporations, foreign partnerships and other foreign shareholders (collectively, "Non-U.S. Shareholders") are complex and no attempt will be made herein to provide more than a summary of such rules.

PROSPECTIVE NON-U.S. SHAREHOLDERS SHOULD CONSULT WITH THEIR OWN TAX ADVISORS TO DETERMINE THE IMPACT OF FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL INCOME TAX LAWS WITH REGARD TO AN INVESTMENT IN COPT'S SHARES OF BENEFICIAL

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INTEREST, INCLUDING ANY REPORTING REQUIREMENTS, AS WELL AS THE TAX TREATMENT OF SUCH AN INVESTMENT UNDER THEIR HOME COUNTRY LAWS.

In general, Non-U.S. Shareholders will be subject to regular United States federal income taxation with respect to their investment in COPT's shares of beneficial interest in the same manner as a U.S. shareholder (i.e., at graduated rates on a net basis, after allowance of deductions) if such investment is "effectively connected" with the conduct by such Non-U.S. Shareholder of a trade or business in the United States. A Non-U.S. Shareholder that is a corporation and that receives income with respect to its investment in COPT's shares of beneficial interest that is (or is treated as) "effectively connected" with the conduct of a trade or business in the United States may also be subject to the 30% branch profits tax imposed under Section 884 of the Internal Revenue Code, which is payable in addition to the regular United States corporate income tax. The following discussion addresses only the federal income taxation of Non-U.S. Shareholders whose investment in COPT's shares of beneficial interest is not "effectively connected" with the conduct of a trade or business in the United States. Prospective investors whose investment in COPT's shares of beneficial interest may be "effectively connected" with the conduct of a United States trade or business should consult their own tax advisors as to the tax consequences thereof.

Distributions that are not attributable to gain from sales or exchanges of United States real property interests and that are not designated by COPT as capital gains dividends will be treated as dividends of ordinary income to the extent that they are made out of COPT's current or accumulated earnings and profits. Such distributions ordinarily will be subject to a withholding tax equal to 30% of the gross amount of the distribution unless an applicable tax treaty reduces or eliminates that tax. Dividends paid to an address in a country outside the United States will not be presumed to be paid to a resident of such country for purposes of determining the applicability of withholding discussed above and the availability of a reduced tax treaty rate. A Non-U.S. Shareholder who wishes to claim the benefit of an applicable treaty rate will now be required to satisfy certain certification and other requirements. Distributions that COPT makes in excess of its current and accumulated earnings and profits will not be taxable to a Non-U.S. Shareholder to the extent they do not exceed the adjusted basis of such Non-U.S. Shareholder's shares, but rather will reduce the adjusted basis of such shares (but not below zero). To the extent that such distributions exceed the adjusted basis of a Non-U.S. Shareholder's shares, they will give rise to tax liability if such Non-U.S. Shareholder would otherwise be subject to tax on any gain from the sale or disposition of shares, as described below.

For withholding tax purposes, COPT is currently required to treat all distributions as if made out of its current or accumulated earnings and profits and thus intends to withhold at the rate of 30% (or a reduced treaty rate if applicable) on the amount of any distribution (other than distributions designated as capital gain dividends) made to a Non-U.S. Shareholder. COPT would not be required to withhold at the 30% rate on distributions COPT reasonably estimates to be in excess of its current and accumulated earnings and profits. If it cannot be determined at the time a distribution is made whether such distribution will be in excess of current and accumulated earnings and profits, the distribution will be subject to withholding at the rate applicable to ordinary dividends. However, a Non-U.S. Shareholder may seek a refund of such amounts from the IRS if it is subsequently determined that such distribution was, in fact, in excess of its current or accumulated earnings and profits, and the amount withheld exceeded the Non-U.S. Shareholder's United States tax liability, if any, with respect to the distribution.

For any year in which COPT qualifies as a REIT, distributions that are attributable to gain from sales or exchanges of United States real property interests will be taxed to a Non-U.S. Shareholder under the provisions of the Foreign Investment in Real Property Tax Act of 1980 ("FIRPTA"). Under FIRPTA, these distributions are taxed to a Non-U.S. Shareholder as if such gain were effectively connected with the conduct of a United States trade or business. Non-U.S. Shareholders would thus be taxed at the normal capital gain rates applicable to domestic shareholders (subject to applicable

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alternative minimum tax and special alternative minimum tax in the case of nonresident alien individuals), without regard as to whether such distributions are designated by COPT as capital gain dividends. Also, distributions subject to FIRPTA may be subject to a 30% branch profits tax in the hands of a foreign corporate shareholder not entitled to treaty exemption. COPT is required by Treasury Regulations to withhold 35% of any distribution to a Non-U.S. Shareholder that could be designated as a capital gain dividend. This amount is creditable against the Non-U.S. Shareholder's FIRPTA tax liability.

Gain recognized by a Non-U.S. Shareholder upon a sale of COPT's shares of beneficial interest generally will not be subject to United States taxation unless such shares constitute a "United States real property interest" within the meaning of FIRPTA. COPT's shares of beneficial interest will not constitute a "United States real property interest" so long as COPT is a "domestically controlled REIT." A "domestically controlled REIT" is generally a REIT in which at all times during a specified testing period less than 50% in value of its share was held directly or indirectly by Non-U.S. Shareholders. COPT believes that it will be a "domestically controlled REIT" and therefore, the sale of COPT's shares of beneficial interest will not be subject to taxation under FIRPTA. However, because COPT's shares of beneficial interest are publicly traded, no assurance can be given that COPT will continue to be a "domestically controlled REIT." Notwithstanding the foregoing, gain from the sale or exchange of its shares not otherwise subject to FIRPTA generally will be taxable to a Non-U.S. Shareholder if the Non-U.S. Shareholder is a nonresident alien individual who is present in the United States for 183 days or more during the taxable year and has a "tax home" in the United States. In such case, the nonresident alien individual will be subject to a 30% United States withholding tax on the amount of such individual's gain.

If COPT does not qualify as or ceases to be a "domestically controlled REIT," whether gain arising from the sale or exchange by a Non-U.S. Shareholder of COPT's shares of beneficial interest would be subject to U.S. taxation under FIRPTA will depend on whether the shares are "regularly traded" (as defined in applicable Treasury Regulations) on an established securities market (such as the NYSE, on which COPT's common shares and Series B, E, F and G Preferred Shares of beneficial interest are traded) and on the size of the selling Non-U.S. Shareholder's interest in COPT. If the gain on the sale of COPT's shares of beneficial interest were to be subject to tax under FIRPTA, the Non-U.S. Shareholder would be subject to the same treatment as a domestic shareholder 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 the possible application of the 30% branch profits tax in the case of foreign corporations), and the purchaser would be required to withhold and remit to the IRS 10% of the sale price. In addition, if COPT is not a "domestically controlled REIT," distributions in excess of its current and accumulated earnings and profits would be subject to withholding at a rate of 10%.

Dividends paid in the United States with respect to COPT's shares of beneficial interest, and proceeds from the sale of COPT's shares of beneficial interest, through a United States broker (or certain brokers having significant connections with the United States) may be subject to the information reporting requirements of the Internal Revenue Code. Under the backup withholding rules, a shareholder may be subject to backup withholding at the rate of 28% unless such shareholder (i) is a corporation or comes within certain other exempt categories and, when required, demonstrates this fact, or (ii) provides a taxpayer identification number and certifies as to no loss of exemption, and otherwise complies with the applicable requirements of the backup withholding rules. Non-U.S. Shareholders are generally exempt from information reporting and backup withholding, but may be required to provide a properly completed Form W-8 or otherwise comply with applicable certification and identification procedures in order to prove their exemption. Any amount paid as backup withholding will be creditable against the Non-U.S. Shareholder's United States income tax liability.

Other Tax Considerations

Effect of Tax Status of the Operating Partnership on REIT Qualification. All of COPT's investments are through the operating partnership. COPT believes that the operating partnership is properly treated as a partnership for tax purposes (and not as an association taxable as a corporation). If, however, the operating partnership were to be treated as an association taxable as a corporation, COPT would cease to qualify as a REIT. Furthermore, in such a situation, the operating partnership would be subject to corporate income taxes and COPT would not be able to deduct its share of any losses generated by the operating partnership in computing its taxable income.

Tax Allocations with Respect to the Properties. The operating partnership was formed, in part, by way of contributions of appreciated property. When property is contributed to a partnership in exchange for an interest in the partnership, the partnership generally takes a carryover basis in that property for tax purposes equal to the adjusted basis of the contributing partner in the property, rather than a basis equal to the fair market value of the property at the time of contribution (this difference is referred to as a "Book-Tax Difference"). The partnership agreement of the operating partnership requires allocations of income, gain, loss and deduction with respect to contributed Property to be made in a manner consistent with the special rules in Section 704(c) of the Internal Revenue Code, and the regulations thereunder, which tend to eliminate the

Book-Tax Differences with respect to the contributed Properties over the depreciable lives of the contributed Properties. However, because of certain technical limitations, the special allocation rules of Section 704(c) may not always entirely eliminate the Book-Tax Difference on an annual basis or with respect to a specific taxable transaction such as a sale. Thus, the carryover basis of the contributed properties in the hands of the operating partnership could cause COPT to be allocated lower amounts of depreciation and other deductions for tax purposes than would be allocated to COPT if all properties were to have a tax basis equal to their fair market value at the time of acquisition. The foregoing principles also apply in determining its earnings and profits for purposes of determining the portion of distributions taxable as dividend income. The application of these rules over time may result in a higher portion of distributions being taxed as dividends than would have occurred had COPT purchased its interests in all properties at their agreed value.

Treasury Regulations under Section 704(c) of the Internal Revenue Code allow partnerships to use any reasonable method of accounting for Book-Tax Differences so that the contributing partner receives the tax benefits and burdens of any built-in gain or loss associated with the property. The operating partnership has determined to use the "traditional method" (which is specifically approved in the Treasury Regulations) for accounting for Book-Tax Differences with respect to the Contributed Properties.

State and Local Taxes. COPT and its shareholders may be subject to state or local taxation in various state or local jurisdictions, including those in which COPT or they transact business or reside. The state and local tax treatment of us and its shareholders may not conform to the federal income tax consequences discussed above. Consequently, prospective shareholders should consult with their own tax advisors regarding the effect of state, local and other tax laws of any investment in COPT's shares of beneficial interest.

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

Unless otherwise set forth in a prospectus supplement accompanying this prospectus, we may sell the securities offered pursuant to this prospectus to or through one or more underwriters or dealers, or we may sell the securities to investors directly or through agents. Any such underwriter, dealer or agent involved in the offer and sale of the securities will be named in the applicable prospectus supplement. We may sell securities directly to investors on our own behalf in those jurisdictions where we are authorized to do so.

Underwriters may offer and sell the securities at a fixed price or prices which may be changed, at market prices prevailing at the time of sale, at prices related to such prevailing market prices or at negotiated prices. We also may, from time to time, authorize dealers or agents to offer and sell the securities upon such terms and conditions as may be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. In connection with the sale of any of the securities, underwriters may receive compensation from us in the form of underwriting discounts or commissions and may also receive commissions from purchasers of the securities for whom they may act as agent. Underwriters may sell the securities to or through dealers, and such dealers may receive compensation in the form of discounts, concessions or commissions from the underwriters or commissions from the purchasers for whom they may act as agents.

Our common shares may also be sold in one or more of the following transactions: (a) block transactions (which may involve crosses) in which a broker-dealer may sell all or a portion of such shares as agent, but may position and resell all or a portion of the block as principal to facilitate the transaction; (b) purchases by any such broker-dealer as principal, and resale by such broker-dealer for its own account pursuant to a prospectus supplement; (c) a special offering, an exchange distribution or a secondary distribution in accordance with applicable New York Stock Exchange or other stock exchange, quotation system or over-the-counter market rules; (d) ordinary brokerage transactions and transactions in which any such broker-dealer solicits purchasers; (e) sales "at the market" to or through a market maker or into an existing trading market, on an exchange or otherwise, for such shares; and (f) sales in other ways not involving market makers or established trading markets, including direct sales to purchasers.

Any underwriting compensation paid by us to underwriters or agents in connection with the offering of the securities, and any discounts or concessions or commissions allowed by underwriters to participating dealers, will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. Dealers and agents participating in the distribution of the securities may be deemed to be underwriters, and any discounts and commissions received by them and any profit realized by them on resale of the securities may be deemed to be underwriting discounts and commissions.

Underwriters, dealers and agents may be entitled, under agreements entered into with us, to indemnification against and contribution toward certain civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended. Unless otherwise set forth in an accompanying prospectus supplement, the obligations of any underwriters to purchase any of the securities will be subject to certain conditions precedent, and the underwriters will be obligated to purchase all of such securities, if any are purchased.

Underwriters, dealers and agents may engage in transactions with, or perform services for, us and our affiliates in the ordinary course of business.

In connection with the offering of the securities hereby, certain underwriters, and selling group members and their respective affiliates may engage in transactions that stabilize, maintain or otherwise affect the market price of the applicable securities. Such transactions may include stabilization transactions effected in accordance with Rule 104 of Regulation M promulgated by the SEC pursuant to which such persons may bid for or purchase securities for the purpose of stabilizing their market

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price. The underwriters in an offering of securities may also create a "short position" for their account by selling more securities in connection with the offering than they are committed to purchase from us. In such case, the underwriters could cover all or a portion of such short position by either purchasing securities in the open market following completion of the offering of such securities or by exercising any over-allotment option granted to them by us. In addition, the managing underwriter may impose "penalty bids" under contractual arrangements with other underwriters, which means that they can reclaim from an underwriter (or any selling group member participating in the offering) for the account of the other underwriters, the selling concession with respect to securities that are distributed in the offering but subsequently purchased for the account of the underwriters in the open market. Any of the transactions described in this paragraph or comparable transactions that are described in any accompanying prospectus supplement may result in the maintenance of the price of the securities at a level above that which might otherwise prevail in the open market. None of such transactions described in this paragraph or in an accompanying prospectus supplement are required to be taken by any underwriters and, if they are undertaken, may be discontinued at any time.

Our common shares are listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol "OFC." Any new series of preferred shares or warrants will be new issues of securities with no established trading market and may or may not be listed on a national securities exchange, quotation system or over-the-counter market. Any underwriters or agents to or through which securities are sold by us may make a market in such securities, but such underwriters or agents will not be obligated to do so and any of them may discontinue any market making at any time without notice. No assurance can be given as to the liquidity of or trading market for any securities sold by us.

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EXPERTS

The financial statements incorporated in this prospectus by reference to our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2002, have been so incorporated in reliance on the report of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, independent accountants, given on the authority of said firm as experts in auditing and accounting.

LEGAL MATTERS

The validity of the securities offered hereby are being passed upon for COPT by Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP. The opinion of counsel as described under the heading "Federal Income Tax Matters" is being rendered by Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP, which opinion is subject to various assumptions and is based on current tax law. Certain legal matters may be passed upon for any of the underwriters or agents by counsel named in the applicable prospectus supplement.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We have filed a registration statement on Form S-3 with the SEC in connection with the offer and sale of the securities from time to time in the future. In addition, we file annual, quarterly, and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. You may read and copy the registration statement and any other documents filed by us at the SEC's Public Reference Room at 450 Fifth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20549. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the Public Reference Room. Our SEC filings are also available to the public at the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>. Our reference to the SEC's website is intended to be an inactive textual reference only.

This prospectus does not contain all of the information included in the registration statement. If a reference is made in this prospectus, including documents we incorporate by reference in this prospectus, to any of our contracts or other documents, the reference may not be complete and you should refer to the exhibits that are a part of or incorporated by reference in the registration statement for a copy of the contract or document.

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The SEC allows us to "incorporate by reference" into this prospectus the information we file with the SEC, which means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to those documents. Information incorporated by reference is part of this prospectus. Later information filed with the SEC will update and supersede this information.

We incorporate by reference the documents listed below and any future filings we make with the SEC under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended until this offering is completed:

Our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2002;

Our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q for the quarters ended March 31, 2003 and June 30, 2003;

Our Current Reports on Form 8-K filed on May 23, 2003, July 31, 2003 (as amended by Form 8-KA filed on July 31, 2003), August 4, 2003, August 7, 2003 and September 12, 2003;

The description of our common shares of beneficial interest set forth in our Registration Statement on Form 8-A, as filed on April 7, 1998.

You may request a copy of these filings, at no cost, by contacting Mary Ellen Fowler, Vice President, Finance and Investor Relations, Corporate Office Properties Trust, 8815 Centre Park Drive, Suite 400, Columbia, Maryland 21045, by telephone at 410-992-7324, by facsimile at 410-740-1174, or by e-mail at maryellen.fowler@copt.com, or by visiting our website, www.copt.com. The information contained on our website is not part of this prospectus supplement. Our reference to our website is intended to be an inactive textual reference only.

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