

AMERICAN TOWER CORP /MA/

Form 424B2

February 27, 2015

Table of Contents

CALCULATION OF REGISTRATION FEE

Title of Each Class of Securities to be Registered	Amount to be Registered	Maximum Offering Price Per Unit	Maximum Aggregate Offering Price	Amount of Registration Fee (1)
Common Stock, par value \$0.01 per share	25,850,000 (2)	\$97	\$2,507,450,000	\$291,365.69

(1) Calculated in accordance with Rule 457(r) under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, and relates to the Registration Statement on Form S-3 (File No. 333-188812) filed by the Registrant on May 23, 2013.

(2) Includes 2,350,000 shares of our common stock issuable upon exercise of the underwriters' over-allotment option to purchase additional shares of common stock.

Table of Contents

**Filed pursuant to 424(b)(2)
Registration No. 333-188812**

**PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT TO
PROSPECTUS DATED MAY 23, 2013**

23,500,000 Shares

**American Tower Corporation
Common Stock**

We are offering 23,500,000 shares of our common stock, par value \$0.01 per share (our Common Stock).

We have granted the underwriters the option to purchase up to an additional 2,350,000 shares of our Common Stock from us, solely to cover over-allotments, if any, at the public offering price less the underwriting discounts and commissions within 30 days from the date of this prospectus supplement. See the section of this prospectus supplement entitled Underwriting beginning on page S-30 of this prospectus supplement.

Concurrently with this offering, pursuant to a separate prospectus supplement, we are offering 12,500,000 depositary shares (the Preferred Stock Offering), each representing a 1/10th interest in a share of 5.50% Mandatory Convertible Preferred Stock, Series B, par value \$0.01 per share (the Mandatory Convertible Preferred Stock). The Preferred Stock Offering is being made by means of a separate prospectus supplement and not by means of this prospectus supplement. This prospectus supplement is not an offer to sell or a solicitation of an offer to buy any depositary shares being offered in the Preferred Stock Offering. The completion of this offering is not contingent on the completion of the Preferred Stock Offering, and the completion of the Preferred Stock Offering is not contingent on the completion of this offering. Neither this offering nor the Preferred Stock Offering is contingent on the consummation of the Proposed Verizon Transaction (as defined herein) or any additional debt financing.

We intend to use the net proceeds of this offering, together with the net proceeds of the concurrent Preferred Stock Offering, if completed, cash on hand and borrowings under our revolving credit facilities to finance the Proposed Verizon Transaction and to pay related fees and expenses. If the Proposed Verizon Transaction is not completed, we intend to use the net proceeds from this offering for general corporate purposes, which may include the financing of other pending acquisitions, such as the Proposed TIM Acquisition or the Proposed Airtel Acquisition (each as defined below), or repaying our existing indebtedness. See Use of Proceeds.

Our Common Stock is listed on the NYSE under the symbol AMT. On February 25, 2015, the last reported sale price of our Common Stock on the NYSE was \$97.85 per share.

*Investing in our Common Stock involves risks. See **Risk Factors** beginning on page S-11 and in Part I, Item 1A of our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2014.*

	Public Offering Price	Underwriting Discount and Commissions	Proceeds Before Expenses to American Tower Corporation
Per Share	\$ 97.00	\$ 2.5705	\$ 94.4295
Total	\$ 2,279,500,000	\$ 60,406,750	\$ 2,219,093,250

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission (the SEC) nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The underwriters expect to deliver the shares of Common Stock in book-entry form only through the facilities of The Depository Trust Company (DTC) for the accounts of its participants, including Clearstream Banking, *société anonyme*, and Euroclear Bank S.A./N.V., as operator of the Euroclear System, against payment on or about March 3, 2015.

Joint Book-Running Managers

Goldman, Sachs & Co.

BofA Merrill Lynch
Senior Co-Managers

Barclays

Citigroup

J.P. Morgan

Morgan Stanley

RBC Capital Markets
Co-Managers

RBS

TD Securities

BBVA

BNP PARIBAS

Credit Agricole CIB

EA Markets

HSBC

Macquarie Capital

Mizuho Securities

Santander

Scotiabank

SMBC Nikko

SunTrust Robinson Humphrey

The date of this prospectus supplement is February 25, 2015.

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Prospectus Supplement

<u>About This Prospectus Supplement</u>	S-ii
<u>Note Regarding Forward-Looking Statements</u>	S-ii
<u>Market and Industry Data</u>	S-iii
<u>Prospectus Supplement Summary</u>	S-1
<u>Selected Historical Consolidated Financial Data</u>	S-9
<u>Risk Factors</u>	S-11
<u>Use of Proceeds</u>	S-16
<u>Capitalization</u>	S-18
<u>Price Range of Common Stock and Dividend Policy</u>	S-21
<u>Description of Common Stock</u>	S-22
<u>Material U.S. Federal Income Tax Consequences</u>	S-29
<u>Underwriting</u>	S-30
<u>Legal Matters</u>	S-36
<u>Experts</u>	S-36
<u>Where You Can Find More Information</u>	S-37

Prospectus

<u>About This Prospectus</u>	1
<u>Note Regarding Forward-Looking Statements</u>	1
<u>American Tower Corporation</u>	2
<u>Risk Factors</u>	2
<u>Use of Proceeds</u>	3
<u>Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges</u>	3
<u>Description of Securities</u>	4
<u>Description of Common Stock</u>	4
<u>Description of Preferred Stock</u>	10
<u>Description of Debt Securities</u>	11
<u>Description of Depositary Shares</u>	22
<u>Description of Warrants</u>	22
<u>Description of Purchase Contracts</u>	23
<u>Description of Units</u>	24
<u>Legal Ownership</u>	25
<u>Plan of Distribution</u>	26
<u>Federal Income Tax Considerations Related to Our Qualification and Taxation as a REIT</u>	28
<u>Certain U.S. Federal Income Tax Considerations Relevant to Holders of Our Debt Securities</u>	43
<u>U.S. Federal Income Tax Considerations Relevant to Holders of Our Stock</u>	48
<u>Validity of the Securities</u>	57
<u>Experts</u>	57
<u>Where You Can Find More Information</u>	57

Table of Contents

We are responsible for the information contained and incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. We have not, and the underwriters have not, authorized anyone to give you any other information, and we take no responsibility for any other information that others may give you. We are not making an offer to sell these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted. You should not assume that the information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus is accurate as of any date other than the date of the document containing the information.

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

This document consists of two parts. The first part is this prospectus supplement, which describes the specific terms of this offering. The second part is the accompanying prospectus, which describes more general information, some of which may not apply to this offering. You should read both this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, together with the documents incorporated by reference and the additional information described below under the heading *Where You Can Find More Information*.

If the description of the offering varies between this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, you should rely on the information in this prospectus supplement.

Any statement made in this prospectus supplement or in a document incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement will be deemed to be modified or superseded for purposes of this prospectus supplement to the extent that a statement contained in this prospectus supplement or in any other subsequently filed document that is also incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement modifies or supersedes that statement. Any statement so modified or superseded will not be deemed, except as so modified or superseded, to constitute a part of this prospectus supplement.

NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus contain or incorporate by reference statements about future events and expectations, or forward-looking statements, all of which are inherently uncertain. We have based those forward-looking statements on our current expectations and projections about future results. When we use words such as *anticipate, intend, plan, forecast, project, believe, estimate, expect, should, would, could, may* or similar expressions, we do so to identify forward-looking statements. Examples of forward-looking statements include, but are not limited to, statements we make regarding the Proposed Verizon Transaction, statements regarding the proposed closing of the Proposed Verizon Transaction, the use of net proceeds from this offering and the Preferred Stock Offering, future prospects of growth in the communications site leasing industry, the effects of consolidation among companies in our industry and among our tenants and other competitive pressures, the level of future expenditures by companies in this industry and other trends in this industry, changes in zoning, tax and other laws and regulations, our substantial leverage and debt service obligations, our ability to maintain or increase our market share, our future operating results, economic, political and other events, particularly those relating to our international operations, our ability to remain qualified for taxation as a real estate investment trust (REIT), our plans to fund our future liquidity needs, the amount and timing of any future distributions including those we are required to make as a REIT, our future financing transactions, our ability to protect our rights to the land under our towers, our future capital expenditure levels, natural disasters and similar events. These statements are based on our management's beliefs and assumptions, which in turn are based on currently available information. These assumptions could prove inaccurate. See *Risk Factors* in this prospectus supplement, in the accompanying prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference. These forward-looking statements may be found in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus generally as well as the documents incorporated by reference.

Table of Contents

You should keep in mind that any forward-looking statement we make in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus, the documents incorporated by reference or elsewhere speaks only as of the date on which we make it. New risks and uncertainties arise from time to time, and it is impossible for us to predict these events or how they may affect us. In any event, these and other important factors, including those set forth under the caption "Risk Factors" in this prospectus supplement, in the accompanying prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference, may cause actual results to differ materially from those indicated by our forward-looking statements. We do not intend to update or revise the forward-looking statements we make in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus, the documents incorporated by reference or elsewhere, except as may be required by law. In light of these risks and uncertainties, you should keep in mind that the future events or circumstances described in any forward-looking statement we make in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus, the documents incorporated by reference or elsewhere might not occur.

MARKET AND INDUSTRY DATA

This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus contain or incorporate by reference estimates regarding market data, which are based on our internal estimates, independent industry publications, reports by market research firms and/or other published independent sources. In each case, we believe these estimates are reasonable. However, market data is subject to change and cannot always be verified with complete certainty due to limits on the availability and reliability of raw data, the voluntary nature of the data gathering process and other limitations and uncertainties inherent in any statistical survey of market data. As a result, you should be aware that market data set forth in this prospectus supplement, accompanying prospectus or incorporated by reference, and estimates and beliefs based on such data, may not be reliable.

Table of Contents

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT SUMMARY

This summary may not contain all the information that may be important to you. You should read this entire prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and those documents incorporated by reference into the prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, including the risk factors and the financial statements and related notes, before making an investment decision. Unless otherwise indicated or the context otherwise requires, references to we, us, our and American Tower are references to American Tower Corporation and its predecessor, as applicable, and its consolidated subsidiaries, in each case, as the context requires.

American Tower Corporation

American Tower Corporation was created as a subsidiary of American Radio Systems Corporation in 1995 to own, manage, develop and lease communications and broadcast tower sites, and was spun off into a free-standing public company in 1998. Since inception, we have grown our communications site portfolio through acquisitions, long-term lease arrangements, development and construction, and through mergers with, and acquisitions of, other tower operators, increasing the size of our portfolio to over 75,000 communications sites.

American Tower Corporation operates as a REIT for federal income tax purposes.

American Tower Corporation is a holding company, and we conduct our operations through our directly and indirectly owned subsidiaries and our joint ventures. Our principal domestic operating subsidiaries are American Towers LLC and SpectraSite Communications, LLC. We conduct our international operations primarily through our subsidiary, American Tower International, Inc., which in turn conducts operations through its various international holding and operating subsidiaries and joint ventures. Our international operations consist primarily of our operations in Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Germany, Ghana, India, Mexico, Peru, South Africa and Uganda.

Our principal executive office is located at 116 Huntington Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts 02116. Our main telephone number at that address is (617) 375-7500.

Recent Developments

Proposed Verizon Transaction

On February 5, 2015, we entered into a Master Agreement (the *Master Agreement*) with Verizon Communications, Inc., a Delaware corporation (*Verizon*), pursuant to which we will have the exclusive right to lease, acquire or otherwise operate and manage up to 11,489 Verizon wireless communications sites (the *Sites*) for approximately \$5.056 billion in cash at closing, subject to certain conditions and limited adjustments (the *Proposed Verizon Transaction*).

Under the Master Agreement, Verizon has agreed to, through certain Verizon subsidiaries (the *Verizon Lessors*), lease or sublease approximately 11,324 Sites (the *MPL Sites*), including their interest in the land associated with each Site, the tower at such Site and certain related improvements and tower-related assets (the *Included Property* of such Site), to a newly formed subsidiary of the Company (*Tower Operator*). Tower Operator will have the option to purchase the MPL Sites (the *Purchase Options*) at the end of their respective lease or sublease terms for aggregate option payments of up to approximately \$5.0 billion, which payments, if the options are exercised, will be due between 2034 and 2047.

Table of Contents

Under the Master Agreement, Verizon has further agreed to sell to us the Included Property of approximately 165 additional Sites (the Sale Sites and, together with the MPL Sites and the Included Properties of the MPL Sites and the Sale Sites, the Verizon Assets). Our acquisition of the Sale Sites will be effected pursuant to a contribution and transfer by certain Verizon subsidiaries (the Verizon Contributors and, together with Verizon, the Verizon Parties) of the Sale Sites and the assignment of the related collocation agreements to newly formed subsidiaries of the Verizon Parties (the Sale Site Subsidiaries), and the subsequent sale and transfer of the equity interests in the Sale Site Subsidiaries to us or one of our designated affiliates.

At the closing of the Proposed Verizon Transaction, we will lease and make available collocation space at each Site to a designated Verizon collocator for such Site pursuant to the master lease agreements. The initial term of the master lease agreement as to each Site will be for a ten-year period and will be automatically extended (unless terminated at such time by the Verizon collocators) for eight additional five-year renewal terms, unless it is terminated earlier with respect to any Site pursuant to a termination right. The designated Verizon collocator will pay an initial collocation rent of \$1,900 per month for each Site, with annual rent increases of 2%. The payment of collocation rent by the designated Verizon collocator will be unconditionally and irrevocably guaranteed by Verizon.

Based on preliminary unaudited financial information for the Verizon Assets currently anticipated to be included as part of the Proposed Verizon Transaction, we estimate that, based on financial information for the year ended December 31, 2014, these Verizon Assets generated annual third-party cash site rental revenues of approximately \$97 million and incurred ground lease expense of approximately \$129 million. As of December 31, 2014, the Verizon Assets had an average of 0.4 third-party leases per tower, which were primarily from AT&T Mobility.

The preliminary financial data presented above are based solely upon information available to us as of the date of this prospectus supplement. Neither our nor Verizon's independent auditors have audited, reviewed, compiled or performed any procedures with respect to the preliminary financial information upon which we based our above estimates, or on our estimates. Accordingly, neither our nor Verizon's independent auditors express an opinion or any other form of assurance with respect thereto. Actual site rental revenues and ground lease expense are subject to change, may be materially different from the foregoing amounts and will depend on the Verizon Assets that are ultimately included as part of the Proposed Verizon Transaction and the terms of the relevant collocation agreements and ground leases then in effect. See Risk Factors Risks Related to the Proposed Verizon Transaction.

Neither this offering nor the Preferred Stock Offering is contingent on the consummation of the Proposed Verizon Transaction or any additional debt financing.

For additional and more detailed information, please see Item 1.01 of our Current Report on Form 8-K relating to the Proposed Verizon Transaction filed with the SEC on February 5, 2015, which is incorporated by reference herein. See Where You Can Find More Information.

Concurrent Preferred Stock Offering

Concurrently with this offering, we are offering, by means of a separate prospectus supplement, 12,500,000 depositary shares, each representing a 1/10th interest in a share of the Mandatory Convertible Preferred Stock (or 13,750,000 depositary shares, if the underwriters exercise their over-allotment option to purchase up to an additional 1,250,000 depositary shares in full), for cash. We estimate that the net proceeds of the concurrent Preferred Stock Offering, after reflecting the underwriting discount and estimated offering expenses, will be approximately \$1,217.6 million (or \$1,339.3 million if the underwriters exercise their over-allotment option to

Table of Contents

purchase additional depositary shares in full), although there can be no assurance that the concurrent Preferred Stock Offering will be completed. The completion of this offering is not contingent on the completion of the concurrent Preferred Stock Offering, and the completion of the concurrent Preferred Stock Offering is not contingent on the completion of this offering. This prospectus supplement is not an offer to sell or a solicitation of an offer to buy any depositary shares being offered in the Preferred Stock Offering.

Bridge Loan Commitment

In connection with entering into the Master Agreement, we obtained a \$5.05 billion bridge loan commitment to ensure financing for the Proposed Verizon Transaction. Effective February 20, 2015, the bridge loan commitment was reduced as a result of the additional \$1.75 billion in aggregate amount of incremental commitments under our existing credit facilities, as described below, to an aggregate amount of \$3.3 billion. The bridge loan commitment will be further reduced on a dollar-for-dollar basis by, among other things, the net cash proceeds of this offering, the net cash proceeds of the Preferred Stock Offering, the net cash proceeds of any debt incurrence (subject to certain customary exceptions) and the net cash proceeds of asset dispositions (subject to certain customary exceptions).

Borrowings under the bridge loan commitment, if any, will bear interest at a rate equal to, at our option, LIBOR plus an applicable margin varying from 1.125% to 2.000% per annum or a Base Rate plus an applicable margin varying from 0.125% to 1.000% per annum, depending upon the ratings of our unsecured senior indebtedness. In each case, the applicable margin will increase by 25 basis points at the end of each 90-day period while the bridge loan remains outstanding. For these purposes, LIBOR means the London interbank offered rate and Base Rate means the highest of (a) the prime rate, (b) the federal funds effective rate plus 1/2 of 1.00% per annum and (iii) LIBOR for an interest period of one month plus 1.00% per annum. Borrowings under the bridge loan commitment, if any, will mature on the date that is 364 days after the closing date (as defined in the bridge loan commitment). The bridge loan commitment will expire if we do not make any borrowings thereunder on the earliest to occur of (i) the consummation of the Proposed Verizon Transaction, (ii) the termination of the Master Agreement or the public announcement by us of the abandonment of the Proposed Verizon Transaction and (iii) August 5, 2015 (or November 3, 2015, if the Termination Date (as defined in the Master Agreement) is extended pursuant to the Master Agreement). The bridge loan commitment contains, and the credit agreement in respect of the bridge loan commitment, if any, will contain, certain customary conditions to funding. We will pay certain customary commitment fees and, in the event we make any borrowings, funding and other fees in connection with the bridge loan commitment.

Although we do not currently expect to make any borrowings under the bridge loan commitment, we may do so. In particular, we may be required to borrow under the bridge loan commitment if this offering or our other financing transactions in connection with the Proposed Verizon Transaction are not completed or generate significantly less net proceeds than contemplated by this prospectus supplement.

Amendments to Our Credit Facilities

On February 5, 2015 and February 20, 2015, we entered into amendment agreements with respect to our \$2.0 billion multi-currency senior unsecured revolving credit facility (the 2013 Credit Facility), \$1.5 billion unsecured term loan (the 2013 Term Loan) and \$1.5 billion senior unsecured revolving credit facility (the 2014 Credit Facility). After giving effect to these amendments, our permitted ratio of Total Debt to Adjusted EBITDA (as defined in the loan agreements for each of the facilities) is (i) 6.00 to 1.00 for the fiscal quarters ended December 31, 2014 through the end of the fiscal quarter ending immediately prior to the closing of the Proposed Verizon Transaction, (ii) 7.25 to 1.00 for the first and second fiscal quarters ending on or after the closing of the Proposed Verizon Transaction, (iii) 7.00 to 1.00 for the two subsequent fiscal quarters and (iii) 6.00 to 1.00 thereafter. In addition, the maximum Incremental Term Loan Commitments (as defined in the

Table of Contents

agreement governing the 2013 Term Loan) was increased to \$1.0 billion and the maximum Revolving Loan Commitments, after giving effect to any Incremental Commitments (each as defined in the loan agreements for each of the revolving credit facilities), was increased to \$3.5 billion and \$2.5 billion under the 2013 Credit Facility and the 2014 Credit Facility, respectively. Effective February 20, 2015, we received incremental commitments for an additional \$500 million under each of the 2013 Term Loan and the 2014 Credit Facility and \$750 million under the 2013 Credit Facility. As a result, as of the date of this prospectus supplement and without giving effect to the Proposed Verizon Transaction, we may borrow up to \$2.75 billion under the 2013 Credit Facility and up to \$2.0 billion under the 2014 Credit Facility, and have \$2.0 billion outstanding under the 2013 Term Loan.

Proposed TIM Acquisition

On November 21, 2014, we entered into an agreement with TIM Celular S.A., a wholly-owned subsidiary of TIM Participações S.A., a publicly traded subsidiary of Telecom Italia S.p.A., to acquire two portfolios of towers in Brazil (the Proposed TIM Acquisition). The first portfolio includes approximately 5,240 towers and the second portfolio includes approximately 1,240 towers. At signing, the total purchase price was approximately 3.0 billion Brazilian Reals (approximately \$1.1 billion), subject to customary adjustments. We expect to close the Proposed TIM Acquisition in the first half of 2015, subject to customary closing conditions. We expect to fund the Proposed TIM Acquisition through a combination of cash on hand, borrowings under credit facilities and other debt financing.

Proposed Airtel Acquisition

On November 24, 2014, we entered into an agreement with Airtel Networks Limited, through Bharti Airtel Limited's subsidiary company, Bharti Airtel International (Netherlands) BV (Airtel), to acquire over 4,800 of Airtel's communications towers in Nigeria (the Proposed Airtel Acquisition) and, together with the Proposed TIM Acquisition, the Other Proposed Acquisitions). At signing, the total purchase price was approximately \$1.1 billion, subject to adjustments. We expect to close the Proposed Airtel Acquisition in the first half of 2015, subject to customary closing conditions and regulatory approval. We expect to fund the Proposed Airtel Acquisition through a combination of cash on hand, borrowings under our credit facilities and other debt financing.

Sources and Uses

The following table outlines the sources and uses of funds for the Proposed Verizon Transaction, assuming no exercise by the underwriters of their over-allotment options with respect to this offering or the Preferred Stock Offering. The table assumes that the Proposed Verizon Transaction and the financing transactions are completed simultaneously, although this offering and the Preferred Stock Offering are expected to occur before the completion of the Proposed Verizon Transaction.

All of the amounts in the following table are estimated. The actual amounts may vary from the estimated amounts set forth in the following table. You should read the following together with the information included under Recent Developments Proposed Verizon Transaction, Use of Proceeds and Capitalization.

Sources of funds	(Dollars in millions)		Uses of funds
Cash on hand	\$ 75	Proposed Verizon Transaction consideration	\$ 5,056
Preferred Stock Offering, before discounts, commissions and expenses (1)	1,250	Proposed Verizon Transaction fees and expenses (4)	91
Common Stock offered hereby, before discounts, commissions and expenses (2)	2,280		
Borrowings under our revolving credit facilities, before financing fees and expenses (3)	1,542		
Total sources of funds	\$ 5,147	Total uses of funds	\$ 5,147

Table of Contents

- (1) Concurrently with this offering, we are offering, by means of a separate prospectus supplement, 12,500,000 depositary shares, each representing a 1/10th interest in a share of the Mandatory Convertible Preferred Stock (or 13,750,000 depositary shares, if the underwriters exercise their over-allotment option to purchase up to an additional 1,250,000 depositary shares in full), for cash. The gross proceeds from the Preferred Stock Offering have been calculated by using the public offering price of \$100.00 per depositary share, and assuming no exercise by the underwriters of their over-allotment option to purchase additional depositary shares.
- (2) The gross proceeds from this offering have been calculated by using the public offering price of \$97.00 per share of our Common Stock, and assuming no exercise by the underwriters of their over-allotment option to purchase additional shares.
- (3) We expect to borrow \$702 million under the 2013 Credit Facility and \$840 million under the 2014 Credit Facility.
- (4) Includes estimated fees and expenses related to the Proposed Verizon Transaction and the financing of the Proposed Verizon Transaction, including underwriting discounts and commissions, legal, accounting and advisory fees, financing fees and other transaction costs.

Completion of this offering is not contingent upon completion of the Preferred Stock Offering or the completion of the Proposed Verizon Transaction. Accordingly, even if the Proposed Verizon Transaction or the Preferred Stock Offering is not completed, the shares of Common Stock sold in this offering will remain outstanding. If the Proposed Verizon Transaction is not completed, we intend to use the net proceeds from this offering for general corporate purposes, which may include the financing of other pending acquisitions, such as the Other Proposed Acquisitions, or repaying existing indebtedness. We may not complete the Proposed Verizon Transaction or the Preferred Stock Offering on the terms contemplated or at all. See Risk Factors Risks Related to the Proposed Verizon Transaction.

After the closing of the Proposed Verizon Transaction, if completed, we may also replenish our cash or repay any revolving credit or bridge loan borrowings made in connection with the Proposed Verizon Transaction with the proceeds of additional financings, which may include offering of debt securities in one or more series.

Table of Contents

THE OFFERING

For purposes of this summary, the references to American Tower, we, us or our refer only to American Tower Corporation (and not to any of its affiliates, including its subsidiaries).

Issuer	American Tower Corporation, a Delaware corporation.
Common Stock Offered	23,500,000 shares.
Common Stock to be Outstanding After this Offering	420,208,636 shares.
Underwriters Option	We have granted the underwriters a 30-day option to purchase up to 2,350,000 additional shares of Common Stock, solely to cover over-allotments, if any, at the public offering price, less the underwriting discounts and commissions.
Use of Proceeds	<p>We estimate that the net proceeds to us from this offering, after reflecting the underwriting discounts and commissions and estimated offering expenses, will be approximately \$2,219.7 million (or approximately \$2,441.6 million if the underwriters exercise their over-allotment option to purchase additional shares of Common Stock in full).</p> <p>We expect to use the net proceeds of this offering, together with the net proceeds of the Preferred Stock Offering, if completed, cash on hand and borrowings under our revolving credit facilities to finance the Proposed Verizon Transaction and to pay related fees and expenses. If the Proposed Verizon Transaction is not completed, we intend to use the net proceeds from this offering for general corporate purposes, which may include the financing of other pending acquisitions, such as the Other Proposed Acquisitions, or repaying existing indebtedness. See Use of Proceeds and Capitalization.</p>
Concurrent Preferred Stock Offering	Concurrently with this offering, we are offering, by means of a separate prospectus supplement, 12,500,000 depositary shares, each representing a 1/10th interest in a share of 5.50% Mandatory Convertible Preferred Stock, Series B (or 13,750,000 depositary shares, if the underwriters exercise their over-allotment option to purchase up to an additional 1,250,000 depositary shares in full) for cash, in connection with the financing of the Proposed Verizon Transaction. The completion of this offering is not contingent on the completion of the Preferred Stock Offering, and the completion of the Preferred Stock Offering is not contingent on the completion of this offering. Neither this offering nor the Preferred Stock Offering is contingent on the consummation of the Proposed Verizon Transaction or any additional debt financing.
Listing	Our Common Stock is listed on the NYSE under the symbol AMT.

Table of Contents

Restrictions on Ownership and Transfer of Common Stock

Our Restated Certificate of Incorporation (Certificate of Incorporation) contains restrictions on the ownership and transfer of our Common Stock, and preferred stock (including the Mandatory Convertible Preferred Stock represented by the depositary shares offered in the Preferred Stock Offering) intended to assist us in complying with FCC Regulatory Limitations (as defined under Description of Common Stock Restrictions on Ownership and Transfer Federal Communications Laws Restrictions) and maintaining our status as a REIT for federal income tax purposes. For example, our Certificate of Incorporation prohibits any person from acquiring actual or constructive ownership of 9.8% or more (in value or number of shares) of our outstanding stock, subject to certain limited exceptions.

As a result, holders will be restricted from owning our Common Stock in excess of the Stock Ownership Limit (as defined in our Certificate of Incorporation), or violating any of the other restrictions on ownership and transfer, contained in our Certificate of Incorporation. In the event any transfer of shares of Common Stock or other event would result in a holder beneficially owning shares of Common Stock in excess of the Stock Ownership Limit or would result in the Company's disqualification as a REIT, that number of shares that would cause a violation of the applicable limit may be (i) redeemed or (ii) automatically transferred to a trust for the benefit of a charitable organization selected by our board of directors. See Description of Common Stock Restrictions on Ownership and Transfer Federal Communications Laws Restrictions.

Transfer Agent and Registrar

Computershare Inc. is the transfer agent and registrar for our Common Stock.

Federal Income Tax Considerations

The federal income tax consequences of purchasing, owning and disposing of our Common Stock are described in Material U.S. Federal Income Tax Consequences included in this prospectus supplement and U.S. Federal Income Tax Considerations Relevant to Holders of Our Stock in the accompanying prospectus.

Risk Factors

Before making an investment in our Common Stock, you should carefully consider all of the information in this prospectus supplement, in the accompanying prospectus or incorporated by reference herein or therein, including the discussions under Risk Factors beginning on page S-11 and in Part I, Item 1A of our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2014, which is incorporated by reference herein.

Immediately after the consummation of this offering, we will have 420,208,636 shares of our Common Stock issued and outstanding. The number of shares of our Common Stock to be outstanding immediately after this offering is based on 396,708,636 shares of our Common Stock outstanding as of February 13, 2015, plus the 23,500,000 shares of Common Stock that we are offering hereby, but excludes:

2,350,000 shares of our Common Stock issuable on the exercise of the underwriters' over-allotment option to purchase additional shares of our Common Stock in this offering;

Table of Contents

up to 11,812,762 shares of our Common Stock (including up to 1,073,887 shares of our Common Stock if the underwriters in the Preferred Stock Offering exercise their over-allotment option to purchase additional depositary shares in full), assuming all dividends are paid in cash and mandatory conversion based on an applicable market value of our Common Stock equal to the threshold appreciation price of \$116.40, and subject to anti-dilution, make-whole and other adjustments, that would be issuable upon conversion of the Mandatory Convertible Preferred Stock represented by the depositary shares issued in the Preferred Stock Offering;

up to 5,504,400 shares of our Common Stock, assuming all dividends are paid in cash and mandatory conversion based on an applicable market value of our Common Stock equal to the threshold appreciation price of \$109.00, and subject to anti-dilution, make-whole and other adjustments, that would be issuable upon conversion of the 5.25% Mandatory Convertible Preferred Stock, Series A (the Series A Preferred Stock); and

an aggregate of 17,630,797 shares of our Common Stock reserved for issuance under our various stock compensation plans. Unless otherwise specified or the context requires otherwise, information in this prospectus supplement assumes that the over-allotment option we have granted to the underwriters in this offering to purchase additional shares of our Common Stock is not exercised.

Table of Contents**SELECTED HISTORICAL CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL DATA**

The selected historical consolidated financial data for the fiscal years ended December 31, 2014, 2013 and 2012 and as of December 31, 2014 and 2013 is derived from historical audited consolidated financial information included in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2014, which is incorporated herein by reference. The selected historical consolidated financial data for the fiscal years ended December 31, 2011 and 2010 and as of December 31, 2012, 2011 and 2010 is derived from historical financial information not included or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement.

You should read the selected historical consolidated financial data in conjunction with our Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations, our consolidated financial statements and related notes, which are incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement, and the information set forth under the heading Risk Factors beginning on page S-11 and in Part I, Item 1A of our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2014, which is incorporated by reference herein. Year-to-year comparisons are significantly affected by our acquisitions, dispositions and construction of towers.

	2010	2011	Year Ended December 31,		2014
			2012	2013	
			(In thousands)		
Statements of Operations Data:					
Revenues:					
Rental and management	\$ 1,936,373	\$ 2,386,185	\$ 2,803,490	\$ 3,287,090	\$ 4,006,854
Network development services	48,962	57,347	72,470	74,317	93,194
Total operating revenues	1,985,335	2,443,532	2,875,960	3,361,407	4,100,048
Operating expenses:					
Cost of operations (exclusive of items shown separately below)					
Rental and management (1)	447,629	590,272	686,681	828,742	1,056,177
Network development services (2)	26,957	30,684	35,798	31,131	38,088
Depreciation, amortization and accretion	460,726	555,517	644,276	800,145	1,003,802
Selling, general, administrative and development expense (3)	229,769	288,824	327,301	415,545	446,542
Other operating expenses	35,876	58,103	62,185	71,539	68,517
Total operating expenses	1,200,957	1,523,400	1,756,241	2,147,102	2,613,126
Operating income	784,378	920,132	1,119,719	1,214,305	1,486,922
Interest income, TV Azteca, net	14,212	14,214	14,258	22,235	10,547
Interest income	5,024	7,378	7,680	9,706	14,002
Interest expense	(246,018)	(311,854)	(401,665)	(458,296)	(580,234)
Loss on retirement of long-term obligations	(1,886)		(398)	(38,701)	(3,473)
Other income (expense) (4)	315	(122,975)	(38,300)	(207,500)	(62,060)
Income from continuing operations before income taxes and income on equity method investments	556,025	506,895	701,294	541,749	865,704
Income tax provision	(182,489)	(125,080)	(107,304)	(59,541)	(62,505)
Income on equity method investments	40	25	35		
Income from continuing operations	373,576	381,840	594,025	482,208	803,199
Income from discontinued operations, net	30				
Net income	373,606	381,840	594,025	482,208	803,199
Net (income) loss attributable to noncontrolling interest	(670)	14,622	43,258	69,125	21,711
Net income attributable to American Tower Corporation stockholders	372,936	396,462	637,283	551,333	824,910
Dividends declared on preferred stock					(23,888)

Net income attributable to American Tower Corporation common stockholders	\$ 372,936	\$ 396,462	\$ 637,283	\$ 551,333	\$ 801,022
---	------------	------------	------------	------------	------------

S-9

Table of Contents

	Year Ended December 31,				
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
	(In thousands)				
Other Data:					
Capital expenditures	\$ 346,664	\$ 523,015	\$ 568,048	\$ 724,532	\$ 974,404
Cash provided by operating activities	1,020,977	1,165,942	1,414,391	1,599,047	2,134,589
Cash used for investing activities	(1,300,902)	(2,790,812)	(2,558,385)	(5,173,337)	(1,949,548)
Cash provided by (used in) financing activities	910,330	1,086,095	1,170,366	3,525,565	(134,591)
Sites owned and operated at end of period	35,074	45,478	54,604	67,418	75,594

	As of December 31,				
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
	(In thousands)				
Balance Sheet Data (5):					
Cash and cash equivalents (including restricted cash) (6)	\$ 959,935	\$ 372,406	\$ 437,934	\$ 446,492	\$ 473,698
Property and equipment, net	3,683,474	4,981,722	5,765,856	7,177,728	7,626,817
Total assets	10,370,084	12,242,395	14,089,429	20,283,665	21,331,545
Long-term obligation, including current portion	5,587,388	7,236,308	8,753,376	14,478,278	14,608,708
Total American Tower Corporation equity	3,501,444	3,287,220	3,573,101	3,534,165	3,953,560

- (1) For the year ended December 31, 2010, there was no stock-based compensation expense included. For the years ended December 31, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014, amount includes approximately \$1.1 million, \$0.8 million, \$1.0 million and \$1.4 million, respectively, of stock-based compensation expense.
- (2) For the year ended December 31, 2010, there was no stock-based compensation expense included. For the years ended December 31, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014, amount includes approximately \$1.2 million, \$1.0 million, \$0.6 million and \$0.4 million, respectively, of stock-based compensation expense.
- (3) For the years ended December 31, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014, amount includes approximately \$52.6 million, \$45.1 million, \$50.2 million, \$66.6 million and \$78.3 million, respectively, of stock-based compensation expense.
- (4) For the years ended December 31, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014, amount includes unrealized foreign currency gains (losses) of approximately \$4.8 million, \$(131.1) million, \$(34.3) million, \$(211.7) million and \$(49.3) million, respectively.
- (5) Balances have been revised to reflect purchase accounting measurement period adjustments.
- (6) As of December 31, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014, amount includes approximately \$76.0 million, \$42.2 million, \$69.3 million, \$152.9 million and \$160.2 million, respectively, of restricted funds pledged as collateral to secure obligations and cash, the use of which is otherwise limited by contractual provisions.

Table of Contents

RISK FACTORS

You should carefully consider the following risk factors, in addition to the other information presented and incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, in evaluating us, our business and an investment in our Common Stock. A description of the risks related to our business is included in the Risk Factors section in Part I, Item 1A of our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2014, which is incorporated by reference herein. The risks and uncertainties described below and incorporated by reference are not the only ones we face. Additional risks and uncertainties that we do not currently know about, or that we currently believe are immaterial, may also adversely impact our business. Events relating to any of the following risks as well as other risks and uncertainties could seriously harm our business, financial condition and results of operations. In such a case, the trading value of our Common Stock could decline, which in turn could cause you to lose all or part of your investment.

Risks related to this offering

The price of our Common Stock may be volatile.

The market price of our Common Stock following this offering may fluctuate significantly from time to time and may be influenced by many factors, some of which are beyond our control, including those described in this Risk Factors section and the following:

the factors described above under the heading Note Regarding Forward-Looking Statements ;

the risk factors described in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2014;

successful completion of the Proposed Verizon Transaction and our ability to achieve the anticipated benefits of the Proposed Verizon Transaction;

actual or anticipated fluctuations in our operating results or our competitors' operating results;

our growth rate and our competitors' growth rates;

the financial market and general economic conditions;

the creditworthiness of our tenants;

changes in stock market analyst recommendations regarding us, our competitors or the tower industry generally, or lack of analyst coverage of our Common Stock;

sales of our Common Stock by our executive officers, directors and significant stockholders or sales of substantial amounts of our Common Stock;

payment of dividends on the Series A Preferred Stock or the Mandatory Convertible Preferred Stock by delivery of shares of our Common Stock;

Edgar Filing: AMERICAN TOWER CORP /MA/ - Form 424B2

announcements by us or our competitors of new products, capacity changes, significant contracts, acquisitions or strategic investments;

changes in accounting principles; and

changes in tax laws and regulations.

Broad market and industry factors may adversely affect the market price of our Common Stock, regardless of our actual operating performance. As a result, our Common Stock may trade at prices significantly below the price at which you purchased them. In addition, security holders often institute class action litigation following periods of volatility in the price of a company's securities. If the market value of our Common Stock experiences adverse fluctuations and we become a party to this type of litigation, regardless of the outcome, we could incur substantial legal costs and our management's attention could be diverted from the operation of our business, causing our business to decline.

S-11

Table of Contents

Sales of substantial amounts of our Common Stock in the public market, or the perception that these sales may occur, could cause the market price of our Common Stock to decline.

Sales of substantial amounts of our Common Stock in the public market, or the perception that these sales may occur, or the conversion of the Series A Preferred Stock or the Mandatory Convertible Preferred Stock or the payment of dividends on the Series A Preferred Stock or the Mandatory Convertible Preferred Stock in the form of shares of our Common Stock, or the perception that such conversions or dividends could occur, could cause the market price of our Common Stock to decline. This could also impair our ability to raise additional capital through the sale of our equity securities.

In connection with the Proposed Verizon Transaction, we are concurrently offering 12,500,000 depositary shares, each representing a 1/10th interest in a share of the Mandatory Convertible Preferred Stock. Each share of the Mandatory Convertible Preferred Stock, unless previously converted, will automatically convert on February 15, 2018 into a number of shares of our Common Stock based on the applicable market value of our Common Stock.

We may issue additional Common Stock in the future in connection with capital raisings, acquisitions, strategic transactions or for other purposes. To the extent we issue substantial additional Common Stock, the ownership of our existing stockholders would be diluted and our earnings per share could be reduced, which may negatively affect the market prices for our Common Stock.

We may not be able to continue paying a regular dividend and the failure to do so could adversely affect the market price of our Common Stock and may jeopardize our qualification for taxation as a REIT.

Our declaration and payment of dividends on the shares of our Common Stock in the future will be determined by our board of directors (or an authorized committee thereof) in its sole discretion and will depend on business conditions, our financial condition, earnings and liquidity and other factors. The agreements governing any of our and our subsidiaries' existing or future indebtedness may limit our ability to declare and pay cash dividends on the shares of our capital stock. In the event that the agreements governing any such indebtedness restrict our ability to declare and pay dividends in cash on the shares of our Common Stock, we may be unable to declare and pay dividends in cash on the shares of our Common Stock unless we can repay or refinance the amounts outstanding under such agreements.

In addition, under Delaware law, our board of directors (or an authorized committee thereof) may only declare and pay dividends on shares of our capital stock out of our statutory surplus (which is defined as the amount equal to total assets minus total liabilities, in each case at fair market value, minus statutory capital), or if there is no such surplus, out of our net profits for the then current and/or immediately preceding fiscal year. Further, even if we are permitted under our contractual obligations and Delaware law to declare and pay cash dividends on the shares of our Common Stock, we may not have sufficient cash to declare and pay dividends in cash on the shares of our Common Stock.

Our failure to continue paying regular dividends could adversely affect our stock price and might jeopardize our qualification for taxation as a REIT for federal income tax purposes. See Description of Common Stock in this prospectus supplement, as well as Federal Income Tax Considerations Related to Our Qualification and Taxation as a REIT REIT Qualification Requirements Annual Distribution Requirements in the accompanying prospectus.

Our issuance of preferred stock may cause the Common Stock price to decline, which may negatively impact your investment.

Our board of directors is authorized to issue series of shares of preferred stock without any action on the part of our stockholders. Our board of directors also has the power, without stockholder approval, to set the terms of any such series of shares of preferred stock that may be issued, including voting rights, conversion rights,

Table of Contents

dividend rights, preferences over Common Stock with respect to dividends or if we liquidate, dissolve or wind up our business and other terms. The Series A Preferred Stock, the Mandatory Convertible Preferred Stock represented by the depository shares we are offering in the concurrent Preferred Stock Offering and any other preferred stock we may issue in the future will rank senior to all of our Common Stock with respect to the payment of dividends or upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up. If we issue cumulative preferred stock in the future that has preference over Common Stock with respect to the payment of dividends or upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up, or if we issue preferred stock with voting rights that dilute the voting power of Common Stock, the market price of Common Stock could decrease, which may negatively impact your investment.

Risks related to the Proposed Verizon Transaction

The Proposed Verizon Transaction may not be completed within the expected timeframe, if at all, and the pendency of the Proposed Verizon Transaction could adversely affect our business, financial conditions and results of operations.

Completion of the Proposed Verizon Transaction is subject to the satisfaction (or waiver) of a number of conditions, many of which are beyond our control and may prevent, delay or otherwise negatively affect its completion. We cannot predict when these conditions will be satisfied, if at all. Failure to complete the Proposed Verizon Transaction would, and any delay in completing the Proposed Verizon Transaction could, prevent us from realizing the anticipated benefits from the Proposed Verizon Transaction, which may negatively impact the market price of our securities, including our Common Stock. Additionally, if we fail to close the Proposed Verizon Transaction and are otherwise in breach of our obligations, we could be liable for damages.

Pursuant to the terms of the Master Agreement, fewer than the 11,489 Sites currently anticipated to be included in the Proposed Verizon Transaction may be included as part of the Proposed Verizon Transaction at closing.

Failure to successfully and efficiently integrate acquired or leased assets, including the Verizon Assets, into our operations may adversely affect our business, financial conditions and results of operations.

Integrating acquired portfolios of communications sites may require significant resources, as well as attention from our management team. In addition, we may incur certain non-recurring charges associated with the integration of acquired or leased assets or businesses into our operations. Further, the significant acquisition-related integration costs could materially and adversely affect our results of operations in the period in which such charges are recorded or our cash flow in the period in which any related costs are actually paid. For example, the integration of the Verizon Assets, which includes up to 11,489 towers, into our operations will be a significant undertaking, and we anticipate that we will incur certain non-recurring charges associated with the integration of the Verizon Assets into our operations, including costs for tasks such as tower visits and audits and ground and tenant lease verifications. Additional integration challenges include:

transitioning all data related to the Verizon Assets, tenants and landlords to a common information technology system;

successfully marketing space on the Verizon Assets;

successfully transitioning the ground lease rent payment and the tenant billing and collection processes;

retaining existing tenants on the Verizon Assets; and

maintaining our standards, controls, procedures and policies with respect to the Verizon Assets.

Additionally, we may fail to successfully integrate the assets we acquire or fail to utilize such assets to their full capacity. If we are not able to meet these integration challenges, we may not realize the benefits we expect from our acquired portfolios and businesses, including the Proposed Verizon Transaction, and our business, financial condition and results of operations will be adversely affected.

Table of Contents

We are not providing audited historical financial information for the Verizon Assets or pro forma financial statements reflecting the impact of the Proposed Verizon Transaction on our historical operating results.

Following the closing of the Proposed Verizon Transaction, we will be required to file a current report on Form 8-K that contains audited income statement data for the Verizon Assets for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2014, as well as unaudited information for the relevant interim period, and, based on that income statement data, pro forma income statement information for those periods reflecting the estimated pro forma impact of the Proposed Verizon Transaction. We do not expect to file the current report on Form 8-K with the required financial information until after the closing of the Proposed Verizon Transaction and, as a result, we are not in a position at this time to include this information in this prospectus supplement. As a result, investors will be required to determine whether to participate in this offering without the benefit of this historical and pro forma financial information.

It is possible that the audit and review of the Verizon Assets income statement data, our preparation of pro forma information or our experience in operating the Verizon Assets will require us to adjust our expectations regarding the impact of the Proposed Verizon Transaction on our operating results, which may be significantly lower than anticipated.

The bankruptcy of certain subsidiaries of Verizon that are lessors or sublessors of Sites to one of our subsidiaries, or our failure to exercise the Purchase Options available to us pursuant to the Proposed Verizon Transaction, may adversely affect our business, financial conditions and results of operations.

If the Proposed Verizon Transaction is consummated, a substantial number of the Sites that are part of the Proposed Verizon Transaction will be located on land leased from third parties. At the closing of the Proposed Verizon Transaction, one of our subsidiaries will lease or sublease, or otherwise be granted the right to manage and operate, the MPL Sites from certain subsidiaries of Verizon, in an arrangement similar to the master lease arrangements we have with other carriers with respect to certain existing towers. If one of these Verizon subsidiaries becomes a debtor in a bankruptcy proceeding and is permitted to reject the underlying ground lease, our subsidiary could lose its interest in the applicable MPL Sites. If our subsidiary loses its interest in the applicable Sites or if the applicable ground leases were to be terminated, we would lose the cash flow derived from these Sites, which may have a material adverse effect on our business, financial conditions and results of operations. We will have similar bankruptcy risks with respect to Sites that we operate under management agreements.

Under the definitive agreements governing the Proposed Verizon Transaction, we will have the option to purchase certain Sites at the end of their respective lease or sublease terms for aggregate option payments of up to approximately \$5.0 billion, which payments, if the options are exercised, will be due between 2034 and 2047. We may not have the required available capital to exercise our rights to purchase these Sites at the time the Purchase Options are required to be exercised. Even if we do have the required available capital, we may choose not to exercise our rights to purchase some or all of these Sites for business or other reasons. In the event that we do not exercise the Purchase Options, or are otherwise unable to acquire an interest that would allow us to continue to operate these Sites after their respective lease terms, we will lose the future cash flows from these Sites, which may have a material adverse effect on our business, financial conditions and results of operations. In the event that we decide to exercise the Purchase Options, the benefits of the acquisition of the applicable Sites may not exceed the related costs, which could adversely affect our business, financial conditions and results of operations.

Investors will not have any rights to require us to repurchase, redeem or repay any of the shares of our Common Stock offered hereby if the Proposed Verizon Transaction is not completed.

Investors will not have any rights to require us to repurchase, redeem or repay any of the shares of our Common Stock offered hereby if the Proposed Verizon Transaction is not completed. Further, investors will not

Table of Contents

have any right to require us to repurchase, redeem or repay any of the shares of our Common Stock offered hereby, if, subsequent to the completion of this offering, we or Verizon experience any changes in our business or financial condition or if the terms of the Proposed Verizon Transaction or the financing thereof change. Even if we repurchase, redeem or repay the shares of our Common Stock offered hereby, investors may not obtain their expected return and may not be able to reinvest the proceeds from such repurchase, redemption or repayment in an investment that results in a comparable return.

If the Proposed Verizon Transaction is not completed, our management will have broad discretion to use the net proceeds of this offering.

This offering is not contingent upon the completion of the Proposed Verizon Transaction. Accordingly, if the Proposed Verizon Transaction is not completed, our management will have broad discretion to use the net proceeds of this offering for general corporate purposes. General corporate purposes may include, without limitation, the financing of other pending acquisitions, such as the Other Proposed Acquisitions, and repaying existing indebtedness. See Use of Proceeds. Our management's judgments may not result in positive returns on your investment and you will not have an opportunity, as part of your investment decision, to evaluate the economic, financial or other information upon which our management bases its decisions.

Table of Contents**USE OF PROCEEDS**

We expect to receive net proceeds of approximately \$2,219.7 million from the sale of our Common Stock (or approximately \$2,441.6 million if the underwriters exercise their over-allotment option to purchase additional shares of our Common Stock in full), after reflecting the estimated underwriting discounts and commissions and estimated expenses of this offering. We intend to use the net proceeds of this offering, together with the net proceeds of the concurrent Preferred Stock Offering, if completed, cash on hand and borrowings under our revolving credit facilities, to finance the Proposed Verizon Transaction and to pay related fees and expenses.

This offering is not contingent on the completion of the Proposed Verizon Transaction. If the Proposed Verizon Transaction is not completed, we intend to use the net proceeds from this offering for general corporate purposes, which may include the financing of other pending acquisitions, such as the Other Proposed Acquisitions, or repaying our existing indebtedness. See Prospectus Supplement Summary Recent Developments Proposed Verizon Transaction and Capitalization.

Pending use, the net proceeds may be invested temporarily in short-term marketable securities or applied to repay short-term debt. Our management will have broad discretion in the application of the net proceeds, and the purposes for which the net proceeds are used may change from those described above.

The following table outlines the sources and uses of funds for the Proposed Verizon Transaction, assuming no exercise by the underwriters of their over-allotment options with respect to this offering or the Preferred Stock Offering. The table assumes that the Proposed Verizon Transaction and the financing transactions are completed simultaneously, although this offering and the Preferred Stock Offering are expected to occur before completion of the Proposed Verizon Transaction.

All of the amounts in the following table are estimated. The actual amounts may vary from the estimated amounts set forth in the following table. You should read the following together with the information included under Recent Developments Proposed Verizon Transaction and Capitalization.

Sources of funds	(Dollars in millions)		Uses of funds
Cash on hand	\$ 75	Proposed Verizon Transaction consideration	\$ 5,056
Preferred Stock Offering, before discounts, commissions and expenses (1)	1,250	Proposed Verizon Transaction fees and expenses (4)	91
Common Stock offered hereby, before discounts, commissions and expenses (2)	2,280		
Borrowings under our revolving credit facilities, before financing fees and expenses (3)	1,542		
Total sources of funds	\$ 5,147	Total uses of funds	\$ 5,147

- (1) Concurrently with this offering, we are offering, by means of a separate prospectus supplement, 12,500,000 depositary shares, each representing a 1/10th interest in a share of the Mandatory Convertible Preferred Stock (or 13,750,000 depositary shares, if the underwriters exercise their over-allotment option to purchase up to an additional 1,250,000 depositary shares in full), for cash. The gross proceeds from the Preferred Stock Offering have been calculated by using the public offering price of \$100.00 per depositary share, and assuming no exercise by the underwriters of their over-allotment option to purchase additional depositary shares.
- (2) The gross proceeds from this offering have been calculated by using the public offering price of \$97.00 per share of our Common Stock, and assuming no exercise by the underwriters of their over-allotment option to purchase additional shares.

Table of Contents

- (3) We expect to borrow \$702 million under the 2013 Credit Facility and \$840 million under the 2014 Credit Facility.
- (4) Includes estimated fees and expenses related to the Proposed Verizon Transaction and the financing of the Proposed Verizon Transaction, including underwriting discounts and commissions, legal, accounting and advisory fees, financing fees and other transaction costs.

S-17

Table of Contents**CAPITALIZATION**

The following table shows our cash and cash equivalents and capitalization as of December 31, 2014:

on a historical basis;

on an as adjusted basis, after giving effect to (i) net borrowings of \$45 million under the 2014 Credit Facility, (ii) net borrowings of \$115 million under the 2013 Credit Facility, (iii) incremental borrowings of \$500 million under the 2013 Term Loan and (iv) the redemption of our outstanding 4.625% senior notes due 2015;

on an as further adjusted basis after giving effect to the receipt of (but not the application of) the following: (i) approximately \$2,219.7 million of net proceeds in this offering, after reflecting underwriting discounts and commissions and estimated expenses (assuming no exercise of the underwriters over-allotment option to purchase additional shares of our Common Stock); (ii) approximately \$1,217.6 million of net proceeds in the Preferred Stock Offering, after reflecting underwriting discounts and commissions and estimated expenses (assuming no exercise of the underwriters over-allotment option to purchase additional depositary shares); and (iii) approximately \$702 million of borrowings under the 2013 Credit Facility and approximately \$840 million of borrowings under the 2014 Credit Facility.

We have the ability to borrow additional amounts under our revolving credit facilities. You should read the capitalization table below in conjunction with Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations and our consolidated financial statements and related notes, which are incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement.

	As of December 31, 2014		
	Historical	As Adjusted (In thousands)	As Further Adjusted
Cash and cash equivalents (1)(2)	\$ 313,492	\$ 369,953	\$ 5,349,254
Long-term debt, including current portion (3):			
American Tower secured and other subsidiary debt:			
Secured Tower Revenue Securities, Series 2013-1A	500,000	500,000	500,000
Secured Tower Revenue Securities, Series 2013-2A	1,300,000	1,300,000	1,300,000
Unison Notes (4)	203,683	203,683	203,683
South African facility (5)	75,133	75,133	75,133
Colombian credit facility (6)	83,596	83,596	83,596
Shareholder loans (7)	137,655	137,655	137,655
Mexican loan (8)	263,426	263,426	263,426
GTP Notes (9)	1,263,983	1,263,983	1,263,983
BR Towers debentures (10)	118,688	118,688	118,688
BR Towers credit facility (10)	16,389	16,389	16,389
Other debt, including capital lease obligations	95,382	95,382	95,382
Total American Tower subsidiary debt	4,057,935	4,057,935	4,057,935
American Tower Corporation debt:			
2013 Term Loan	1,500,000	2,000,000	2,000,000
2013 Credit Facility		115,000	817,000
2014 Credit Facility	1,100,000	1,145,000	1,985,000
4.625% senior notes due 2015 (11)	599,958		
7.00% senior notes due 2017	500,000	500,000	500,000
4.50% senior notes due 2018	999,631	999,631	999,631
3.40% senior notes due 2019	1,005,509	1,005,509	1,005,509

Table of Contents

	As of December 31, 2014		
	Historical	As Adjusted (In thousands)	As Further Adjusted
7.25% senior notes due 2019	297,260	297,260	297,260
5.05% senior notes due 2020	699,496	699,496	699,496
3.450% senior notes due 2021	646,394	646,394	646,394
5.90% senior notes due 2021	499,474	499,474	499,474
4.70% senior notes due 2022	698,987	698,987	698,987
3.50% senior notes due 2023	993,230	993,230	993,230
5.00% senior notes due 2024	1,010,834	1,010,834	1,010,834
Total American Tower Corporation debt	10,550,773	10,610,815	12,152,815
Total long-term debt, including current portion.	\$ 14,608,708	\$ 14,668,750	\$ 16,210,750
Equity:			
Preferred stock (12)			
Mandatory Convertible Preferred Stock, Series A	\$ 60	\$ 60	\$ 60
Mandatory Convertible Preferred Stock, Series B			13
Common Stock (13)	3,995	3,995	4,230
Additional paid-in capital	5,788,786	5,788,786	9,225,839
Distributions in excess of earnings	(837,320)	(837,320)	(837,320)
Accumulated other comprehensive loss	(794,221)	(794,221)	(794,221)
Treasury stock	(207,740)	(207,740)	(207,740)
American Tower Corporation equity	3,953,560	3,953,560	7,390,861
Non-controlling interest	99,792	99,792	99,792
Total equity	4,053,352	4,053,352	7,490,653
Total capitalization	\$ 18,662,060	\$ 18,722,102	\$ 23,701,403

- (1) Does not reflect the distribution of approximately \$150.7 million to our common stockholders of record on December 16, 2014, or the distribution of approximately \$7.9 million to our preferred stockholders of record on February 1, 2015, both of which were accrued for at December 31, 2014, and paid on January 13, 2015 and February 16, 2015, respectively.
- (2) As of December 31, 2014, amount excludes approximately \$160.2 million of restricted funds pledged as collateral to secure obligations and cash, the use of which is otherwise limited by contractual provisions. The amount is also before any application of the net proceeds from this offering, the Preferred Stock Offering or the borrowings under our revolving credit facilities, which we expect to use, together with cash on hand, to finance the Proposed Verizon Transaction and to pay related fees and expenses. If the Proposed Verizon Transaction is completed, after giving effect to the application of the net proceeds as set forth in Use of Proceeds, cash and cash equivalents would have been approximately \$293.3 million.
- (3) Excludes intercompany indebtedness that is eliminated in our consolidated financial statements.
- (4) Assumed by us in connection with the acquisition of certain legal entities holding a portfolio of property interests from Unison Holdings, LLC and Unison Site Management II, L.L.C.
- (5) Denominated in South African Rand.
- (6) Denominated in Colombian Pesos.
- (7) Represents balances attributable to minority shareholder loans in the Company's joint ventures in Ghana and Uganda. The Ghana loan is denominated in Ghanaian Cedi and the Uganda loan is denominated in U.S. Dollars.
- (8) Denominated in Mexican Pesos.
- (9) Securitized indebtedness assumed in connection with our acquisition of MIP Tower Holdings LLC in October 2013.

Table of Contents

- (10) Secured indebtedness assumed in connection with our acquisition of BR Towers in November 2014. The BR Towers debentures and BR Towers credit facility are denominated in Brazilian Real.
- (11) Redeemed in full on February 11, 2015 for an aggregate redemption price of \$613.6 million, including approximately \$10.0 million of accrued and unpaid interest, which was funded with borrowings under the 2013 Credit Facility.
- (12) Consists of preferred stock, par value \$0.01 per share 20,000,000 shares authorized, 6,000,000 shares of Mandatory Convertible Preferred Stock, Series A issued and outstanding (actual, as adjusted and as further adjusted basis), no shares of Mandatory Convertible Preferred Stock, Series B issued and outstanding (actual and as adjusted basis) and 1,250,000 shares of Mandatory Convertible Preferred Stock, Series B issued and outstanding (as further adjusted basis).
- (13) Consists of common stock, par value \$0.01 per share 1,000,000,000 shares authorized, 399,508,751 shares issued and 396,698,725 shares outstanding (actual, as adjusted basis) and 423,008,751 shares issued and 420,198,725 shares outstanding (as further adjusted basis).

S-20

Table of Contents**PRICE RANGE OF COMMON STOCK AND DIVIDEND POLICY**

Our Common Stock trades on the NYSE under the symbol AMT. The following table presents reported quarterly high and low per share sale prices of our Common Stock on the NYSE for the periods indicated below.

2015	High	Low
Quarter ended March 31(through February 25, 2015)	\$ 101.88	\$ 94.05
2014	High	Low
Quarter ended March 31	\$ 84.90	\$ 78.38
Quarter ended June 30	90.73	80.10
Quarter ended September 30	99.90	89.05
Quarter ended December 31	106.31	90.20
2013	High	Low
Quarter ended March 31	\$ 79.98	\$ 72.56
Quarter ended June 30	85.26	69.54
Quarter ended September 30	78.33	67.89
Quarter ended December 31	81.36	71.55

On February 25, 2015, the closing price of our Common Stock was \$97.85 per share as reported on the NYSE. As of February 13, 2015, we had 396,708,636 outstanding shares of Common Stock and 166 registered holders.

Dividends

As a REIT, we must annually distribute to our stockholders an amount equal to at least 90% of our REIT taxable income (determined before the deduction for distributed earnings and excluding any net capital gain). Generally, we expect to distribute all or substantially all of our REIT taxable income after taking into consideration our net operating loss carryforwards. The amount, timing and frequency of future distributions will be at the sole discretion of our board of directors (or an authorized committee thereof) and will be declared based upon various factors, a number of which may be beyond our control, including our financial condition and operating cash flows, the amount required to maintain our qualification for taxation as a REIT and reduce any income and excise taxes that we otherwise would be required to pay, limitations on distributions in our existing and future debt and preferred equity instruments, our ability to utilize net operating losses to offset our distribution requirements, limitations on our ability to fund distributions using cash generated through our taxable REIT subsidiaries and other factors that our board of directors (or an authorized committee thereof) may deem relevant.

During the periods indicated below, we declared the following regular cash distributions to our stockholders:

Declaration Date	Payment Date	Record Date	Distribution per Share	Aggregate Payment Amount (in millions)
Year ended December 31, 2014				
March 6, 2014	April 25, 2014	April 10, 2014	\$ 0.32	\$ 126.6
May 21, 2014	July 16, 2014	June 17, 2014	\$ 0.34	\$ 134.6
September 10, 2014	October 7, 2014	September 23, 2014	\$ 0.36	\$ 142.7
December 2, 2014	January 13, 2015	December 16, 2014	\$ 0.38	\$ 150.7
Year ended December 31, 2013				
March 12, 2013	April 25, 2013	April 10, 2013	\$ 0.26	\$ 102.8
May 22, 2013	July 16, 2013	June 17, 2013	\$ 0.27	\$ 106.7
September 12, 2013	October 7, 2013	September 23, 2013	\$ 0.28	\$ 110.5
December 4, 2013	December 31, 2013	December 16, 2013	\$ 0.29	\$ 114.5

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF COMMON STOCK

The description below summarizes the general terms of our Common Stock. This section is a summary, and it does not describe every aspect of our Common Stock. This summary is subject to and qualified in its entirety by reference to the provisions of our Certificate of Incorporation and our By-Laws and the General Corporation Law of the State of Delaware (the "DGCL"). Copies of our Certificate of Incorporation and By-Laws have been filed or incorporated by reference as exhibits to SEC filings incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement.

The information appearing under this caption "Description of Common Stock" supplements and, to the extent inconsistent, replaces the information appearing in the accompanying prospectus under the caption "Description of Securities" "Description of Common Stock."

In this offering, we are issuing Mandatory Convertible Preferred Stock which will impact the rights of holders of our Common Stock. For additional information, see "Risk Factors" "Risks related to this offering." You should read the following description of our Common Stock in light of this information.

Authorized Shares

As of the date of this prospectus supplement, we are authorized to issue up to one billion (1,000,000,000) shares of Common Stock.

Voting Rights

With respect to all matters upon which stockholders are entitled to vote, the holders of the outstanding shares of Common Stock are entitled to one (1) vote in person or by proxy for each share of Common Stock outstanding in the name of such stockholders on the record of stockholders. Generally, all matters to be voted on by stockholders must be approved by a majority (or by a plurality in the case of election of directors where the number of candidates nominated for election exceeds the number of directors to be elected) of the votes entitled to be cast by all shares of Common Stock present in person or by proxy.

Dividends and Other Distributions

Subject to applicable law and rights, if any, of the holders of any outstanding series of preferred stock or any class or series of stock having a preference over the Common Stock with respect to the payment of dividends and other distributions, dividends and other distributions may be declared and paid on the Common Stock from time to time and in amounts as our board of directors may determine. We pay regular dividends and other distributions, but the amount, timing and frequency of any distribution are at the sole discretion of our board of directors. Dividends and other distributions are declared based upon various factors, including without limitation distributions required to maintain our qualification for taxation as a REIT. The loan agreements for our credit facilities contain covenants that restrict our ability to pay dividends and other distributions unless certain financial covenants are satisfied.

Liquidation Rights

Upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, the holders of Common Stock are entitled to share ratably in all assets available for distribution after payment in full to creditors and payment in full to holders of preferred stock then outstanding of any amount required to be paid to them. Neither the merger, consolidation or business combination of American Tower with or into any other entity in which our stockholders receive capital stock and/or other securities (including debt securities) of the surviving entity (or the direct or indirect parent entity thereof), nor the sale, lease or transfer by us of any part of our business and assets, nor the reduction of our capital stock, shall be deemed to be a voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up.

Table of Contents

Other Provisions

The holders of Common Stock have no preemptive, subscription or redemption rights and are not entitled to the benefit of any sinking fund. The shares of Common Stock presently outstanding are validly issued, fully paid and nonassessable.

We may not subdivide, combine, or pay or declare any stock dividend on, the outstanding shares of Common Stock unless all outstanding shares of Common Stock are subdivided or combined or the holders of Common Stock receive a proportionate dividend.

Restrictions on Ownership and Transfer

For us to comply with and have maximum business flexibility under the Federal Communications Laws (defined in our Certificate of Incorporation and including the Communications Act of 1934, as amended), and for us to qualify as a REIT under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the Code), our Certificate of Incorporation contains restrictions on stock ownership and stock transfers. These ownership and transfer restrictions could delay, defer or prevent a transaction or a change in control that might involve a premium price for our Common Stock or otherwise be in the best interests of the stockholders.

Federal Communications Laws Restrictions. Our Certificate of Incorporation permits us to restrict the ownership or proposed ownership of shares of our stock if that ownership or proposed ownership (i) is or could be inconsistent with, or in violation of, Federal Communications Laws (as defined in our Certificate of Incorporation); (ii) limits or impairs, or could limit or impair, our business activities or proposed business activities under the Federal Communications Laws; or (iii) subjects or could subject us to CFIUS Review (as defined in our Certificate of Incorporation) or to any provision of the Federal Communications Laws, including those requiring any review, authorization or approval, to which we would not be subject but for that ownership or proposed ownership, including, without limitation, Section 310 of the Communications Act and regulations relating to foreign ownership, multiple ownership or cross-ownership (clauses (i) through (iii) above are collectively referred to as FCC Regulatory Limitations). We reserve the right to require any person to whom a FCC Regulatory Limitation may apply to promptly furnish to us such information (including, without limitation, information with respect to the citizenship, other ownership interests and affiliations) as we may request. If such person fails to furnish all of the information we request, or we conclude that such person's ownership or proposed ownership of our stock, or the exercise by such person of any rights of stock ownership in connection with our stock, may result in a FCC Regulatory Limitation, we reserve the right to:

refuse to permit the transfer of shares of our Common Stock and/or preferred stock to such person;

to the fullest extent permitted by law, suspend those rights of stock ownership the exercise of which may cause the FCC Regulatory Limitation;

require the conversion of any or all shares of our preferred stock held by such person into a number of shares of our Common Stock of equivalent value;

redeem the shares of our Common Stock and/or our preferred stock held by such person pursuant to the procedures set forth below; and/or

exercise any and all appropriate remedies, at law or in equity, in any court of competent jurisdiction, against any such person, with a view toward obtaining the information or preventing or curing any situation that may cause a FCC Regulatory Limitation.

The following procedures apply to the redemption of such person's shares of our Common Stock and/or preferred stock:

the redemption price of any redeemed shares of our Common Stock or preferred stock shall be the fair market value (as defined in our Certificate of Incorporation) of those shares;

Table of Contents

the redemption price may be paid in cash or any other of our debt or equity securities or any combination thereof;

the board of directors in its sole discretion may decide to only redeem some (and not all) of such person's shares, which may include the selection of the most recently purchased or acquired shares, selection by lot or selection by such other manner as the board of directors may determine;

we must provide at least 15 days' prior written notice of the date on which we plan to effect the redemption (unless waived by such person); provided, that the redemption date may be the date on which written notice is given to such person if the cash (or any other of our debt or equity securities) necessary to effect the redemption has been deposited in trust for the benefit of such person and is subject to immediate withdrawal by such person upon surrender of the stock certificates for the redeemed shares;

from and after the date of the redemption, any and all rights relating to the redeemed shares shall cease and terminate and such person shall only possess the right to obtain cash (or such other of our debt or equity securities) payable upon the redemption; and

such other terms and conditions as the board of directors may determine.

REIT Restrictions. For us to qualify as a REIT under the Code, our stock 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 (other than the first year for which an election to be a REIT has been made). In addition, not more than 50% of the value of the outstanding shares of our stock may be owned, directly or indirectly, by five or fewer individuals (as defined in the Code to include certain entities such as private foundations) during the last half of a taxable year (other than the first taxable year for which an election to be a REIT has been made). To ensure that these ownership requirements and other requirements for continued qualification as a REIT are met and to otherwise protect us from the consequences of a concentration of ownership among our stockholders, our Certificate of Incorporation contains provisions restricting the ownership or transfer of shares of our stock.

The relevant sections of our Certificate of Incorporation provide that, subject to the exceptions and the constructive ownership rules described below, no person (as defined in our Certificate of Incorporation) may beneficially or constructively own more than 9.8% in value of our aggregate outstanding stock, or more than 9.8% in value or number (whichever is more restrictive) of the outstanding shares of any class or series of our stock. We refer to these restrictions as the ownership limits.

The applicable constructive ownership rules under the Code are complex and may cause stock owned, actually or constructively, by a group of related individuals or entities to be treated as owned by one individual or entity. As a result, the acquisition of less than 9.8% in value of our aggregate outstanding stock or less than 9.8% in value or number of our outstanding shares of any class or series of stock (including through the acquisition of an interest in an entity that owns, actually or constructively, any class or series of our stock) by an individual or entity could nevertheless cause that individual or entity, or another individual or entity, to own, constructively or beneficially, in excess of 9.8% in value of our aggregate outstanding stock or 9.8% in value or number of our outstanding shares of any class or series of stock.

In addition to the ownership limits, our Certificate of Incorporation prohibits any person from actually or constructively owning shares of our stock to the extent that such ownership would cause any of our income that would otherwise qualify as rents from real property for purposes of Section 856(d) of the Code to fail to qualify as such.

The board of directors may, in its sole discretion, exempt a person from the ownership limits and certain other REIT limits on ownership and transfer of our stock described above, and may establish a different limit on ownership for that person. However, the board of directors may not exempt any person whose ownership of outstanding stock in violation of these limits would result in our failing to qualify as a REIT. In order to be

Table of Contents

considered by the board of directors for an exemption or a different limit on ownership, a person must make such representations and undertakings as are reasonably necessary to ascertain that the person's beneficial or constructive ownership of our stock will not now or in the future jeopardize our ability to qualify as a REIT and must agree that any violation or attempted violation of those representations or undertakings (or other action that is contrary to the ownership limits and certain other REIT limits on ownership and transfer of our stock described above) will result in the shares of stock being automatically transferred to a trust as described below. As a condition of its waiver, the board of directors may require an opinion of counsel or IRS ruling satisfactory to it with respect to our qualification as a REIT and may impose such other conditions as it deems appropriate in connection with the granting of the exemption or different limit on ownership.

In connection with the waiver of the ownership limits or at any other time, the board of directors may from time to time increase the ownership limits for one or more persons and decrease the ownership limits for all other persons; provided that the new ownership limits may not, after giving effect to such increase and under certain assumptions stated in our Certificate of Incorporation, result in us being closely held within the meaning of Section 856(h) of the Code (without regard to whether the ownership interests are held during the last half of a taxable year). Reduced ownership limits will not apply to any person whose percentage ownership of our aggregate outstanding stock or of the shares of a class or series of our stock, as applicable, is in excess of such decreased ownership limits until such time as that person's percentage of our aggregate outstanding stock or of the shares of a class or series of stock, as applicable, equals or falls below the decreased ownership limits, but any further acquisition of shares of our stock or of a class or series of our stock, as applicable, in excess of such percentage ownership of shares of stock or of a class or series of stock will be in violation of the ownership limits.

Our Certificate of Incorporation further prohibits:

any person from transferring shares of our stock if the transfer would result in our aggregate outstanding stock being beneficially owned by fewer than 100 persons (determined without reference to any rules of attribution); and

any person from beneficially or constructively owning shares of our stock if that ownership would result in our failing to qualify as a REIT.

The foregoing provisions on transferability and ownership will not apply if the board of directors determines that it is no longer in our best interests to attempt to qualify, or to continue to qualify, as a REIT.

Any person who acquires, or attempts or intends to acquire, beneficial or constructive ownership of shares of our stock that will or may violate the ownership limits or any of the other foregoing restrictions on transferability and ownership will be required to give notice to us immediately (or, in the case of a proposed or attempted transaction, at least 15 days prior to the transaction) and provide us with such other information as we may request in order to determine the effect, if any, of the transfer on our qualification as a REIT.

Pursuant to our Certificate of Incorporation, if there is any purported transfer of our stock or other event or change of circumstances that, if effective or otherwise, would violate any of the restrictions described above, then the number of shares causing the violation (rounded up to the nearest whole share) will be automatically transferred to a trust for the exclusive benefit of a designated charitable beneficiary, except that any transfer that results in the violation of the restriction relating to our stock being beneficially owned by fewer than 100 persons will be automatically void and of no force or effect. The automatic transfer will be effective as of the close of business on the business day prior to the date of the purported transfer or other event or change of circumstances that requires the transfer to the trust. We refer below to the person that would have owned the shares if they had not been transferred to the trust as the purported transferee. Any ordinary dividend paid to the purported transferee prior to our discovery that the shares had been automatically transferred to a trust as described above must be repaid to the trustee upon demand. Our Certificate of Incorporation also provides for adjustments to the

Table of Contents

entitlement to receive extraordinary dividends and other distributions as between the purported transferee and the trust. If the transfer to the trust as described above is not automatically effective for any reason, to prevent violation of the applicable restriction contained in our Certificate of Incorporation, the transfer of the excess shares will be automatically void and of no force or effect.

Shares of our stock transferred to the trustee are deemed to be 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 the transfer to the trust or, if the purported transferee did not give value for the shares in connection with the event causing the shares to be held in trust (e.g., in the case of a gift, devise or other similar transaction), the market price on the day of the event and (ii) the market price on the date we accept, or our designee accepts, the offer. We have the right to accept the offer until the trustee has sold the shares of our stock held in the trust pursuant to the clauses discussed below. Upon a sale to us, the interest of the charitable beneficiary in the shares sold terminates and the trustee must distribute the net proceeds of the sale to the purported transferee, except that the trustee may reduce the amount payable to the purported transferee by the amount of any ordinary dividends that we paid to the purported transferee prior to our discovery that the shares had been transferred to the trust and that is owed by the purported transferee to the trustee as described above. Any net sales proceeds in excess of the amount payable to the purported transferee will be immediately paid to the charitable beneficiary, and any ordinary dividends held by the trustee with respect to the stock will be paid to the charitable beneficiary.

If we do not buy the shares, the trustee must, as soon as reasonably practicable (and, if the shares are listed on a national securities exchange, within 20 days) after receiving notice from us of the transfer of shares to the trust, sell the shares to a person or entity who could own the shares without violating the restrictions described above. Upon such a sale, the trustee must distribute to the purported transferee an amount equal to the lesser of (i) the price paid by the purported transferee for the shares or, if the purported transferee did not give value for the shares in connection with the event causing the shares to be held in trust (e.g., in the case of a gift, devise or other such transaction), the market price of the shares on the day of the event causing the shares to be held in the trust, and (ii) the sales proceeds (net of commissions and other expenses of sale) received by the trustee for the shares. The trustee may reduce the amount payable to the purported transferee by the amount of any ordinary dividends that we paid to the purported transferee before our discovery that the shares had been transferred to the trust and that is owed by the purported transferee to the trustee as described above. Any net sales proceeds in excess of the amount payable to the purported transferee will be immediately paid to the charitable beneficiary, together with any ordinary dividends held by the trustee with respect to such stock. In addition, if prior to discovery by us that shares of stock have been transferred to a trust, the shares of stock are sold by a purported transferee, then the shares will be deemed to have been sold on behalf of the trust and, to the extent that the purported transferee received an amount for or in respect of the shares that exceeds the amount that the purported transferee was entitled to receive as described above, the excess amount will be paid to the trustee upon demand. The purported transferee has no rights in the shares held by the trustee.

The trustee will be indemnified by us or from the proceeds of sales of stock in the trust for its costs and expenses reasonably incurred in connection with conducting its duties and satisfying its obligations under our Certificate of Incorporation. The trustee will also be entitled to reasonable compensation for services provided as determined by agreement between the trustee and the board of directors, which compensation may be funded by us or the trust. If we pay any such indemnification or compensation, we are entitled on a first priority basis (subject to the trustee's indemnification and compensation rights) to be reimbursed from the trust. To the extent the trust funds any such indemnification and compensation, the amounts available for payment to a purported transferee (or the charitable beneficiary) would be reduced.

The trustee will be designated by us and must be unaffiliated with us and with any purported transferee. Prior to the sale of any shares by the trust, the trustee will receive, in trust for the beneficiary, all distributions paid by us with respect to the shares, and may also exercise all voting rights with respect to the shares.

Table of Contents

Subject to the DGCL, effective as of the date that the shares have been transferred to the trust, the trustee will have the authority, at the trustee's sole discretion:

to rescind as void any vote cast by a purported transferee prior to our discovery that the shares have been transferred to the trust; and

to recast the vote in accordance with the desires of the trustee acting for the benefit of the charitable beneficiary of the trust. However, if we have already taken corporate action, then the trustee may not rescind and recast the vote. In addition, if our board of directors determines that a proposed or purported transfer would violate the restrictions on ownership and transfer of our stock set forth in our Certificate of Incorporation, our board of directors may take such action as it deems advisable to refuse to give effect to or to prevent the violation, including but not limited to, causing us to repurchase shares of our stock, refusing to give effect to the transfer on our books or instituting proceedings to enjoin the transfer.

Following the end of each REIT taxable year, every owner of 5% or more (or such lower percentage as required by the Code or the Treasury regulations promulgated thereunder) of the outstanding shares of any class or series of our stock, must, upon request, provide us written notice of the person's name and address, the number of shares of each class and series of our stock that the person beneficially owns and a description of the manner in which the shares are held. Each such owner must also provide us with such additional information as we may request in order to determine the effect, if any, of such owner's beneficial ownership on our qualification as a REIT and to ensure compliance with the ownership limits. In addition, each beneficial owner or constructive owner of our stock, and any person (including the stockholder of record) who is holding shares of our stock for a beneficial owner or constructive owner will, upon demand, be required to provide us with such information as we may request in good faith in order to determine our qualification as a REIT and to comply with the requirements of any taxing authority or governmental authority or to determine such compliance.

As noted above, the rights, preferences and privileges of the holders of our Common Stock may be affected by the rights, preferences and privileges granted to holders of preferred stock, including the Mandatory Convertible Preferred Stock. Because our board of directors will have the power to establish the preferences and rights of each series of preferred stock, it may afford the stockholders of any series of preferred stock preferences, powers and rights senior to the rights of holders of shares of our Common Stock that could have the effect of delaying, deferring or preventing a change in control of American Tower. See *Description of Mandatory Convertible Preferred Stock* in this prospectus supplement and *Description of Preferred Stock* in the accompany prospectus for more information about our preferred stock.

Certain Anti-Takeover Provisions

Delaware Business Combination Provisions

We are subject to the provisions of Section 203 of the DGCL. Section 203 prohibits a publicly held Delaware corporation from engaging in a business combination with an interested stockholder for a period of three years after the person became an interested stockholder, unless the business combination or the transaction in which the stockholder became an interested stockholder is approved in a prescribed manner. A business combination includes mergers, asset sales and other transactions resulting in a financial benefit to the interested stockholder. Subject to certain exceptions, an interested stockholder is a person who, together with affiliates and associates, owns, or within the prior three years owned, 15% or more of the corporation's voting stock.

Certain Provisions of our Certificate of Incorporation and By-Laws

Our By-Laws establish advance notice procedures with respect to stockholder proposals and the nomination of candidates for election of directors, other than nominations made by, or at the direction of, our board of directors. These procedures may impede stockholders' ability to bring matters before a meeting of stockholders or make nominations for directors at a meeting of stockholders.

Table of Contents

Our Certificate of Incorporation includes provisions eliminating the personal liability of our directors to the fullest extent permitted by the DGCL and indemnifying our directors and officers to the fullest extent permitted by the DGCL. The limitation of liability and indemnification provisions in our Certificate of Incorporation may discourage stockholders from bringing a lawsuit against directors for breach of their fiduciary duty. These provisions may also have the effect of reducing the likelihood of derivative litigation against directors and officers, even though a derivative action, if successful, might otherwise benefit us and our stockholders. In addition, the value of investments in our securities may be adversely affected to the extent we pay the costs of settlement and damage awards against directors and officers pursuant to these indemnification provisions.

Our Certificate of Incorporation provides that any or all of the directors may be removed at any time, either with or without cause, by a vote of a majority of the shares outstanding and entitled to vote. This provision may delay or prevent our stockholders from removing incumbent directors.

The ownership and transfer restrictions contained in our Certificate of Incorporation, and described above, may have the effect of inhibiting or impeding a change in control.

Our Certificate of Incorporation and our By-Laws provide that our By-Laws may be altered, amended, changed or repealed by (i) the approval or consent of not less than a majority of the total outstanding shares of stock entitled to vote generally in the election of directors or (ii) a majority of the entire board of directors.

Certain Provisions of our Debt Obligations

Change of control and merger, consolidation and asset sale provisions in our indentures for our outstanding notes and loan agreements for our credit facilities may discourage a takeover attempt. These provisions may make acquiring us more difficult.

Listing of Common Stock

Our Common Stock is traded on the NYSE under the symbol AMT.

Transfer Agent and Registrar

The transfer agent and registrar for our Common Stock is Computershare Inc., P.O. Box 43006, Providence, RI 02940, (866) 201-5087.

Table of Contents

MATERIAL U.S. FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSEQUENCES

The following supplements and updates the summary of U.S. federal income tax considerations in the accompanying prospectus. Subject to qualifications and assumptions contained in its opinion and in the accompanying prospectus, our tax counsel Sullivan & Worcester LLP has rendered a legal opinion that we have been organized and have qualified as a REIT under the Code for our 2012 through 2014 taxable years, and that our current investments and plan of operation will enable us to continue to meet the requirements for qualification and taxation as a REIT under the Code. Pursuant to revised implementation dates, in the case of the regime commonly known as FATCA, as described in the accompanying prospectus under U.S. Federal Income Tax Considerations Relevant to Holders of Our Stock Foreign Accounts, withholding potentially applies to dividend payments on our stock, and is expected to potentially apply to other withholdable payments (including payments of gross proceeds from a sale or other disposition of our stock) made after December 31, 2016. We encourage you to consult your tax advisor regarding the specific federal, state, local, foreign and other tax consequences to you of the acquisition, ownership and disposition of our Common Stock.

S-29

Table of Contents**UNDERWRITING**

Goldman, Sachs & Co., Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith Incorporated, Barclays Capital Inc., Citigroup Global Markets Inc. and J.P. Morgan Securities LLC are acting as joint book-running managers of the offering and as representatives (the Representatives) of the underwriters named below. Subject to the terms and conditions stated in the underwriting agreement dated the date of this prospectus supplement, each underwriter named below has severally agreed to purchase, and we have agreed to sell to that underwriter, the respective numbers of shares of Common Stock set forth opposite the underwriter's name.

Underwriters	Number of Shares
Goldman, Sachs & Co.	3,525,000
Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith Incorporated	2,063,300
Barclays Capital Inc.	2,063,300
Citigroup Global Markets Inc.	2,063,300
J.P. Morgan Securities LLC	2,063,300
Morgan Stanley & Co. LLC	2,063,300
TD Securities (USA) LLC	2,063,300
RBC Capital Markets, LLC	2,063,300
RBS Securities Inc.	2,063,300
BNP Paribas Securities Corp.	417,125
Credit Agricole Securities (USA) Inc.	417,125
HSBC Securities (USA) Inc.	417,125
Mizuho Securities USA Inc.	417,125
Santander Investment Securities Inc.	417,125
BBVA Securities Inc.	276,125
SMBC Nikko Securities America, Inc.	276,125
SunTrust Robinson Humphrey, Inc.	276,125
Scotia Capital (USA) Inc.	276,125
EA Markets Securities LLC	213,850
Macquarie Capital (USA) Inc.	64,625
Total	23,500,000

The underwriters are offering the shares subject to their acceptance of the shares from us and subject to prior sale. The underwriting agreement provides that the obligations of the underwriters to pay for and accept delivery of the shares are subject to, among other things, approval of legal matters by counsel and other conditions. The underwriters are obligated to purchase all the shares if they purchase any of the shares. However, the underwriters are not required to take or pay for the shares covered by the underwriters' over-allotment option to purchase additional shares of Common Stock described below. The underwriting agreement also provides that if an underwriter defaults, the purchase commitments of non-defaulting underwriters may also be increased or the offering may be terminated.

The shares of Common Stock sold by the underwriters to the public will initially be offered at the initial public offering price set forth on the cover of this prospectus supplement. Any shares sold by the underwriters to securities dealers may be sold at a selling concession from the initial public offering price not in excess of \$1.5423 per share. If all the shares are not sold at the initial offering price, the underwriters may change the offering price and the other selling terms.

We have granted the underwriters an option, exercisable for 30 days after the date of this prospectus supplement, to purchase up to an aggregate of 2,350,000 additional shares of Common Stock, solely to cover over-allotments, if any, at the public offering price listed on the cover page of this prospectus supplement, less

Table of Contents

underwriting discounts and commissions and less an amount per share equal to any dividends that are paid or payable by us on the shares reflected in the preceding table but that are not payable on the shares purchased on exercise of that option. To the extent the over-allotment option is exercised, each underwriter will become obligated, subject to conditions, to purchase approximately the same percentage of the additional shares being purchased as the number of shares listed next to such underwriter's name in the table above bears to the total number of shares listed next to the names of all underwriters in such table.

The following table shows the per share and total public offering price, underwriting discounts and commissions and proceeds before expenses to us. These amounts are shown assuming both no exercise and full exercise of the option of the underwriters to purchase additional shares of Common Stock described above.

	Per Share	No Exercise	Total Full Exercise
Price to the public	\$ 97.00	\$ 2,279,500,000	\$ 2,507,450,000
Underwriting discounts and commissions	\$ 2.5705	\$ 60,406,750	\$ 66,447,425
Proceeds, before expenses, to us	\$ 94.4295	\$ 2,219,093,250	\$ 2,441,002,575

We estimate that the expenses of this offering payable by us, excluding underwriting discounts and commissions, will be approximately \$614,000. The underwriters have agreed to reimburse us for certain of our expenses relating to this offering and related matters.

We have agreed that we will not, subject to certain exceptions, offer, sell, contract to sell, pledge, grant any option to purchase, make any short sale or otherwise dispose, except as provided hereunder, of any Common Stock, preferred stock or any securities of the Company that are substantially similar to the Common Stock or the Mandatory Convertible Preferred Stock, including but not limited to any options or warrants to purchase shares of Common Stock or any securities that are convertible into or exchangeable for, or that represent the right to receive, Common Stock or any such substantially similar securities (Lockup Securities) without the prior consent of the Representatives for a period of 90 days after the date of this prospectus supplement (the Lockup Period).

All of our directors and executive officers have entered into lockup agreements with the underwriters prior to the commencement of this offering pursuant to which each of these persons, for the Lockup Period, has agreed that such person or entity will not, subject to certain exceptions, without the prior written consent of the Representatives:

- (1) offer, sell, contract to sell, pledge, grant any option to purchase, make any short sale or otherwise dispose of any shares of Common Stock, the Mandatory Convertible Preferred Stock or any options or warrants to purchase any shares of our Lockup Securities, or any securities convertible into, exchangeable for or that represent the right to receive shares of our Lockup Securities whether now owned or hereinafter acquired, owned directly by the undersigned (including holding as a custodian) or with respect to which the undersigned has beneficial ownership within the rules and regulations of the SEC; or
- (2) engage in any hedging or other transaction which is designed to or which reasonably could be expected to lead to or result in a sale or disposition the shares owned by a director or executive officer which are subject to the lockup subject to certain exceptions.

Our Common Stock is listed for trading on the NYSE under the trading symbol AMT.

Table of Contents

In connection with the offering, the underwriters may purchase and sell shares of our Common Stock in the open market. Purchases and sales in the open market may include short sales, purchases to cover short positions, stabilizing purchases and penalty bids.

Short sales involve secondary market sales by the underwriters of a greater number of shares than they are required to purchase in the offering.

Covering transactions involve purchases of shares in the open market after the distribution has been completed in order to cover short positions.

Stabilizing transactions involve bids to purchase shares so long as the stabilizing bids do not exceed a specified maximum.

Penalty bids permit the representatives to reclaim a selling concession from an underwriter when the shares originally sold by the underwriter are purchased in a stabilizing transaction or a syndicate covering transaction to cover syndicate short positions. Purchases to cover short positions and stabilizing purchases, as well as other purchases by the underwriters for their own accounts, may have the effect of preventing or retarding a decline in the market price of the shares. They may also cause the price of the shares to be higher than the price that would otherwise exist in the open market in the absence of these transactions. The underwriters may conduct these transactions in the over-the-counter market or otherwise. If the underwriters commence any of these transactions, they may discontinue them at any time.

A prospectus in electronic format may be made available on the web sites maintained by one or more underwriters, or selling group members, if any, participating in the offering. The underwriters may agree to allocate a number of shares to underwriters and selling group members for sale to their online brokerage account holders. Internet distributions will be allocated by the Representatives to underwriters and selling group members that may make Internet distributions on the same basis as other allocations.

The underwriters have performed commercial banking, investment banking and advisory services for us from time to time for which they have received customary fees and reimbursement of expenses. The underwriters may, from time to time, engage in transactions with and perform services for us in the ordinary course of their business for which they may receive customary fees and reimbursement of expenses.

In the ordinary course of their business activities, the underwriters and their affiliates may make or hold a broad array of investments and actively trade debt and equity securities (or related derivative securities) and financial instruments (including bank loans) for their own account and for the accounts of their customers. Such investments and securities activities may involve securities and/or instruments of ours or our affiliates. The underwriters and their affiliates may also make investment recommendations and/or publish or express independent research views in respect of such securities or financial instruments and may hold, or recommend to clients that they acquire, long and/or short positions in such securities and instruments. In addition, Goldman, Sachs & Co. acted as a financial advisor and provided committed financing in connection with the Proposed Verizon Transaction. Goldman, Sachs & Co. will receive customary fees for such roles.

In addition, affiliates of certain of the underwriters from time to time have acted, or in the future may act, as agents and/or lenders to us and our affiliates and subsidiaries under our or their respective credit facilities, for which services they expect to receive customary compensation. For example, certain of the underwriters and/or their respective affiliates acted as lenders in connection with the amendments to our credit facilities and have committed to provide the bridge loan in connection with the Proposed Verizon Transaction. See Prospectus Supplement Summary Recent Developments Bridge Loan Commitment and Amendments to Our Credit Facilities.

We have agreed to indemnify the underwriters against certain liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act, or to contribute with respect to payments that the underwriters may be required to make.

Table of Contents

Other than in the United States, no action has been taken by us or the underwriters that would permit a public offering of the securities offered by this prospectus supplement in any jurisdiction where action for that purpose is required. The securities offered by this prospectus supplement may not be offered or sold, directly or indirectly, nor may this prospectus supplement or any other offering material or advertisements in connection with the offer and sale of any such securities be distributed or published in any jurisdiction, except under circumstances that will result in compliance with the applicable rules and regulations of that jurisdiction. Persons into whose possession this prospectus supplement comes are advised to inform themselves about and to observe any restrictions relating to the offering and the distribution of this prospectus supplement. This prospectus supplement does not constitute an offer to sell or a solicitation of an offer to buy any securities offered thereby in any jurisdiction in which such an offer or a solicitation is unlawful.

Notice to Prospective Investors in the European Economic Area

In relation to each member state of the European Economic Area that has implemented the Prospectus Directive (each, a relevant member state), with effect from and including the date on which the Prospectus Directive is implemented in that relevant member state (the relevant implementation date), an offer of securities described in this prospectus supplement may not be made to the public in that relevant member state other than under the following exemptions if they have been implemented in that member state:

to any legal entity which is a qualified investor as defined in the Prospectus Directive;

to fewer than 100 or, if the relevant member state has implemented the relevant provision of the 2010 PD Amending Directive, 150, natural or legal persons (other than qualified investors as defined in the Prospectus Directive), as permitted under the Prospectus Directive, subject to obtaining the prior consent of the relevant Dealer or Dealers nominated by us for any such offer; or

in any other circumstances falling within Article 3(2) of the Prospectus Directive, provided that no such offer of securities shall require us or any underwriter to publish a prospectus pursuant to Article 3 of the Prospectus Directive.

For purposes of this provision, the expression an offer of securities to the public in any relevant member state means the communication in any form and by any means of sufficient information on the terms of the offer and the securities to be offered so as to enable an investor to decide to purchase or subscribe for the securities, as the expression may be varied in that member state by any measure implementing the Prospectus Directive in that member state, and the expression Prospectus Directive means Directive 2003/71/EC (and amendments thereto, including the 2010 PD Amending Directive, to the extent implemented in the relevant member state) and includes any relevant implementing measure in each relevant member state. The expression 2010 PD Amending Directive means Directive 2010/73/EU.

The sellers of the securities have not authorized and do not authorize the making of any offer of securities through any financial intermediary on their behalf, other than offers made by the underwriters with a view to the final placement of the securities as contemplated in this prospectus supplement. Accordingly, no purchaser of the securities, other than the underwriters, is authorized to make any further offer of the securities on behalf of the sellers or the underwriters.

Notice to Prospective Investors in the United Kingdom

This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus are only being distributed to, and are only directed at, (i) persons who are outside the United Kingdom, (ii) investment professionals falling within Article 19(5) of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (Financial Promotion) Order 2005 (the Order) or (iii) high net worth companies, and other persons to whom it may lawfully be communicated, falling within Article 49(2)(a) to (d) of the Order (all such persons together being referred to as relevant persons). The securities described in this prospectus supplement are only available to, and any invitation, offer or agreement to subscribe, purchase or otherwise acquire such securities will be engaged in only with, relevant persons. Any person who is not a relevant person should not act or rely on this document or any of its contents.

Table of Contents

Each underwriter has represented, warranted and agreed that:

it has only communicated or caused to be communicated and will only communicate or cause to be communicated an invitation or inducement to engage in investment activity (within the meaning of Section 21 of the Financial Services and Market Act 2000 (FSMA)) received by it in connection with the issue or sale of any securities which is contemplated by this prospectus supplement in circumstances in which Section 21(1) of the FSMA does not apply to us; and

it has complied and will comply with all applicable provisions of the FSMA with respect to anything done by it in relation to such securities in, from or otherwise involving the United Kingdom.

Notice to Prospective Investors in Switzerland

The securities may not be publicly offered in Switzerland and will not be listed on the SIX Swiss Exchange (SIX) or on any other stock exchange or regulated trading facility in Switzerland. This document has been prepared without regard to the disclosure standards for issuance prospectuses under art. 652a or art. 1156 of the Swiss Code of Obligations or the disclosure standards for listing prospectuses under art. 27 ff. of the SIX Listing Rules or the listing rules of any other stock exchange or regulated trading facility in Switzerland. Neither this document nor any other offering or marketing material relating to the securities or the offering may be publicly distributed or otherwise made publicly available in Switzerland.

Neither this document nor any other offering or marketing material relating to the offering, the Company, the securities have been or will be filed with or approved by any Swiss regulatory authority. In particular, this document will not be filed with, and the offer of securities will not be supervised by, the Swiss Financial Market Supervisory Authority FINMA (FINMA), and the offer of securities has not been and will not be authorized under the Swiss Federal Act on Collective Investment Schemes (CISA). The investor protection afforded to acquirers of interests in collective investment schemes under the CISA does not extend to acquirers of securities.

Notice to Prospective Investors in the Dubai International Financial Centre

This prospectus supplement relates to an Exempt Offer in accordance with the Offered Securities Rules of the Dubai Financial Services Authority (DFSA). This prospectus supplement is intended for distribution only to persons of a type specified in the Offered Securities Rules of the DFSA. It must not be delivered to, or relied on by, any other person. The DFSA has no responsibility for reviewing or verifying any documents in connection with Exempt Offers. The DFSA has not approved this prospectus supplement nor taken steps to verify the information set forth herein and has no responsibility for the prospectus supplement. The securities to which this prospectus supplement relates may be illiquid and/or subject to restrictions on their resale. Prospective purchasers of the securities offered should conduct their own due diligence on the securities. If you do not understand the contents of this prospectus supplement you should consult an authorized financial advisor.

Notice to Prospective Investors in Australia

No placement document, prospectus, product disclosure statement or other disclosure document has been lodged with the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC), in relation to the offering. This prospectus does not constitute a prospectus, product disclosure statement or other disclosure document under the Corporations Act 2001 (the Corporations Act), and does not purport to include the information required for a prospectus, product disclosure statement or other disclosure document under the Corporations Act.

Any offer in Australia of the securities may only be made to persons (the Exempt Investors) who are sophisticated investors (within the meaning of section 708(8) of the Corporations Act), professional investors (within the meaning of section 708(11) of the Corporations Act) or otherwise pursuant to one or more exemptions contained in section 708 of the Corporations Act so that it is lawful to offer the securities without disclosure to investors under Chapter 6D of the Corporations Act.

Table of Contents

The securities applied for by Exempt Investors in Australia must not be offered for sale in Australia in the period of 12 months after the date of allotment under the offering, except in circumstances where disclosure to investors under Chapter 6D of the Corporations Act would not be required pursuant to an exemption under section 708 of the Corporations Act or otherwise or where the offer is pursuant to a disclosure document which complies with Chapter 6D of the Corporations Act. Any person acquiring securities must observe such Australian on-sale restrictions.

This prospectus contains general information only and does not take account of the investment objectives, financial situation or particular needs of any particular person. It does not contain any securities recommendations or financial product advice. Before making an investment decision, investors need to consider whether the information in this prospectus is appropriate to their needs, objectives and circumstances, and, if necessary, seek expert advice on those matters.

Notice to Prospective Investors in Singapore

The securities which are the subject of this prospectus supplement do not represent units in a collective investment scheme which is authorized or recognized by the Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS) under Section 286 or 287 of the Securities and Futures Act (Chapter 289 of Singapore) (SFA) and this prospectus supplement has not been registered as a prospectus with the Monetary Authority of Singapore under the SFA. This prospectus supplement and any other document or material in connection with the offer or sale, or invitation for subscription or purchase, of the securities will not be circulated or distributed, nor will the securities be offered or sold, or be made the subject of an invitation for subscription or purchase, whether directly or indirectly, to persons in Singapore, other than institutional investors as defined in Section 4A of the SFA or relevant regulations thereunder.

Table of Contents

LEGAL MATTERS

Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP, New York, New York, will pass upon the validity of the Common Stock for American Tower. Sullivan & Worcester LLP, Boston, Massachusetts, will pass upon our qualification and taxation as a REIT. Certain other legal matters will be passed upon for American Tower by Edmund DiSanto, Esq., Executive Vice President and General Counsel of American Tower. The underwriters will be represented by Shearman & Sterling LLP, New York, New York.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements, and the related financial statement schedule, incorporated in this prospectus supplement by reference to our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2014 and the effectiveness of our internal control over financial reporting have been audited by Deloitte & Touche LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, as stated in their reports, which are incorporated herein by reference. Those consolidated financial statements and financial statement schedule have been so incorporated in reliance upon the reports of such firm given upon their authority as experts in accounting and auditing.

S-36

Table of Contents

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. Our SEC filings are available to the public over the Internet at the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>. Please note that the SEC's website is included in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus as an inactive textual reference only. The information contained on the SEC's website is not incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus and should not be considered to be part of this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus, except as described in the following paragraph. You may also read and copy any document we file with the SEC at its public reference facility at 100 F Street, NE, Washington, D.C. 20549. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the operation of the public reference facility.

We incorporate by reference into this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus certain information we file with the SEC, which means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to those documents. The information incorporated by reference is an important part of this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. Certain information that we subsequently file with the SEC will automatically update and supersede information in this prospectus supplement and in our other filings with the SEC. We incorporate by reference the documents listed below, which we have already filed with the SEC, 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 (the Exchange Act) until the termination of the offering made by this prospectus supplement, except that we are not incorporating any information included in a Current Report on Form 8-K that has been or will be furnished (and not filed) with the SEC, unless such information is expressly incorporated herein or in the accompanying prospectus by a reference to a furnished Current Report on Form 8-K or other furnished document:

our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2014 filed with the SEC on February 24, 2015;

our Definitive Proxy Statement filed with the SEC on April 4, 2014 pursuant to Section 14 of the Exchange Act; and

our Current Reports on Form 8-K filed with the SEC on January 12, 2015, February 5, 2015 (Item 1.01 only), February 11, 2015, February 23, 2015 (Item 5.02 and Exhibit 10.1 only) and February 24, 2015.

You may request a copy of these filings at no cost, by writing or calling us at the following address: 116 Huntington Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts 02116, Tel: (617) 375-7500, Attention: Investor Relations.

Table of Contents

Common Stock

Preferred Stock

Debt Securities

Depositary Shares

Warrants

Purchase Contracts

Units

The following are types of securities that we may offer, issue and sell from time to time, or that may be sold by selling securityholders from time to time, together or separately:

shares of our common stock;

shares of our preferred stock;

debt securities;

depositary shares;

warrants to purchase debt or equity securities;

purchase contracts; and

units.

Any of these securities may be offered together or separately and in one or more series, if any, in amounts, at prices and on other terms to be determined at the time of the offering and described in an accompanying prospectus supplement. You should read this prospectus and any prospectus supplement carefully before you invest.

Unless otherwise stated in a prospectus supplement, none of these securities other than our common stock will be listed on any securities exchange. Our common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol **AMT**.

We may offer and sell these securities through one or more underwriters, dealers or agents, through underwriting syndicates managed or co-managed by one or more underwriters, or directly to purchasers, on a continuous or delayed basis. The prospectus supplement for each

offering of securities will describe in detail the plan of distribution for that offering.

To the extent that any selling securityholder resells any securities, the selling securityholder may be required to provide you with this prospectus and a prospectus supplement identifying and containing specific information about the selling securityholder and the terms of the securities being offered.

Investing in the offered securities involves risks. You should consider the risk factors described in any applicable prospectus supplement and in the documents we incorporate by reference.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or passed upon the accuracy or adequacy of this prospectus or any applicable prospectus supplement. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

Prospectus dated May 23, 2013

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>About This Prospectus</u>	1
<u>Note Regarding Forward-Looking Statements</u>	1
<u>American Tower Corporation</u>	2
<u>Risk Factors</u>	2
<u>Use of Proceeds</u>	3
<u>Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges</u>	3
<u>Description of Securities</u>	4
<u>Description of Common Stock</u>	4
<u>Description of Preferred Stock</u>	10
<u>Description of Debt Securities</u>	11
<u>Description of Depositary Shares</u>	22
<u>Description of Warrants</u>	22
<u>Description of Purchase Contracts</u>	23
<u>Description of Units</u>	24
<u>Legal Ownership</u>	25
<u>Plan of Distribution</u>	26
<u>Federal Income Tax Considerations Related to Our Qualification and Taxation as a REIT</u>	28
<u>Certain U.S. Federal Income Tax Considerations Relevant to Holders of Our Debt Securities</u>	43
<u>U.S. Federal Income Tax Considerations Relevant to Holders of Our Stock</u>	48
<u>Validity of the Securities</u>	57
<u>Experts</u>	57
<u>Where You Can Find More Information</u>	57

We are responsible for the information contained and incorporated by reference in this prospectus. We have not authorized anyone to give you any other information, and we take no responsibility for any other information that others may give you. We are not making an offer to sell these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted. You should not assume that the information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus or any prospectus supplement is accurate as of any date other than the date of the document containing the information.

Table of Contents

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of a registration statement that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, which we refer to as the SEC, utilizing an automatic shelf registration process. Under this shelf process, we may periodically sell the securities described in this prospectus in one or more offerings. This prospectus provides a general description of our common stock, preferred stock, debt securities, depository shares, warrants, purchase contracts and units that we may offer. Each time we offer securities, we will provide a prospectus supplement that will contain specific information about the terms of that offering. The prospectus supplement may also add, update or change information, including information about us, contained in this prospectus. Therefore, before making your investment decision, you should carefully read:

this prospectus;

any applicable prospectus supplement, which (1) explains the specific terms of the securities being offered and (2) updates and changes information in this prospectus; and

the documents referred to in **Where You Can Find More Information** on page 57 for information about us, including our financial statements.

References to we, us, our, the Company and American Tower are references to American Tower Corporation and its consolidated subsidiaries unless it is clear from the context that we mean only American Tower Corporation. References herein to our predecessor corporation are references to American Tower Corporation prior to December 31, 2011, the effective date of the merger of American Tower Corporation with and into its wholly owned subsidiary, American Tower REIT Inc. (the surviving company, which was renamed American Tower Corporation after the merger).

NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus, any prospectus supplement and the documents incorporated by reference contain statements about future events and expectations, or forward-looking statements, all of which are inherently uncertain. We have based those forward-looking statements on our current expectations and projections about future results. When we use words such as anticipates, intends, plans, believes, estimates, expects, similar expressions, we do so to identify forward-looking statements. Examples of forward-looking statements include statements we make regarding future prospects of growth in the communications site leasing industry, the level of future expenditures by companies in this industry and other trends in this industry, the effects of consolidation among companies in our industry and among our tenants and other competitive pressures, our ability to maintain or increase our market share, our future operating results, our ability to qualify or to remain qualified for taxation as a real estate investment trust, which we refer to as a REIT, our substantial leverage and debt service obligations, economic, political and other events, particularly those relating to our international operations, changes in environmental, tax and other laws, our ability to protect our rights to the land under our towers, natural disasters and similar events, the amount and timing of any future distributions including those we are required to make as a REIT, our future purchases under our stock repurchase program, our future capital expenditure levels, our future financing transactions and our plans to fund our future liquidity needs. These statements are based on our management's beliefs and assumptions, which in turn are based on currently available information. These assumptions could prove inaccurate.

You should keep in mind that any forward-looking statement we make in this prospectus, any prospectus supplement, the documents incorporated by reference or elsewhere speaks only as of the date on which we make it. New risks and uncertainties arise from time to time, and it is impossible for us to predict these events or how they may affect us. In any event, these and other important factors, including those set forth under the caption **Risk Factors** in a prospectus supplement and the documents incorporated by reference, may cause actual results to differ materially from those indicated by our forward-looking statements. We have no duty, and do not intend, to update or revise the forward-looking statements we make in this prospectus, any prospectus supplement, the documents incorporated by reference or elsewhere, except as may be required by law. In light of these risks and uncertainties, you should keep in mind that the future events or circumstances described in any forward-looking statement we make in this prospectus, any prospectus supplement, the documents incorporated by reference or elsewhere might not occur.

Table of Contents

AMERICAN TOWER CORPORATION

American Tower Corporation was originally created as a subsidiary of American Radio Systems Corporation in 1995 and was spun off into a free-standing public company in 1998. Since inception, we have grown our communications real estate portfolio through acquisitions, long-term lease arrangements and site development. We believe that since January 1, 2012, we have been organized and have operated in a manner that enables us to qualify, and we intend to continue to operate in a manner that will allow us to continue to qualify, as a REIT for U.S. federal income tax purposes.

American Tower Corporation is a holding company organized under the laws of the State of Delaware, and we conduct our operations through our directly and indirectly owned subsidiaries and joint ventures. Our principal domestic operating subsidiaries are American Towers LLC and SpectraSite Communications, LLC. We conduct our international operations through our subsidiary, American Tower International, Inc., which in turn conducts operations through its various international operating subsidiaries and joint ventures. Effective for our taxable year that commenced January 1, 2012, we are taxed as a REIT under Sections 856 through 860 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, which we refer to as the Code.

Our principal executive office is located at 116 Huntington Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts 02116. Our main telephone number at that address is (617) 375-7500.

RISK FACTORS

Investing in the offered securities involves risks. Before deciding to invest in our securities, you should carefully consider the discussion of risks and uncertainties under the heading **Risk Factors** contained in any applicable prospectus supplement and in the documents that are incorporated by reference in this prospectus. See the section entitled **Where You Can Find More Information** on page 57.

Table of Contents**USE OF PROCEEDS**

Except as otherwise set forth in a prospectus supplement, we intend to use the net proceeds from any sale of the securities described in this prospectus for our general corporate purposes, which may include financing possible acquisitions, refinancing our indebtedness and repurchasing our common stock. The net proceeds may be invested temporarily in short-term marketable securities or applied to repay short-term debt until they are used for their stated purpose.

Unless otherwise set forth in a prospectus supplement, we will not receive any proceeds in the event that the securities are sold by a selling securityholder.

RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES

The following table sets forth the ratio of earnings to fixed charges for the indicated periods:

	2008	Year Ended December 31,			2012	Three Months Ended March 31, 2013
		2009	2010	2011		
Ratio of earnings to fixed charges (1)	2.12x	2.27x	2.65x	2.19x	2.32x	2.23x

- (1) For the purpose of this calculation, earnings consists of income from continuing operations before: income taxes, income on equity method investments and fixed charges (excluding interest capitalized and amortization of interest capitalized). Fixed charges consists of interest expensed and capitalized, amortization of debt discounts and premiums and related issuance costs and the component of rental expense associated with operating leases believed by management to be representative of the interest factor thereon.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF SECURITIES

This prospectus contains summary descriptions of the common stock, preferred stock, debt securities, depositary shares, warrants, purchase contracts and units that we or selling securityholders may sell from time to time. These summary descriptions are not meant to be complete descriptions of each security. The particular terms of any security will be described in a related prospectus supplement, if necessary.

DESCRIPTION OF COMMON STOCK

We may periodically issue shares of our common stock or other securities that can be exercised, converted or exchanged into shares of our common stock. The description below summarizes the general terms of our common stock. This section is a summary, and it does not describe every aspect of our common stock. This summary is subject to and qualified in its entirety by reference to the provisions of our Restated Certificate of Incorporation, which we refer to as our Certificate of Incorporation, and our Amended and Restated By-Laws, which we refer to as our By-Laws.

Authorized Shares

As of the date of this prospectus, we are authorized to issue up to one billion (1,000,000,000) shares of common stock with one cent (\$0.01) par value per share.

Voting Rights

With respect to all matters upon which stockholders are entitled to vote, the holders of the outstanding shares of common stock are entitled to one (1) vote in person or by proxy for each share of common stock outstanding in the name of such stockholders on the record of stockholders. Generally, all matters to be voted on by stockholders must be approved by a majority (or by a plurality in the case of election of directors where the number of candidates nominated for election exceeds the number of directors to be elected) of the votes entitled to be cast by all shares of common stock present in person or by proxy.

Dividends and Other Distributions

Subject to applicable law and rights, if any, of the holders of any outstanding series of preferred stock or any class or series of stock having a preference over the common stock with respect to the payment of dividends and other distributions, dividends and other distributions may be declared and paid on the common stock from time to time and in amounts as our board of directors may determine. We pay regular dividends and other distributions, but the amount, timing and frequency of any distribution are at the sole discretion of our board of directors. Dividends and other distributions are declared based upon various factors, including without limitation distributions required to maintain REIT status. The loan agreements for our credit facilities contain covenants that restrict our ability to pay dividends and other distributions unless certain financial covenants are satisfied.

Liquidation Rights

Upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, the holders of common stock are entitled to share ratably in all assets available for distribution after payment in full to creditors and payment in full to holders of preferred stock then outstanding of any amount required to be paid to them. Neither the merger, consolidation or business combination of American Tower with or into any other entity in which our stockholders receive capital stock and/or other securities (including debt securities) of the surviving entity (or the direct or indirect parent entity thereof), nor the sale, lease or transfer by us of any part of our business and assets, nor the reduction of our capital stock, shall be deemed to be a voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up.

Table of Contents

Other Provisions

The holders of common stock have no preemptive, subscription or redemption rights and are not entitled to the benefit of any sinking fund. The shares of common stock presently outstanding are validly issued, fully paid and nonassessable.

We may not subdivide, combine, or pay or declare any stock dividend on, the outstanding shares of common stock unless all outstanding shares of common stock are subdivided or combined or the holders of common stock receive a proportionate dividend.

Restrictions on Ownership and Transfer

For us to comply with and have maximum business flexibility under the Federal Communications Laws (defined in our Certificate of Incorporation and including the Communications Act of 1934, as amended), and for us to qualify as a REIT under the Code, our Certificate of Incorporation contains restrictions on stock ownership and stock transfers. These ownership and transfer restrictions could delay, defer or prevent a transaction or a change in control that might involve a premium price for our common stock or otherwise be in the best interests of the stockholders.

Federal Communications Laws Restrictions. Our Certificate of Incorporation permits us to restrict the ownership or proposed ownership of shares of our stock if that ownership or proposed ownership (i) is or could be inconsistent with, or in violation of, Federal Communications Laws (as defined in our Certificate of Incorporation); (ii) limits or impairs, or could limit or impair, our business activities or proposed business activities under the Federal Communications Laws; or (iii) subjects or could subject us to CFIUS Review (as defined in our Certificate of Incorporation) or to any provision of the Federal Communications Laws, including those requiring any review, authorization or approval, to which we would not be subject but for that ownership or proposed ownership, including, without limitation, Section 310 of the Communications Act and regulations relating to foreign ownership, multiple ownership or cross-ownership (clauses (i) through (iii) above are collectively referred to as FCC Regulatory Limitations). We reserve the right to require any person to whom a FCC Regulatory Limitation may apply to promptly furnish to us such information (including, without limitation, information with respect to the citizenship, other ownership interests and affiliations) as we may request. If such person fails to furnish all of the information we request, or we conclude that such person's ownership or proposed ownership of our stock, or the exercise by such person of any rights of stock ownership in connection with our stock, may result in a FCC Regulatory Limitation, we reserve the right to:

refuse to permit the transfer of shares of our common stock and/or preferred stock to such person;

to the fullest extent permitted by law, suspend those rights of stock ownership the exercise of which may cause the FCC Regulatory Limitation;

require the conversion of any or all shares of our preferred stock held by such person into a number of shares of our common stock of equivalent value;

redeem the shares of our common stock and/or our preferred stock held by such person pursuant to the procedures set forth below; and/or

exercise any and all appropriate remedies, at law or in equity, in any court of competent jurisdiction, against any such person, with a view toward obtaining the information or preventing or curing any situation that may cause a FCC Regulatory Limitation.

The following procedures apply to the redemption of such person's shares of our common stock and/or preferred stock:

the redemption price of any redeemed shares of our common stock or preferred stock shall be the fair market value (as defined in our Certificate of Incorporation) of those shares;

the redemption price may be paid in cash or any other of our debt or equity securities or any combination thereof;

Table of Contents

the board of directors in its sole discretion may decide to only redeem some (and not all) of such person's shares, which may include the selection of the most recently purchased or acquired shares, selection by lot or selection by such other manner as the board of directors may determine;

we must provide at least 15 days' prior written notice of the date on which we plan to effect the redemption (unless waived by such person); provided, that the redemption date may be the date on which written notice is given to such person if the cash (or any other of our debt or equity securities) necessary to effect the redemption has been deposited in trust for the benefit of such person and is subject to immediate withdrawal by such person upon surrender of the stock certificates for the redeemed shares;

from and after the date of the redemption, any and all rights relating to the redeemed shares shall cease and terminate and such person shall only possess the right to obtain cash (or such other of our debt or equity securities) payable upon the redemption; and

such other terms and conditions as the board of directors may determine.

REIT Restrictions. For us to qualify as a REIT under the Code, our stock 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 (other than the first year for which an election to be a REIT has been made). In addition, not more than 50% of the value of the outstanding shares of our stock may be owned, directly or indirectly, by five or fewer individuals (as defined in the Code to include certain entities such as private foundations) during the last half of a taxable year (other than the first taxable year for which an election to be a REIT has been made). To ensure that these ownership requirements and other requirements for continued qualification as a REIT are met and to otherwise protect us from the consequences of a concentration of ownership among our stockholders, our Certificate of Incorporation contains provisions restricting the ownership or transfer of shares of our stock.

The relevant sections of our Certificate of Incorporation provide that, subject to the exceptions and the constructive ownership rules described below, no person (as defined in our Certificate of Incorporation) may beneficially or constructively own more than 9.8% in value of our aggregate outstanding stock, or more than 9.8% in value or number (whichever is more restrictive) of the outstanding shares of any class or series of our stock. We refer to these restrictions as the ownership limits.

The applicable constructive ownership rules under the Code are complex and may cause stock owned, actually or constructively, by a group of related individuals or entities to be treated as owned by one individual or entity. As a result, the acquisition of less than 9.8% in value of our aggregate outstanding stock or less than 9.8% in value or number of our outstanding shares of any class or series of stock (including through the acquisition of an interest in an entity that owns, actually or constructively, any class or series of our stock) by an individual or entity could nevertheless cause that individual or entity, or another individual or entity, to own, constructively or beneficially, in excess of 9.8% in value of our aggregate outstanding stock or 9.8% in value or number of our outstanding shares of any class or series of stock.

In addition to the ownership limits, our Certificate of Incorporation prohibits any person from actually or constructively owning shares of our stock to the extent that such ownership would cause any of our income that would otherwise qualify as rents from real property for purposes of Section 856(d) of the Code to fail to qualify as such.

The board of directors may, in its sole discretion, exempt a person from the ownership limits and certain other REIT limits on ownership and transfer of our stock described above, and may establish a different limit on ownership for that person. However, the board of directors may not exempt any person whose ownership of outstanding stock in violation of these limits would result in our failing to qualify as a REIT. In order to be considered by the board of directors for an exemption or a different limit on ownership, a person must make such representations and undertakings as are reasonably necessary to ascertain that the person's beneficial or

Table of Contents

constructive ownership of our stock will not now or in the future jeopardize our ability to qualify as a REIT and must agree that any violation or attempted violation of those representations or undertakings (or other action that is contrary to the ownership limits and certain other REIT limits on ownership and transfer of our stock described above) will result in the shares of stock being automatically transferred to a trust as described below. As a condition of its waiver, the board of directors may require an opinion of counsel or IRS ruling satisfactory to it with respect to our qualification as a REIT and may impose such other conditions as it deems appropriate in connection with the granting of the exemption or different limit on ownership.

In connection with the waiver of the ownership limits or at any other time, the board of directors may from time to time increase the ownership limits for one or more persons and decrease the ownership limits for all other persons; provided that the new ownership limits may not, after giving effect to such increase and under certain assumptions stated in our Certificate of Incorporation, result in us being closely held within the meaning of Section 856(h) of the Code (without regard to whether the ownership interests are held during the last half of a taxable year). Reduced ownership limits will not apply to any person whose percentage ownership of our aggregate outstanding stock or of the shares of a class or series of our stock, as applicable, is in excess of such decreased ownership limits until such time as that person's percentage of our aggregate outstanding stock or of the shares of a class or series of stock, as applicable, equals or falls below the decreased ownership limits, but any further acquisition of shares of our stock or of a class or series of our stock, as applicable, in excess of such percentage ownership of shares of stock or of a class or series of stock will be in violation of the ownership limits.

Our Certificate of Incorporation further prohibits:

any person from transferring shares of our stock if the transfer would result in our aggregate outstanding stock being beneficially owned by fewer than 100 persons (determined without reference to any rules of attribution); and

any person from beneficially or constructively owning shares of our stock if that ownership would result in our failing to qualify as a REIT.

The foregoing provisions on transferability and ownership will not apply if the board of directors determines that it is no longer in our best interests to attempt to qualify, or to continue to qualify, as a REIT.

Any person who acquires, or attempts or intends to acquire, beneficial or constructive ownership of shares of our stock that will or may violate the ownership limits or any of the other foregoing restrictions on transferability and ownership will be required to give notice to us immediately (or, in the case of a proposed or attempted transaction, at least 15 days prior to the transaction) and provide us with such other information as we may request in order to determine the effect, if any, of the transfer on our qualification as a REIT.

Pursuant to our Certificate of Incorporation, if there is any purported transfer of our stock or other event or change of circumstances that, if effective or otherwise, would violate any of the restrictions described above, then the number of shares causing the violation (rounded up to the nearest whole share) will be automatically transferred to a trust for the exclusive benefit of a designated charitable beneficiary, except that any transfer that results in the violation of the restriction relating to our stock being beneficially owned by fewer than 100 persons will be automatically void and of no force or effect. The automatic transfer will be effective as of the close of business on the business day prior to the date of the purported transfer or other event or change of circumstances that requires the transfer to the trust. We refer below to the person that would have owned the shares if they had not been transferred to the trust as the purported transferee. Any ordinary dividend paid to the purported transferee prior to our discovery that the shares had been automatically transferred to a trust as described above must be repaid to the trustee upon demand. Our Certificate of Incorporation also provides for adjustments to the entitlement to receive extraordinary dividends and other distributions as between the purported transferee and the trust. If the transfer to the trust as described above is not automatically effective for any reason, to prevent violation of the applicable restriction contained in our Certificate of Incorporation, the transfer of the excess shares will be automatically void and of no force or effect.

Table of Contents

Shares of our stock transferred to the trustee are deemed to be 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 the transfer to the trust or, if the purported transferee did not give value for the shares in connection with the event causing the shares to be held in trust (e.g., in the case of a gift, devise or other similar transaction), the market price on the day of the event and (ii) the market price on the date we accept, or our designee accepts, the offer. We have the right to accept the offer until the trustee has sold the shares of our stock held in the trust pursuant to the clauses discussed below. Upon a sale to us, the interest of the charitable beneficiary in the shares sold terminates and the trustee must distribute the net proceeds of the sale to the purported transferee, except that the trustee may reduce the amount payable to the purported transferee by the amount of any ordinary dividends that we paid to the purported transferee prior to our discovery that the shares had been transferred to the trust and that is owed by the purported transferee to the trustee as described above. Any net sales proceeds in excess of the amount payable to the purported transferee will be immediately paid to the charitable beneficiary, and any ordinary dividends held by the trustee with respect to the stock will be paid to the charitable beneficiary.

If we do not buy the shares, the trustee must, as soon as reasonably practicable (and, if the shares are listed on a national securities exchange, within 20 days) after receiving notice from us of the transfer of shares to the trust, sell the shares to a person or entity who could own the shares without violating the restrictions described above. Upon such a sale, the trustee must distribute to the purported transferee an amount equal to the lesser of (i) the price paid by the purported transferee for the shares or, if the purported transferee did not give value for the shares in connection with the event causing the shares to be held in trust (e.g., in the case of a gift, devise or other such transaction), the market price of the shares on the day of the event causing the shares to be held in the trust, and (ii) the sales proceeds (net of commissions and other expenses of sale) received by the trustee for the shares. The trustee may reduce the amount payable to the purported transferee by the amount of any ordinary dividends that we paid to the purported transferee before our discovery that the shares had been transferred to the trust and that is owed by the purported transferee to the trustee as described above. Any net sales proceeds in excess of the amount payable to the purported transferee will be immediately paid to the charitable beneficiary, together with any ordinary dividends held by the trustee with respect to such stock. In addition, if prior to discovery by us that shares of stock have been transferred to a trust, the shares of stock are sold by a purported transferee, then the shares will be deemed to have been sold on behalf of the trust and, to the extent that the purported transferee received an amount for or in respect of the shares that exceeds the amount that the purported transferee was entitled to receive as described above, the excess amount will be paid to the trustee upon demand. The purported transferee has no rights in the shares held by the trustee.

The trustee will be indemnified by us or from the proceeds of sales of stock in the trust for its costs and expenses reasonably incurred in connection with conducting its duties and satisfying its obligations under our Certificate of Incorporation. The trustee will also be entitled to reasonable compensation for services provided as determined by agreement between the trustee and the board of directors, which compensation may be funded by us or the trust. If we pay any such indemnification or compensation, we are entitled on a first priority basis (subject to the trustee's indemnification and compensation rights) to be reimbursed from the trust. To the extent the trust funds any such indemnification and compensation, the amounts available for payment to a purported transferee (or the charitable beneficiary) would be reduced.

The trustee will be designated by us and must be unaffiliated with us and with any purported transferee. Prior to the sale of any shares by the trust, the trustee will receive, in trust for the beneficiary, all distributions paid by us with respect to the shares, and may also exercise all voting rights with respect to the shares.

Subject to the General Corporation Law of the State of Delaware, which we refer to as the DGCL, effective as of the date that the shares have been transferred to the trust, the trustee will have the authority, at the trustee's sole discretion:

to rescind as void any vote cast by a purported transferee prior to our discovery that the shares have been transferred to the trust; and

to recast the vote in accordance with the desires of the trustee acting for the benefit of the charitable beneficiary of the trust.

Table of Contents

However, if we have already taken corporate action, then the trustee may not rescind and recast the vote.

In addition, if our board of directors determines that a proposed or purported transfer would violate the restrictions on ownership and transfer of our stock set forth in our Certificate of Incorporation, our board of directors may take such action as it deems advisable to refuse to give effect to or to prevent the violation, including but not limited to, causing us to repurchase shares of our stock, refusing to give effect to the transfer on our books or instituting proceedings to enjoin the transfer.

Following the end of each REIT taxable year, every owner of 5% or more (or such lower percentage as required by the Code or the Treasury regulations promulgated thereunder) of the outstanding shares of any class or series of our stock, must, upon request, provide us written notice of the person's name and address, the number of shares of each class and series of our stock that the person beneficially owns and a description of the manner in which the shares are held. Each such owner must also provide us with such additional information as we may request in order to determine the effect, if any, of such owner's beneficial ownership on our qualification as a REIT and to ensure compliance with the ownership limits. In addition, each beneficial owner or constructive owner of our stock, and any person (including the stockholder of record) who is holding shares of our stock for a beneficial owner or constructive owner will, upon demand, be required to provide us with such information as we may request in good faith in order to determine our qualification as a REIT and to comply with the requirements of any taxing authority or governmental authority or to determine such compliance.

As noted above, the rights, preferences and privileges of the holders of our common stock may be affected by the rights, preferences and privileges granted to holders of preferred stock. Because our board of directors will have the power to establish the preferences and rights of each series of preferred stock, it may afford the stockholders of any series of preferred stock preferences, powers and rights senior to the rights of holders of shares of our common stock that could have the effect of delaying, deferring or preventing a change in control of American Tower. See *Description of Preferred Stock* for more information about our preferred stock.

Certain Anti-Takeover Provisions

Delaware Business Combination Provisions

We are subject to the provisions of Section 203 of the DGCL. Section 203 prohibits a publicly held Delaware corporation from engaging in a business combination with an interested stockholder for a period of three years after the person became an interested stockholder, unless the business combination or the transaction in which the stockholder became an interested stockholder is approved in a prescribed manner. A business combination includes mergers, asset sales and other transactions resulting in a financial benefit to the interested stockholder. Subject to certain exceptions, an interested stockholder is a person who, together with affiliates and associates, owns, or within the prior three years owned, 15% or more of the corporation's voting stock.

Certain Provisions of our Certificate of Incorporation and By-Laws

Our By-Laws establish advance notice procedures with respect to stockholder proposals and the nomination of candidates for election of directors, other than nominations made by, or at the direction of, our board of directors. These procedures may impede stockholders' ability to bring matters before a meeting of stockholders or make nominations for directors at a meeting of stockholders.

Our Certificate of Incorporation includes provisions eliminating the personal liability of our directors to the fullest extent permitted by the DGCL and indemnifying our directors and officers to the fullest extent permitted by the DGCL. The limitation of liability and indemnification provisions in our Certificate of Incorporation may discourage stockholders from bringing a lawsuit against directors for breach of their fiduciary duty. These provisions may also have the effect of reducing the likelihood of derivative litigation against directors and officers, even though a derivative action, if successful, might otherwise benefit us and our stockholders. In addition, the value of investments in our securities may be adversely affected to the extent we pay the costs of settlement and damage awards against directors and officers pursuant to these indemnification provisions.

Table of Contents

Our Certificate of Incorporation provides that any or all of the directors may be removed at any time, either with or without cause, by a vote of a majority of the shares outstanding and entitled to vote. This provision may delay or prevent our stockholders from removing incumbent directors.

The ownership and transfer restrictions contained in our Certificate of Incorporation, and described above, may have the effect of inhibiting or impeding a change in control.

Our Certificate of Incorporation and our By-Laws provide that our By-Laws may be altered, amended, changed or repealed by (i) the approval or consent of not less than a majority of the total outstanding shares of stock entitled to vote generally in the election of directors or (ii) a majority of the entire board of directors.

Certain Provisions of our Debt Obligations

Change of control and merger, consolidation and asset sale provisions in our indentures for our outstanding notes and loan agreements for our credit facilities may discourage a takeover attempt. These provisions may make acquiring us more difficult.

Listing of Common Stock

Our common stock is traded on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol AMT.

Transfer Agent and Registrar

The transfer agent and registrar for our common stock is Computershare, P.O. Box 43006, Providence, RI 02940, (866) 201-5087.

DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED STOCK

Pursuant to our Certificate of Incorporation, the board of directors is empowered, without any approval of our stockholders, to issue shares of preferred stock in one or more series, to establish the number of shares in each series, and to fix the relative rights, preferences, powers, qualifications, limitations and restrictions of each such series. The prospectus supplement relating to any series of preferred stock we may offer will contain the specific terms of that series, including some or all of the following:

whether the shares of the series are redeemable, and if so, the prices at which, and the terms and conditions on which, the shares may be redeemed, including the date or dates upon or after which the shares will be redeemable and the amount per share payable in case of redemption;

whether shares of the series will be entitled to receive dividends or other distributions and, if so, the distribution rate on the shares, any restriction, limitation or condition upon the payment of the dividends or other distributions, whether dividends or other distributions will be cumulative, and the dates on which dividends or other distributions are payable;

any preferential amount payable upon shares of the series in the event of voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up of American Tower;

whether and the extent to which the series will be guaranteed;

whether the shares of the series are convertible, or exchangeable for, shares of any other class or classes of stock or of any other series of stock, or any other securities of American Tower, and if so, the terms and conditions of such conversion or exchange, including price or rates of conversion at which, and the terms and conditions on which, the shares of the series may be converted or exchanged into other securities;

a discussion of any material U.S. federal income tax considerations applicable to the preferred stock being offered;

Table of Contents

terms and conditions of the purchase or sinking fund provisions, if any, for the purchase or redemption of shares of the series;

the distinctive designation of each series and the number of shares that will constitute the series;

the voting power, if any, of shares of the series; and

any other relative rights, preferences or limitations.

As of the date of this prospectus, we are authorized to issue up to twenty million (20,000,000) shares of preferred stock, par value \$0.01 per share, and have no shares of preferred stock outstanding. Some of the provisions described in the section **Description of Common Stock Restrictions on Ownership and Transfer** may also apply to any shares of preferred stock we issue.

DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES

This section describes the general terms that will apply to any debt securities that we may offer pursuant to this prospectus and an applicable prospectus supplement. The specific terms of any offered debt securities, and the extent to which the general terms described in this section apply to these debt securities, will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement at the time of the offering. The prospectus supplement, which we will file with the SEC, may or may not modify the general terms found in this prospectus. For a complete description of any series of debt securities, you should read both this prospectus and the prospectus supplement that applies to that series of debt securities.

In this section, the terms **we**, **our**, **us** and **American Tower** refer solely to American Tower Corporation (and not to any of its affiliates, including subsidiaries). As used in this prospectus, **debt securities** means the debentures, notes, bonds and other evidences of indebtedness offered pursuant to this prospectus and an applicable prospectus supplement and authenticated by the relevant trustee and delivered under the applicable indenture.

We may issue senior debt securities under an indenture dated as of May 13, 2010 between us and The Bank of New York Mellon Trust Company, N.A., as trustee (the **2010 Indenture**), or under an indenture dated as of May 23, 2013 between us and U.S. Bank National Association, as trustee (the **2013 Indenture**). The 2010 Indenture and the 2013 Indenture are filed, or incorporated by reference, as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part. We may issue subordinated debt under a separate indenture to be entered into between us, U.S. Bank National Association, as trustee, as supplemented from time to time. This indenture, as supplemented, is referred to in this prospectus as the **Subordinated Indenture**. References to the **indenture** in this prospectus refer to the 2010 Indenture, the 2013 Indenture or the Subordinated Indenture, as applicable. References to the **trustee** in this prospectus refer to The Bank of New York Mellon Trust Company, N.A. when used in connection with the 2010 Indenture, and to U.S. Bank National Association when used in connection with the 2013 Indenture and the Subordinated Indenture. If a different trustee or a different indenture for a series of debt securities is used, those details will be provided in a prospectus supplement and the forms of any other indentures will be filed with the SEC at the time they are used.

We have summarized below the material provisions of the indenture and the debt securities, and indicated which material provisions will be described in an applicable prospectus supplement. For further information, you should read the indenture. The following summary is qualified in its entirety by the provisions of the indenture.

General

The debt securities that we may offer under the indenture are not limited in aggregate principal amount. We may issue debt securities at one or more times in one or more series. Each series of debt securities may have different terms. The terms of any series of debt securities will be described in, or determined by action taken pursuant to, a resolution of our board of directors or a committee appointed by our board of directors or in a supplement to the indenture relating to that series.

Table of Contents

We are not obligated to issue all debt securities of one series at the same time and, unless otherwise provided in the prospectus supplement, we may reopen a series, without the consent of the holders of the debt securities of that series, for the issuance of additional debt securities of that series. Additional debt securities of a particular series will have the same terms and conditions as outstanding debt securities of that series, except for the date of original issuance and the offering price, and will be consolidated with, and form a single series with, those outstanding debt securities.

The prospectus supplement relating to any series of debt securities that we may offer will state the price or prices at which the debt securities will be offered and will contain the specific terms of that series. These terms may include the following:

the title of the series;

any limit upon the aggregate principal amount of the series;

the date or dates on which each of the principal of and premium, if any, on the securities of the series is payable and the method of determination thereof;

the rate or rates at which the securities of the series will bear interest, if any, or the method of calculating such rate or rates of interest, the date or dates from which interest will accrue or the method by which the date or dates will be determined, the interest payment dates on which any interest will be payable and the record date, if any;

the place or places where the principal of (and premium, if any) and interest, if any, on securities of the series will be payable;

the place or places where the securities may be exchanged or transferred;

the period or periods within which, the price or prices at which, the currency or currencies (including currency unit or units) in which, and the other terms and conditions upon which, securities of the series may be redeemed, in whole or in part, at our option, if we are to have that option with respect to the applicable series;

our obligation, if any, to redeem or purchase securities of the series in whole or in part pursuant to any sinking fund or analogous provision or upon the happening of a specified event or at the option of a holder thereof and the period or periods within which, the price or prices at which, and the other terms and conditions upon which securities of the series will be redeemed or purchased, in whole or in part, pursuant to such an obligation;

if other than denominations of \$2,000 and multiples of \$1,000 thereafter, the denominations in which securities of the series are issuable;

if other than U.S. dollars, the currency or currencies (including currency unit or units) in which payments of principal of (and premium, if any) and interest, if any, on the securities of the series will or may be payable, or in which the securities of the series will be denominated, and the particular provisions applicable thereto;

Edgar Filing: AMERICAN TOWER CORP /MA/ - Form 424B2

if the payments of principal of (and premium, if any), or interest, if any, on the securities of the series are to be made, at our or a holder's election, in a currency or currencies (including currency unit or units) other than that in which the securities are denominated or designated to be payable, the currency or currencies (including currency unit or units) in which the payments are to be made, the terms and conditions of the payments and the manner in which the exchange rate with respect to the payments will be determined, and the particular provisions applicable thereto;

if the amount of payments of principal of (and premium, if any) and interest, if any, on the securities of the series will be determined with reference to an index, formula or other method (which index, formula or method may be based, without limitation, on a currency or currencies (including currency unit or units) other than that in which the securities of the series are denominated or designated to be payable), the index, formula or other method by which those amounts will be determined;

Table of Contents

whether, and the terms and conditions upon which, the securities of the series may or must be converted into our securities or exchanged for our securities or those of another enterprise;

if other than the principal amount thereof, the portion of the principal amount of securities of the series which will be payable upon declaration of acceleration of the maturity thereof pursuant to an event of default or the method by which that portion will be determined;

any modifications of or additions to the events of default or covenants with respect to securities of the series, or any modifications of or additions to subordination provisions with respect to the subordinated debt securities;

whether the securities of the series will be subject to legal defeasance or covenant defeasance as provided in the indenture;

if other than the trustee, the identity of the registrar and any paying agent;

if the securities of the series will be issued in whole or in part in global form, (i) the depositary for the global securities, (ii) the form of any legend that will be borne by the global securities, (iii) whether beneficial owners of interests in any securities of the series in global form may exchange those interests for certificated securities of that series and of like tenor of any authorized form and denomination and (iv) the circumstances under which any such exchange may occur; and

any other terms of the series.

Interest

Unless otherwise indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, if any payment date with respect to debt securities falls on a day that is not a business day, we will make the payment on the next business day. The payment made on the next business day will be treated as though it had been made on the original payment date, and no interest will accrue on the payment for the additional period of time.

Ranking

The senior debt securities will be our direct, unconditional, unsecured and unsubordinated obligations and will rank *pari passu* with all of our other unsecured senior obligations. However, the senior debt securities will be effectively junior to all of our secured obligations to the extent of the value of the assets securing those obligations. The debt securities will also be structurally subordinated to all liabilities, including trade payables and lease obligations, of our subsidiaries. The subordinated debt securities will be our direct, unconditional, unsecured and subordinated obligations and will be junior in right of payment to our existing and future senior obligations. The extent of subordination of the subordinated debt securities will be described below under **Additional Provisions Applicable to Subordinated Debt Securities** **Subordination of Subordinated Debt Securities**, or as described in an accompanying prospectus supplement.

Covenants

Except as described below or in the prospectus supplement with respect to any series of debt securities, neither we nor our subsidiaries are restricted by the indenture from paying dividends or making distributions on our or their capital stock or purchasing or redeeming our or their capital stock. The indenture does not require the maintenance of any financial ratios or specified levels of net worth or liquidity. In addition, with certain exceptions, the indenture does not contain any covenants or other provisions that would limit our or our subsidiaries' right to incur additional indebtedness or limit the amount of additional indebtedness, including senior or secured indebtedness that we can create, incur, assume or guarantee.

Unless otherwise indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, covenants contained in the indenture will be applicable to the series of debt securities to which the prospectus supplement relates so long as any of the debt securities of that series are outstanding.

Table of Contents

Reporting

The indenture provides that we will furnish to the trustee, within 15 days after we are required to file such annual and quarterly reports, information, documents and other reports with the SEC, copies of our annual report and of the information, documents and other reports that we are required to file with the SEC pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, which we refer to as the Exchange Act. We will also comply with the other provisions of Section 314(a) of the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended, which we refer to as the Trust Indenture Act.

Consolidation, Merger and Sale of Assets

The indenture provides that we may not consolidate or merge with or into, or sell or convey all or substantially all of our assets in any one transaction or series of related transactions to another person, unless:

either we are the resulting, surviving or transferee corporation, or our successor is a corporation organized under the laws of the United States, any state or the District of Columbia and expressly assumes by supplemental indenture all of our obligations under the indenture and all the debt securities; and

immediately after giving effect to the transaction, no default or event of default has occurred and is continuing.

The term **default** for the purpose of this provision means any event that is, or with the passage of time or the giving of notice or both would become, an event of default.

Except in the case of a lease of all or substantially all of our assets, the successor will be substituted for us in the indenture with the same effect as if it had been an original party to such indenture. Thereafter, the successor may exercise our rights and powers under the indenture.

Events of Default, Notice and Waiver

In the indenture, the term **event of default** with respect to debt securities of any series means any of the following:

failure by us to pay interest, if any, on the debt securities of that series for 30 days after the date payment is due and payable;

failure by us to pay principal of or premium, if any, on the debt securities of that series when due, at maturity, upon any redemption, by declaration or otherwise;

failure by us to comply with other covenants in the indenture or the debt securities of that series for 90 days after notice that compliance was required; and

certain events of bankruptcy or insolvency of us or any of our significant subsidiaries.

The term **significant subsidiaries** for the purpose of this provision means any of our subsidiaries that would be a **significant subsidiary** as defined in Rule 1-02(w) of Regulation S-X of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, which we refer to as the Securities Act.

If an event of default (other than relating to certain events of bankruptcy or insolvency of us or breach of our reporting obligation) has occurred and is continuing, the trustee or the holders of not less than 25% in aggregate principal amount of the debt securities of that series may declare the entire principal of all the debt securities of the affected series to be due and payable immediately.

Edgar Filing: AMERICAN TOWER CORP /MA/ - Form 424B2

If an event of default relating to certain events of bankruptcy or insolvency of us occurs and is continuing, then the principal amount of all of the outstanding debt securities and any accrued interest thereon will automatically become due and payable immediately, without any declaration or other act by the trustee or any holder.

Table of Contents

The holders of not less than a majority in aggregate principal amount of the debt securities of any series may, after satisfying conditions, rescind and annul any of the above-described declarations and consequences involving the debt securities of that series, except a continuing default or event of default in the payment of principal of, or interest or premium, if any, on the debt securities of the affected series.

The indenture imposes limitations on suits brought by holders of debt securities of any series against us. Except for actions for payment of overdue principal or interest, no holder of a debt security of any series may institute any action against us under the indenture unless:

the holder has previously given to the trustee written notice of an event of default and the continuance of that event of default;

the holder or holders of at least 25% in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series have requested that the trustee pursue the remedy;

such holder or holders have offered to the trustee security or indemnity reasonably satisfactory to the trustee against the costs, expenses and liabilities to be incurred in compliance with such request;

the trustee has not instituted the action within 60 days of the receipt of such notice, request and offer of indemnity; and

the trustee has not received inconsistent direction by the holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series.

We will be required to file annually with the trustee a certificate, signed by two officers of our company, stating whether or not the officers know of any default by us in the performance, observance or fulfillment of any condition or covenant of the indenture.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the sole remedy for any breach of our obligation under the indenture to file or furnish reports or other financial information pursuant to section 314(a)(1) of the Trust Indenture Act (or as otherwise required by the indenture) shall be the payment of liquidated damages, and the holders will not have any right under the indenture to accelerate the maturity of the debt securities of the affected series as a result of any such breach. If any such breach continues for 90 days after notice thereof is given in accordance with the indenture, we will pay liquidated damages to all the holders of the debt securities of that series at a rate per annum equal to (i) 0.25% per annum of the principal amount of the debt securities of that series from the 90th day following such notice to but not including the 180th day following such notice (or such earlier date on which the event of default relating to the reporting obligations referred to in this paragraph shall have been cured or waived) and (ii) 0.50% per annum of the principal amount of the debt securities of that series from the 180th day following such notice to but not including the 365th day following such notice (or such earlier date on which the event of default relating to the reporting obligations referred to in this paragraph shall have been cured or waived). On such 365th day (or earlier, if the event of default relating to the reporting obligations referred to in this paragraph shall have been cured or waived prior to such 365th day), such additional interest will cease to accrue, and the debt securities of that series will be subject to acceleration as provided above if the event of default is continuing. The provisions of the indenture described in this paragraph will not affect the rights of the holders of the debt securities of any series in the event of the occurrence of any other event of default.

Modification and Waiver

Except as provided in the two succeeding paragraphs, the indenture provides that we and the trustee thereunder may, with the consent of the holders of not less than a majority in aggregate principal amount of the debt securities of any series then outstanding (including, without limitation, consents obtained in connection with a purchase of, or tender offer or exchange offer for, debt securities of that series), voting as one class, add any provisions to, or change in any manner, eliminate or modify in any way the provisions of, the indenture or modify in any manner the rights of the holders of the debt securities of that series.

Table of Contents

We and the trustee may amend or supplement the indenture or the debt securities of any series without the consent of any holder to:

secure the debt securities of any series;

evidence the assumption by a successor corporation of our obligations under the indenture and the debt securities of any series in the case of a merger, amalgamation, consolidation or sale of all or substantially all of our assets;

add covenant(s) or events of default(s) for the protection of the holders of all or any series of debt securities;

cure any ambiguity or correct any defect or inconsistency in the indenture or make any other provisions as we may deem necessary or desirable; provided, however, that no such provisions will materially adversely affect the interests of the holders of any debt securities;

evidence and provide for the acceptance of appointment by a successor trustee in accordance with the indenture;

provide for uncertificated debt securities in addition to, or in place of, certificated debt securities of any series in a manner that does not materially and adversely affect any holders of the debt securities of that series;

conform the text of the indenture or the debt securities of any series to any provision of this Description of Debt Securities or Description of Securities in the prospectus supplement for that series to the extent that the provision in that description was intended to be a verbatim recitation of a provision of the indenture or the debt securities of that series;

provide for the issuance of additional debt securities of any series in accordance with the limitations set forth in the indenture as of the date of the indenture;

make any change that would provide any additional rights or benefits to the holders of all or any series of debt securities or that does not adversely affect the legal rights under the indenture of any such holder or any holder of a beneficial interest in the debt securities of that series;

comply with requirements of the SEC in order to effect or maintain the qualification of the indenture under the Trust Indenture Act;

establish the form or terms of debt securities of any series as permitted by the indenture;

secure our obligations in respect of the debt securities of any series;

in the case of convertible or exchangeable debt securities of any series, subject to the provisions of the supplemental indenture for that series, to provide for conversion rights, exchange rights and/or repurchase rights of holders of that series in connection with any reclassification or change of our common stock or in the event of any amalgamation, consolidation, merger or sale of all or

substantially all of the assets of us or our subsidiaries substantially as an entirety occurs;

in the case of convertible or exchangeable debt securities of any series, to reduce the conversion price or exchange price applicable to that series;

in the case of convertible or exchangeable debt securities of any series, to increase the conversion rate or exchange ratio in the manner described in the supplemental indenture for that series, provided that the increase will not adversely affect the interests of the holders of that series in any material respect; or

any other action to amend or supplement the indenture or the debt securities of any series as described in the prospectus supplement with respect to that series of debt securities.

Table of Contents

We and the trustee may not, without the consent of the holder of each outstanding debt security affected thereby:

change the final maturity of any debt security;

reduce the aggregate principal amount on any debt security;

reduce the rate or amend or modify the calculation, or time of payment, of interest, including defaulted interest on any debt security;

reduce or alter the method of computation of any amount payable on any debt security upon redemption, prepayment or purchase of any debt security or otherwise alter or waive any of the provisions with respect to the redemption of any debt security, or waive a redemption payment with respect to any debt security;

change the currency in which the principal of, or interest or premium, if any, on any debt security is payable;

impair the right to institute suit for the enforcement of any payment on any debt security when due, or otherwise make any change in the provisions of the indenture relating to waivers of past defaults or the rights of holders of any debt security to receive payments of principal of, or premium, if any, or interest on any debt security;

modify the provisions of the indenture with respect to modification and waiver (including waiver of certain covenants, waiver of a default or event of default in respect of debt securities of any series), except to increase the percentage required for modification or waiver or to provide for the consent of each affected holder;

reduce the percentage of principal amount of outstanding debt securities of any series whose holders must consent to an amendment, supplement or waiver of the indenture or the debt securities of that series;

change the ranking provisions of the Subordinated Indenture in a manner adverse to the holders of debt securities issued thereunder in any material respect;

impair the rights of holders of debt securities of any series that are exchangeable or convertible to receive payment or delivery of any consideration due upon the conversion or exchange of the debt securities of that series; or

any other action to modify or amend the indenture or the debt securities of any series as may be described in the prospectus supplement with respect to that series of debt securities as requiring the consent of each holder affected thereby.

Defeasance

The indenture provides that we will be discharged from any and all obligations in respect of the debt securities of any series (except for certain obligations to register the transfer or exchange of the debt securities, to replace stolen, lost or mutilated debt securities, to maintain paying agencies and hold monies for payment in trust and to pay the principal of and interest, if any, on those debt securities), upon the deposit with the applicable trustee, in trust, of money and/or U.S. government obligations, which through the payment of interest and principal of the U.S. government obligations in accordance with their terms will provide money in an amount sufficient to pay any installment of principal and premium, if any, and interest, if any, on the debt securities of that series on the stated maturity date thereof in accordance with the terms of the

indenture and the debt securities of that series. Also, the establishment of such a trust will be conditioned on the delivery by us to the trustee of an opinion of counsel reasonably satisfactory to the trustee to the effect that, based upon applicable U.S. federal income tax law or a ruling published by the United States Internal Revenue Service, or the IRS, such a defeasance and discharge will not be deemed, or result in, a taxable event with respect to the holders. For the avoidance of doubt, such an opinion would require a change in current U.S. tax law.

Table of Contents

We may also omit to comply with the restrictive covenants, if any, of any particular series of debt securities, other than our covenant to pay the amounts due and owing with respect to that series. Any such omission will not be an event of default with respect to the debt securities of that series, upon the deposit with the applicable trustee, in trust, of money and/or U.S. government obligations, which through the payment of interest and principal of the U.S. government obligations in accordance with their terms will provide money in an amount sufficient to pay any installment of principal and premium, if any, and interest, if any, on the debt securities of that series on the stated maturity date thereof in accordance with the terms of the indenture and the debt securities of that series. Our obligations under the indenture and the debt securities of that series other than with respect to those covenants will remain in full force and effect. Also, the establishment of such a trust will be conditioned on the delivery by us to the trustee of an opinion of counsel to the effect that such a defeasance and discharge will not be deemed, or result in, a taxable event with respect to the holders.

Satisfaction and Discharge

At our option, we may satisfy and discharge the indenture with respect to the debt securities of any series (except for specified obligations of the trustee and ours, including, among others, the obligations to apply money held in trust) when:

either (a) all debt securities of that series previously authenticated under the indenture have been delivered to the trustee for cancellation or (b) all debt securities of that series not yet delivered to the trustee for cancellation (i) have become due and payable by reason of the mailing of a notice of redemption or otherwise or (ii) will become due and payable within one year, and we have irrevocably deposited or caused to be deposited with the trustee as trust funds in trust solely for the benefit of the holders an amount sufficient to pay and discharge the entire indebtedness on debt securities of that series;

no default or event of default with respect to debt securities of that series has occurred or is continuing on the date of the deposit or will occur as a result of the deposit and the deposit will not result in a breach or violation of any other instrument to which we are bound;

we have paid or caused to be paid all other sums payable by us under the indenture and any applicable supplemental indenture with respect to the debt securities of that series;

we have delivered irrevocable instructions to the trustee to apply the deposited funds toward the payment of securities of that series at the stated maturity date or the redemption date, as applicable; and

we have delivered to the trustee an officers' certificate and an opinion of counsel stating that all conditions precedent relating to the satisfaction and discharge of the indenture as to that series have been satisfied.

Unclaimed Money

If money deposited with the trustee or paying agent for the payment of principal of, premium or accrued and unpaid interest, if any, on debt securities remains unclaimed for two years, the trustee and paying agent will pay the money back to us upon our request. However, the trustee and paying agent have the right to withhold paying the money back to us until they publish in a newspaper of general circulation in the City of New York, or mail to each holder, a notice stating that the money will be paid back to us if unclaimed after a date no less than 30 days from the publication or mailing. After the trustee or paying agent pays the money back to us, holders of debt securities entitled to the money must look to us for payment, subject to applicable law, and all liability of the trustee and the paying agent with respect to the money will cease.

Purchase and Cancellation

The registrar and paying agent will forward to the trustee any debt securities surrendered to them for transfer, exchange or payment, and the trustee will promptly cancel those debt securities in accordance with its customary procedures. We will not issue new debt securities to replace debt securities that we have paid or delivered to the trustee for cancellation or that any holder has converted.

Table of Contents

We may, to the extent permitted by law, purchase debt securities in the open market or by tender offer at any price or by private agreement. We may, at our option and to the extent permitted by law, reissue, resell or surrender to the trustee for cancellation any debt securities we purchase in this manner; provided that we not reissue or resell those debt securities if upon reissuance or resale, they would constitute restricted securities within the meaning of Rule 144 under the Securities Act. Debt securities surrendered to the trustee for cancellation may not be reissued or resold and will be promptly cancelled.

Replacement of Debt Securities

We will replace mutilated, lost, destroyed or stolen debt securities at the holder's expense upon delivery to the trustee of the mutilated debt securities or evidence of the loss, destruction or theft of the debt securities satisfactory to the trustee and us. In the case of a lost, destroyed or stolen debt security, we or the trustee may require, at the expense of the holder, indemnity satisfactory to us and the trustee.

Book-Entry Issuance

Unless otherwise specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, our debt securities will be book-entry securities that are cleared and settled through the Depository Trust Company, which we refer to as the DTC, a securities depository. Upon issuance, unless otherwise specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, all book-entry securities of the same series will be represented by one or more fully registered global securities. Each global security will be deposited with, or on behalf of, DTC and will be registered in the name of DTC or a nominee of DTC. DTC will thus be the only registered holder of any such securities and will be considered the sole owner of the securities.

Purchasers may only hold interests in the global securities through DTC if they are participants in the DTC system. Purchasers may also hold interests through a securities intermediary—a bank, brokerage house or other institution that maintains securities accounts for customers—that has an account with DTC or its nominee. DTC will maintain accounts showing the securities holdings of its participants, and these participants will in turn maintain accounts showing the securities holdings of their customers. Some of these customers may themselves be securities intermediaries holding securities for their customers. Thus, each beneficial owner of a book-entry security will hold that security indirectly through a hierarchy of intermediaries, with DTC at the top and the beneficial owner's own securities intermediary at the bottom.

The securities of each beneficial owner of a book-entry security will be evidenced solely by entries on the books of the beneficial owner's securities intermediary. The actual purchaser of the securities will generally not be entitled to have the securities represented by the global securities registered in its name and will not be considered the owner. In most cases, a beneficial owner will also not be able to obtain a paper certificate evidencing the holder's ownership of securities. The book-entry system for holding securities eliminates the need for physical movement of certificates. The laws of some jurisdictions require some purchasers of securities to take physical delivery of their securities in definitive form. These laws may impair the ability to transfer book-entry securities.

Unless otherwise specified in the prospectus supplement with respect to a series of debt securities, the beneficial owner of book-entry securities represented by a global security may exchange the securities for definitive or paper securities only if:

DTC is unwilling or unable to continue as depository for such global security and we are unable to find a qualified replacement for DTC within 90 days;

at any time DTC ceases to be a clearing agency registered under the Exchange Act and we are unable to find a qualified replacement for DTC within 90 days;

Table of Contents

We in our sole discretion decide to allow some or all book-entry securities to be exchangeable for definitive securities in registered form; or

An event of default has occurred and is continuing under the indenture, and a holder of the securities has requested definitive securities.

Any global security that is exchangeable will be exchangeable in whole for definitive securities in registered form with the same terms, and in the case of debt securities, in an equal aggregate principal amount in denominations of \$2,000 and whole multiples of \$1,000 (unless otherwise specified in the prospectus supplement). Definitive securities will be registered in the name or names of the person or persons specified by DTC in a written instruction to the registrar of the securities. DTC may base its written instruction upon directions it receives from its participants.

In this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement, for book-entry securities, references to actions taken by security holders will mean actions taken by DTC upon instructions from its participants, and references to payments and notices of redemption to security holders will mean payments and notices of redemption to DTC as the registered holder of the securities for distribution to participants in accordance with DTC's procedures.

DTC is a limited-purpose trust company organized under the laws of the State of New York, a banking organization within the meaning of the New York Banking Law, a member of the Federal Reserve System, a clearing corporation within the meaning of the New York Uniform Commercial Code and a clearing agency registered under the Exchange Act. The rules applicable to DTC and its participants are on file with the SEC.

We will not have any responsibility or liability for any aspect of the records relating to, or payments made on account of, beneficial ownership interests in the book-entry securities or for maintaining, supervising or reviewing any records relating to the beneficial ownership interests.

Regarding the Trustee

The Bank of New York Mellon Trust Company, N.A. is the trustee under the 2010 Indenture. U.S. Bank National Association is the trustee under the 2013 Indenture.

Except during the continuance of an event of default, the trustee will perform only such duties as are specifically set forth in the indenture. During the existence of an event of default, the trustee will exercise such of the rights and powers vested in it under the indenture and use the same degree of care and skill in its exercise as a prudent person would exercise under the circumstances in the conduct of such person's own affairs. The holders of a majority in principal amount of the then outstanding debt securities of any series will have the right to direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for exercising any remedy available to the trustee, subject to certain exceptions. Subject to these provisions, the trustee will be under no obligation to exercise any of its rights or powers under the indenture at the request of any holder of debt securities, unless such holder has offered to the trustee security and indemnity satisfactory to it against any loss, liability or expense.

Pursuant and subject to the Trust Indenture Act, the trustee will be permitted to engage in other transactions with us; however, if the trustee acquires any conflicting interest, it would be required to eliminate such conflict within 90 days, apply to the SEC for permission to continue as trustee or resign. The Bank of New York Mellon Trust Company, N.A. is also the trustee under certain indentures under which our senior debt securities have been issued. U.S. Bank National Association is also the trustee under the trust and servicing agreement related to our securitization transaction.

Table of Contents

No individual liability of directors, officers, employees, incorporators, stockholders or agents

The indenture provides that none of our past, present or future directors, officers, employees, incorporators, stockholders or agents in their capacity as such will have any liability for any of our obligations under the debt securities of any series or the indenture. Each holder of debt securities of any series by accepting a debt security waives and releases all such liability. The waiver and release are part of the consideration for issuance of the debt securities. The waiver may not be effective to waive liabilities under the federal securities laws and it is the view of the SEC that such a waiver is against public policy.

Governing law

The indenture and debt securities of each series are governed by, and construed in accordance with, the laws of the State of New York.

Additional Provisions Applicable to Subordinated Debt Securities

General

The subordinated debt securities will be our unsecured obligations under the Subordinated Indenture and will be subordinate in right of payment to certain other indebtedness as described below under **Subordination of Subordinated Debt Securities** or in the applicable prospectus supplement. The subordinated debt securities will be effectively subordinated to all of our secured debt, to the extent of the value of the assets securing that debt.

Subordination of Subordinated Debt Securities

Payments on the subordinated debt securities will, as described in the applicable prospectus supplement, be subordinated in right of payment to the prior payment in full, in cash or cash equivalents, of all of our existing and future senior debt. As a result, the subordinated debt securities will be contractually subordinated to all of our senior debt and effectively subordinated to all debt and other obligations of our subsidiaries.

Senior debt is defined in the Subordinated Indenture as, with respect to any person (as defined in the Subordinated Indenture), the principal of (and premium, if any) and interest on any indebtedness, whether outstanding at the date of the Subordinated Indenture or thereafter created or incurred, which is for:

money borrowed by such person;

securities, notes, debentures, bonds or other similar instruments issued by such person;

obligations of such person evidencing the purchase price of property by such person or a subsidiary of such person, all conditional sale obligations of such person and all obligations of such person under any conditional sale or title retention agreement other than trade accounts payable in the ordinary course of business;

obligations, contingent or otherwise, of such person in respect of any letters of credit, bankers' acceptance, security purchase facilities or similar credit transactions;

obligations in respect of interest rate swap, cap or other agreements, interest rate future or option contracts, currency swap agreements, currency future or option contracts and other similar agreements;

obligations in respect of any factoring, securitization, sale of receivables or similar transaction;

money borrowed by or obligations described in the six preceding bullet points of others and assumed or guaranteed by such person;

obligations under performance guarantees, support agreements and other agreements in the nature thereof relating to the obligations of any subsidiary of such person;

Table of Contents

renewals, extensions, refundings, amendments and modifications of any indebtedness of the kind described in the eight preceding bullet points or of the instruments creating or evidencing the indebtedness, unless, in each case, by the terms of the instrument creating or evidencing the indebtedness or the renewal, extension, refunding, amendment and modification, it is provided that the indebtedness is not senior in right of payment to the subordinated debt securities; and

obligations of the type referred to in the preceding bulletpoints of others secured by a lien on the property or asset of such person. Unless otherwise specified in the applicable prospectus supplement for a particular series of subordinated debt securities, in the event of any distribution of our assets upon dissolution, winding up, liquidation or reorganization, the holders of senior debt shall first be paid in full in respect of principal, premium (if any) and interest before any such payments are made on account of the subordinated debt securities. In addition, in the event that (1) the subordinated debt securities are declared due and payable because of an event of default (other than under the circumstances described in the preceding sentence) and (2) any default has occurred and is continuing in the payment of principal, premium (if any), sinking funds or interest on any senior debt, then no payment shall be made on account of principal, premium (if any), sinking funds or interest on the subordinated debt securities until all such payments due in respect of the senior debt have been paid in full.

By reason of the subordination provisions described above, in the event of liquidation or insolvency, any of our creditors who are not holders of senior debt may recover less, ratably, than holders of senior debt and may recover more, ratably, than holders of the subordinated debt securities.

Deferral of Interest Payments

The terms upon which we may defer payments of interest on subordinated debt securities of any series will be set forth in the relevant prospectus supplement and, to the extent necessary, in the supplemental indenture relating to that series. If any such terms are provided for, an interest payment properly deferred will not constitute a default in the payment of interest.

DESCRIPTION OF DEPOSITARY SHARES

We may issue fractional interests in shares of common or preferred stock, rather than shares of common or preferred stock, with those rights and subject to the terms and conditions that we may specify in a related prospectus supplement. If we do so, we will provide for a depositary (either a bank or trust company depositary that has its principal office in the United States) to issue receipts for depositary shares, each of which will represent a fractional interest in a share of common or preferred stock. The shares of common or preferred stock underlying the depositary shares will be deposited under a deposit agreement between us and the depositary. The prospectus supplement will include the name and address of the depositary.

DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS

We may issue warrants to purchase debt or equity securities. Each warrant will entitle the holder to purchase for cash the amount of debt or equity securities at the exercise price stated or determinable in the prospectus supplement for the warrants. We may issue warrants independently or together with any offered securities. The warrants may be attached to or separate from those offered securities. We will issue the warrants under warrant agreements to be entered into between us and a bank or trust company, as warrant agent, all as described in a related prospectus supplement. The warrant agent will act solely as our agent in connection with the warrants and will not assume any obligation or relationship of agency or trust for or with any holders or beneficial owners of warrants.

Table of Contents

The prospectus supplement relating to any warrants that we may offer will contain the specific terms of the warrants. These terms will include some or all of the following:

the title of the warrants;

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

the designation, amount and terms of the securities for which the warrants are exercisable;

the designation and terms of the other securities, if any, with which the warrants are to be issued and the number of warrants issued with each other security;

the aggregate number of warrants;

any provisions for adjustment of the number or amount of securities receivable upon exercise of the warrants or the exercise price of the warrants;

the price or prices at which the securities purchasable upon exercise of the warrants may be purchased;

the date on and after which the warrants and the securities purchasable upon exercise of the warrants will be separately transferable, if applicable;

a discussion of any material U.S. federal income tax considerations applicable to the exercise of the warrants;

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

the maximum or minimum number of warrants that may be exercised at any time;

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

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

DESCRIPTION OF PURCHASE CONTRACTS

We may issue purchase contracts, including contracts obligating holders to purchase from us and us to sell to the holders, a specified number of shares of common stock, preferred stock or depositary shares at a future date or dates. Alternatively, the purchase contracts may obligate us to purchase from holders, and obligate holders to sell to us, a specified or varying number of shares of common stock, preferred stock or depositary shares. The consideration per share of common stock or preferred stock or per depositary share may be fixed at the time the purchase contracts are issued or may be determined by a specific reference to a formula set forth in the purchase contracts. The purchase contracts may provide for

Edgar Filing: AMERICAN TOWER CORP /MA/ - Form 424B2

settlement by delivery by us or on our behalf of shares of the underlying security, or they may provide for settlement by reference or linkage to the value, performance or trading price of the underlying security. The purchase contracts may be issued separately or as part of purchase units consisting of a purchase contract and debt securities, preferred stock or debt obligations of third parties, including U.S. treasury securities, other purchase contracts or common stock, or other securities or property, securing the holders' obligations to purchase or sell, as the case may be, the common stock, preferred stock, depository shares or other security or property under the purchase contracts. The purchase contracts may require us to make periodic payments to the holders thereof or vice versa, and these payments may be unsecured or prefunded on some basis and may be paid on a current or on a deferred basis. The purchase contracts may require holders to secure their obligations thereunder in a specified manner and may provide for the prepayment of all or part of the consideration payable by holders in connection with the purchase of the underlying security or other property pursuant to the purchase contracts.

Table of Contents

The securities related to the purchase contracts may be pledged to a collateral agent for our benefit pursuant to a pledge agreement to secure the obligations of holders of purchase contracts to purchase the underlying security or property under the related purchase contracts. The rights of holders of purchase contracts to the related pledged securities will be subject to our security interest therein created by the pledge agreement. No holder of purchase contracts will be permitted to withdraw the pledged securities related to such purchase contracts from the pledge arrangement.

DESCRIPTION OF UNITS

We may issue units consisting of one or more purchase contracts, warrants, debt securities, shares of preferred stock, shares of common stock or any combination of such of our securities (but not securities of third parties), as specified in a related prospectus supplement.

Table of Contents

LEGAL OWNERSHIP

In this prospectus and in any applicable prospectus supplement, when we refer to the holders of securities as being entitled to specified rights or payments, we mean only the actual legal holders of the securities. While you will be the holder if you hold a security registered in your name, more often than not the holder actually will be a broker, bank or other financial institution or, in the case of a global security, the depository. Our obligations, as well as the obligations of the trustee, any transfer agent, any registrar and any third parties employed by us, the trustee, any transfer agent and any registrar, run only to persons who are registered as holders of our securities, except as may be specifically provided for in the contract governing the securities. For example, once we make payment to the registered holder, we have no further responsibility for the payment even if that holder is legally required to pass the payment along to you as a street name customer but does not do so.

Holding securities in accounts at banks, brokers or other financial institutions is called holding in street name. If you hold our securities in street name, we will recognize only the bank or broker, or the financial institution the bank or broker uses to hold the securities, as a holder. These intermediary banks, brokers, other financial institutions and depositories pass along principal, interest, dividends and other payments, if any, on the securities, either because they agree to do so in their customer agreements or because they legally are required to do so. This means that if you are an indirect holder, you will need to coordinate with the institution through which you hold your interest in a security in order to determine how the provisions involving holders described in this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement actually will apply to you. For example, if the debt security in which you hold a beneficial interest in street name can be repaid at the option of the holder, you cannot redeem it yourself by following the procedures described in the prospectus supplement that applies to that security. Instead, you would need to cause the institution through which you hold your interest to take those actions on your behalf. Your institution may have procedures and deadlines different from or additional to those described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

If you hold our securities in street name or through other indirect means, you should check with the institution through which you hold your interest in a security to find out:

How it handles payments and notices with respect to the securities;

Whether it imposes fees or charges;

How it handles voting, if applicable;

How and when you should notify it to exercise on your behalf any rights or options that may exist under the securities;

Whether and how you can instruct it to send you securities registered in your own name so you can be a direct holder as described below; and

How it would pursue rights under the securities if there were a default or other event triggering the need for holders to act to protect their interests.

Table of Contents

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We may sell the securities covered by this prospectus in any of the following three ways (or in any combination of the following three ways):

to or through underwriters or dealers;

directly to a limited number of purchasers or to a single purchaser; or

through agents.

We may enter into derivative transactions with third parties, or sell securities not covered by this prospectus to third parties in privately negotiated transactions. If the applicable prospectus supplement so indicates, in connection with those derivatives, the third parties may sell securities covered by this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement, including in short sale transactions. If so, the third party may use securities pledged by us or borrowed from us or others to settle those sales or to close out any related open borrowings of stock and may use securities received from us in settlement of those derivatives to close out any related open borrowings of stock. The third party in such sale transactions will be an underwriter and, if not identified in this prospectus, will be identified in the applicable prospectus supplement (or a post-effective amendment to the registration statement of which this prospectus forms a part).

The applicable prospectus supplement will set forth the terms of the offering of the securities covered by this prospectus, including:

the name or names of any underwriters, dealers or agents and the amounts of securities underwritten or purchased by each of them;

the initial public offering price of the securities and the proceeds to us and any discounts, commissions or concessions allowed or reallocated or paid to dealers; and

any securities exchanges on which the securities may be listed.

Any initial public offering price and any discounts or concessions allowed or reallocated or paid to dealers may be changed from time to time.

Underwriters or the third parties described above may offer and sell the offered securities from time to time in one or more transactions, including negotiated transactions, at a fixed public offering price or at varying prices determined at the time of sale. If we use underwriters in the sale of any securities, the securities will be acquired by the underwriters for their own account and may be resold from time to time in one or more transactions described above. The securities may be offered to the public either through underwriting syndicates represented by managing underwriters or directly by underwriters. Generally, the underwriters' obligations to purchase the securities will be subject to customary conditions. The underwriters will be obligated to purchase all of the offered securities if they purchase any of the offered securities.

We may sell the securities through agents from time to time. The applicable prospectus supplement will name any agent involved in the offer or sale of the securities and any commissions we pay to them. Generally, any agent will be acting on a best efforts basis for the period of its appointment.

We may authorize underwriters, dealers or agents to solicit offers by certain purchasers to purchase the securities from us at the public offering price set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement pursuant to delayed delivery contracts providing for payment and delivery on a specified date in the future. The contracts will be subject only to those conditions set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement, and the applicable prospectus supplement will set forth any commissions we pay for solicitation of these contracts.

Certain persons participating in this offering may engage in transactions that stabilize, maintain or otherwise affect the price of the securities. Specifically, in connection with underwritten offerings of the offered securities and in accordance with applicable law and industry practice, the underwriters may over-allot and may bid for, and purchase, the securities in the open market.

Table of Contents

Agents, underwriters and other third parties described above that participate in the distribution of the offered securities may be underwriters as defined in the Securities Act, and any discounts or commissions they receive from us and any profit on their resale of the securities may be treated as underwriting discounts and commissions under the Securities Act. We may have agreements with the agents, underwriters and those other third parties to indemnify them against specified civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act, or to contribute to payments they may be required to make in respect of those liabilities. Agents, underwriters and those other third parties may engage in transactions with or perform services for us in the ordinary course of their businesses.

To comply with applicable state securities laws, the securities offered by this prospectus will be sold, if necessary, in such jurisdictions only through registered or licensed brokers or dealers. In addition, securities may not be sold in some states absent registration or pursuant to an exemption from applicable state securities laws.

Table of Contents

FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSIDERATIONS RELATED TO OUR QUALIFICATION AND TAXATION AS A REIT

The following summary of U.S. federal income tax considerations is based on existing law, and is limited to our qualification and taxation as a REIT. The opinion of our tax counsel, Sullivan & Worcester LLP, attached hereto as Exhibit 8.1 addresses our qualification and taxation as a REIT since January 1, 2012, as set forth in this summary. For a discussion of certain U.S. federal income tax considerations that may be relevant to persons considering the purchase of debt securities covered by this prospectus, please see the section entitled "Certain U.S. Federal Income Tax Considerations Relevant to Holders of Our Debt Securities" beginning on page 43. For a discussion of U.S. federal income tax considerations that may be relevant to persons considering the purchase of our stock covered by this prospectus, please see the section entitled "U.S. Federal Income Tax Considerations Relevant to Holders of Our Stock" beginning on page 48.

The sections of the Code that govern federal income tax qualification and treatment of a REIT are complex. This section contains a summary of applicable Code provisions, related rules and regulations and administrative and judicial interpretations, all of which are subject to change, possibly with retroactive effect. Future legislative, judicial or administrative actions or decisions could also affect the accuracy of statements made in this summary. We have received private letter rulings from the IRS with respect to some but not all of the matters described in this summary, and we cannot provide assurance that the IRS or a court will agree with all of the statements made in this summary. The IRS or a court could, for example, take a different position from that described in this summary with respect to our acquisitions, operations, restructurings or other matters, including with respect to matters similar to, but subsequent or unrelated to, those matters addressed in the IRS private letter rulings issued to us; furthermore, while a private letter ruling from the IRS generally is binding on the IRS, we and our tax counsel cannot rely on the private letter rulings if the factual representations, assumptions or undertakings made in our letter ruling requests to the IRS are untrue or incomplete in any material respect. If successful, IRS challenges could result in significant tax liabilities for applicable parties. In addition, this summary is not exhaustive of all possible tax consequences related to our qualification and taxation as a REIT, and does not discuss any estate, gift, state, local or foreign tax consequences. For all these reasons, we urge any holder of or prospective acquiror of our securities to consult with a tax advisor about the federal income tax and other tax consequences of our qualification and taxation as a REIT. Our intentions and beliefs described in this summary are based upon our understanding of applicable laws and regulations that are in effect as of the date of this prospectus. If new laws or regulations are enacted which impact us directly or indirectly, we may change our intentions or beliefs.

Taxation as a REIT

Effective for our taxable year ended December 31, 2012, we will elect to be taxed as a REIT under Sections 856 through 860 of the Code, and the discussion below assumes that we will make that election by timely filing our federal income tax return as a REIT. Our REIT election, assuming continuing compliance with the then applicable qualification tests, will continue in effect for subsequent taxable years. Although no assurance can be given, we believe that, since January 1, 2012, we have been organized and have operated, and will continue to be organized and to operate, in a manner that qualified and will continue to qualify us to be taxed under the Code as a REIT.

Our tax counsel has opined that we have been organized and will have qualified as a REIT under the Code for our 2012 taxable year upon our filing a timely REIT federal income tax return for that year, and that our current investments and plan of operation will enable us to continue to meet the requirements for qualification and taxation as a REIT under the Code. Our tax counsel's opinions are conditioned upon the assumption that our Certificate of Incorporation, By-Laws, licenses and all other applicable legal documents to which we are or have been a party have been and will be complied with by all parties to those documents, upon the accuracy and completeness of the factual matters described in this prospectus, upon private letter rulings issued to us by the IRS as to certain federal income tax matters, and upon representations made by us as to certain factual matters.

Table of Contents

relating to our organization and operations and our expected manner of operation. If this assumption or a representation is inaccurate or incomplete, our tax counsel's opinions may be adversely affected and may not be relied upon. The opinions of our tax counsel are based upon the law as it exists today, but the law may change in the future, possibly with retroactive effect. Given the highly complex nature of the rules governing REITs, the ongoing importance of factual determinations, and the possibility of future changes in our circumstances, no assurance can be given by our tax counsel or us regarding the continuing accuracy of the matters in this summary. Any opinion of our tax counsel will be expressed as of the date issued. Our tax counsel will have no obligation to advise us or holders of our securities of any subsequent change in the matters stated, represented or assumed or of any subsequent change in the applicable law. Also, the opinions of tax counsel are not binding on either the IRS or a court, and either could take a position different from that expressed by tax counsel.

Our continued qualification and taxation as a REIT will depend upon our compliance on a continuing basis with various qualification tests imposed under the Code and summarized below. Our ability to satisfy the asset tests will depend in part upon our good faith analysis of the fair market values of our assets, some of which are not susceptible to a precise determination. Our compliance with the REIT income and quarterly asset requirements also depends upon our ability to successfully manage the composition of our income and assets on an ongoing basis. While we believe that we will satisfy these tests, our tax counsel will not review compliance with these tests on a continuing basis. If we fail to qualify as a REIT in any year, we will be subject to federal income taxation as if we were a corporation taxed under subchapter C of the Code, or a C corporation, and our stockholders will be taxed like stockholders of C corporations, meaning that federal income tax generally will be applied at both the corporate and stockholder levels. In this event, we could be subject to significant tax liabilities, and the amount of cash available for payment or distribution to our securityholders could be reduced or eliminated.

As a REIT, we generally are not subject to federal income tax on our net income distributed as dividends to our stockholders. Distributions to our stockholders generally are included in their income as dividends to the extent of our current or accumulated earnings and profits. Our dividends are not generally entitled to the preferential tax rates on qualified dividend income, but a portion of our dividends may be treated as capital gain dividends or qualified dividend income, all as explained below. No portion of any of our dividends is eligible for the dividends received deduction for corporate stockholders. Distributions in excess of current or accumulated earnings and profits generally are treated for federal income tax purposes as returns of capital to the extent of a recipient stockholder's basis in our stock, and will reduce this basis. Our current or accumulated earnings and profits generally will be allocated first to distributions made on our outstanding preferred stock, if any, and thereafter to distributions made on our common stock. For all these purposes, our distributions include both cash distributions and any in kind distributions of property that we might make.

If we qualify as a REIT and meet the tests described below, we generally will not pay federal income tax on amounts we distribute to our stockholders. However, even if we qualify as a REIT, we may be subject to federal tax in the following circumstances:

We will be taxed at regular corporate rates on any undistributed real estate investment trust taxable income, determined by including our undistributed net capital gains and after offset by our available net operating loss carryovers (NOLs);

If our alternative minimum taxable income exceeds our taxable income, we may be subject to the corporate alternative minimum tax on our items of tax preference. Items that are treated differently for regular and alternative minimum tax purposes are to be allocated between a REIT and its stockholders under Treasury regulations which are yet to be prescribed. It is possible that these Treasury regulations will require tax preference items to be allocated to us with respect to any accelerated depreciation or other tax preference items that we claim, including a portion of the NOLs we may utilize;

If we have net income from the disposition of foreclosure property that is held primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of business or from other nonqualifying income from foreclosure property, we will be subject to tax on this income at the highest regular corporate rate, currently 35%;

Table of Contents

If we have net income from prohibited transactions that is, dispositions of inventory or property held primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of business other than dispositions of foreclosure property and other than dispositions excepted under a statutory safe harbor we will be subject to tax on this income at a 100% rate;

If we fail to satisfy the 75% gross income test or the 95% gross income test discussed below, but nonetheless maintain our qualification as a REIT, we will be subject to tax at a 100% rate on the greater of the amount by which we fail the 75% or the 95% test, with adjustments, multiplied by a fraction intended to reflect our profitability;

If we fail to distribute for any calendar year at least the sum of 85% of our REIT ordinary income for that year, 95% of our REIT capital gain net income for that year and any undistributed taxable income from prior periods, we will be subject to a 4% nondeductible excise tax on the excess of the required distribution over the amounts actually distributed;

If we recognize gain on the disposition of any asset that was held by us on January 1, 2012 during a specified period (generally ten years) thereafter, then we will pay tax at the highest regular corporate tax rate, which is currently 35%, on the lesser of the excess of the fair market value of the asset over our basis in the asset on January 1, 2012, or the gain we recognize in the disposition. We currently do not expect to sell any assets if such a sale would result in the imposition of a material tax liability. We cannot, however, provide assurance that we will not change our plans in this regard;

If we acquire an asset from a corporation in a transaction in which our basis in the asset is determined by reference to the basis of the asset in the hands of a present or former C corporation (including, for example, if we were to liquidate a wholly owned taxable REIT subsidiary, or TRS), and if we subsequently recognize gain on the disposition of this asset during a specified period (generally ten years) beginning on the date on which the asset ceased to be owned by the C corporation, then we will pay tax at the highest regular corporate tax rate, which is currently 35%, on the lesser of the excess of the fair market value of the asset over the C corporation's basis in the asset on the date the asset ceased to be owned by the C corporation, or the gain we recognize in the disposition. We currently do not expect to sell any assets if such a sale would result in the imposition of a material tax liability. We cannot, however, provide assurance that we will not change our plans in this regard;

If we acquire a corporation in a transaction where we succeed to its tax attributes, to preserve our status as a REIT we must generally distribute all of the C corporation earnings and profits inherited in that acquisition, if any, not later than the end of our taxable year in which the acquisition occurs. However, if we fail to do so, relief provisions would allow us to maintain our status as a REIT provided we distribute any subsequently discovered C corporation earnings and profits and pay an interest charge in respect of the period of delayed distribution;

As summarized below, REITs are permitted within limits to own stock and securities of a TRS. A domestic TRS is separately taxed on its net income as a C corporation, and is subject to limitations on the deductibility of interest expense paid to its REIT parent. While a foreign TRS is taxed in the United States only to the extent it has income that is effectively connected with the conduct of a trade or business in the United States or that is investment income from United States sources, a foreign TRS is generally subject to foreign taxes in the jurisdictions in which its assets or operations are located. In addition, the REIT parent is subject to a 100% tax on the amount by which various charges and reimbursements between the parent REIT and its TRS are determined to be priced excessively in favor of the REIT rather than on an arms-length basis; and

To the extent we invest in properties in foreign jurisdictions, our income from those properties will generally be subject to tax in those jurisdictions. If we continue to operate as we do, then we will distribute all of our taxable income to our stockholders such that we will generally not pay federal income tax. As a result, we cannot recover the cost of foreign income taxes imposed on our foreign investments by claiming foreign tax credits against our federal income tax liability. Also, we cannot pass through to our stockholders any foreign tax credits.

Table of Contents

If we fail to qualify as a REIT or elect not to qualify as a REIT, then we will be subject to federal income tax in the same manner as a regular C corporation. Further, as a regular C corporation, distributions to our stockholders will not be deductible by us, nor will distributions be required under the Code. Also, to the extent of our current and accumulated earnings and profits, all distributions to our stockholders will generally be taxable as ordinary dividends potentially eligible for preferential tax rates, discussed below in U.S. Federal Income Tax Considerations Relevant to Holders of Our Stock Taxation of U.S. Stockholders and, subject to limitations in the Code, will be eligible for the dividends received deduction for corporate stockholders. Finally, we will generally be disqualified from qualification as a REIT for the four taxable years following disqualification. Our failure to qualify as a REIT for even one year could result in reduction or elimination of distributions to our stockholders, or in our incurring substantial indebtedness or liquidating substantial investments in order to pay the resulting corporate level taxes, which could adversely impact our ability to make payments or distributions to our securityholders. The Code provides certain relief provisions under which we might avoid automatically ceasing to be a REIT for failure to meet certain REIT requirements, all as discussed in more detail below.

REIT Qualification Requirements

General Requirements. Section 856(a) of the Code defines a REIT as a corporation, trust or association:

- (1) that is managed by one or more trustees or directors;
- (2) the beneficial ownership of which is evidenced by transferable shares or by transferable certificates of beneficial interest;
- (3) that would be taxable, but for Sections 856 through 859 of the Code, as a domestic C corporation;
- (4) that is not a financial institution or an insurance company subject to special provisions of the Code;
- (5) the beneficial ownership of which is held by 100 or more persons;
- (6) that is not closely held as defined under the personal holding company stock ownership test, as described below; and
- (7) that meets other tests regarding income, assets and distributions, all as described below.

Section 856(b) of the Code provides that conditions (1) through (4) must be met during the entire taxable year and that condition (5) must be met during at least 335 days of a taxable year of 12 months, or during a pro rata part of a taxable year of less than 12 months. Section 856(h)(2) of the Code provides that neither condition (5) nor (6) need be met for our first taxable year as a REIT. We believe that we have met and will meet conditions (1) through (7) during each of the requisite periods commencing with our first taxable year as a REIT, and that we will continue to meet these conditions in future taxable years. There can, however, be no assurance in this regard.

By reason of condition (6), we will fail to qualify as a REIT for a taxable year if at any time during the last half of a year (except for our first taxable year as a REIT) more than 50% in value of our outstanding stock is owned directly or indirectly by five or fewer individuals. To help comply with condition (6), our Certificate of Incorporation restricts transfers of our stock that would otherwise result in concentrated ownership positions. In addition, if we comply with applicable Treasury regulations to ascertain the ownership of our stock and do not know, or by exercising reasonable diligence would not have known, that we failed condition (6), then we will be treated as having met condition (6). However, our failure to comply with these regulations for ascertaining ownership may result in a penalty of \$25,000, or \$50,000 for intentional violations. Accordingly, we have complied and will continue to comply with these regulations, including requesting annually from record holders of significant percentages of our stock information regarding the ownership of our stock. Under our Certificate of Incorporation, our stockholders are required to respond to these requests for information.

Table of Contents

For purposes of condition (6), the term *individuals* is defined in the Code to include natural persons, supplemental unemployment compensation benefit plans, private foundations and portions of a trust permanently set aside or used exclusively for charitable purposes, but not other entities or qualified pension plans or profit-sharing trusts. As a result, REIT shares owned by an entity that is not an *individual* are considered to be owned by the direct and indirect owners of the entity that are *individuals* (as so defined), rather than to be owned by the entity itself. Similarly, REIT shares held by a qualified pension plan or profit-sharing trust are treated as held directly by the individual beneficiaries in proportion to their actuarial interests in such plan or trust. Consequently, five or fewer such trusts could own more than 50% of the interests in an entity without jeopardizing that entity's federal income tax qualification as a REIT. However, as discussed below under *U.S. Federal Income Tax Considerations Relevant to Holders of Our Stock* *Taxation of Tax-Exempt Stockholders*, if a REIT is a *pension-held REIT*, each qualified pension plan or profit-sharing pension trust owning more than 10% of the REIT's shares by value generally may be taxed on a portion of the dividends it receives from the REIT.

The Code provides that we will not automatically fail to be a REIT if we do not meet conditions (1) through (6), provided we can establish reasonable cause for any such failure. Each such excused failure will result in the imposition of a \$50,000 penalty instead of REIT disqualification. It is impossible to state whether in all circumstances we would be entitled to the benefit of this relief provision. This relief provision applies to any failure of the applicable conditions, even if the failure first occurred in a prior taxable year.

Our Wholly Owned Subsidiaries and Our Investments Through Partnerships. Except in respect of TRSs as discussed below, Section 856(i) of the Code provides that any corporation, 100% of whose stock is held by a REIT and its disregarded subsidiaries, is a qualified REIT subsidiary and shall not be treated as a separate corporation. The assets, liabilities and items of income, deduction and credit of a qualified REIT subsidiary are treated as the REIT's. We believe that each of our direct and indirect wholly owned subsidiaries, other than the TRSs discussed below, will be either a qualified REIT subsidiary within the meaning of Section 856(i) of the Code or a noncorporate entity that for federal income tax purposes is not treated as separate from its owner under regulations issued under Section 7701 of the Code, each of which we refer to as a QRS. Thus, except for the TRSs discussed below, in applying all the federal income tax REIT qualification requirements described in this summary, all assets, liabilities and items of income, deduction and credit of our direct and indirect wholly owned subsidiaries are treated as ours.

We have invested and may invest in real estate through one or more entities that are treated as partnerships for federal income tax purposes, including limited or general partnerships, limited liability companies or foreign entities. In the case of a REIT that is a partner in a partnership, regulations under the Code provide that, for purposes of the REIT qualification requirements regarding income and assets discussed below, the REIT is deemed to own its proportionate share of the assets of the partnership corresponding to the REIT's proportionate capital interest in the partnership and is deemed to be entitled to the income of the partnership attributable to this proportionate share. In addition, for these purposes, the character of the assets and gross income of the partnership generally retains the same character in the hands of the REIT. Accordingly, our proportionate share of the assets, liabilities and items of income of each partnership in which we are a partner is treated as ours for purposes of the income tests and asset tests discussed below. In contrast, for purposes of the distribution requirement discussed below, we must take into account as a partner our share of the partnership's income as determined under the general federal income tax rules governing partners and partnerships under Sections 701 through 777 of the Code.

To the extent our QRSs and partnerships have assets or operations in foreign jurisdictions, their income from those assets and operations will generally be subject to tax in those jurisdictions. If we and our QRSs and partnerships continue to operate as we currently do, then our foreign QRSs and partnerships will not have any U.S. operations, and we will generally not pay federal income tax to the extent we distribute our taxable income to our stockholders each year. As a result, we cannot recover the cost of foreign income taxes imposed on our QRSs and partnerships' foreign investments by claiming foreign tax credits against our federal income tax liability. Also, we cannot pass through to our stockholders any foreign tax credits.

Table of Contents

Taxable REIT Subsidiaries. We are permitted to own any or all of the securities of a taxable REIT subsidiary as defined in Section 856(l) of the Code, provided that no more than 25% of the total value of our assets, at the close of each quarter, is comprised of our investments in the stock or securities of our TRSs. We have received a private letter ruling from the IRS that a loan to a TRS of ours that is adequately secured by towers, tower sites or other interests in real property will not be treated as a security for purposes of this 25% TRS limitation. Among other requirements, a TRS of ours must:

- (1) be a non-REIT corporation for federal income tax purposes in which we directly or indirectly own shares;
- (2) join with us in making a TRS election;
- (3) not directly or indirectly operate or manage a lodging facility or a health care facility; and
- (4) not directly or indirectly provide to any person, under a franchise, license or otherwise, rights to any brand name under which any lodging facility or health care facility is operated, except that in limited circumstances a subfranchise, sublicense or similar right can be granted to an independent contractor to operate or manage a lodging facility or a health care facility.

In addition, a corporation other than a REIT in which a TRS directly or indirectly owns more than 35% of the voting power or value will automatically be treated as a TRS. Subject to the discussion below, we believe that we and each of our TRSs have complied with, and will continue to comply with, on a continuous basis, the requirements for TRS status at all times during which the subsidiary's TRS election is reported as being in effect, and we believe that the same will be true for any TRS that we later form or acquire.

Our ownership of stock and securities in TRSs is exempt from the 10% and 5% REIT asset tests discussed below. Also, as discussed below, TRSs can perform services for our tenants without disqualifying the rents we receive from those tenants under the 75% or 95% gross income tests discussed below. Moreover, because TRSs are taxed as C corporations that are separate from us, their assets, liabilities and items of income, deduction and credit generally are not imputed to us for purposes of the REIT qualification requirements described in this summary. Therefore, TRSs can generally undertake third party management and development activities and activities not related to real estate.

Restrictions are imposed on TRSs to ensure that they will be subject to an appropriate level of federal income taxation. For example, a TRS may not deduct interest paid in any year to an affiliated REIT to the extent that the interest payments exceed, generally, 50% of the TRS's adjusted taxable income for that year. However, the TRS may carry forward the disallowed interest expense to a succeeding year, and deduct the interest in that later year subject to that year's 50% adjusted taxable income limitation. In addition, if a TRS pays interest, rent or other amounts to its affiliated REIT in an amount that exceeds what an unrelated third party would have paid in an arm's length transaction, then the REIT generally will be subject to an excise tax equal to 100% of the excessive portion of the payment. Finally, if in comparison to an arm's length transaction, a tenant has overpaid rent to the REIT in exchange for underpaying the TRS for services rendered, and if the REIT has not adequately compensated the TRS for services provided to or on behalf of a tenant, then the REIT may be subject to an excise tax equal to 100% of the undercompensation to the TRS. A safe harbor exception to this excise tax applies if the TRS has been compensated at a rate at least equal to 150% of its direct cost in furnishing or rendering the service. We believe that our TRSs have received and will continue to receive at least arm's length compensation, from our tenants or from us, for the services they provide to our tenants. There can be no assurance that arrangements involving our TRSs will not result in the imposition of one or more of these deduction limitations or excise taxes, but we do not believe that we are or will be subject to these impositions.

To the extent our TRSs have assets or operations in foreign jurisdictions, their income from those assets and operations will generally be subject to tax in those jurisdictions. If we and our TRSs continue to operate as we currently do, then our foreign TRSs will not have any U.S. operations or federal income tax liability, and we will generally not pay federal income tax to the extent we distribute our taxable income, including our dividend

Table of Contents

income from our TRSs, to our stockholders each year. As a result, we cannot recover the cost of foreign income taxes imposed on our TRSs foreign investments by claiming foreign tax credits against either our or their federal income tax liability. Also, we cannot pass through to our stockholders any foreign tax credits.

Our Assets as Real Estate Assets. Treasury regulations define *real property* for purposes of Section 856 of the Code to mean land or improvements thereon, such as buildings or other inherently permanent structures thereon, including items which are structural components of such buildings or structures. In addition, the term is defined recursively so that real property includes interests in real property. For these purposes, local law definitions are not controlling. By way of illustration, Treasury regulations provide that real property includes wiring in a building, plumbing systems, central heating or central air-conditioning machinery, pipes or ducts, elevators or escalators installed in a building and other items which are structural components of a building or other permanent structure; however, again by way of example, real property is defined to exclude assets accessory to the operation of a business such as machinery, printing presses, transportation equipment which is not a structural component of the building, office equipment, refrigerators, individual air-conditioning units, grocery counters or furnishings of a motel, hotel or office building. For purposes of Section 856 of the Code, real property includes real property outside of the United States as well as real property within the United States.

Treasury regulations provide that, for purposes of Section 856 of the Code, the term *interests in real property* includes several types of interests that relate to real property such as (a) fee ownership and co-ownership of land or improvements thereon, leaseholds of land or improvements thereon, options to acquire land or improvements thereon and options to acquire leaseholds of land or improvements thereon, (b) timeshare interests that represent an undivided fractional fee interest, or undivided leasehold interest, in real property, and that entitle the holders of the interests to the use and enjoyment of the property for a specified period of time each year, and (c) stock held by a person as a tenant-stockholder in a cooperative housing corporation (as those terms are defined in Section 216 of the Code). In administrative pronouncements spanning several decades, the IRS has concluded that *interests in real property* properly include intangibles such as voting rights and goodwill that are inextricably and compulsorily tied to real property or otherwise inseparable from real property.

We received a private letter ruling from the IRS that, for purposes of Section 856 of the Code, our towers and the sites on which they are located (including any fencing, shelters and permanently installed backup generators) are interests in real property, and intangible assets (including goodwill) derived from our real estate are also *interests in real property*. Because all or substantially all of our intangible assets (including goodwill) as reported on our audited financial statements relate to current and future rental cash flows from space on our towers and at our tower sites, we believe that all or substantially all of these intangibles are inextricably and compulsorily tied to, and derived from, our real estate and are thus *interests in real property*.

In order to qualify as a mortgage on real property for purposes of the 75% gross income test and 75% asset test discussed below, a mortgage loan must be secured by real property with a fair market value, at the time the loan is made, at least equal to the amount of the loan. In Revenue Ruling 80-280, 1980-2 C.B. 207, the IRS concluded that a loan secured by a mortgage loan can itself qualify as an interest in mortgages on real property where the ultimate collateral in the arrangement is real property of sufficient fair market value. Although there can be no assurance in this regard, we believe that our loans that are intended to be mortgages on real property for purposes of the REIT income and asset tests below in fact so qualify, because we generally seek to have those loans directly secured by real property of sufficient fair market value or indirectly and ultimately secured by real property of sufficient fair market value consistent with the principles of Revenue Ruling 80-280.

Income Tests. There are two gross income requirements for qualification as a REIT under the Code:

At least 75% of our gross income (excluding: (a) gross income from sales or other dispositions of property held primarily for sale; (b) any income arising from *clearly identified* hedging transactions that we enter into to manage interest rate or price changes or currency fluctuations with respect to borrowings we incur to acquire or carry real estate assets; (c) any income arising from *clearly*

Table of Contents

identified hedging transactions that we enter into primarily to manage risk of currency fluctuations relating to any item that qualifies under the 75% or 95% gross income tests (or any property that generates such income or gain); (d) real estate foreign exchange gain (as defined in Section 856(n)(2) of the Code); (e) income from the repurchase or discharge of indebtedness; and (f) gross income excludable under Section 856(c)(5)(J)(i) of the Code on account of an IRS private letter ruling issued to us, including applicable adjustments under Section 481(a) of the Code) must be derived from investments relating to real property, including rents from real property as defined under Section 856 of the Code, interest and gain from mortgages on real property, income and gain from foreclosure property, gain from the sale or other disposition of real property other than dealer property, dividends and gain from shares in other REITs, or amounts described under Section 856(c)(5)(J)(ii) of the Code as producing income described in Section 856(c)(3) of the Code on account of an IRS private letter ruling issued to us. When we receive new capital in exchange for our stock or in a public offering of five-year or longer debt instruments, income attributable to the temporary investment of this new capital in stock or a debt instrument, if received or accrued within one year of our receipt of the new capital, is generally also qualifying income under the 75% gross income test.

At least 95% of our gross income (excluding: (a) gross income from sales or other dispositions of property held primarily for sale; (b) any income arising from clearly identified hedging transactions that we enter into to manage interest rate or price changes or currency fluctuations with respect to borrowings we incur to acquire or carry real estate assets; (c) any income arising from clearly identified hedging transactions that we enter into primarily to manage risk of currency fluctuations relating to any item that qualifies under the 75% or 95% gross income tests (or any property that generates such income or gain); (d) passive foreign exchange gain (as defined in Section 856(n)(3) of the Code); (e) income from the repurchase or discharge of indebtedness; and (f) gross income excludable under Section 856(c)(5)(J)(i) of the Code on account of an IRS private letter ruling issued to us, including applicable adjustments under Section 481(a) of the Code) must be derived from a combination of items of real property income that satisfy the 75% gross income test described above, dividends, interest, gains from the sale or disposition of stock, securities or real property, or amounts described under Section 856(c)(5)(J)(ii) of the Code as producing income described in Section 856(c)(2) on account of an IRS private letter ruling issued to us.

For purposes of the 75% and 95% gross income tests outlined above, income derived from a shared appreciation provision in a mortgage loan is generally treated as gain recognized on the sale of the property to which it relates. Although we will use our best efforts to ensure that the income generated by our investments will be of a type that satisfies both the 75% and 95% gross income tests, there can be no assurance in this regard.

In order to qualify as rents from real property under Section 856 of the Code, several requirements must be met:

The amount of rent received generally must not be based on the income or profits of any person, but may be based on receipts or sales.

With respect to various obligations of ours that we pass through to our tenants, such as ground rents and property taxes, the passed-through amounts paid by our tenants are generally considered additional rental income received by us. We have received a private letter ruling from the IRS to the effect that, so long as the passed-through amounts are actually paid over to our own obligees, otherwise qualifying amounts we receive from our tenants that include passed-through amounts will be treated in full as qualifying under the 75% and 95% gross income tests, even if the passed-through amounts are based on income or profits from the property.

Rents do not qualify if the REIT owns 10% or more by vote or value of the tenant, whether directly or after application of attribution rules. While we intend not to lease property to any party if rents from that property would not qualify as rents from real property, application of the 10% ownership rule is dependent upon complex attribution rules and circumstances that may be beyond our control. For

Table of Contents

example, an unaffiliated third party's ownership directly or by attribution of 10% or more by value of our stock, as well as an ownership position in the stock of one of our tenants which, when added to our own ownership position in that tenant, totals 10% or more by vote or value of the stock of that tenant, would result in that tenant's rents not qualifying as rents from real property. Our Certificate of Incorporation disallows transfers or purported acquisitions, directly or by attribution, of our stock to the extent necessary to maintain our REIT status under the Code. Nevertheless, there can be no assurance that these provisions in our Certificate of Incorporation will be effective to prevent our REIT status from being jeopardized under the 10% affiliated tenant rule. Furthermore, there can be no assurance that we will be able to monitor and enforce these restrictions, nor will our stockholders necessarily be aware of ownership of our stock attributed to them under the Code's attribution rules.

There is a limited exception to the above prohibition on earning rents from real property from a 10% affiliated tenant, if the tenant is a TRS. If at least 90% of the leased/licensed space of a property is leased/licensed to tenants other than TRSs and 10% affiliated tenants, and if the TRS's rent for space at that property is substantially comparable to the rents paid by nonaffiliated tenants for comparable space at the property, then otherwise qualifying rents paid by the TRS to the REIT will not be disqualified on account of the rule prohibiting 10% affiliated tenants. At some of our tower sites, we may license space to a TRS so that, for example, the TRS can operate a master antenna, backhaul antenna or other asset. In any such instance, we cannot be sure that the rental relationship will qualify under the limited exception for leasing/licensing space to a TRS. However, we expect the total rents we receive from leasing/licensing space to our TRSs will be immaterial to our compliance with the REIT gross income tests.

In order for rents to qualify, we generally must not manage the property or furnish or render services to the tenants of the property, except through an independent contractor from whom we derive no income or through one of our TRSs. There is an exception to this rule permitting a REIT to perform customary tenant services of the sort that a tax-exempt organization could perform without being considered in receipt of unrelated business taxable income as defined in Section 512(b)(3) of the Code. In addition, a de minimis amount of noncustomary services will not disqualify income as rents from real property so long as the value of the impermissible services does not exceed 1% of the gross income from the property.

If rent attributable to personal property leased in connection with a lease of real property is 15% or less of the total rent received under the lease, then the rent attributable to personal property will qualify as rents from real property; if this 15% threshold is exceeded, the rent attributable to personal property will not so qualify. The portion of rental income treated as attributable to personal property is determined according to the ratio of the fair market value of the personal property to the total fair market value of the real and personal property that is rented. While this 15% test generally is applied separately to each lease of real property, Treasury regulations provide that the test may be applied on an aggregate basis at a multi-tenanted facility with substantially similar leases, such that the aggregate rents received or accrued at the facility under substantially similar leases are tested by reference to the ratio of the fair market value of all rented personal property under such leases to the total fair market value of all rented real and personal property under such leases. We have received a private letter ruling from the IRS confirming that this aggregation is available to us on a site by site basis at our election.

For the reasons set forth below, we believe that, since January 1, 2012, all or substantially all our rents have qualified and will continue to qualify as rents from real property for purposes of Section 856 of the Code.

With respect to services we render at our tower sites, we believe that these services will be of the type that are usually or customarily performed in connection with the rental of tower space and that are not primarily for the benefit or convenience of our tenants. Therefore, we believe that our provision of these permissible services will not cause rents received with respect to our properties to fail to qualify as rents from real property. Any

Table of Contents

impermissible services at a tower site are expected to be provided by an independent contractor or a TRS under appropriate arrangements in order to avoid jeopardizing the qualification of our rents from real property. We have received private letter rulings from the IRS that, based on our representation that particular services are customary and either are consistent with our fiduciary functions or benefit our properties as a whole, these specified services provided in connection with the rental of tower space will not cause otherwise qualifying amounts received by us to be excluded from rents from real property under Section 856(d) of the Code. If, contrary to our expectation, the IRS or a court determines that one or more services we provide to our tenants directly (as opposed to through a TRS or an independent contractor) are impermissible services, and that the amount of gross receipts we receive that is attributable to the provision of such services during a taxable year at a site exceeds 1% of all gross receipts we received or accrued during such taxable year with respect to that site, then all of the rents from that site will be nonqualifying income for purposes of the 75% and 95% gross income tests. Although rents at any one site are immaterial to our compliance with the 75% and 95% gross income tests, a finding by the IRS or a court of sufficient impermissible services at a large number of sites could possibly jeopardize our ability to comply with the 95% gross income test, and in an extreme case possibly even with the 75% gross income test. Under those circumstances, however, we expect we would qualify for the gross income tests relief provision described below, and thereby would preserve our qualification as a REIT; however, the penalty taxes associated with this relief could be material.

In applying the above criteria, each lease or license of space is evaluated separately from each other lease or license, except that the 1% threshold for impermissible services is applied on a site-by-site basis, as discussed above. For purposes of Section 856 of the Code, we believe that each site license under our master license agreements may be tested separately from each other site license under the above criteria, and we have received a private letter ruling from the IRS to that effect.

With respect to any foreign properties, we have maintained, and will continue to maintain, appropriate books and records for our foreign properties in local currencies. Accordingly, for federal income tax purposes, including presumably the 75% and 95% gross income tests summarized above, our income, gains and losses from our foreign operations that are not held in TRSs will generally be calculated first in the applicable local currency, and then translated into United States dollars at appropriate exchange rates. On the periodic repatriation of monies from such foreign operations to the United States, we will be required to recognize foreign exchange gains or losses; however, any foreign exchange gains we recognize from repatriation are expected to constitute real estate foreign exchange gains under Section 856(n)(2) of the Code, and will thus be excluded from the 75% and 95% gross income tests summarized above.

In addition, when we own interests in entities that are controlled foreign corporations for federal income tax purposes, we are deemed to receive our allocable share of certain income, referred to as Subpart F Income, earned by such controlled foreign corporations whether or not that income is actually distributed to us. Numerous exceptions apply in determining whether an item of income is Subpart F Income, including exceptions for rent received from an unrelated person and derived in the active conduct of a trade or business. Rents from real property are generally treated as earned in an active trade or business if the landlord/licensor regularly performs active and substantial management and operational functions with respect to the property while it is leased, but only if such activities are performed through the landlord/licensor's own officers or staff of employees. We believe our controlled foreign corporations generally satisfy this active rental exception, and accordingly we have not recognized material amounts of Subpart F Income, though we may recognize material amounts of Subpart F income in the future. We have received private letter rulings from the IRS that the types of Subpart F Income most likely to be recognized by us qualify under the 95% gross income test. However, we have received no ruling regarding whether other types of Subpart F Income qualify for, or are excluded from, the 95% gross income test. In addition, we do not believe our Subpart F income qualifies under the 75% gross income test.

Absent the foreclosure property rules of Section 856(e) of the Code, a REIT's receipt of nonrental, nonpassive income from a property would not qualify under the 75% and 95% gross income tests. But as foreclosure property, such gross income from such a property would so qualify. In the case of property leased by

Table of Contents

a REIT to a tenant, foreclosure property is defined under applicable Treasury regulations to include generally the real property and incidental personal property that the REIT reduces to possession upon a default or imminent default under the lease by the tenant, and as to which a foreclosure property election is made by attaching an appropriate statement to the REIT's federal income tax return.

Any gain that a REIT recognizes on the sale of foreclosure property held as inventory or primarily for sale to customers, plus any income it receives from foreclosure property that would not qualify under the 75% gross income test in the absence of foreclosure property treatment, reduced by expenses directly connected with the production of those items of income, would be subject to income tax at the maximum corporate rate, currently 35%, under the foreclosure property income tax rules of Section 857(b)(4) of the Code. Thus, if a REIT should lease foreclosure property in exchange for rent that qualifies as rents from real property as described above, then that rental income is not subject to the foreclosure property income tax.

Other than sales of foreclosure property, any gain we realize on the sale of property held as inventory or other property held primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of business will be treated as income from a prohibited transaction that is subject to a penalty tax at a 100% rate. This prohibited transaction income also may adversely affect our ability to satisfy the 75% and 95% gross income tests for federal income tax qualification as a REIT. We cannot provide assurances as to whether or not the IRS might successfully assert that one or more of our dispositions would be subject to the 100% penalty tax. However, we believe that dispositions of assets that we might make will not be subject to the 100% penalty tax, because we intend to:

engage in the business of developing, owning, leasing and managing our existing properties and acquiring, developing, owning, leasing and managing new properties; and

own our assets for long-term use in our business, with only occasional dispositions.

If we fail to satisfy one or both of the 75% or the 95% gross income tests in any taxable year, we may nevertheless qualify as a REIT for that year if we satisfy the following requirements:

our failure to meet the test is due to reasonable cause and not due to willful neglect; and

after we identify the failure, we file a schedule describing each item of our gross income included in the 75% or 95% gross income tests for that taxable year.

It is impossible to state whether in all circumstances we would be entitled to the benefit of this relief provision for the 75% and 95% gross income tests. Even if this relief provision does apply, a 100% tax is imposed upon the greater of the amount by which we failed the 75% test or the amount by which we failed the 95% test, with adjustments, multiplied by a fraction intended to reflect our profitability. This relief provision applies to any failure of the applicable income tests, even if the failure first occurred in a year prior to the taxable year in which the failure was discovered.

Asset Tests. At the close of each quarter of each taxable year, we must also satisfy the following asset percentage tests in order to qualify as a REIT for federal income tax purposes:

At least 75% of our total assets must consist of real estate assets, cash and cash items, shares in other REITs, government securities and temporary investments of new capital (that is, stock or debt instruments purchased with proceeds of a stock offering or a public offering of our debt with a term of at least five years, but only for the one year period commencing with our receipt of the offering proceeds).

Not more than 25% of our total assets may be represented by securities other than those securities that count favorably toward the preceding 75% asset test.

Table of Contents

Of the investments included in the preceding 25% asset class, the value of any one non-REIT issuer's securities that we own may not exceed 5% of the value of our total assets. In addition, we may not own more than 10% of the vote or value of any one non-REIT issuer's outstanding securities, unless the securities are straight debt securities or otherwise excepted as discussed below. Our stock and securities in a TRS are exempted from these 5% and 10% asset tests.

No more than 25% of our total assets may be represented by stock or securities of TRSs.

We have received a private letter ruling from the IRS that, for purposes of Section 856 of the Code, our towers and the sites on which they are located (including any fencing, shelters and permanently installed backup generators) are interests in real property, and intangible assets (including goodwill) derived from our real estate are also interests in real property. Because all or substantially all of our intangible assets (including goodwill) as reported on our audited financial statements relate to current and future rental cash flows from space on our towers and at our tower sites, we believe that all or substantially all of these intangibles are, and will remain, inextricably and compulsorily tied to, and derived from, our real estate and are thus interests in real property. Following the close of each quarter, our board of directors has reviewed, and expects to continue to so review, internally prepared valuation presentations, which have assisted and will assist it in determining the nature and value of the assets shown on our audited financial statements for purposes of the various REIT asset and income tests under Section 856 of the Code. Upon review and due consideration of each completed quarter's valuation presentation, our board of directors has determined and expects to continue to determine, to the maximum extent it is authorized and afforded discretion to determine such matters under applicable federal income tax laws (including in particular Section 856(c)(5)(A) of the Code), whether for the completed calendar quarter (a) substantially all of our intangible assets (including goodwill) were derived from our real estate and (b) the value of our assets, including the value of our towers, buildings, land, intangibles and other assets, were such that we met all of the above REIT asset tests.

The above REIT asset tests must be satisfied at the close of each calendar quarter of each taxable year as a REIT. After a REIT meets the asset tests at the close of any quarter, it will not lose its status as a REIT in any subsequent quarter solely because of fluctuations in the values of its assets, including if caused by changes in the foreign currency exchange rate used to value any foreign assets; but this grandfathering rule may be of limited benefit to a REIT such as us that makes periodic acquisitions of both qualifying and nonqualifying REIT assets. When a failure to satisfy the above asset tests results from an acquisition of securities or other property during a quarter, the failure can be cured by disposition of sufficient nonqualifying assets within 30 days after the close of that quarter.

In addition, if we fail the 5% value test or the 10% vote or value tests at the close of any quarter and do not cure such failure within 30 days after the close of that quarter, that failure will nevertheless be excused if (a) the failure is de minimis and (b) within 6 months after the last day of the quarter in which we identify the failure, we either dispose of the assets causing the failure or otherwise satisfy the 5% value and 10% vote and value asset tests. For purposes of this relief provision, the failure will be de minimis if the value of the assets causing the failure does not exceed the lesser of (a) 1% of the total value of our assets at the end of the relevant quarter or (b) \$10,000,000. If our failure is not de minimis, or if any of the other REIT asset tests have been violated, we may nevertheless qualify as a REIT if (a) we provide the IRS with a description of each asset causing the failure, (b) the failure was due to reasonable cause and not willful neglect, (c) we pay a tax equal to the greater of (1) \$50,000 or (2) the highest rate of corporate tax imposed (currently 35%) on the net income generated by the assets causing the failure during the period of the failure, and (d) within 6 months after the last day of the quarter in which we identify the failure, we either dispose of the assets causing the failure or otherwise satisfy all of the REIT asset tests. These relief provisions apply to any failure of the applicable asset tests, even if the failure first occurred in a year prior to the taxable year in which the failure was discovered.

The Code also provides an excepted securities safe harbor to the 10% value test that includes among other items (a) straight debt securities, (b) certain rental agreements in which payment is to be made in subsequent years, (c) any obligation to pay rents from real property, (d) securities issued by governmental entities that are

Table of Contents

not dependent in whole or in part on the profits of or payments from a nongovernmental entity, and (e) any security issued by another REIT. We have maintained and will continue to maintain records of the value of our assets to document our compliance with the above asset tests and intend to take actions as may be required to cure any failure to satisfy the tests within 30 days after the close of any quarter or within the six-month periods described above.

With respect to each calendar quarter reviewed by our board, and based on its determinations described above, we believe that, since January 1, 2012, we have satisfied the above REIT asset tests.

Annual Distribution Requirements. In order to qualify for taxation as a REIT under the Code, we are required to make annual distributions other than capital gain dividends to our stockholders in an amount at least equal to the excess of:

(1) the sum of 90% of our real estate investment trust taxable income, as defined in Section 857 of the Code, computed by excluding any net capital gain and before taking into account any dividends paid deduction for which we are eligible, and 90% of our net income after tax, if any, from property received in foreclosure, over

(2) the sum of our qualifying noncash income, e.g., imputed rental income or income from transactions inadvertently failing to qualify as like kind exchanges.

The distributions must be paid in the taxable year to which they relate, or in the following taxable year if declared before we timely file our federal income tax return for the earlier taxable year and if paid on or before the first regular distribution payment after that declaration. If a dividend is declared in October, November or December to stockholders of record during one of those months, and is paid during the following January, then for federal income tax purposes the dividend will be treated as having been both paid and received on December 31 of the prior taxable year. A distribution which is not pro rata within a class of our stock entitled to a distribution, or which is not consistent with the rights to distributions among our classes of stock, is a preferential distribution that is not taken into consideration for purposes of the distribution requirements, and accordingly the payment of a preferential distribution could affect our ability to meet the distribution requirements. Taking into account our distribution policies, including any dividend reinvestment plan we might adopt in the future, we do not believe that we have made or will make any preferential distributions. The distribution requirements may be waived by the IRS if a REIT establishes that it failed to meet them by reason of distributions previously made to meet the requirements of the 4% excise tax discussed below. To the extent that we do not distribute all of our net capital gain and all of our real estate investment trust taxable income, as adjusted, we will be subject to federal income tax on undistributed amounts.

In addition, we will be subject to a 4% nondeductible excise tax to the extent we fail within a calendar year to make required distributions to our stockholders of 85% of our ordinary income and 95% of our capital gain net income plus the excess, if any, of the grossed up required distribution for the preceding calendar year over the amount treated as distributed for that preceding calendar year. For this purpose, the term grossed up required distribution for any calendar year is the sum of our taxable income for the calendar year without regard to the deduction for dividends paid and all amounts from earlier years that are not treated as having been distributed under the provision. We will be treated as having sufficient earnings and profits to treat as a dividend any distribution by us up to the amount required to be distributed in order to avoid imposition of the 4% excise tax.

If we do not have enough cash or other liquid assets to meet the 90% distribution requirements, we may find it necessary and desirable to arrange for new debt or equity financing to provide funds for required distributions in order to maintain our REIT status. We can provide no assurance that financing would be available for these purposes on favorable terms.

We may be able to rectify a failure to pay sufficient dividends for any year by paying deficiency dividends to stockholders in a later year. These deficiency dividends may be included in our deduction for dividends paid for the earlier year, but an interest charge would be imposed upon us for the delay in distribution.

Table of Contents

In addition to the other distribution requirements above, to preserve our status as a REIT we are required to timely distribute C corporation earnings and profits that we inherit from acquired corporations.

Our C Corporation History

Our Built-in Gains. As described above, notwithstanding our qualification and taxation as a REIT, we may still be subject to corporate taxation in particular circumstances. If we recognize gain on the disposition of any asset that was held by us on January 1, 2012 during a specified period (generally ten years) thereafter, then we will generally pay tax at the highest regular corporate tax rate, currently 35%, on the lesser of (1) the excess, if any, of the asset's fair market value over our basis in the asset, each determined on January 1, 2012, or (2) our gain recognized in the disposition. Accordingly, any taxable disposition during the specified period of an asset we held on January 1, 2012 could be subject to this built-in gains tax. We currently do not expect to sell any assets if such a sale would result in the imposition of a material tax liability. We cannot, however, provide assurance that we will not change our plans in this regard.

Our Earnings and Profits. A REIT may not have any undistributed C corporation earnings and profits at the end of any taxable year. Thus, in order to qualify as a REIT, we were required to distribute to our stockholders all of our pre-REIT accumulated earnings and profits, if any, prior to the end of our first taxable year as a REIT. Absent an available relief provision, failure to have distributed these pre-REIT accumulated earnings and profits before December 31, 2012 could result in our disqualification as a REIT.

Although our tax counsel is unable to render an opinion on factual determinations such as the amount of our pre-REIT accumulated earnings and profits, we retained accountants to compute the amount of our pre-REIT accumulated earnings and profits as of December 31, 2011. Based on these calculations, we believe that we have satisfied the requirement of timely distributing all of our pre-REIT accumulated earnings and profits. However, there can be no assurance that the IRS would not, upon subsequent examination, propose adjustments to our calculation of the undistributed earnings and profits. If it is subsequently determined that we had undistributed earnings and profits as of the end of our first taxable year as a REIT, we may be eligible for a relief provision similar to the deficiency dividends procedure described above. To utilize this relief provision, we would have to pay an interest charge for the delay in distributing the undistributed earnings and profits; in addition, we would be required to distribute to our stockholders, in addition to our other REIT distribution requirements, the amount of the undistributed earnings and profits less the interest charge paid.

Acquisitions of C Corporations

In addition to the circumstances described above, we will be subject to corporate taxation if we acquire an asset from a corporation in a transaction in which our basis in the asset is determined by reference to the basis of the asset in the hands of a present or former C corporation (including, for example, if we were to liquidate a TRS or convert a TRS to a QRS), and if we subsequently recognize gain on the disposition of this asset during a specified period (generally ten years) beginning on the date on which the asset ceased to be owned by the C corporation. In such case, we will generally pay tax at the highest regular corporate tax rate, currently 35%, on the lesser of (1) the excess, if any, of the asset's fair market value over its adjusted tax basis, each determined as of the time the asset ceased to be owned by the C corporation, or (2) our gain recognized in the disposition. Accordingly, any taxable disposition of an asset so acquired during the specified period could be subject to this built-in gains tax. We currently do not expect to sell any assets if such a sale would result in the imposition of a material tax liability. We cannot, however, provide assurance that we will not change our plans in this regard.

As described above, if we acquire a corporation, liquidate a TRS or convert a TRS to a QRS, to preserve our status as a REIT we must generally distribute all of the C corporation earnings and profits inherited in that transaction, if any, not later than the end of our taxable year in which the transaction occurred. However, if we fail to do so, relief provisions would allow us to maintain our status as a REIT provided we distribute any subsequently discovered C corporation earnings and profits and pay an interest charge in respect of the period of

Table of Contents

delayed distribution. Special rules apply if we liquidate a foreign TRS or convert it to a QRS, including as to the federal income tax bases in the assets that carry over to us, as to the accumulated earnings which we must include as additional dividend income, and as to the C corporation's earnings and profits that carry over to us. In general, however, the accumulated earnings of the liquidated foreign TRS must either be distributed to our stockholders as additional dividend income or be offset with available NOLs.

Other Tax Consequences

Our tax treatment may be modified by legislative, judicial or administrative actions at any time, which actions may be retroactive in effect. The rules dealing with U.S. federal income taxation are constantly under review by Congress, the IRS and the United States Treasury, and statutory changes, new regulations, revisions to existing regulations and revised interpretations of established concepts are issued frequently. Likewise, the rules regarding taxes other than federal income taxes may also be modified. No prediction can be made as to the likelihood of passage of new tax legislation or other provisions, or the direct or indirect effect on us. Revisions to tax laws and interpretations of these laws could adversely affect the tax or other consequences described above. We may also be subject to taxation by state, local or other jurisdictions, including those in which we transact business or are domiciled. These tax consequences may not be comparable to the federal income tax consequences discussed above.

Table of Contents

**CERTAIN U.S. FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSIDERATIONS RELEVANT TO HOLDERS OF OUR
DEBT SECURITIES**

The following is a summary of certain U.S. federal income tax considerations that may be relevant to persons considering the purchase of fixed rate debt securities covered by this prospectus. A discussion of certain U.S. federal income tax considerations that may be relevant to persons considering the purchase of convertible debt securities, short-term debt securities (generally, debt securities having maturities of not more than one year), floating rate debt securities or foreign currency debt securities, will be included in the applicable prospectus supplement if such debt securities will be issued.

This summary, which does not represent tax advice, is based on laws, regulations, rulings and decisions now in effect, all of which are subject to change (including changes in effective dates) or possible differing interpretations. This summary deals only with debt securities that will be held as capital assets and, except where otherwise specifically stated, is addressed only to persons who purchase debt securities in the initial offering. It does not address tax considerations applicable to investors that may be subject to special tax rules, such as:

banks, insurance companies, regulated investment companies, REITs or other financial institutions;

brokers, dealers or traders in securities or foreign currency;

persons who have a functional currency other than the U.S. dollar;

persons subject to alternative minimum tax;

persons that will hold debt securities as a position in a straddle, hedging transaction, constructive sale transaction, constructive ownership transaction or conversion transaction, or as part of a synthetic security or other integrated financial transaction;

tax-exempt entities; or

expatriates.

This summary does not discuss any state, local, foreign or other tax considerations not specifically addressed below. Prospective purchasers of debt securities should review the accompanying prospectus supplements for summaries of special U.S. federal income tax considerations that may be relevant to a particular issue of debt securities, including any floating rate debt securities or foreign currency debt securities (defined below).

Your U.S. federal income tax consequences may differ depending on whether or not you are a U.S. Holder. For purposes of this summary, a U.S. Holder is a beneficial owner of a debt security that is:

an individual who is a citizen or resident of the United States, including an alien individual who is a lawful permanent resident of the United States or meets the substantial presence residency test under the U.S. federal income tax laws;

a corporation (or an entity treated as a corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes) that is created or organized in or under the laws of the United States, any state thereof or the District of Columbia;

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

a trust if (i) a court within the United States is able to exercise primary supervision over the administration of the trust and one or more United States persons have the authority to control all substantial decisions of the trust, or (ii) an electing trust in existence on August 20, 1996, to the extent provided in Treasury regulations;

whose status is not overridden by an applicable tax treaty. Conversely, a Non-U.S. Holder is a beneficial owner of a debt security who is not a U.S. Holder or an entity classified as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes. If a partnership (including any entity treated as a partnership for U.S. federal

Table of Contents

income tax purposes) holds debt securities, the tax treatment of a partner in the partnership generally will depend upon the status of the partner and the activities of the partnership. A beneficial owner that is a partnership and partners in such a partnership should consult their tax advisors about the U.S. federal income tax consequences of the acquisition, ownership and disposition of our debt securities.

Tax Consequences to U.S. Holders

Payments of Interest. Payments of qualified stated interest (as defined below under Original Issue Discount) on a debt security will be taxable to a U.S. Holder as ordinary interest income at the time that such payments are accrued or are received (in accordance with the U.S. Holder's method of tax accounting).

Purchase, Sale, Exchange, Retirement or other Disposition of Debt Securities. A U.S. Holder's tax basis in a debt security generally will equal the cost of such debt security to such U.S. Holder, increased by any amounts includible in income by the U.S. Holder as original issue discount and market discount and reduced by any amortized premium (each as described below) and any payments other than payments of qualified stated interest (as defined below) made on such debt security.

Upon the sale, exchange, retirement or other disposition of a debt security, a U.S. Holder generally will recognize gain or loss equal to the difference between the amount realized on the sale, exchange or retirement (less any accrued qualified stated interest, which will be taxable as such) and the U.S. Holder's tax basis in such debt security.

Except as discussed below with respect to market discount, gain or loss recognized by a U.S. Holder generally will be long-term capital gain or loss if the U.S. Holder has held the debt security for more than one year at the time of disposition. Long-term capital gains recognized by a noncorporate U.S. Holder, including an individual, generally are subject to tax at a lower rate than short-term capital gains or ordinary income. The deductibility of capital losses is subject to limitations.

Original Issue Discount. In addition to, or as an alternative to, bearing qualified stated interest, a debt security may be issued with original issue discount, which we refer to as OID. U.S. Holders of debt securities with OID generally will be subject to the special tax accounting rules for obligations issued with original issue discount provided by the Code and certain regulations promulgated thereunder, which we refer to as the OID Regulations. Debt securities issued with OID will be referred to as original issue discount debt securities. Notice will be given in the accompanying prospectus supplement when we determine that a particular debt security is an original issue discount debt security. U.S. Holders of such original issue discount debt securities should be aware that, as described in greater detail below, they generally must include OID in ordinary gross income for U.S. federal income tax purposes as it accrues, in advance of the receipt of cash attributable to that income.

A debt security will generally be considered to be issued with OID if its stated redemption price at maturity (as defined below) exceeds its issue price (as defined below) by more than a de minimis amount (generally, 0.25% of such stated redemption price multiplied by the number of complete years to maturity). The stated redemption price at maturity of a debt security is generally the sum of all payments to be made on the debt security other than qualified stated interest (as defined below). Qualified stated interest is generally stated interest that is unconditionally payable in cash or in property (other than our debt instruments) at least annually during the entire term of a debt security at a single fixed rate or, subject to certain conditions, based on one or more interest indices. The issue price of each debt security in a particular offering will generally be the first price at which a substantial amount of that particular offering is sold to the public (ignoring sales to underwriters, placement agents or wholesalers).

In general, each U.S. Holder of an original issue discount debt security, whether such holder uses the cash or the accrual method of tax accounting, will be required to include in ordinary gross income the sum of the daily portions of OID on the debt security for all days during the taxable year that the U.S. Holder owns the

Table of Contents

debt security. The daily portions of OID on an original issue discount debt security are determined by allocating to each day in any accrual period a ratable portion of the OID allocable to that accrual period. Accrual periods may be any length and may vary in length over the term of an original issue discount debt security, provided that no accrual period is longer than one year and each scheduled payment of principal or interest occurs on either the final day or the first day of an accrual period. In the case of an initial U.S. Holder, the amount of OID on an original issue discount debt security allocable to each accrual period is determined by (a) multiplying the adjusted issue price (as defined below) of the original issue discount debt security at the beginning of the accrual period by the yield to maturity (as defined below) of such original issue discount debt security (appropriately adjusted to reflect the length of the accrual period) and (b) subtracting from that product the amount (if any) of qualified stated interest allocable to that accrual period. The yield to maturity of a debt security is the discount rate that causes the present value of all payments on the debt security as of its original issue date to equal the issue price of such debt security. The adjusted issue price of an original issue discount debt security at the beginning of any accrual period will generally be the sum of its issue price (generally including accrued interest, if any) and the amount of OID allocable to all prior accrual periods, reduced by the amount of all payments other than payments of qualified stated interest (if any) made with respect to such debt security in all prior accrual periods. As a result of this constant-yield method of including OID in income, the amounts includible in income by a U.S. Holder in respect of an original issue discount debt security denominated in U.S. dollars generally are lesser in the early years and greater in the later years than the amounts that would be includible on a straight-line basis.

A U.S. Holder generally may make an irrevocable election to include in its income its entire return on a debt security (i.e., the excess of all remaining payments to be received on the debt security, including payments of qualified stated interest, over the amount paid by such U.S. Holder for such debt security) under the constant-yield method described above. For debt securities purchased at a premium or bearing market discount in the hands of the U.S. Holder, the U.S. Holder making such election will also be deemed to have made the election (discussed below under *Premium and Market Discount*) to amortize premium or to accrue market discount in income currently on a constant-yield basis.

A subsequent U.S. Holder of an original issue discount debt security that purchases the debt security at a cost less than the sum of the remaining payments to be made on the debt security (other than payments of qualified stated interest), or an initial U.S. Holder that purchases an original issue discount debt security at a price other than the debt security's issue price, also generally will be required to include in gross income the daily portions of OID, calculated as described above. However, if such U.S. Holder acquires the original issue discount debt security with acquisition premium (i.e., at a price greater than its adjusted issue price, which in the case of an initial U.S. Holder would be the issue price), the U.S. Holder is required to reduce its periodic inclusions of OID income by a portion of the acquisition premium equal to the ratio of the OID that would otherwise be includable in such U.S. Holder's income with respect to the debt security during the current taxable year, over the total remaining OID on the debt security as of the acquisition date.

Certain of the debt securities may be subject to special redemption, repayment or interest rate reset features, as indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement. Debt securities containing such features, in particular original issue discount debt securities, may be subject to special rules that differ from the general rules discussed above. Purchasers of debt securities with such features should carefully examine the accompanying prospectus supplement and should consult their own tax advisors with respect to such debt securities because the tax consequences with respect to such features, and especially with respect to OID, will depend, in part, on the particular terms of the purchased debt securities.

Premium and Market Discount. A U.S. Holder of a debt security that purchases the debt security at a cost greater than the sum of the remaining payments to be made on the debt security (other than payments of qualified stated interest) will be considered to have purchased the debt security at a premium, and may elect to amortize such premium (as an offset to interest income), using a constant-yield method, over the remaining term of the debt security. Such election, once made, generally applies to all bonds held or subsequently acquired by

Table of Contents

the U.S. Holder on or after the first taxable year to which the election applies and may not be revoked without the consent of the IRS. A U.S. Holder that elects to amortize such premium must reduce its tax basis in a debt security by the amount of the premium amortized during its holding period. Original issue discount debt securities purchased at a premium will not be subject to the OID rules described above.

With respect to a U.S. Holder that does not elect to amortize bond premium, the amount of bond premium will be included in the U.S. Holder's tax basis when the debt security matures or is disposed of by the U.S. Holder. Therefore, a U.S. Holder that does not elect to amortize such premium and that holds the debt security to maturity generally will be required to treat the premium as a capital loss when the debt security matures. If the non-electing U.S. Holder disposes of the debt security prior to maturity, the premium will decrease the gain or increase the loss that the U.S. Holder would otherwise recognize on the disposition.

If a U.S. Holder of a debt security purchases the debt security at a price that is lower than the sum of the remaining payments to be made on the debt security (other than payments of qualified stated interest) or, in the case of an original issue discount debt security, its adjusted issue price, by at least 0.25% of the sum of the remaining payments to be made on the debt security (other than payments of qualified stated interest) multiplied by the number of remaining whole years to maturity, the debt security will be considered to have market discount in the hands of such U.S. Holder. In such case, gain realized by the U.S. Holder on the disposition of the debt security generally will be treated as ordinary income to the extent of the market discount that accrued on the debt security while held by such U.S. Holder. In addition, the U.S. Holder could be required to defer the deduction of the interest paid on any indebtedness incurred or maintained to purchase or carry the debt security. In general terms, market discount on a debt security will be treated as accruing ratably over the term of such debt security or, at the election of the U.S. Holder, under a constant-yield method.

A U.S. Holder may elect to include market discount in income on a current basis as it accrues (on either a ratable or constant-yield basis), in lieu of treating a portion of any gain realized on a sale of a debt security as ordinary income. If a U.S. Holder elects to include market discount on a current basis, the interest deduction deferral rule described above will not apply. Any such election, if made, applies to all market discount bonds acquired by the taxpayer on or after the first day of the first taxable year to which such election applies and is revocable only with the consent of the IRS.

Information Reporting and Backup Withholding. The issuing and paying agent will be required to file information returns with the IRS with respect to payments made to U.S. Holders of debt securities unless an exception applies. In addition, U.S. Holders who are not exempt will generally be subject to backup withholding tax in respect of such payments if they do not provide their taxpayer identification numbers to the issuing and paying agent. All individuals are subject to these requirements. In general, corporations, tax-exempt organizations and individual retirement accounts are exempt from these requirements.

Tax Consequences to Non-U.S. Holders

Under present U.S. federal income tax law, and subject to the discussions below concerning backup withholding and foreign accounts:

- (a) No withholding of U.S. federal income tax generally will be required with respect to the payment by us or any issuing and paying agent on a debt security owned by a Non-U.S. Holder, provided (i) that the beneficial owner does not actually or constructively own 10% or more of the total combined voting power of all classes of our stock entitled to vote within the meaning of section 871(h)(3) of the Code and the regulations thereunder, (ii) the beneficial owner is not a controlled foreign corporation to which we are a related person within the meaning of Section 864(d)(4) of the Code, (iii) the beneficial owner is not a bank whose receipt of interest on a debt security is described in section 881(c)(3)(A) of the Code; and (iv) the beneficial owner provides a statement signed under penalties of perjury that includes its name and address and certifies that it is a Non-U.S. Holder in compliance with applicable requirements, generally made, under current procedures, on IRS Form W-8BEN (or satisfies certain documentary evidence requirements for establishing that it is a Non-U.S. Holder).

Table of Contents

- (b) A Non-U.S. Holder will generally not be subject to U.S. federal income tax on gain realized on the sale, exchange or redemption of a debt security, unless (i) such gain is effectively connected with the conduct by the Non-U.S. Holder of a trade or business in the United States (and, if an income tax treaty applies, is attributable to a U.S. permanent establishment or fixed base maintained by the Non-U.S. Holder) or (ii) in the case of gain realized by an individual Non-U.S. Holder, the Non-U.S. Holder is present in the United States for 183 days or more in the taxable year of the retirement or disposition and certain other conditions are met.

- (c) If a Non-U.S. Holder is subject to withholding at a rate in excess of a reduced rate for which such holder is eligible under a tax treaty or otherwise, such Non-U.S. Holder may be able to obtain a refund of or credit for any amounts withheld in excess of the applicable rate. Non-U.S. Holders are encouraged to consult with their own tax advisors regarding the possible implications of these withholding requirements on their investment in the debt securities.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, a Non-U.S. Holder generally will be taxed in the same manner as a U.S. Holder with respect to interest income that is effectively connected with its U.S. trade or business (and, if an income tax treaty applies, is attributable to a U.S. permanent establishment or fixed base maintained by the Non-U.S. Holder). In addition, under certain circumstances, effectively connected interest income of a corporate Non-U.S. Holder may be subject to a branch profits tax imposed at a 30% rate (as reduced by an applicable treaty). A Non-U.S. Holder with effectively connected income will, however, generally not be subject to withholding tax on interest income if, under current procedures, it delivers a properly completed IRS Form W-8ECI.

In general, backup withholding and information reporting will not apply to a payment of interest on a debt security to a Non-U.S. Holder, or to proceeds from the disposition of a debt security by a Non-U.S. Holder, in each case, if the Non-U.S. Holder certifies under penalties of perjury that it is a Non-U.S. Holder and neither we nor our paying agent has actual knowledge, or reason to know, to the contrary. Any amounts withheld under the backup withholding rules will be refunded or credited against the Non-U.S. Holder's U.S. federal income tax liability provided the required information is timely furnished to the IRS. In certain circumstances, if a debt security is not held through a qualified intermediary, the amount of payments made on such debt security, the name and address of the beneficial owner and the amount, if any, of tax withheld may be reported to the IRS.

The rules regarding withholding, backup withholding and information reporting for Non-U.S. Holders are complex, may vary depending on a holder's particular situation, and are subject to change. In addition, special rules apply to certain types of Non-U.S. Holders including partnerships, trusts and other entities treated as pass-through entities for U.S. federal income tax purposes. Non-U.S. Holders should accordingly consult their own tax advisors as to the specific methods to use and forms to complete to satisfy these rules.

Foreign Accounts

A U.S. law enacted in 2010 and commonly referred to as FATCA potentially imposes a withholding tax of 30% on payments of (i) interest on a debt obligation of a U.S. issuer after December 31, 2013, and (ii) gross proceeds from the sale or other disposition of such a debt obligation after December 31, 2016, in each case made to (a) a foreign financial institution (as a beneficial owner or as an intermediary), unless such institution enters into an agreement with the U.S. government (or is required by applicable local law) to collect and provide to the U.S. or other relevant tax authorities certain information regarding U.S. account holders of such institution; or (b) a foreign entity (as a beneficial owner) that is not a financial institution unless such entity provides the withholding agent with a certification that it does not have any substantial U.S. owners or that identifies its substantial U.S. owners, which generally includes any specified U.S. person that directly or indirectly owns more than a specified percentage of such entity. FATCA generally will apply to debt obligations of a U.S. issuer issued or materially modified after December 31, 2013. If you hold our debt securities through a non-U.S. intermediary or if you are a Non-U.S. Holder, we urge you to consult your own tax advisor regarding foreign account tax compliance.

Table of Contents

U.S. FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSIDERATIONS RELEVANT TO HOLDERS OF OUR STOCK

The following is a summary of the material U.S. federal income tax considerations relating to the acquisition, ownership and disposition of our stock. The opinion of our tax counsel, Sullivan & Worcester LLP, attached hereto as Exhibit 8.1 addresses these considerations, as set forth in this summary. Our tax counsel's opinions are conditioned upon the assumption that our Certificate of Incorporation, By-Laws, licenses and all other applicable legal documents to which we are or have been a party have been and will be complied with by all parties to those documents, upon the accuracy and completeness of the factual matters described in this prospectus, upon private letter rulings issued to us by the IRS as to certain federal income tax matters, and upon representations made by us as to certain factual matters relating to our organization and operations and our expected manner of operation. If this assumption or a representation is inaccurate or incomplete, our tax counsel's opinions may be adversely affected and may not be relied upon. The opinions of our tax counsel are based upon the law as it exists today, but the law may change in the future, possibly with retroactive effect. Given the highly complex nature of the rules governing REITs and their stockholders, the ongoing importance of factual determinations, and the possibility of future changes in our circumstances, no assurance can be given by our tax counsel or us regarding the continuing accuracy of the matters in this summary. Any opinion of our tax counsel is expressed as of the date issued. Our tax counsel will have no obligation to advise us or our stockholders of any subsequent change in the matters stated, represented or assumed or of any subsequent change in the applicable law. Also, the opinions of tax counsel are not binding on either the IRS or a court, and either could take a position different from that expressed by tax counsel. For a discussion of the specific U.S. federal income tax considerations that may be relevant to persons considering the purchase of common stock, preferred stock, warrants, purchase contracts, units or depositary shares, please refer to the related prospectus supplement.

The sections of the Code that govern the U.S. federal income tax consequences of acquiring, owning and disposing of stock in a REIT are complex. This section contains a summary of applicable Code provisions, related rules and regulations and administrative and judicial interpretations, all of which are subject to change, possibly with retroactive effect. Future legislative, judicial or administrative actions or decisions could also affect the accuracy of statements made in this summary. In addition, this summary is not exhaustive of all possible tax consequences, and does not discuss any estate, gift, state, local or foreign tax consequences. For all these reasons, we urge you and any holder or prospective acquiror of our stock to consult with a tax advisor about the U.S. federal income tax and other tax consequences of the acquisition, ownership and disposition of our stock. Our intentions and beliefs described in this summary are based upon our understanding of applicable laws and regulations that are in effect as of the date of this prospectus. If new laws or regulations are enacted which impact us directly or indirectly, we may change our intentions or beliefs.

The summary is based on existing law, and is limited to investors who acquire or own our stock as investment assets rather than as inventory or as property used in a trade or business. It does not address tax considerations applicable to investors that may be subject to special tax rules, such as:

banks, insurance companies, regulated investment companies, REITs or other financial institutions;

brokers, dealers or traders in securities or foreign currency;

persons who have a functional currency other than the U.S. dollar;

persons who acquire our stock in connection with employment or other performance of services;

persons subject to alternative minimum tax;

persons who acquire or hold our stock as a position in a straddle, hedging transaction, constructive sale transaction, constructive ownership transaction or conversion transaction, or as part of a synthetic security or other integrated financial transaction;

tax-exempt entities; or

expatriates.

Table of Contents

Investors considering purchasing our stock should consult their tax advisors concerning the application of U.S. federal income tax laws to their particular situation as well as any consequences of the purchase, ownership and disposition of our stock arising under the laws of any state, local or non-U.S. taxing jurisdiction.

Your U.S. federal income tax consequences may differ depending on whether or not you are a U.S. stockholder. For purposes of this summary, a U.S. stockholder is a beneficial owner of our stock that is:

an individual who is a citizen or resident of the United States, including an alien individual who is a lawful permanent resident of the United States or meets the substantial presence residency test under the U.S. federal income tax laws;

a corporation (or an entity treated as a corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes) that is created or organized in or under the laws of the United States, any state thereof or the District of Columbia;

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

a trust if (i) a court within the United States is able to exercise primary supervision over the administration of the trust and one or more United States persons have the authority to control all substantial decisions of the trust, or (ii) an electing trust in existence on August 20, 1996, to the extent provided in Treasury regulations;

whose status as a U.S. stockholder is not overridden by an applicable tax treaty. Conversely, a non-U.S. stockholder is a beneficial owner of our stock who is not a U.S. stockholder. If a partnership (including any entity treated as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes) is a beneficial owner of our stock, the tax treatment of a partner in the partnership generally will depend upon the status of the partner and the activities of the partnership. A beneficial owner that is a partnership and partners in such a partnership should consult their tax advisors about the U.S. federal income tax consequences of the acquisition, ownership and disposition of our stock.

If we fail to qualify as a REIT or elect not to qualify as a REIT, our stockholders will be subject to tax in the same manner as stockholders of a C corporation. In that event, to the extent of our current and accumulated earnings and profits, all distributions to our stockholders will generally be taxable as ordinary dividends potentially eligible for preferential tax rates discussed below and, subject to limitations in the Code, will be eligible for the dividends received deduction for corporate stockholders.

Taxation of U.S. Stockholders

For noncorporate U.S. stockholders, to the extent that their total adjusted income does not exceed applicable thresholds, the maximum U.S. federal income tax rate for long-term capital gains and most corporate dividends is generally 15%. For those noncorporate U.S. stockholders whose total adjusted income exceeds such income thresholds, the maximum U.S. federal income tax rate for long-term capital gains and most corporate dividends is generally 20%. However, because we are not generally subject to U.S. federal income tax on the portion of our REIT taxable income distributed to our stockholders, dividends on our stock generally are not eligible for such preferential tax rates. As a result, our ordinary dividends continue to be taxed at the higher U.S. federal income tax rates applicable to ordinary income. However, the preferential U.S. federal income tax rates for long-term capital gains and for dividends generally apply to:

- (1) long-term capital gains, if any, recognized on the disposition of our stock;
- (2) our distributions designated as long-term capital gain dividends (except to the extent attributable to real estate depreciation recapture, in which case the distributions are subject to a maximum 25% U.S. federal income tax rate);
- (3)

Edgar Filing: AMERICAN TOWER CORP /MA/ - Form 424B2

our dividends attributable to dividends, if any, received by us from C corporations such as domestic TRSs and certain foreign TRSs; and

- (4) our dividends to the extent attributable to income upon which we have paid U.S. federal corporate income tax.

Table of Contents

As long as we qualify as a REIT for U.S. federal income tax purposes, a distribution to our U.S. stockholders that we do not designate as a capital gain dividend generally will be treated as an ordinary income dividend to the extent of our current or accumulated earnings and profits. Distributions made out of our current or accumulated earnings and profits that we properly designate as capital gain dividends generally will be taxed as long-term capital gains, as discussed below, to the extent they do not exceed our actual net capital gain for the taxable year. However, corporate U.S. stockholders may be required to treat up to 20% of any capital gain dividend as ordinary income under Section 291 of the Code.

In addition, we may elect to retain net capital gain income and treat it as constructively distributed. In that case:

- (1) we will be taxed at regular corporate capital gains tax rates on retained amounts;
- (2) each U.S. stockholder will be taxed on its designated proportionate share of our retained net capital gains as though that amount were distributed and designated a capital gain dividend;
- (3) each U.S. stockholder will receive a credit for its designated proportionate share of the tax that we pay;
- (4) each U.S. stockholder will increase its adjusted basis in our stock by the excess of the amount of its proportionate share of these retained net capital gains over its proportionate share of the tax that we pay; and
- (5) both we and our corporate stockholders will make commensurate adjustments in our respective earnings and profits for U.S. federal income tax purposes.

If we elect to retain our net capital gains in this fashion, we will notify our U.S. stockholders of the relevant tax information within 60 days after the close of the affected taxable year.

If for any taxable year we designate capital gain dividends for U.S. stockholders, then a portion of the capital gain dividends we designate will be allocated to the holders of a particular class of stock on a percentage basis equal to the ratio of the amount of the total dividends paid or made available for the year to the holders of that class of stock to the total dividends paid or made available for the year to holders of all outstanding classes of our stock. We will similarly designate the portion of any capital gain dividend that is to be taxed to noncorporate U.S. stockholders at preferential maximum rates (including any capital gains attributable to real estate depreciation recapture that are subject to a maximum 25% U.S. federal income tax rate) so that the designations will be proportionate among all outstanding classes of our stock.

Distributions in excess of current or accumulated earnings and profits will not be taxable to a U.S. stockholder to the extent that they do not exceed the U.S. stockholder's adjusted tax basis in our stock, but will reduce the U.S. stockholder's basis in such stock. To the extent that these excess distributions exceed the adjusted basis of a U.S. stockholder's stock, they will be included in income as capital gain, with long-term gain generally taxed to noncorporate U.S. stockholders at preferential maximum rates. No U.S. stockholder may include on his U.S. federal income tax return any of our net operating losses or any of our capital losses.

If a dividend is declared in October, November or December to stockholders of record during one of those months, and is paid during the following January, then for U.S. federal income tax purposes the dividend will be treated as having been both paid and received on December 31 of the prior taxable year. Also, items that are treated differently for regular and alternative minimum tax purposes are to be allocated between a REIT and its stockholders under Treasury regulations which are to be prescribed. It is possible that these Treasury regulations will require tax preference items to be allocated to our stockholders with respect to any accelerated depreciation or other tax preference items that we claim, including a portion of the NOLs we may utilize. We have allocated and may in the future allocate preference items to our stockholders in the absence of such regulations.

Table of Contents

A U.S. stockholder will generally recognize gain or loss equal to the difference between the amount realized and the U.S. stockholder's adjusted basis in our stock that is sold or exchanged. This gain or loss will be capital gain or loss, and will be long-term capital gain or loss if the U.S. stockholder's holding period in the stock exceeds one year. In addition, any loss upon a sale or exchange of our stock held for six months or less will generally be treated as a long-term capital loss to the extent of our long-term capital gain dividends during the holding period.

For taxable years beginning after December 31, 2012, U.S. stockholders who are individuals, estates or trusts are generally required to pay a new 3.8% Medicare tax on their net investment income (including dividends on and gains from the sale or other disposition of our stock), or in the case of estates and trusts on their net investment income that is not distributed, in each case to the extent that their total adjusted income exceeds applicable thresholds.

The Code imposes a penalty for the failure to properly disclose a reportable transaction. A reportable transaction currently includes, among other things, a sale or exchange of our stock resulting in a tax loss in excess of (a) \$10 million in any single year or \$20 million in any combination of years in the case of our stock held by a C corporation or by a partnership with only C corporation partners or (b) \$2 million in any single year or \$4 million in any combination of years in the case of our stock held by any other partnership or an S corporation, trust or individual, including losses that flow through pass through entities to individuals. A taxpayer discloses a reportable transaction by filing IRS Form 8886 with its U.S. federal income tax return and, in the first year of filing, a copy of Form 8886 must be sent to the IRS's Office of Tax Shelter Analysis. The penalty for failing to disclose a reportable transaction is generally \$10,000 in the case of a natural person and \$50,000 in any other case.

Noncorporate U.S. stockholders who borrow funds to finance their acquisition of our stock could be limited in the amount of deductions allowed for the interest paid on the indebtedness incurred. Under Section 163(d) of the Code, interest paid or accrued on indebtedness incurred or continued to purchase or carry property held for investment is generally deductible only to the extent of the investor's net investment income. A U.S. stockholder's net investment income will include ordinary income dividend distributions received from us and, if an appropriate election is made by the U.S. stockholder, capital gain dividend distributions and qualified dividends received from us; however, distributions treated as a nontaxable return of the stockholder's basis will not enter into the computation of net investment income.

Taxation of Tax-Exempt Stockholders

Subject to the pension-held REIT rules discussed below, our distributions made to stockholders that are tax-exempt pension plans, individual retirement accounts or other qualifying tax-exempt entities will not constitute unrelated business taxable income, provided that the stockholder has not financed its acquisition of our stock with acquisition indebtedness within the meaning of the Code, and provided further that, consistent with our present intent, we do not hold a residual interest in a real estate mortgage investment conduit.

Tax-exempt pension trusts that own more than 10% by value of a pension-held REIT at any time during a taxable year may be required to treat a percentage of all dividends received from the pension-held REIT during the year as unrelated business taxable income. This percentage is equal to the ratio of:

- (1) the pension-held REIT's gross income derived from the conduct of unrelated trades or businesses, determined as if the pension-held REIT were a tax-exempt pension fund, less direct expenses related to that income, to
- (2) the pension-held REIT's gross income from all sources, less direct expenses related to that income,

Table of Contents

except that this percentage shall be deemed to be zero unless it would otherwise equal or exceed 5%. A REIT is a pension-held REIT if:

the REIT is predominantly held by tax-exempt pension trusts; and

the REIT would fail to satisfy the closely held ownership requirement, discussed above in Federal Income Tax Considerations Related to Our Qualification and Taxation as a REIT REIT Qualification Requirements , if the stock in the REIT held by tax-exempt pension trusts were viewed as held by tax-exempt pension trusts rather than by their respective beneficiaries.

A REIT is predominantly held by tax-exempt pension trusts if at least one tax-exempt pension trust owns more than 25% by value of the REIT's stock, or if one or more tax-exempt pension trusts, each owning more than 10% by value of the REIT's stock, own in the aggregate more than 50% by value of the REIT's stock. Because of the stock ownership concentration restrictions in our Certificate of Incorporation, we believe that we have not been and will not become a pension-held REIT. However, because our common stock is publicly traded, we cannot completely control whether or not we are or will become a pension-held REIT.

Social clubs, voluntary employee benefit associations, supplemental unemployment benefit trusts and qualified group legal services plans exempt from U.S. federal income taxation under Sections 501(c)(7), (c)(9), (c)(17) and (c)(20) of the Code, respectively, are subject to different unrelated business taxable income rules, which generally will require them to characterize distributions from a REIT as unrelated business taxable income. In addition, these prospective investors should consult their own tax advisors concerning any set aside or reserve requirements applicable to them.

Taxation of Non-U.S. Stockholders

The rules governing the U.S. federal income taxation of non-U.S. stockholders are complex, and the following discussion is intended only as a summary of these rules. If you are a non-U.S. stockholder, we urge you to consult with your own tax advisor to determine the impact of U.S. federal, state, local and foreign tax laws, including any tax return filing and other reporting requirements, with respect to your investment in our stock.

In general, a non-U.S. stockholder will be subject to regular U.S. federal income tax in the same manner as a U.S. stockholder with respect to its investment in our stock if that investment is effectively connected with the non-U.S. stockholder's conduct of a trade or business in the United States (and, if provided by an applicable income tax treaty, is attributable to a permanent establishment or fixed base the non-U.S. stockholder maintains in the United States). In addition, a corporate non-U.S. stockholder that receives income that is or is deemed effectively connected with a trade or business in the United States may also be subject to the 30% branch profits tax, which is payable in addition to regular U.S. federal corporate income tax. The balance of this discussion of the U.S. federal income taxation of non-U.S. stockholders addresses only those non-U.S. stockholders whose investment in our stock is not effectively connected with the conduct of a trade or business in the United States.

A distribution by us to a non-U.S. stockholder that is not attributable to gain from the sale or exchange of a United States real property interest and that is not designated as a capital gain dividend will be treated as an ordinary income dividend to the extent that it is made out of current or accumulated earnings and profits. A distribution of this type will generally be subject to U.S. federal income tax and withholding at the rate of 30%, or at a lower rate if the non-U.S. stockholder has in the manner prescribed by the IRS demonstrated its entitlement to benefits under a tax treaty. In the case of any in kind distributions of property, we or other applicable withholding agents will collect the amount required to be withheld by reducing to cash for remittance to the IRS a sufficient portion of the property that the non-U.S. stockholder would otherwise receive, and the non-U.S. stockholder may bear brokerage or other costs for this withholding procedure. Because we cannot determine our current and accumulated earnings and profits until the end of the taxable year, withholding at the rate of 30% or applicable lower treaty rate will generally be imposed on the gross amount of any distribution to a

Table of Contents

non-U.S. stockholder that we make and do not designate as a capital gain dividend. Notwithstanding this withholding on distributions in excess of our current and accumulated earnings and profits, these distributions are a nontaxable return of capital to the extent that they do not exceed the non-U.S. stockholder's adjusted basis in our stock, and the nontaxable return of capital will reduce the adjusted basis in such stock. To the extent that distributions in excess of current and accumulated earnings and profits exceed the non-U.S. stockholder's adjusted basis in our stock, the distributions will give rise to tax liability if the non-U.S. stockholder would otherwise be subject to tax on any gain from the sale or exchange of such stock, as discussed below. A non-U.S. stockholder may seek a refund from the IRS of amounts withheld on distributions to him in excess of our current and accumulated earnings and profits.

From time to time, some of our distributions may be attributable to the sale or exchange of United States real property interests. However, capital gain dividends that are received by a non-U.S. stockholder, as well as dividends attributable to our sales of United States real property interests, will be subject to the taxation and withholding regime applicable to ordinary income dividends and the branch profits tax will not apply, provided that (1) these dividends are received with respect to a class of stock that is regularly traded on a domestic established securities market (such as the New York Stock Exchange, or the NYSE), both as defined by applicable Treasury regulations, and (2) the non-U.S. stockholder does not own more than 5% of that class of stock at any time during the one year period ending on the date of distribution of the applicable capital gain and United States real property interest dividends. If both of these provisions are satisfied, qualifying non-U.S. stockholders will not be subject to withholding either on capital gain dividends or on dividends that are attributable to our sales of United States real property interests as though those amounts were effectively connected with a U.S. trade or business, and qualifying non-U.S. stockholders will not be required to file U.S. federal income tax returns or pay branch profits tax in respect of these dividends. Instead, these dividends will be subject to U.S. federal income tax and withholding as ordinary dividends, currently at a 30% tax rate unless reduced by applicable treaty, as discussed below. Although there can be no assurance in this regard, we believe that our common stock has been and will remain regularly traded on a domestic established securities market within the meaning of applicable Treasury regulations; however, we can provide no assurance that our common stock will continue to be regularly traded on a domestic established securities market or that any future class of stock that we may issue will be so traded.

Except as discussed above, for any year in which we qualify as a REIT, distributions that are attributable to gain from the sale or exchange of a United States real property interest are taxed to a non-U.S. stockholder as if these distributions were gains effectively connected with a trade or business in the United States conducted by the non-U.S. stockholder. Accordingly, a non-U.S. stockholder that does not qualify for the special rule above will be taxed on these amounts at the normal capital gain and other tax rates applicable to a U.S. stockholder, subject to any applicable alternative minimum tax and to a special alternative minimum tax in the case of nonresident alien individuals; such a non-U.S. stockholder will be required to file a United States federal income tax return reporting these amounts, even if applicable withholding is imposed as described below; and such a non-U.S. stockholder that is also a corporation may owe the 30% branch profits tax in respect of these amounts. We or other applicable withholding agents will be required to withhold from distributions to such non-U.S. stockholders, and remit to the IRS, 35% of the maximum amount of any distribution that could be designated as a capital gain dividend. In addition, for purposes of this withholding rule, if we designate prior distributions as capital gain dividends, then subsequent distributions up to the amount of the designated prior distributions will be treated as capital gain dividends. The amount of any tax withheld is creditable against the non-U.S. stockholder's U.S. federal income tax liability, and the non-U.S. stockholder may file for a refund from the IRS of any amount of withheld tax in excess of that tax liability.

A special wash sale rule applies to a non-U.S. stockholder who owns our stock if (1) the non-U.S. stockholder owns more than 5% of that class of stock at any time during the one year period ending on the date of the distribution described below, or (2) that class of stock is not, within the meaning of applicable Treasury regulations, regularly traded on a domestic established securities market (such as the NYSE). Although there can be no assurance in this regard, we believe that our common stock has been and will remain regularly traded

Table of Contents

on a domestic established securities market within the meaning of applicable Treasury regulations, all as discussed above; however, we can provide no assurance that our common stock will continue to be regularly traded on a domestic established securities market or that any future class of stock that we issue will be so traded. We thus anticipate this wash sale rule to apply, if at all, only to a non-U.S. stockholder that either (1) owns more than 5% of any class of our stock or (2) owns shares in a class of our stock that does not meet the trading standard described above. Such a non-U.S. stockholder will be treated as having made a wash sale of our stock if it (1) disposes of an interest in our stock during the 30 days preceding the ex-dividend date of a distribution by us that, but for such disposition, would have been treated by the non-U.S. stockholder in whole or in part as gain from the sale or exchange of a United States real property interest, and then (2) acquires or enters into a contract to acquire a substantially identical interest in our stock, either actually or constructively through a related party, during the 61-day period beginning 30 days prior to the ex-dividend date. In the event of such a wash sale, the non-U.S. stockholder will have gain from the sale or exchange of a United States real property interest in an amount equal to the portion of the distribution that, but for the wash sale, would have been a gain from the sale or exchange of a United States real property interest. As discussed above, a non-U.S. stockholder's gain from the sale or exchange of a United States real property interest can trigger increased U.S. taxes, such as the branch profits tax applicable to non-U.S. corporations, and increased U.S. tax filing requirements.

If for any taxable year we designate capital gain dividends for our stockholders, then a portion of the capital gain dividends we designate will be allocated to the holders of a particular class of stock on a percentage basis equal to the ratio of the amount of the total dividends paid or made available for the year to the holders of that class of stock to the total dividends paid or made available for the year to holders of all outstanding classes of our stock.

Tax treaties may reduce the withholding obligations on our distributions. Under some treaties, however, rates below 30% that are applicable to ordinary income dividends from U.S. corporations may not apply to ordinary income dividends from a REIT or may apply only if the REIT meets certain additional conditions. A non-U.S. stockholder must generally use an applicable IRS Form W-8, or substantially similar form, to claim tax treaty benefits. If the amount of tax withheld with respect to a distribution to a non-U.S. stockholder exceeds the stockholder's U.S. federal income tax liability with respect to the distribution, the non-U.S. stockholder may file for a refund of the excess from the IRS. The 35% withholding tax rate discussed above on some capital gain dividends corresponds to the maximum income tax rate applicable to corporate non-U.S. stockholders but is higher than the current preferential maximum rates on capital gains generally applicable to noncorporate non-U.S. stockholders. Treasury regulations also provide special rules to determine whether, for purposes of determining the applicability of a tax treaty, our distributions to a non-U.S. stockholder that is an entity should be treated as paid to the entity or to those owning an interest in that entity, and whether the entity or its owners are entitled to benefits under the tax treaty. In the case of any in kind distributions of property, we or other applicable withholding agents will have to collect the amount required to be withheld by reducing to cash for remittance to the IRS a sufficient portion of the property that the non-U.S. stockholder would otherwise receive, and the non-U.S. stockholder may bear brokerage or other costs for this withholding procedure.

Non-U.S. stockholders should generally be able to treat amounts we designate as retained but constructively distributed capital gains in the same manner as actual distributions of capital gain dividends by us. In addition, a non-U.S. stockholder should be able to offset as a credit against its U.S. federal income tax liability the proportionate share of the tax paid by us on such retained but constructively distributed capital gains. A non-U.S. stockholder may file for a refund from the IRS for the amount that the non-U.S. stockholder's proportionate share of tax paid by us exceeds its U.S. federal income tax liability on the constructively distributed capital gains.

If our stock is not a United States real property interest within the meaning of Section 897 of the Code, then a non-U.S. stockholder's gain on sale of our stock generally will not be subject to U.S. federal income taxation, except that a nonresident alien individual who was in the United States for 183 days or more during the taxable year may be subject to a 30% tax on this gain. Our stock will not constitute a United States real property interest if we are a domestically controlled REIT. A domestically controlled REIT is a REIT in which at all

Table of Contents

times during the preceding five year period less than 50% in value of its stock is held directly or indirectly by foreign persons; for this exception to be available, it is unclear whether a new REIT like us must have been a REIT during the preceding five years or whether instead we are permitted to satisfy the foreign ownership limit with ownership history from our pre-REIT period and that of our predecessor corporation. We believe that we have been and will remain a domestically controlled REIT and thus a non U.S. stockholder's gain on sale of our stock will not be subject to U.S. federal income taxation. However, because our common stock is publicly traded, we can provide no assurance that we have been or will remain a domestically controlled REIT. If we are not a domestically controlled REIT, a non-U.S. stockholder's gain on sale of our stock will not be subject to U.S. federal income taxation as a sale of a United States real property interest if that class of stock is regularly traded, as defined by applicable Treasury regulations, on an established securities market like the NYSE, and the non-U.S. stockholder has at all times during the preceding five years owned 5% or less by value of that class of stock; although not completely clear, we believe that both our pre-REIT ownership history and the ownership history of our predecessor corporation are included in applying this 5% threshold test. In this regard, because the stock of others may be redeemed, a non-U.S. stockholder's percentage interest in a class of our stock may increase even if it acquires no additional stock in that class. If the gain on the sale of our stock were subject to U.S. federal income taxation, the non-U.S. stockholder will generally be subject to the same treatment as a U.S. stockholder with respect to its gain, will be required to file a U.S. federal income tax return reporting that gain, and a corporate non-U.S. stockholder might owe branch profits tax. A purchaser of our stock from a non-U.S. stockholder will not be required to withhold on the purchase price if the purchased stock is regularly traded on an established securities market or if we are a domestically controlled REIT. Otherwise, a purchaser of our stock from a non-U.S. stockholder may be required to withhold 10% of the purchase price paid to the non-U.S. stockholder and to remit the withheld amount to the IRS.

Backup Withholding and Information Reporting

Information reporting and backup withholding may apply to distributions or proceeds paid to our stockholders under the circumstances discussed below. The backup withholding rate is currently 28%. Amounts withheld under backup withholding are generally not an additional tax and may be refunded by the IRS or credited against the stockholder's U.S. federal income tax liability. In the case of any in kind distributions of property by us to a stockholder, we or other applicable withholding agents will have to collect any applicable backup withholding by reducing to cash for remittance to the IRS a sufficient portion of the property that the stockholder would otherwise receive, and the stockholder may bear brokerage or other costs for this withholding procedure.

A U.S. stockholder may be subject to backup withholding when it receives distributions on our stock or proceeds upon the sale, exchange, redemption, retirement or other disposition of our stock, unless the U.S. stockholder properly executes, or has previously properly executed, under penalties of perjury an IRS Form W-9 or substantially similar form that:

provides the U.S. stockholder's correct taxpayer identification number; and

certifies that the U.S. stockholder is exempt from backup withholding because it comes within an enumerated exempt category, it has not been notified by the IRS that it is subject to backup withholding, or it has been notified by the IRS that it is no longer subject to backup withholding.

If the U.S. stockholder has not provided and does not provide its correct taxpayer identification number on the IRS Form W-9 or substantially similar form, it may be subject to penalties imposed by the IRS, and we or other applicable withholding agents may have to withhold a portion of any distributions or proceeds paid to such U.S. stockholder. Unless the U.S. stockholder has established on a properly executed IRS Form W-9 or substantially similar form that it comes within an enumerated exempt category, distributions or proceeds on our stock paid to it during the calendar year, and the amount of tax withheld, if any, will be reported to it and to the IRS.

Table of Contents

Distributions on our stock to a non-U.S. stockholder during each calendar year and the amount of tax withheld, if any, will generally be reported to the non-U.S. stockholder and to the IRS. This information reporting requirement applies regardless of whether the non-U.S. stockholder is subject to withholding on distributions on our stock or whether the withholding was reduced or eliminated by an applicable tax treaty. Also, distributions paid to a non-U.S. stockholder on our stock may be subject to backup withholding, unless the non-U.S. stockholder properly certifies its non-U.S. stockholder status on an IRS Form W-8 or substantially similar form in the manner described above. Similarly, information reporting and backup withholding will not apply to proceeds a non-U.S. stockholder receives upon the sale, exchange, redemption, retirement or other disposition of our stock, if the non-U.S. stockholder properly certifies its non-U.S. stockholder status on an IRS Form W-8 or substantially similar form. Even without having executed an IRS Form W-8 or substantially similar form, however, in some cases information reporting and backup withholding will not apply to proceeds that a non-U.S. stockholder receives upon the sale, exchange, redemption, retirement or other disposition of our stock if the non-U.S. stockholder receives those proceeds through a broker's foreign office.

Foreign Accounts

FATCA potentially imposes a withholding tax of 30% on payments of (i) dividends after December 31, 2013, and (ii) gross proceeds from the sale or other disposition of our stock after December 31, 2016, in each case made to (a) a foreign financial institution (as a beneficial owner or as an intermediary), unless such institution enters into an agreement with the U.S. government (or is required by applicable local law) to collect and provide to the U.S. or other relevant tax authorities certain information regarding U.S. account holders of such institution; or (b) a foreign entity (as a beneficial owner) that is not a financial institution unless such entity provides the withholding agent with a certification that it does not have any substantial U.S. owners or that identifies its substantial U.S. owners, which generally includes any specified U.S. person that directly or indirectly owns more than a specified percentage of such entity. If you hold our stock through a non-U.S. intermediary or if you are a non-U.S. stockholder, we urge you to consult your own tax advisor regarding foreign account tax compliance.

Other Tax Consequences

The tax treatment of our stockholders may be modified by legislative, judicial or administrative actions at any time, which actions may be retroactive in effect. The rules dealing with U.S. federal income taxation are constantly under review by Congress, the IRS and the United States Treasury, and statutory changes, new regulations, revisions to existing regulations and revised interpretations of established concepts are issued frequently. Likewise, the rules regarding taxes other than federal income taxes may also be modified. No prediction can be made as to the likelihood of passage of new tax legislation or other provisions, or the direct or indirect effect on us and our stockholders. Revisions to tax laws and interpretations of these laws could adversely affect the tax or other consequences of an investment in our stock. Our stockholders may also be subject to taxation by state, local or other jurisdictions, including those in which we or our stockholders transact business or reside. These tax consequences may not be comparable to the U.S. federal income tax consequences discussed above.

Table of Contents

VALIDITY OF THE SECURITIES

The validity of the securities described in this prospectus will be passed upon for American Tower by Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP, New York, New York. Certain legal matters will be passed upon for American Tower by Edmund DiSanto, Esq., Executive Vice President, Chief Administrative Officer, General Counsel and Secretary of American Tower. The validity of the securities described in this prospectus will be passed upon for any underwriters or agents, as the case may be, by Shearman & Sterling LLP, New York, New York. Our qualification as a REIT, and the associated consequences to holders of our stock, have been passed upon by Sullivan & Worcester LLP, Boston, Massachusetts.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements, and the related financial statement schedule, incorporated in this prospectus by reference from the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K, and the effectiveness of the Company's internal control over financial reporting have been audited by Deloitte & Touche LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, as stated in their reports, which are incorporated herein by reference. Those consolidated financial statements and financial statement schedule have been so incorporated in reliance upon the reports of such firm given upon their authority as experts in accounting and auditing.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. Our SEC filings are available to the public over the Internet at the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>. Please note that the SEC's website is included in this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement as an inactive textual reference only. The information contained on the SEC's website is not incorporated by reference into this prospectus and should not be considered to be part of this prospectus, except as described in the following paragraph. You may also read and copy any document we file with the SEC at its public reference facility at 100 F Street, NE, Washington, D.C. 20549. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the operation of the public reference facility.

We incorporate by reference into this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement certain information we file with the SEC, which means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to those documents. The information incorporated by reference is an important part of this prospectus. Certain information that we subsequently file with the SEC will automatically update and supersede information in this prospectus and in our other filings with the SEC. We incorporate by reference the documents listed below, which we have already filed with the SEC, and any future filings we make with the SEC under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act, until all the securities offered by this prospectus have been sold and all conditions to the consummation of such sales have been satisfied, except that we are not incorporating any information included in a Current Report on Form 8-K that has been or will be furnished (and not filed) with the SEC, unless such information is expressly incorporated herein by a reference in a furnished Current Report on Form 8-K or other furnished document:

our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012 filed with the SEC on February 27, 2013;

our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2013 filed with the SEC on May 1, 2013;

portions of our Definitive Proxy Statement on Schedule 14A filed with the SEC on April 11, 2013 that are incorporated by reference into Part III of our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012;

Table of Contents

our Current Reports on Form 8-K filed with the SEC on January 3, 2013, January 8, 2013, March 5, 2013, March 6, 2013, March 12, 2013, March 15, 2013 and May 22, 2013; and

the description of our common stock contained in Exhibit 4.1 to Form 8-K filed with the SEC on January 3, 2012, and any subsequent amendments and reports to update that description.

You may request a copy of these filings at no cost, by writing or calling us at the following address: 116 Huntington Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts 02116, Telephone: (617) 375-7500, Attention: Investor Relations.

Table of Contents