

PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA
Form 424B5
January 16, 2002

++++
+The information in this prospectus supplement is not complete and may be +
+changed. A registration statement relating to these securities has been filed +
+with the Securities and Exchange Commission and has been declared effective. +
+This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus are not an offer +
+to sell these securities and we are not soliciting an offer to buy these +
+securities in any state where the offer or sale is not permitted. +
++++

FILED PURSUANT TO RULE 424(b) (5)
REGISTRATION NO. 333-78627

SUBJECT TO COMPLETION, DATED JANUARY 16, 2002

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

(To Prospectus dated June 2, 1999)

[LOGO OF PS BUSINESS PARKS, INC./SM/]

1,500,000 Shares

PS Business Parks, Inc.

Depository Shares Each Representing 1/1,000 of a Share of
% Cumulative Preferred Stock, Series F
Liquidation Preference Equivalent to \$25.00 Per Depository Share

We are selling 1,500,000 depository shares each representing 1/1,000 of a share of our % Cumulative Preferred Stock, Series F. The shares of Preferred Stock represented by the depository shares will be deposited with American Stock Transfer & Trust Company as depository. As a holder of depository shares, you will be entitled to all proportional rights, preferences and privileges of the Preferred Stock. We have granted the underwriters an option to purchase up to 225,000 additional depository shares to cover over-allotments. The following is a summary of the Preferred Stock:

- . We will pay cumulative distributions on the Preferred Stock, from the date of original issuance, at the rate of % of the liquidation preference per year (\$ per year per depository share).
- . We will pay distributions on the Preferred Stock quarterly, beginning on March 31, 2002 (with the payment on that date being based pro rata on the number of days from the original issuance of the Preferred Stock).
- . We are not allowed to redeem the Preferred Stock before January , 2007, except in order to preserve our status as a real estate investment trust.
- . On and after January , 2007, we may, at our option, redeem the Preferred Stock by paying you \$25.00 per depository share, plus any accrued and unpaid distributions.
- . The Preferred Stock has no stated maturity and is not subject to any sinking fund or mandatory redemption and is not convertible into any other securities.
- . Investors in the depository shares representing interests in the Preferred Stock generally have no voting rights, except if we fail to pay distributions for six or more quarters or as required by law.

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

We intend to apply to have the depositary shares listed on the American Stock Exchange, or AMEX, under the symbol "PSBPrF." If this application is approved, trading of the depositary shares on the AMEX is expected to begin within 30 days following initial delivery of the depositary shares.

Investing in the depositary shares involves certain risks. See "Risk Factors" beginning on page 1 of the accompanying prospectus.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission 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.

	Per Depositary Share	Total
	-----	-----
Public Offering Price.....	\$ 25.00	\$37,500,000
Underwriting Discount.....	\$	\$
Proceeds to PS Business Parks (before expenses).....	\$	\$

The underwriters are offering the depositary shares subject to various conditions. The underwriters expect to deliver the depositary shares to purchasers on or about January , 2002.

Salomon Smith Barney
Credit Suisse First Boston
A.G. Edwards & Sons, Inc.
Morgan Stanley Dean Witter
CIBC World Markets Corp.
Tucker Anthony Sutro Capital Markets
Wachovia Securities

January , 2002

You should rely only on the information contained in or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus. We have not authorized anyone to provide you with different information. We are not making an offer of these securities in any state where the offer is not permitted. You should not assume that the information contained in or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus is accurate as of any date other than the date on the front of this prospectus supplement.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Prospectus Supplement

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

	Page

Summary of the Offering.....	S-3
The Company.....	S-4
Use of Proceeds	S-5
Capitalization.....	S-5
Description of Preferred Stock and Depositary Shares.....	S-6
Federal Income Tax Consequences.....	S-13
Underwriting.....	S-16
Legal Matters.....	S-18
Experts.....	S-18

Prospectus

Risk Factors.....	1
About This Prospectus.....	5
Where You Can Find More Information.....	6
Forward-Looking Statements.....	7
The Company.....	7
Use of Proceeds.....	8
Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges.....	8
Description of Common Stock	8
Description of Preferred Stock.....	10
Description of Equity Stock.....	14
Description of the Depositary Shares.....	17
Description of Warrants.....	20
Certain Federal Income Tax Considerations.....	20
Plan of Distribution.....	33
Legal Opinions.....	36
Experts.....	36

This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, including documents incorporated by reference, contain forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements are inherently subject to risk and uncertainties, many of which cannot be predicted with accuracy and some of which might not even be anticipated. Future events and actual results, financial and otherwise, may differ materially from the results discussed in the forward-looking statements. Important factors that might cause such a difference include, but are not limited to, those discussed in "Risk Factors" and in "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations" in our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended September 30, 2001, which are incorporated herein by reference.

S-2

SUMMARY OF THE OFFERING

Securities Offered.....	1,500,000 depositary shares each representing 1/1,000 of a share of our Cumulative Preferred Stock, Series F (1,725,000 depositary shares if the underwriters' over-allotment option is exercised in full).	%
Price per Share.....	\$25.	
Use of Proceeds.....	To repay a loan from Public Storage, Inc., and to fund acquisitions of commercial	

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

properties, development activity, purchases of interests in real estate entities and general corporate purposes.

Ranking..... With respect to the payment of dividends and amounts upon liquidation, the Series F Preferred Stock will rank:

- . on a parity with our 9 1/4% Cumulative Preferred Stock, Series A, our 9 1/2% Cumulative Preferred Stock, Series D and any other preferred shares that are not by their terms subordinated to the Series F Preferred Stock, and
- . senior to our common stock and any other of our equity securities that by their terms rank junior to the Series F Preferred Stock.

Dividends..... Holders of Series F Preferred Stock will be entitled to receive, when, as and if declared by the Board of Directors out of assets of the Company legally available for payment, cash dividends payable quarterly in arrears on or before the last day of March, June, September and December of each year, commencing on March 31, 2002, at the rate of % of the liquidation preference per year (\$ per year per depositary share). Dividends on the Series F Preferred Stock will accumulate whether or not we have earnings, whether or not we have funds legally available for the payment of such dividends and whether or not we declare dividends.

Liquidation Rights..... The Series F Preferred Stock will have a liquidation preference equal to \$25 per depositary share, plus accrued and unpaid dividends, if any.

Redemption..... We are not allowed to redeem the Series F Preferred Stock before January , 2007, except in order to preserve our status as a REIT. On and after January , 2007, we may, at our option, redeem the Series F Preferred Stock by paying you \$25 per depositary share, plus any accrued and unpaid dividends.

Voting Rights..... If dividends on the Series F Preferred Stock are in arrears for six or more quarterly periods, whether or not such quarterly periods are consecutive, holders of Series F Preferred Stock (voting together with all other series of preferred shares) will be entitled to vote for the election of two additional directors to serve on our Board of Directors until all such arrearages have been paid.

No Conversion..... The Series F Preferred Stock is not convertible into or exchangeable for any other of our property or securities.

Trading..... We intend to apply to have the depositary shares listed on the AMEX under the symbol PSBPrF. If approved, trading is expected to begin within 30 days after the initial delivery of the depositary shares.

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

S-3

THE COMPANY

We are a self-advised and self-managed real estate investment trust, or REIT, that acquires, develops, owns and operates commercial properties. We are the sole general partner of our operating partnership, PS Business Parks, L.P., through which we conduct most of our activities. At December 31, 2001, we had interests in properties in nine states containing approximately 15.1 million net rentable square feet of space.

The following table sets forth information relating to the net rentable square footage of our properties as of December 31, 2001:

	Industrial	Office	Flex	Total	% of Total
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
California:					
Los Angeles County.....	1,006,000	88,000	770,000	1,864,000	12.3%
Northern California.....	405,000	64,000	1,026,000	1,495,000	9.9%
Orange County.....	--	161,000	911,000	1,072,000	7.1%
San Diego County.....	--	157,000	378,000	535,000	3.5%
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	1,411,000	470,000	3,085,000	4,966,000	32.9%
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Virginia:					
Northern Virginia.....	--	589,000	2,032,000	2,621,000	17.3%
Texas:					
Dallas.....	--	--	1,576,000	1,576,000	10.4%
Austin.....	--	--	833,000	833,000	5.5%
Houston.....	--	132,000	243,000	375,000	2.5%
San Antonio.....	--	199,000	--	199,000	1.3%
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	--	331,000	2,652,000	2,983,000	19.7%
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Oregon:					
Portland.....	--	347,000	1,626,000	1,973,000	13.1%
Maryland:					
Maryland.....	--	721,000	1,048,000	1,769,000	11.7%
Arizona:					
Phoenix.....	--	--	569,000	569,000	3.8%
Other.....					
	--	--	228,000	228,000	1.5%
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	1,411,000	2,458,000	11,240,000	15,109,000	100.0%
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====

Recent Developments

On November 20, 2001, we acquired a business park known as the Cornell Oaks Corporate Center in Beaverton, Oregon and 24 acres of developable land adjacent

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

to the park at an aggregate cost, including closing costs, of \$87.5 million. The park consists of 12 buildings, including one office building with 63,000 net rentable square feet and 11 flex-space buildings with a total of 622,000 net rentable square feet. This acquisition increases our presence in the Beaverton submarket of Portland, Oregon to approximately 2,000,000 net rentable square feet of space.

On December 27, 2001, we acquired a business park known as Metro Park North in Rockville, Maryland at a cost, including closing costs, of \$127 million. The park consists of 17 buildings, including nine office buildings with a total of 692,000 net rentable square feet and eight flex-space buildings with a total of 211,000 net rentable square feet. This acquisition provides us with a presence in the Rockville, Maryland submarket and increases our presence in the Maryland/Northern Virginia market to approximately 4,400,000 net rentable square feet of space.

S-4

USE OF PROCEEDS

We estimate net proceeds from this offering of approximately \$36.1 million after all anticipated issuance costs (approximately \$41.6 million if the underwriters' over-allotment option is exercised in full). We intend to use the net proceeds to repay a loan from Public Storage, Inc. in the amount of \$30.0 million, which was incurred in connection with our acquisition of the Metro Park North business park described under "Recent Developments." The loan is due in June 2002 and bears interest at 3.25% per year. We intend to use the remaining proceeds to fund acquisitions of commercial properties, development activity, purchases of interests in real estate entities and general corporate purposes.

Pending such uses, the net proceeds of this offering will be deposited in interest bearing accounts or invested in certificates of deposit, United States government obligations or other short-term, high quality debt instruments selected at our discretion.

CAPITALIZATION

The following table sets forth as of September 30, 2001 (i) our actual consolidated capitalization and (ii) our as adjusted consolidated capitalization to give effect to borrowings on our line of credit during the fourth quarter of 2001 and the issuance of 1,500,000 depository shares representing interests in the Preferred Stock pursuant to this offering.

	September 30, 2001	
	Actual	As Adjusted
	(Dollars in Thousands)	
Mortgage notes payable.....	\$ 30,354	\$ 30,354
Line of credit.....	--	100,000
Minority interest:		
Preferred units.....	197,750	197,750
Common units.....	162,338	162,338
Shareholders' equity:		
Preferred stock, \$0.01 par value, 50,000,000 shares authorized, 4,840 shares (4,840,000 depository shares)		

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

issued and outstanding, actual, and 6,340 shares (6,340,000 depositary shares) issued and outstanding, as adjusted.....	121,000	158,500
Common stock, \$0.01 par value, 100,000,000 shares authorized, 21,704,067 shares issued and outstanding..	217	217
Paid-in capital.....	426,546	425,165
Cumulative net income.....	162,134	162,134
Other comprehensive loss.....	(740)	(740)
Cumulative distributions.....	(106,296)	(106,296)
	-----	-----
Total shareholders' equity.....	602,861	638,980
	-----	-----
Total capitalization.....	\$993,303	\$1,129,422
	=====	=====

S-5

DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED STOCK AND DEPOSITARY SHARES

General

Under our Articles of Incorporation, as amended, the Board of Directors is authorized without further shareholder action to provide for the issuance of up to 50,000,000 shares of preferred stock, in one or more series, with such voting powers, full or limited, and with such designations, preferences and relative, participating, optional or other special rights, and qualifications, limitations or restrictions thereof, as shall be set forth in resolutions providing for the issue of preferred stock adopted by the Board of Directors. At September 30, 2001, we had outstanding 4,840 shares of preferred stock (represented by 4,840,000 depositary shares) and had reserved for issuance an additional 7,910,000 shares of preferred stock.

Prior to issuance, the Board of Directors will have adopted resolutions creating the % Cumulative Preferred Stock, Series F (the "Preferred Stock"). When issued, the Preferred Stock will have a liquidation value of \$25,000 per share, will be fully paid and nonassessable, will not be subject to any sinking fund or other obligation of PS Business Parks, Inc. (the "Company") to repurchase or retire the Preferred Stock, and will have no preemptive rights.

American Stock Transfer & Trust Company will be the transfer agent and dividend disbursing agent for the Preferred Stock.

Each Depositary Share represents 1/1,000 of a share of Preferred Stock. The shares of the Preferred Stock will be deposited with American Stock Transfer & Trust Company, as Depositary (the "Preferred Stock Depositary"), under a Deposit Agreement among the Company, the Preferred Stock Depositary and the holders from time to time of the depositary receipts (the "Depositary Receipts") issued by the Preferred Stock Depositary under the Deposit Agreement. The Depositary Receipts will evidence the Depositary Shares. Subject to the terms of the Deposit Agreement, each holder of a Depositary Receipt evidencing a Depositary Share will be entitled, proportionately, to all the rights and preferences of, and subject to all of the limitations of, the interest in the Preferred Stock represented by the Depositary Share (including dividend, voting, redemption and liquidation rights and preferences). See "Description of the Depositary Shares" in the accompanying Prospectus and "-- Depositary Shares" below.

Immediately following our issuance of the Preferred Stock, we will deposit the Preferred Stock with the Preferred Stock Depositary, which will then issue and deliver the Depositary Receipts to us. We will, in turn, deliver the

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

Depository Receipts to the underwriters. Depository Receipts will be issued evidencing only whole Depository Shares.

We intend to apply to have the Depository Shares listed on the AMEX. The Preferred Stock will not be listed and we do not expect that there will be any trading market for the Preferred Stock except as represented by the Depository Shares.

Ownership Restrictions

For a discussion of ownership limitations that apply to the Preferred Stock and related Depository Shares, see "Description of Common Stock--Ownership Limitations" in the accompanying Prospectus.

Preferred Stock

The following is a brief description of the terms of the Preferred Stock which does not purport to be complete and is subject to and qualified in its entirety by reference to the Certificate of Determination of the Preferred Stock, the form of which is filed as an exhibit to, or incorporated by reference in, the Registration Statement of which this Prospectus Supplement constitutes a part.

S-6

Ranking

With respect to the payment of dividends and amounts upon liquidation, the Preferred Stock will rank *pari passu* with our 9 1/4% Cumulative Preferred Stock, Series A and our 9 1/2% Cumulative Preferred Stock, Series D (collectively, with the Preferred Stock, the "Senior Preferred Stock") and any other shares of preferred stock issued by us, whether now or hereafter issued, ranking *pari passu* with the Senior Preferred Stock (including shares of preferred stock issued upon conversion of the Series B, Series C, Series E, Series X and Series Y Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Units of our operating partnership), and will rank senior to the Common Stock and any other capital stock of the Company ranking junior to the Preferred Stock.

Dividends

Holder of shares of Preferred Stock, in preference to the holders of shares of the Common Stock, and of any other capital stock issued by us ranking junior to the Preferred Stock as to payment of dividends, will be entitled to receive, when, as and if declared by the Board of Directors out of assets of the Company legally available for payment, cash dividends payable quarterly at the rate of % of the liquidation preference per year (\$ per year per share, equivalent to \$ per year per Depository Share). Dividends on the shares of Preferred Stock will be cumulative from the date of issuance and will be payable, when, as and if declared by the Board of Directors, quarterly on or before March 31, June 30, September 30 and December 31, commencing on or before March 31, 2002, to holders of record as they appear on the stock register of the Company on such record dates, not less than 15 or more than 45 days preceding the payment dates thereof, as shall be fixed by the Board of Directors. After full dividends on the Preferred Stock have been paid or declared and funds set aside for payment for all past dividend periods and for the then current quarter, the holders of shares of Preferred Stock will not be entitled to any further dividends with respect to that quarter.

When dividends are not paid in full upon the Preferred Stock and any other shares of preferred stock of the Company ranking on a parity as to dividends with the Preferred Stock (including the other series of Senior Preferred

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

Stock), all dividends declared upon the Preferred Stock and any other preferred shares of the Company ranking on a parity as to dividends with the Preferred Stock shall be declared pro rata so that the amount of dividends declared per share on such Preferred Stock and such other shares shall in all cases bear to each other the same ratio that the accrued dividends per share on the Preferred Stock and such other preferred shares bear to each other. Except as set forth in the preceding sentence, unless full dividends on the Preferred Stock have been paid for all past dividend periods, no dividends (other than in Common Stock or other shares of capital stock issued by us ranking junior to the Preferred Stock as to dividends and upon liquidation) shall be declared or paid or set aside for payment, nor shall any other distribution be made on the Common Stock or on any other shares of capital stock issued by us ranking junior to or on a parity with the Preferred Stock as to dividends or upon liquidation.

Unless full dividends on the Preferred Stock have been paid for all past dividend periods, we and our subsidiaries may not redeem, repurchase or otherwise acquire for any consideration (nor may we or they pay or make available any moneys for a sinking fund for the redemption of) any shares of Common Stock or any other shares of capital stock issued by us ranking junior to or on a parity with the Preferred Stock as to dividends or upon liquidation except by conversion into or exchange for shares of capital stock issued by us ranking junior to the Preferred Stock as to dividends and upon liquidation.

Our revolving credit facility with a commercial bank restricts our ability to pay distributions in excess of 95% of "Funds from Operations" for the prior four fiscal quarters, less scheduled principal payments and capital expenditures. Funds from operations is defined in the loan agreement generally as net income before gain on sale of real estate, extraordinary loss on early retirement of debt and deductions for depreciation, amortization and non-cash charges. Our management believes that this restriction will not impede our ability to pay the dividends on the Preferred Stock in full.

S-7

No Conversion Rights

The Preferred Stock will not be convertible into shares of any other class or series of capital stock of the Company.

Liquidation Rights

In the event of any voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up of the Company, the holders of the Preferred Stock will be entitled to receive out of our assets available for distribution to stockholders, before any distribution of assets is made to holders of Common Stock or of any other shares of capital stock issued by us ranking as to such distribution junior to the Preferred Stock, liquidating distributions in the amount of \$25,000 per share (equivalent to \$25 per Depositary Share), plus all accrued and unpaid dividends (whether or not earned or declared) for the then current, and all prior, dividend periods. If upon any voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up of the Company, the amounts payable with respect to the Preferred Stock and any other shares of stock issued by us ranking as to any such distribution on a parity with the Preferred Stock are not paid in full, the holders of the Preferred Stock and of such other shares will share ratably in any such distribution of assets of the Company in proportion to the full respective preferential amounts to which they are entitled. After payment of the full amount of the liquidating distribution to which they are entitled, the holders of the Preferred Stock will not be entitled to any further participation in any distribution of assets by us.

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

For purposes of liquidation rights, a consolidation or merger of the Company with or into any other corporation or corporations or a sale of all or substantially all of the assets of the Company is not a liquidation, dissolution or winding up of the Company.

Redemption

Except in certain circumstances relating to our qualification as a REIT, we may not redeem the shares of Preferred Stock prior to January , 2007. On and after January , 2007, at any time or from time to time, we may redeem the shares of Preferred Stock in whole or in part at our option at a cash redemption price of \$25,000 per share of Preferred Stock (equivalent to \$25 per Depositary Share), plus all accrued and unpaid dividends to the date of redemption. If fewer than all the outstanding shares of Preferred Stock are to be redeemed, the shares to be redeemed will be determined by the Board of Directors of the Company, and such shares shall be redeemed pro rata from the holders of record of such shares in proportion to the number of such shares held by such holders (with adjustments to avoid redemption of fractional shares) or by lot in a manner determined by the Board of Directors of the Company.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, if any dividends, including any accumulation, on the Preferred Stock are in arrears, we may not redeem any Preferred Stock unless we redeem simultaneously all outstanding Preferred Stock, and we may not purchase or otherwise acquire, directly or indirectly, any Preferred Stock; provided, however, that this shall not prevent the purchase or acquisition of the Preferred Stock pursuant to a purchase or exchange offer if such offer is made on the same terms to all holders of the Preferred Stock.

Notice of redemption of the Preferred Stock will be given by publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the County of Los Angeles and the City of New York, such publication to be made once a week for two successive weeks commencing not less than 30 nor more than 60 days prior to the redemption date. A similar notice will be mailed by us, postage prepaid, not less than 30 or more than 60 days prior to the redemption date, addressed to the respective holders of record of shares of Preferred Stock to be redeemed at their respective addresses as they appear on the stock transfer records of the Company. Each notice shall state: (i) the redemption date; (ii) the number of shares of Preferred Stock to be redeemed; (iii) the redemption price per share of Preferred Stock; (iv) the place or places where certificates for the Preferred Stock are to be surrendered for payment of the redemption price; and (v) that dividends on the shares of Preferred Stock to be redeemed will cease to accrue on such redemption date. If fewer than all the shares of Preferred Stock held by

S-8

any holder are to be redeemed, the notice mailed to such holder shall also specify the number of shares of Preferred Stock to be redeemed from such holder. In order to facilitate the redemption of shares of Preferred Stock, the Board of Directors may fix a record date for the determination of shares of Preferred Stock to be redeemed, such record date to be not less than 30 nor more than 60 days prior to the date fixed for such redemption.

Notice having been given as provided above, from and after the date specified therein as the date of redemption, unless we default in providing funds for the payment of the redemption price on such date, all dividends on the Preferred Stock called for redemption will cease. From and after the redemption date, unless we so default, all rights of the holders of the Preferred Stock as shareholders of the Company, except the right to receive the redemption price (but without interest), will cease. Upon surrender in accordance with such

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

notice of the certificates representing any such shares (properly endorsed or assigned for transfer, if the Board of Directors of the Company shall so require and the notice shall so state), the redemption price set forth above shall be paid out of the funds provided by the Company. If fewer than all the shares represented by any such certificate are redeemed, a new certificate shall be issued representing the unredeemed shares without cost to the holder thereof.

Subject to applicable law and the limitation on purchases when dividends on the Preferred Stock are in arrears, we may, at any time and from time to time, purchase any shares of Preferred Stock in the open market, by tender or by private agreement.

Voting Rights

Except as indicated below, or except as expressly required by applicable law, holders of the Preferred Stock will not be entitled to vote.

If the equivalent of six quarterly dividends payable on the Preferred Stock or any other series of preferred stock are in default (whether or not declared or consecutive), holders of the Preferred Stock (voting as a class with all other shares of preferred stock, without regard to series) will be entitled to elect two additional directors until all dividends in default have been paid or declared and set apart for payment.

Such right to vote separately to elect directors shall, when vested, be subject, always, to the same provisions for vesting of such right to elect directors separately in the case of future dividend defaults. At any time when such right to elect directors separately shall have so vested, we may, and upon the written request of the holders of record of not less than 20% of the total number of shares of preferred stock of the Company then outstanding shall, call a special meeting of shareholders for the election of directors. In the case of such a written request, such special meeting shall be held within 90 days after the delivery of such request and, in either case, at the place and upon the notice provided by law and in our Bylaws, provided that we shall not be required to call such a special meeting if such request is received less than 120 days before the date fixed for the next ensuing annual meeting of shareholders, and the holders of all classes of outstanding preferred stock (in the case of dividend defaults) are offered the opportunity to elect such directors (or fill any vacancy) at such annual meeting of shareholders. Directors so elected shall serve until the next annual meeting of our shareholders or until their respective successors are elected and qualify. If, prior to the end of the term of any director so elected, a vacancy in the office of such director shall occur, during the continuance of a default in dividends on shares of preferred stock of the Company by reason of death, resignation, or disability, such vacancy shall be filled for the unexpired term of such former director by the appointment of a new director by the remaining director so elected.

The affirmative vote or consent of the holders of at least 66 2/3% of the outstanding shares of the Preferred Stock will be required to amend or repeal any provision of or add any provision to, the Articles of Incorporation, including the Certificate of Determination, if such action would materially and adversely alter or change the rights, preferences or privileges of the Preferred Stock, except as set forth below. The affirmative vote or consent of the holders of at least 66 2/3% of the outstanding shares of the Preferred Stock and any other

series of preferred stock ranking on a parity with the Preferred Stock as to

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

dividends or upon liquidation, voting as a single class, will be required to authorize another class or series of shares senior to the Preferred Stock with respect to the payment of dividends or the distribution of assets on liquidation.

No consent or approval of the holders of shares of the Preferred Stock will be required for the issuance from the Company's authorized but unissued preferred stock of other shares of any series of preferred stock ranking on a parity with or junior to the Preferred Stock as to payment of dividends and distribution of assets, including other shares of Preferred Stock.

Depositary Shares

The following is a brief description of the terms of the Depositary Shares which does not purport to be complete and is subject to, and qualified in its entirety by reference to, the provisions of the Deposit Agreement (including the form of Depositary Receipt contained therein), which is filed as an exhibit to, or incorporated by reference in, the Registration Statement of which this Prospectus Supplement constitutes a part.

Dividends

The Depositary will distribute all cash dividends or other cash distributions received in respect of the Preferred Stock to the record holders of Depositary Receipts in proportion to the number of Depositary Shares owned by such holders on the relevant record date, which will be the same date as the record date fixed by us for the Preferred Stock. In the event that the calculation of such amount to be paid results in an amount which is a fraction of one cent, the amount the Depositary shall distribute to such record holder shall be rounded to the next highest whole cent if such fraction of one cent is equal to or greater than \$.005. Otherwise, the fractional interest shall be disregarded.

In the event of a distribution other than in cash, the Depositary will distribute property received by it to the record holders of Depositary Receipts entitled thereto, in proportion, as nearly as may be practicable, to the number of Depositary Shares owned by such holders on the relevant record date, unless the Depositary determines (after consultation with us) that it is not feasible to make such distribution, in which case the Depositary may (with our approval) adopt any other method for such distribution as it deems equitable and appropriate, including the sale of such property (at such place or places and upon such terms as it may deem equitable and appropriate) and distribution of the net proceeds from such sale to such holders.

Liquidation Preference

In the event of the liquidation, dissolution or winding up of the affairs of the Company, whether voluntary or involuntary, the holders of each Depositary Share will be entitled to 1/1000th of the liquidation preference accorded each share of the Preferred Stock.

Redemption

Whenever we redeem any Preferred Stock held by the Depositary, the Depositary will redeem as of the same redemption date the number of Depositary Shares representing the Preferred Stock so redeemed. The Depositary will publish a notice of redemption of the Depositary Shares containing the same type of information and in the same manner as our notice of redemption and will mail the notice of redemption promptly upon receipt of such notice from us and not less than 30 nor more than 60 days prior to the date fixed for redemption of the Preferred Stock and the Depositary Shares to the record holders of the Depositary Receipts. In case less than all the outstanding Depositary Shares are to be redeemed, the Depositary Shares to be so redeemed shall be determined

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

pro rata or by lot in a manner determined by the Board of Directors.

Voting

Promptly upon receipt of notice of any meeting at which the holders of the Preferred Stock are entitled to vote, the Depositary will mail the information contained in such notice of meeting to the record holders of the

S-10

Depositary Receipts as of the record date for such meeting. Each such record holder of Depositary Receipts will be entitled to instruct the Depositary as to the exercise of the voting rights pertaining to the number of shares of Preferred Stock represented by such record holder's Depositary Shares. The Depositary will endeavor, insofar as practicable, to vote such Preferred Stock represented by such Depositary Shares in accordance with such instructions, and we will agree to take all action which may be deemed necessary by the Depositary in order to enable the Depositary to do so. The Depositary will abstain from voting any of the Preferred Stock to the extent that it does not receive specific instructions from the holders of Depositary Receipts.

Withdrawal of Preferred Stock

Upon surrender of Depositary Receipts at the principal office of the Depositary, upon payment of any unpaid amount due the Depositary, and subject to the terms of the Deposit Agreement, the owner of the Depositary Shares evidenced thereby is entitled to delivery of the number of whole shares of Preferred Stock and all money and other property, if any, represented by such Depositary Shares. Partial shares of Preferred Stock will not be issued. If the Depositary Receipts delivered by the holder evidence a number of Depositary Shares in excess of the number of Depositary Shares representing the number of whole shares of Preferred Stock to be withdrawn, the Depositary will deliver to such holder at the same time a new Depositary Receipt evidencing such excess number of Depositary Shares. Holders of Preferred Stock thus withdrawn will not thereafter be entitled to deposit such shares under the Deposit Agreement or to receive Depositary Receipts evidencing Depositary Shares therefor.

Amendment and Termination of Deposit Agreement

The form of Depositary Receipt evidencing the Depositary Shares and any provision of the Deposit Agreement may at any time and from time to time be amended by agreement between us and the Depositary. However, any amendment which materially and adversely alters the rights of the holders (other than any change in fees) of Depositary Shares will not be effective unless such amendment has been approved by the holders of at least a majority of the Depositary Shares then outstanding. No such amendment may impair the right, subject to the terms of the Deposit Agreement, of any owner of any Depositary Shares to surrender the Depositary Receipt evidencing such Depositary Shares with instructions to the Depositary to deliver to the holder the Preferred Stock and all money and other property, if any, represented thereby, except in order to comply with mandatory provisions of applicable law. The Deposit Agreement may be terminated by us or the Depositary only if (i) all outstanding Depositary Shares have been redeemed or (ii) there has been a final distribution in respect of the Preferred Stock in connection with any dissolution of the Company and such distribution has been made to all the holders of Depositary Shares.

Charges of Depositary

We will pay all transfer and other taxes and governmental charges arising

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

solely from the existence of the depositary arrangements. We will pay charges of the Depositary in connection with the initial deposit of the Preferred Stock and the initial issuance of the Depositary Shares, and redemption of the Preferred Stock and all withdrawals of Preferred Stock by owners of Depositary Shares. Holders of Depositary Receipts will pay transfer, income and other taxes and governmental charges and certain other charges as are provided in the Deposit Agreement to be for their accounts. In certain circumstances, the Depositary may refuse to transfer Depositary Shares, may withhold dividends and distributions and sell the Depositary Shares evidenced by such Depositary Receipt if such charges are not paid.

Miscellaneous

The Depositary will forward to the holders of Depositary Receipts all reports and communications from us which are delivered to the Depositary and which we are required to furnish to the holders of the Preferred Stock. In addition, the Depositary will make available for inspection by holders of Depositary Receipts at the principal

S-11

office of the Depositary, and at such other places as it may from time to time deem advisable, any reports and communications received from the Company which are received by the Depositary as the holder of Preferred Stock.

Neither the Depositary nor any Depositary's Agent (as defined in the Deposit Agreement), nor the Registrar (as defined in the Deposit Agreement) nor the Company assumes any obligation or will be subject to any liability under the Deposit Agreement to holders of Depositary Receipts other than for its gross negligence, willful misconduct or bad faith. Neither the Depositary, any Depositary's Agent, the Registrar nor the Company will be liable if it is prevented or delayed by law or any circumstance beyond its control in performing its obligations under the Deposit Agreement. The Company and the Depositary are not obligated to prosecute or defend any legal proceeding in respect of any Depositary Shares, Depositary Receipts or Preferred Stock unless reasonably satisfactory indemnity is furnished. The Company and the Depositary may rely on written advice of counsel or accountants, on information provided by holders of Depositary Receipts or other persons believed in good faith to be competent to give such information and on documents believed to be genuine and to have been signed or presented by the proper party or parties.

Resignation and Removal of Depositary

The Depositary may resign at any time by delivering to us notice of its election to do so, and we may at any time remove the Depositary, any such resignation or removal to take effect upon the appointment of a successor Depositary and its acceptance of such appointment. Such successor Depositary must be appointed within 60 days after delivery of the notice for resignation or removal and must be a bank or trust company having its principal office in the United States of America and having a combined capital and surplus of at least \$150,000,000.

S-12

FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSEQUENCES

The following is a summary of certain federal income tax considerations pertaining to the acquisition, ownership and disposition of the Depositary Shares. The following summary relates solely to the tax considerations relevant

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

specifically to the acquisition, ownership and disposition of Depositary Shares. For a discussion of the taxation of the Company and the tax considerations relevant to shareholders generally, see "Certain Federal Income Tax Considerations--Taxation of the Company" and "--Taxation of U.S. Shareholders Holding Common Stock" in the accompanying Prospectus. This discussion is general in nature and not exhaustive of all possible tax considerations, nor does the discussion address any state, local or foreign tax considerations. The discussion is based on current law and does not purport to deal with all aspects of federal income taxation that may be relevant to a prospective shareholder in light of its particular circumstances or to certain types of shareholders (including insurance companies, financial institutions, broker-dealers, tax exempt investors, foreign corporations and persons who are not citizens or residents of the United States) subject to special treatment under the federal income tax laws. We have not requested and will not request a ruling from the Internal Revenue Service (the "Service") with respect to any of the federal income tax issues discussed below. Prospective investors should consult, and must depend on, their own tax advisors regarding the federal, state, local, foreign and other tax consequences of holding and disposing of the Depositary Shares.

Taxation of Holders of Depositary Shares

General. Owners of the Depositary Shares will be treated for federal income tax purposes as if they were owners of the Preferred Stock represented by such Depositary Shares. Accordingly, such owners will be entitled to take into account, for federal income tax purposes, income and deductions to which they would be entitled if they were holders of such Preferred Stock. See "Description of the Depositary Shares--Federal Income Tax Considerations" in the accompanying Prospectus. Withdrawals of Preferred Stock for Depositary Shares are not taxable events for federal income tax purposes.

Dividends and Other Distributions; Backup Withholding. For a discussion of the taxation of the Company, the treatment of dividends and other distributions with respect to shares of the Company, and the backup withholding rules, see "Certain Federal Income Tax Considerations--Taxation of the Company" and "--Taxation of U.S. Shareholders Holding Common Stock" in the accompanying Prospectus. Effective for dividend payments made after December 31, 2001, the backup withholding rate was decreased from 30.5% to 30% and is scheduled to be further reduced through 2006 as federal ordinary income tax rates decrease.

Sale or Exchange of Depositary Shares. Upon the sale, exchange or other disposition of Depositary Shares to a party other than the Company, a holder of Depositary Shares will realize capital gain or loss measured by the difference between the amount realized on the sale, exchange or other disposition of the Depositary Shares and such shareholder's adjusted tax basis in the Depositary Shares (provided the Depositary Shares are held as a capital asset). Gain recognized by a shareholder who is an individual, estate or trust upon a sale, exchange or other disposition of Depositary Shares that have been held for more than 12 months will generally be subject to tax at a rate not to exceed 20%. Gain recognized from the sale, exchange or other disposition of Depositary Shares that have been held for 12 months or less will be subject to tax at ordinary income tax rates. In addition, capital gain recognized by a corporate shareholder will continue to be subject to tax at the ordinary income tax rates applicable to corporations. Any loss on a sale, exchange or other disposition, of Depositary Shares that were held for six months or less and with respect to which a "capital gain dividend" was received will be treated as a long term capital loss, up to the amount of the capital gain dividend received with respect to such Depositary Shares. For a discussion of capital gain taxation see "Certain Federal Income Tax Considerations--Taxation of U.S. Shareholders Holding Common Stock--Taxpayer Relief Act and IRS Restructuring Act Changes to Capital Gain Taxation" in the accompanying Prospectus.

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

Redemption of Depositary Shares. Whenever the Company redeems any Preferred Stock held by the Depositary, the Depositary will redeem as of the same redemption date the number of Depositary Shares representing the Preferred Stock so redeemed. The treatment to a holder of Depositary Shares accorded to any

S-13

redemption by the Company (as distinguished from a sale, exchange or other disposition) of Preferred Stock held by the Depositary and corresponding redemption of Depositary Shares can only be determined on the basis of particular facts as to the holder of Depositary Shares at the time of redemption. In general, a holder of Depositary Shares will recognize capital gain or loss measured by the difference between the amount received upon the redemption and the holder of the Depositary Shares' adjusted tax basis in the Depositary Shares redeemed (provided the Depositary Shares are held as a capital asset) if such redemption (i) results in a "complete termination" of a holder's interest in all classes of stock of the Company under Section 302(b)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the "Code") or (ii) is "not essentially equivalent to a dividend" with respect to the holder under Section 302(b)(1) of the Code. In applying these tests, there must be taken into account not only any Depositary Shares owned by the holder, but also such holder's ownership of Common Stock, other series of preferred stock and any options (including stock purchase rights) to acquire any of the foregoing. The holder also must take into account any such securities (including options) which are considered to be owned by such holder by reason of the constructive ownership rules set forth in Sections 318 and 302(c) of the Code.

If a particular holder of Depositary Shares owns (actually or constructively) no shares of Common Stock of the Company or an insubstantial percentage of the outstanding shares of Common Stock, Equity Stock or Preferred Stock of the Company, based upon current law, it is probable that the redemption of Depositary Shares from such a holder would be considered "not essentially equivalent to a dividend." However, whether a distribution is "not essentially equivalent to a dividend" depends on all of the facts and circumstances, and a holder of Depositary Shares intending to rely on any of these tests at the time of redemption should consult its tax adviser to determine their application to its particular situation.

If the redemption does not meet any of the tests under Section 302 of the Code, then the redemption proceeds received from the Depositary Shares will be treated as a distribution on the Depositary Shares as described under "Certain Federal Income Tax Considerations--Taxation of U.S. Shareholders Holding Common Stock" in the accompanying Prospectus. If the redemption is taxed as a dividend, the holder of Depositary Shares' adjusted tax basis in the redeemed Depositary Shares will be transferred to any other stockholdings of the holder of Depositary Shares in the Company. If the holder of Depositary Shares owns no other stockholdings in the Company, under certain circumstances, such basis may be transferred to a related person, or it may be lost entirely.

Legislation Affecting REITs

On December 17, 1999, the Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999 (the "Act"), which included certain provisions affecting REITs, was enacted. The REIT provisions of the Act generally are effective for taxable years beginning after December 31, 2000. The Act is intended to ease the restrictions on a REIT's ability to own the stock of taxable companies. The Act allows REITs to own up to 100% of the stock of companies that have made a joint election with the REIT to be treated as "taxable REIT subsidiaries" ("TRSs"). A TRS will be subject to federal income tax on income as a regular corporation. Under prior law, a REIT generally could not own more than 10% of the voting securities of

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

other corporate issuers (see "Certain Federal Income Tax Considerations--Taxation of the Company--Asset Tests" in the accompanying prospectus). Under the Act, the prior law 10% voting securities test was expanded so that REITs also are prohibited from owning more than (1) 10% of the value of outstanding equity securities of any one corporate issuer, or (2) 10% of the value of certain debt securities of any one issuer of any type, except for qualified REIT subsidiaries, companies that elect to be treated as TRSs or companies that qualify for certain grandfather provisions in the Act.

An important effect of the Act is that TRSs are permitted to offer noncustomary services to the tenants of the REIT (such services generally could be provided under prior law only by "independent contractors" from which the REIT could not earn any income). TRSs also are able to engage in other income producing activities that typically had been undertaken by REITs only through entities in which a REIT could have a substantial economic interest, but was limited to a 10% or less voting interest. The Act includes certain limitations that

S-14

prevent income shifting between a REIT and its TRSs (including, for example, interest payments in excess of certain specified levels), in an effort to ensure that TRSs in fact are taxable on the income that they earn. The Act is designed to force REITs to subject their taxable subsidiaries to the income shifting limitations by prohibiting a REIT from owning more than 10% in either vote or value of the equity securities of a corporate issuer that is not a TRS or 10% of the value of certain debt securities of any one issuer of any type that is not a TRS. In addition, under prior law, a REIT could not own securities of any single issuer with a value in excess of 5% of the value of all assets of the REIT. The Act also relaxed this limitation, so that a REIT may own all or any portion of the securities of a TRS (or TRSs), so long as (1) the aggregate value of the REIT's ownership interests in all TRSs does not exceed 20% of the value of all assets of the REIT and (2) the aggregate value of the REIT's ownership interests in all TRSs, when combined with all other securities held by the REIT that do not qualify for the 75% asset test, does not exceed 25% of the value of all assets of the REIT. The Company and Tenant Advantage, Inc. jointly made the TRS election effective as of January 1, 2001.

Other provisions of the Act that are targeted at REITs include: (1) a reduction in the size of a REIT's required annual distributions to 90% of REIT taxable income (from the prior 95%) (a change that seems likely to have limited effect, given that REITs typically seek to have distributions equal to 100% of their REIT taxable income, so as to avoid paying taxes on any undistributed portion); (2) provisions directed at other segments of the REIT industry, principally the lodging and health-care sectors; and (3) various other technical changes.

S-15

UNDERWRITING

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 number of depositary shares set forth opposite the underwriter's name.

Number of
depositary

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

Underwriter	shares
-----	-----
Salomon Smith Barney Inc.	
Credit Suisse First Boston Corporation.....	
A.G. Edwards & Sons, Inc.	
Morgan Stanley & Co. Incorporated.....	
CIBC World Markets Corp.	
First Union Securities, Inc.	
Tucker Anthony Sutro Capital Markets.....	
Total.....	1,500,000
	=====

The underwriting agreement provides that the obligations of the several underwriters to purchase the depositary shares included in this offering are subject to approval of legal matters by counsel and to other conditions. The underwriters are obligated to purchase all of the depositary shares (other than those covered by the over-allotment option described below) if they purchase any of the depositary shares.

The underwriters, for whom Salomon Smith Barney Inc., Credit Suisse First Boston Corporation, A.G. Edwards & Sons, Inc., Morgan Stanley & Co. Incorporated, CIBC World Markets Corp., First Union Securities, Inc. and Tucker Anthony Sutro Capital Markets are acting as representatives, propose to offer some of the depositary shares directly to the public at the public offering price set forth on the cover page of this prospectus supplement and some of the depositary shares to dealers at the public offering price less a concession not to exceed \$ per depositary share. The underwriters may allow, and dealers may reallow, a concession not to exceed \$ per depositary share on sales to other dealers. If all of the depositary shares are not sold at the initial offering price, the representatives may change the public offering price and the other selling terms.

We have granted to the underwriters an option, exercisable for 30 days from the date of this prospectus supplement, to purchase up to 225,000 additional depositary shares at the public offering price less the underwriting discount. The underwriters may exercise the option solely for the purpose of covering over-allotments, if any, in connection with this offering. To the extent the option is exercised, each underwriter must purchase a number of additional depositary shares approximately proportionate to that underwriter's initial purchase commitment.

We intend to apply to have the depositary shares listed on the AMEX.

S-16

The following table shows the underwriting discounts and commissions that we are to pay to the underwriters in connection with this offering. These amounts are shown assuming both no exercise and full exercise of the underwriters' option to purchase additional depositary shares.

No Exercise	Full Exercise
-----	-----

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

Per depositary share.....	\$	\$
Total.....	\$	\$

In connection with the offering, Salomon Smith Barney on behalf of the underwriters may purchase and sell depositary shares in the open market. These transactions may include short sales, syndicate covering transactions and stabilizing transactions. Short sales involve syndicate sales of depositary shares in excess of the number of depositary shares to be purchased by the underwriters in the offering, which creates a syndicate short position. "Covered" short sales are sales of depositary shares made in an amount up to the number of shares represented by the underwriters' over-allotment option. In determining the source of depositary shares to close out the covered syndicate short position, the underwriters will consider, among other things, the price of depositary shares available for purchase in the open market as compared to the price at which they may purchase depositary shares through the over-allotment option. Transactions to close out the covered syndicate short position involve either purchases of the depositary shares in the open market after the distribution has been completed or the exercise of the over-allotment option. The underwriters may also make "naked" short sales of depositary shares in excess of the over-allotment option. The underwriters must close out any naked short position by purchasing depositary shares in the open market. A naked short position is more likely to be created if the underwriters are concerned that there may be downward pressure on the price of the depositary shares in the open market after pricing that could adversely affect investors who purchase in the offering. Stabilizing transactions consist of bids for or purchases of depositary shares in the open market while the offering is in progress.

The underwriters also may impose a penalty bid. Penalty bids permit the underwriters to reclaim a selling concession from a syndicate member when Salomon Smith Barney repurchases depositary shares originally sold by that syndicate member in order to cover syndicate short positions or make stabilizing purchases.

Any of these activities may have the effect of preventing or retarding a decline of the market price of the depositary shares. They may also cause the price of the depositary 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 on the AMEX or in the over-the-counter market, or otherwise. If the underwriters commence any of these transactions, they may discontinue any of them at any time.

We estimate that our portion of the total expenses of this offering will be \$200,000.

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

One of the underwriters is First Union Securities, Inc., an indirect, wholly owned subsidiary of Wachovia Corporation. Wachovia Corporation conducts its investment banking, institutional, and capital markets businesses through its various bank, broker-dealer and nonbank subsidiaries (including First Union Securities, Inc.) under the trade name of Wachovia Securities. Any references to Wachovia Securities in this prospectus, however, do not include Wachovia Securities, Inc., member NASD/SIPC and a separate broker-dealer subsidiary of Wachovia Corporation and sister affiliate of First Union Securities, Inc., which may or may not be participating as a selling dealer in the distribution of the depositary shares.

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

We have agreed to indemnify the underwriters against certain liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act of 1933, or to contribute to payments the underwriters may be required to make because of any of those liabilities.

S-17

LEGAL MATTERS

The validity of the Preferred Stock and the Depositary Shares offered hereby will be passed upon for the Company by David Goldberg, vice-president and counsel of the Company, and for the underwriters by Hale and Dorr LLP. Hogan & Hartson L.L.P., Washington, D.C., has delivered an opinion as to the status of the Company as a REIT. See "Certain Federal Income Tax Considerations" in the accompanying Prospectus. Mr. Goldberg owns 4,256 shares of common stock of the Company, has options to acquire an additional 3,995 shares of common stock of the Company, owns 10,000 depositary shares representing interests in preferred stock of the Company and intends to purchase Depositary Shares in this offering. Hale and Dorr LLP has from time to time represented the Company on other matters. Hale and Dorr LLP will rely upon Mr. Goldberg with respect to matters governed by California law.

EXPERTS

Ernst & Young LLP, independent auditors, have audited our consolidated financial statements and schedule included in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2000, as set forth in their report, which is incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and accompanying prospectus and elsewhere in the registration statement. Our financial statements and schedule are incorporated by reference in reliance on Ernst & Young LLP's report, given on their authority as experts in accounting and auditing.

Ernst & Young LLP, independent auditors, have audited our combined statement of certain revenues and certain operating expenses of each of the Prosperity Business Campus and the Cornell Oaks Corporate Center included in our Current Report on Form 8-K/A dated November 20, 2001, as set forth in their report, which is incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and accompanying prospectus and elsewhere in the registration statement. Our combined statements of certain revenues and certain operating expenses are incorporated by reference in reliance on Ernst & Young LLP's report, given on their authority as experts in accounting and auditing.

S-18

PS Business Parks, Inc.

By this prospectus, we may offer-

- Common Stock
- Preferred Stock
- Equity Stock
- Depositary Shares
- Warrants

We will provide the specific terms of these securities in supplements to this prospectus. You should read this prospectus and the

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

supplements carefully before you invest.

This prospectus may also be used in registered resales of common stock as described under "Plan of Distribution."

Please read "Risk Factors" beginning on page 1 for a discussion of material risks you should consider before you invest.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities regulator has approved or disapproved the securities to be issued under this prospectus or determined if this prospectus is accurate or adequate. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

June 2, 1999

You should rely only on the information contained in or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus. We have not authorized anyone to provide you with different information. We are not making an offer of these securities in any state where the offer is not permitted. You should not assume that the information contained in or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus is accurate as of any date other than the date on the front of this prospectus supplement.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page

Risk Factors	
We are controlled by Public Storage.....	1
Provisions in our organizational documents may prevent changes in control.....	1
Our operating partnership poses additional risks to us.....	1
We cannot sell certain properties without Public Storage's approval.....	2
Certain institutional investors have special rights.....	2
We would incur adverse tax consequences if we fail to qualify as a REIT.....	2
Since we buy and operate real estate, we are subject to the general real estate investment and operating risks.....	2
Our ability to control our properties may be adversely affected by ownership through partnerships and joint ventures.....	4
We can change our business policies and increase our level of debt without shareholder approval.....	4
We can issue additional securities without shareholder approval.....	4
Increases in interest rates may adversely affect the market price of our common stock.....	4
Shares that become available for future sale may adversely affect the market price of our common stock.....	5
We depend on key personnel.....	5

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

About This Prospectus.....	5
Where You Can Find More Information.....	6
Forward Looking Statements.....	7
The Company.....	7
Use of Proceeds.....	8
Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges.....	8
Description of Common Stock.....	8
Common Stock.....	8
Ownership Limitations.....	9
Description of Preferred Stock.....	10
Outstanding Preferred Stock.....	10
Ownership Limitations.....	11
Future Series of Preferred Stock.....	11
Description of Equity Stock.....	14
Ownership Limitations.....	15
Terms of Equity Stock.....	15
Description of the Depositary Shares.....	17
Dividends.....	17
Liquidation Rights.....	17
Redemption.....	18
Conversion.....	18
Voting.....	18
Withdrawal of Preferred Stock.....	18
Amendment and Termination of Deposit Agreement.....	18

TABLE OF CONTENTS--(Continued)

	Page

Charges of Depositary.....	19
Miscellaneous.....	19
Resignation and Removal of Depositary.....	19
Federal Income Tax Considerations.....	19
Description of Warrants.....	20
Certain Federal Income Tax Considerations.....	20
Taxation of the Company.....	21
Taxation of U.S. Shareholders Holding Common Stock.....	26
Taxation of Non-U.S. Shareholders.....	28
Administration's Proposed Changes to REIT Qualification Requirements....	30
Tax Aspects of the Company's Ownership of Interests in the Operating Partnership.....	31
Taxation of Holders of Preferred Stock, Equity Stock, Depositary Shares and Warrants.....	33
State and Local Taxes.....	33
Plan of Distribution.....	33
Legal Opinions.....	36
Experts.....	36

RISK FACTORS

Before investing in our securities, you should consider the following risks and detriments:

We are controlled by Public Storage.

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

Public Storage owns a substantial number of our shares. At April 30, 1999, Public Storage owned 22% of the outstanding shares of our common stock (41% upon conversion of its interest in our operating partnership). Consequently, Public Storage has the ability to effectively control all matters submitted to a vote of our shareholders, including electing directors, changing our articles of incorporation, dissolving and approving other extraordinary transactions. In addition, Public Storage's ownership may make it more difficult for another party to take over our company without Public Storage's approval.

Public Storage has a voting agreement with another large shareholder. Public Storage and an institutional shareholder owning 26% of our common stock as of April 30, 1999 have both agreed to vote their shares to support specified nominees to our board of directors until the voting agreement expires, which is not before December 2001. This voting agreement further strengthens Public Storage's control of our company.

Provisions in our organizational documents may prevent changes in control.

Our articles generally prohibit owning more than 7% of our shares. Our articles of incorporation restrict the number of shares that may be owned by any other person, and the partnership agreement of our operating partnership contains an anti-takeover provision. No shareholder (other than Public Storage and certain other specified shareholders) may own more than 7% of the outstanding shares of our common stock, unless our board of directors waives this limitation. We imposed this limitation to avoid, to the extent possible, a concentration of ownership that might jeopardize our ability to qualify as a real estate investment trust, or REIT. This limitation, however, also makes a change of control much more difficult (if not impossible) even if it may be favorable to our public shareholders. These provisions will prevent future takeover attempts not approved by Public Storage even if a majority of our public shareholders consider it to be in their best interests because they would receive a premium for their shares over the shares' then market value or for other reasons.

Our board can set the terms of certain securities without shareholder approval. Our board of directors is authorized, without shareholder approval, to issue up to 50,000,000 shares of preferred stock and up to 100,000,000 shares of equity stock, in each case in one or more series. Our board has the right to set the terms of each of these series of stock. Consequently, the board could set the terms of a series of stock that could make it difficult (if not impossible) for another party to take over our company even if it might be favorable to our public shareholders. Our articles of incorporation also contain other provisions that could have the same effect. We can also cause our operating partnership to issue additional interests for cash or in exchange for property.

The partnership agreement of our operating partnership restricts mergers. The partnership agreement of our operating partnership provides that generally we may not merge or engage in a similar transaction unless limited partners of our operating partnership are entitled to receive the same proportionate payments as our shareholders. Also we have agreed not to merge unless the merger would have been approved had the limited partners been able to vote together with our shareholders. These provisions may also make it more difficult for us to merge.

Our operating partnership poses additional risks to us.

Limited partners of our operating partnership, including Public Storage, have the right to vote on certain changes to the partnership agreement. They may vote in a way that is against the interests of our shareholders. Also, as general partner of our operating partnership, we are required to protect the

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

interests of the limited partners of our operating partnership. The interests of the limited partners and of our shareholders may differ.

We cannot sell certain properties without Public Storage's approval.

Before 2007, we may not sell 13 specified properties without Public Storage's approval. Since Public Storage would be taxed on a sale of these properties, the interests of Public Storage and our shareholders may differ as to the best time to sell.

Certain institutional investors have special rights.

Certain institutional investors have rights, such as the right to approve nominees to our board of directors, the right to purchase our securities in certain circumstances and the right to require registration of their shares, not available to our public shareholders.

We would incur adverse tax consequences if we fail to qualify as a REIT.

Our cash flow is reduced if we fail to qualify as a REIT. While we believe that we have qualified since 1990 to be taxed as a REIT, and will continue to be qualified, we cannot be certain. To continue to qualify as a REIT, we need to satisfy certain requirements under the federal income tax laws relating to our income, assets, distributions to shareholders and shareholder base. In this regard, the share ownership limits in our articles of incorporation do not necessarily ensure that our shareholder base is sufficiently diverse for us to qualify as a REIT. For any year we fail to qualify as a REIT, we would be taxed at regular corporate tax rates on our taxable income unless certain relief provisions apply. Taxes would reduce our cash available for distributions to shareholders or for reinvestment, which could adversely affect us and our shareholders. Also we would not be allowed to elect REIT status for five years after we fail to qualify unless certain relief provisions apply.

Our cash flow is reduced if our predecessor failed to qualify as a REIT. For us to qualify to be taxed as a REIT, our predecessor, American Office Park Properties, also needed to qualify to be taxed as a REIT. We believe American Office Park Properties qualified as a REIT beginning in 1997 until its March 1998 merger with us. If it is determined that it did not qualify as a REIT, we could also lose our REIT qualification. Before 1997, our predecessor was a taxable corporation and, to qualify as a REIT, was required to distribute all of its profits before the end of 1996. While we believe American Office Park Properties qualified as a REIT since 1997, we did not obtain an opinion of an outside expert at the time of its merger with us.

We may need to borrow funds to meet our REIT distribution requirements. To qualify as a REIT, we must generally distribute to our shareholders 95% of our taxable income. Our income consists primarily of our share of our operating partnership's income. We intend to make sufficient distributions to qualify as a REIT and otherwise avoid corporate tax. However, differences in timing between income and expenses and the need to make nondeductible expenditures such as capital improvements and principal payments on debt could force us to borrow funds to make necessary shareholder distributions.

Since we buy and operate real estate, we are subject to the general real estate investment and operating risks.

Summary of real estate risks. We own and operate commercial properties and are subject to the risks of owning real estate generally and commercial properties in particular. These risks include:

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

- . the national, state and local economic climate and real estate conditions, such as oversupply of or reduced demand for space and changes in market rental rates;
- . how prospective tenants perceive the attractiveness, convenience and safety of our properties;
- . our ability to provide adequate management, maintenance and insurance;
- . our ability to collect rent from tenants on a timely basis;
- . the expense of periodically renovating, repairing and reletting spaces;

2

- . increasing operating costs, including real estate taxes and utilities, if these increased costs cannot be passed through to tenants; and
- . changes in tax, real estate and zoning laws.

Certain significant costs, such as mortgage payments, real estate taxes, insurance and maintenance costs, generally are not reduced even when a property's rental income is reduced. In addition, environmental and tax laws, interest rate levels, the availability of financing and other factors may affect real estate values and property income. Furthermore, the supply of commercial space fluctuates with market conditions.

If our properties do not generate sufficient income to meet operating expenses, including any debt service, tenant improvements, leasing commissions and other capital expenditures, we may have to borrow additional amounts to cover fixed costs, and we may have to reduce our distributions to shareholders.

We only recently acquired many of our properties. We have recently acquired many of our properties and intend to continue to acquire additional properties. As of March 31, 1999, approximately 36% of our properties' square footage was not managed by us before January 1, 1998. We may not be aware of problems with newly acquired properties that could affect their value, and their operating performance may be less than we anticipate. Also, we may have difficulty integrating new acquisitions into our existing portfolio.

We may encounter significant delays in reletting vacant space, resulting in losses of income. When leases expire, we will incur expenses and we may not be able to release the space on the same terms. Certain leases provide tenants with the right to terminate early if they pay a fee. While we have estimated our cost of renewing leases that expire in 1999, our estimates could be wrong. If we are unable to release space promptly, if the terms are significantly less favorable than anticipated or if the costs are higher, we may have to reduce our distributions to shareholders.

Tenant defaults and bankruptcies may reduce our cash flow and distributions. We may have difficulty in collecting from tenants in default, particularly if they declare bankruptcies. This could affect our cash flow and distributions to shareholders.

We may be adversely affected by significant competition among commercial properties. Many other commercial properties compete with our properties for tenants and we expect that new properties will be built in our markets. Also, we compete with other buyers, many of whom are larger than us, for attractive commercial properties. Therefore, we may not be able to grow as rapidly as we

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

would like.

We may be adversely affected if losses on our properties are not covered by insurance. We carry insurance on our properties that we believe is comparable to the insurance carried by other operators for similar properties. However, we could suffer uninsured losses that adversely affect us or even result in loss of the property. We might still remain liable on any mortgage debt related to that property.

The illiquidity of our real estate investments may prevent us from adjusting our portfolio to respond to market changes. There may be delays and difficulties in selling real estate. Therefore, we cannot easily change our portfolio when economic conditions change. Also, tax laws limit a REIT's ability to sell properties held for less than four years.

We may be adversely affected by changes in laws. Increases in income and service taxes may reduce our cash flow and ability to make expected distributions to our shareholders. Our properties are also subject to various federal, state and local regulatory requirements, such as state and local fire and safety codes. If we fail to comply with these requirements, governmental authorities could fine us or courts could award damages against us. We believe our properties comply with all significant legal requirements. However, these requirements could change in a way that would reduce our cash flow and ability to make distributions to shareholders.

3

We may incur significant environmental remediation costs. Under various federal, state and local environmental laws an owner or operator of real estate interests may have to clean spills or other releases of hazardous or toxic substances on or from a property. Certain environmental laws impose liability whether or not the owner knew of, or was responsible for, the presence of the hazardous or toxic substances. In some cases, liability may exceed the value of the property. The presence of toxic substances, or the failure to properly remedy any resulting contamination, may make it more difficult for the owner or operator to sell, lease or operate its property or to borrow money using its property as collateral. Future environmental laws may impose additional material liabilities on us.

In May 1998, we bought a property in Beaverton, Oregon known as Creekside Corporate Park. Under a consent order issued by the Oregon environmental agency, the current and past owners of the property are conducting an environmental remedial investigation of a property next to Creekside Corporate Park, which is owned by Mattel Corporation. We are not a party to the consent order. As part of the consent order, the Oregon environmental agency ordered the property owners to sample soil and groundwater on our property to determine the nature and extent of contamination resulting from past industrial operations at the Mattel property. We executed access agreements with the current and former property owners to allow access to our property to conduct the required sampling and testing. The sampling and testing is ongoing, and preliminary results from one area indicate that the contamination from the Mattel property may have migrated onto a portion of the Creekside Corporate Park that we own.

We believe that we bear no responsibility or liability for the contamination. If we are held responsible for any costs related to this matter, we believe that the party from whom the property was purchased will be responsible for any expenses or liabilities that we may incur as a result of this contamination.

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

We may be affected by the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 requires that access and use by disabled persons of all public accommodations and commercial properties be facilitated. Existing commercial properties must be made accessible to disabled persons. While we have not estimated the cost of complying with this act, we do not believe the cost will be significant.

Our ability to control our properties may be adversely affected by ownership through partnerships and joint ventures.

We own most of our properties through our operating partnership. Our organizational documents do not limit our investment of funds with others in partnerships or joint ventures. This type of investment may present additional risks. For example, our partners may have interests that differ from ours or that conflict with ours, or our partners may become bankrupt.

We can change our business policies and increase our level of debt without shareholder approval.

Our board of directors establishes our investment, financing, distribution and our other business policies and may change these policies without shareholder approval. Our organizational documents do not limit our level of debt. A change in our policies or an increase in our level of debt could adversely affect our operations or the price of our common stock.

We can issue additional securities without shareholder approval.

We can issue preferred and common stock without shareholder approval. Holders of preferred stock have priority over holders of common stock, and the issuance of additional shares of common stock reduces the interest of existing holders in our company.

Increases in interest rates may adversely affect the market price of our common stock.

One of the factors that influences the market price of our common stock is the annual rate of distributions that we pay on our common stock, as compared with interest rates. An increase in interest rates may lead

4

purchasers of REIT shares to demand higher annual distribution rates, which could adversely affect the market price of our common stock.

Shares that become available for future sale may adversely affect the market price of our common stock.

Substantial sales of our common stock, or the perception that substantial sales may occur, could adversely affect the market price of our common stock. Certain of our shareholders hold significant numbers of shares of our common stock and, subject to compliance with applicable securities laws, could sell their shares.

We depend on key personnel.

We depend on our executive officers, including Ronald L. Havner, Jr., our chief executive officer and president, and Mary Jayne Howard, our chief operating officer and executive vice president. The loss of either of these executive officers could adversely affect our operations. We maintain no key person insurance on either of them.

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of a registration statement that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission using a "shelf" registration process. Under this shelf process, we may sell from time to time up to \$600,000,000 of our common stock, preferred stock, equity stock, depositary shares and warrants, in any combination. This prospectus provides a general description of the securities that we may offer. Each time we offer any of the types of securities described in this prospectus, we will prepare and distribute a prospectus supplement that will contain a description of the specific terms of the securities being offered and of the offering. The prospectus supplement may also supplement the information contained in this prospectus. You should read both this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement, together with the additional information described under the heading "Where You Can Find More Information," before purchasing any securities.

This prospectus may also be used in registered resales of common stock as described under "Plan of Distribution."

Unless otherwise indicated or unless the context requires otherwise, all references in this prospectus to "the Company," "we," "us," "our" and similar references mean PS Business Parks, Inc. and its subsidiaries, including PS Business Parks, L.P. All references in this prospectus to "our operating partnership" mean PS Business Parks, L.P.

5

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We are subject to the reporting requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, and are required to file annual, quarterly and special reports with the Securities and Exchange Commission. You may read and copy any of these documents at the Commission's public reference rooms at Room 1024, Judiciary Plaza, 450 Fifth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20549, and at the Commission's regional offices at Seven World Trade Center, 13th Floor, New York, New York 10048, and Citicorp Center, 500 West Madison Street, Suite 1400, Chicago, Illinois 60661-2511. You may telephone the Commission at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the Commission's public reference facilities. The Commission also maintains a computer site on the World Wide Web (<http://www.sec.gov>) that contains the reports, proxy and information statements and other information that we and other registrants file electronically with the Commission. You can also inspect reports and other information we file at the offices of the American Stock Exchange, Inc., 86 Trinity Place, New York, New York 10006.

We have filed a registration statement on Form S-3, of which this prospectus is a part, with the Commission to register offers and sales of the securities described in this prospectus under the Securities Act of 1933. The registration statement contains additional information about us and the securities. You may read the registration statement and its exhibits without charge at the office of the Commission at 450 Fifth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20549, or on the Commission's World Wide Web site, and you may obtain copies of it from the Commission at prescribed rates.

The Commission allows us to provide information about our business and other important information to you by "incorporating by reference" the information we file with the Commission, which means that we can disclose that information to you by referring in this prospectus to the documents we file with the Commission. Under the Commission's regulations, any statement contained in a document incorporated by reference in this prospectus is automatically updated and superseded by any information contained in this prospectus, or in any

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

subsequently filed document of the types described below.

We incorporate into this prospectus by reference the following documents filed by us with the Commission, each of which should be considered an important part of this prospectus:

SEC Filing (File No. 1-10709) -----	Period Covered or Date of Filing -----
Annual Report on Form 10-K.....	Year ended December 31, 1998
Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q.....	Quarter ended March 31, 1999
Current Report on Form 8-K.....	Dated April 28, 1999
Description of our common stock contained in Registration Statement on Form 8-A, as supplemented by the description of our common stock contained in this prospectus.....	Effective March 15, 1991
All subsequent documents filed by us under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act of 1934.....	After the date of this prospectus and before the termination of the offering

You may request a copy of each of our filings at no cost, by writing or telephoning us at the following address, telephone or facsimile number:

Investor Services Department
PS Business Parks, Inc.
701 Western Avenue
Glendale, California 91201-2397
Telephone: (800) 807-3055
(800) 421-2856
(818) 244-8080
Facsimile: (818) 241-0627

Exhibits to a document will not be provided unless they are specifically incorporated by reference in that document.

6

FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

Some of the information included or incorporated by reference in this prospectus contains forward-looking statements, such as those pertaining to our portfolio performance and future results of operations, market conditions and prospects. The pro forma financial statements and other pro forma information incorporated by reference in this prospectus also contain forward-looking statements. You can identify forward-looking statements by their use of forward-looking terminology such as "believes," "expects," "may," "will," "should," "seeks," "intends," "plans," "pro forma," "estimates" or "anticipates" or the negative of these words and phrases or similar words or phrases. Discussion of strategy, plans or intentions also include forward-looking statements.

Forward-looking statements inherently involve risks and uncertainties and you should not rely on them as predictions of future events. The factors described above under the heading "Risk Factors," as well as changes in the commercial real estate market and the general economy, could cause future events and actual results to differ materially from those set forth or contemplated in the forward-looking statements.

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

THE COMPANY

We are a self-advised and self-managed real estate investment trust or REIT that acquires, develops, owns and operates commercial properties. We are the sole general partner of our operating partnership, PS Business Parks, L.P., through which we conduct most of our activities. At March 31, 1999, we owned approximately 73% of our operating partnership with substantially all of the balance owned by Public Storage, Inc.

In a March 1998 merger with American Office Park Properties, Inc., we acquired the commercial property business previously operated by Public Storage and were renamed "PS Business Parks, Inc." At March 31, 1999, we owned 114 commercial properties in 11 states containing approximately 11.3 million square feet of space.

We elected to be taxed as a REIT beginning with our 1990 taxable year. To the extent that we continue to qualify as a REIT, we will not be taxed, with certain limited exceptions, on the net income that we distribute currently to our shareholders. We were incorporated in California in 1990. Our principal executive offices are located at 701 Western Avenue, Glendale, California 91201-2397. Our telephone number is (818) 244-8080.

7

USE OF PROCEEDS

We intend to use the net proceeds from the sale of the securities described in this prospectus for the acquisition of commercial properties, repayment of our outstanding debt and for general business purposes. Pending their use, we may invest the net proceeds in short-term, interest bearing securities.

RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES

We compute our ratio of earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends by dividing our earnings by our fixed charges. Earnings consists of net income before minority interest in income, loss on early extinguishment of debt and gain on disposition of real estate plus fixed charges less the portion of minority interest in income which does not contribute to fixed charges. In computing our ratio for periods prior to March 17, 1998, we used the operations and fixed charges of American Office Park Properties, Inc., our predecessor for accounting and financial reporting purposes.

	For the Three Months Ended		For the Year Ended December 31,				
	March 31,		1998	1997	1996	1995	1994
	1999	1998	1998	1997	1996	1995	1994
Ratio of earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends.....	12.17	29.92	16.34	12,403.00	N/A	N/A	N/A

N/A--not applicable as we did not have any fixed charges in this period.

DESCRIPTION OF COMMON STOCK

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

We are authorized to issue 100,000,000 shares of common stock. At April 30, 1999, we had outstanding 23,637,410 shares of common stock (exclusive of a total of 7,903,666 shares issuable upon exchange of interests in our operating partnership and shares subject to options).

Common Stock

The following description of our common stock sets forth certain general terms and provisions of the common stock to which any prospectus supplement may relate, including a prospectus supplement providing that common stock will be issuable upon conversion of preferred stock or upon the exercise of warrants. The statements below describing our common stock are in all respects subject to and qualified in their entirety by reference to the applicable provisions of our articles of incorporation and bylaws.

Holders of our common stock will be entitled to receive dividends when, as and if declared by our board of directors, out of funds legally available therefor. Payment and declaration of dividends on our common stock and purchases of shares of common stock by us will be subject to certain restrictions if we fail to pay dividends on outstanding preferred stock. See "Description of Preferred Stock." Upon any liquidation, dissolution or winding up of the Company, holders of common stock will be entitled to share equally and ratably in any assets available for distribution to them, after payment or provision for payment of the debts and our other liabilities and the preferential amounts owing with respect to any of our outstanding preferred stock. Holders of our common stock have no preemptive rights, except such as have been provided to certain of our shareholders by contract, which means public shareholders have no right to acquire any additional shares of common stock that we may issue at a later date.

Each outstanding share of our common stock entitles the holder to one vote on all matters presented to our holders for a vote, with the exception that they have cumulative voting rights with respect to the election of our board of directors, in accordance with California law. Cumulative voting means that each holder of our common stock is entitled to cast as many votes as there are directors to be elected multiplied by the number of shares

8

registered in his or her name. A holder of our common stock may cumulate the votes for directors by casting all of the votes for one candidate or by distributing the votes among as many candidates as he or she chooses. The outstanding shares of our common stock are, and additional shares of common stock will be, when issued, fully paid and nonassessable.

The rights, preferences and privileges of holders of our common stock are subject to, and may be adversely affected by, the rights of the holders of shares of any series of our preferred stock or our equity stock which we may designate and issue in the future. See "Description of Preferred Stock" and "Description of Equity Stock."

Ownership Limitations

For us to qualify as a REIT under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the "Code"), no more than 50% in value of our outstanding shares of capital stock may be owned, directly or constructively under the applicable attribution rules of the Code, by five or fewer individuals (as defined in the Code to include certain entities) during the last half of a taxable year. In order to maintain our qualification as a REIT, our articles of incorporation provide certain restrictions on the shares of capital stock that any

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

shareholder may own.

Our articles of incorporation provide that, subject to certain exceptions, no holder may own, or be deemed to own by virtue of the attribution provisions of the Code, more than (A) 7.0% of the outstanding shares of our common stock and (B) 9.9% of the outstanding shares of each class or series of shares of our preferred stock or equity stock and that all shares of stock be imprinted with a legend setting forth that restriction. Our articles of incorporation provide, however, that no person shall be deemed to exceed the ownership limit solely by reason of the beneficial ownership of shares of any class of stock to the extent that such shares of stock were beneficially owned by such person (including Public Storage) upon completion of, and after giving effect to, the merger with American Office Park Properties. Thus, this limitation does not affect the ownership of common stock held by Public Storage and certain other shareholders at the time of the merger. Furthermore, the limitation does not apply with respect to shares of stock deemed to be owned by a person as a result of such person's ownership of shares of Public Storage (however, such ownership will be taken into account in determining whether a subsequent acquisition or transfer of our shares (but not Public Storage) violates the ownership limit). The ownership limitation is intended to assist in preserving our REIT status in view of Public Storage's substantial ownership interest in us and the Hughes family's substantial ownership interest in Public Storage. There can be no assurance, however, that such ownership limit will enable us to satisfy the requirement that a REIT not be "closely held" within the meaning of Section 856(h) of the Code for any given taxable year, in part as a result of the provision described above providing that the ownership limitation generally does not apply to our shares deemed to be owned as a result of a person's ownership of shares of Public Storage.

Our articles of incorporation provide that our board of directors, in its sole and absolute discretion, may grant exceptions to the ownership limits, so long as (A) our board has determined that we would not be "closely held" within the meaning of Section 856(h) of the Code (without regard to whether the event in question takes place during the second half of a taxable year) and would not otherwise fail to qualify as a REIT, after giving effect to an acquisition by an excepted person of beneficial ownership of the maximum amount of capital stock permitted as a result of the exception to be granted, and taking into account the existing and permitted ownership by other persons of stock (taking into account any other exceptions granted) and (B) the excepted persons provide to our board such representations and undertakings as our board may require. In any case, no holder may own or acquire, either directly, indirectly or constructively under the applicable attribution rules of the Code, any shares of any class of capital stock if such ownership or acquisition (i) would cause more than 50% in value of outstanding capital stock to be owned, either directly or constructively, under the applicable attribution rules of the Code, by five or fewer individuals (as defined in the Code to include certain tax-exempt entities, other than, in general, qualified domestic pension funds), (ii) would result in the Company's stock being beneficially owned by less than 100 persons (determined without reference to any rules of attribution), or (iii) would otherwise result in our failing to qualify as a REIT.

Our articles of incorporation generally provide that if any holder of capital stock purports to transfer shares to a person or there is a change in our capital structure, and either the transfer or the change in capital structure would result in our failing to qualify as a REIT, or such transfer or the change in capital structure would cause the transferee to hold shares in excess of the applicable ownership limit, then the shares causing the violation will be automatically transferred to a trust for the benefit of a

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

designated charitable beneficiary. The purported transferee of those shares will have no right to receive dividends or other distributions with respect to them and will have no right to vote the shares. Any dividends or other distributions paid to such purported transferee prior to the discovery by us that the shares have been transferred to a trust will be paid to the trustee of the trust for the benefit of the charitable beneficiary upon demand. The trustee will designate a transferee of those shares so long as the shares would not violate the restrictions on ownership or transfer in the articles of incorporation in the hands of the designated transferee. Upon the sale of such shares, the purported transferee will receive out of any proceeds remaining after payment of expenses of the charitable trust and us the lesser of (A) (i) the price per share such purported transferee paid for the stock in the purported transfer that resulted in the transfer of the shares to the trust, or (ii) if the transfer or other event that resulted in the transfer of the shares to the trust was not a transaction in which the purported transferee gave full value for such shares, a price per share equal to the market price on the date of the purported transfer or other event that resulted in the transfer of the shares to the trust and (B) the price per share received by the trustee from the sale or other disposition of the shares held in the trust. Each purported transferee shall be deemed to have waived any claims such purported transferee may have against the trustee and us arising from the disposition of the shares, except for claims arising from the trustee's or our gross negligence, willful misconduct, or failure to make payments when required by the articles of incorporation.

DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED STOCK

We are authorized to issue 50,000,000 shares of preferred stock. At April 30, 1999, we had 2,200 outstanding shares of preferred stock (represented by 2,200,000 depository shares) and 510,000 shares reserved for issuance. Our articles of incorporation provide that the preferred stock may be issued from time to time in one or more series and give our board of directors broad authority to fix the dividend and distribution rights, conversion and voting rights, if any, redemption provisions and liquidation preferences of each series of preferred stock. Holders of preferred stock have no preemptive rights. The preferred stock will be, when issued, fully paid and nonassessable.

Although the issuance of preferred stock with special voting rights (or common stock) could be used to deter attempts to obtain control of us in transactions not approved by our board of directors, we have no present intention to issue stock for that purpose.

Outstanding Preferred Stock

At April 30, 1999, we had outstanding a series of preferred stock. It (1) has a stated value of \$25 per depository share, (2) in preference to the holders of shares of our common stock and any other capital stock ranking junior to the preferred stock as to payment of dividends, provides for cumulative quarterly dividends of 9 1/4% of the stated value and (3) is subject to redemption, in whole or in part, at our option at a cash redemption price of \$25 per depository share, plus accrued and unpaid dividends, on and after April 30, 2004.

In the event of our voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up, the holders of the preferred stock will be entitled to receive out of our assets available for distribution to shareholders, before any distribution of assets is made to holders of our common stock or any other shares of capital stock ranking as to such distributions junior to the preferred stock, liquidating distributions in the amount of \$25 per depository share, plus all accrued and unpaid dividends.

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

Except as expressly required by law and in certain other limited circumstances, holders of the preferred stock are not entitled to vote. The consent of holders of at least 66 2/3% of the outstanding shares of the preferred stock (and any other series of preferred stock ranking on a parity therewith), voting as a single class, is required to authorize another class of shares senior to the preferred stock.

10

Ownership Limitations

For a discussion of the ownership limitations that apply to preferred stock, see "Description of Common Stock--Ownership Limitations."

Future Series of Preferred Stock

The following description of preferred stock sets forth certain general terms and provisions of the preferred stock to which any prospectus supplement may relate. The statements below describing the preferred stock are in all respects subject to and qualified in their entirety by reference to the applicable provisions of our articles of incorporation (including the applicable form of certificate of determination) and bylaws.

Reference is made to the prospectus supplement relating to the preferred stock offered thereby for specific terms, including, where applicable, the following: (1) the title and stated value of such preferred stock; (2) the number of shares of such preferred stock offered, the liquidation preference per share and the offering price of such preferred stock; (3) the dividend rate(s), period(s) and/or payment date(s) or method(s) of calculation applicable to such preferred stock; (4) the date from which dividends on such preferred stock shall accumulate, if applicable; (5) the provision for a sinking fund, if any, for such preferred stock; (6) the provision for redemption, if applicable, of such preferred stock; (7) any listing of such preferred stock on any securities exchange; (8) the terms and conditions, if applicable, upon which such preferred stock will be convertible into common stock, including the conversion price (or manner of calculation); (9) the voting rights, if any, of such preferred stock; (10) any other specific terms, preferences, rights, limitations or restrictions of such preferred stock; (11) the relative ranking and preferences of such preferred stock as to dividend rights and rights upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up of our affairs; and (12) any limitations on issuance of any series of preferred stock ranking senior to or on a parity with such series of preferred stock as to dividend rights and rights upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up of our affairs.

Ranking. The ranking of the preferred stock is set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. Unless otherwise specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, such preferred stock will, with respect to dividend rights and rights upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up of our affairs, rank (i) senior to the common stock, any additional class of common stock and any series of preferred stock expressly made junior to such preferred stock; (ii) on a parity with all preferred stock previously issued by us the terms of which specifically provide that such preferred stock rank on a parity with the preferred stock offered hereby; and (iii) junior to all preferred stock previously issued by us the terms of which specifically provide that such preferred stock rank senior to the preferred stock offered hereby.

Dividends. Holders of shares of the preferred stock of each series offered hereby will be entitled to receive, when, as and if declared by our board of directors, out of our assets legally available for payment, cash dividends at such rates and on such dates as will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. Each such dividend shall be payable to holders of record as they

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

appear on the stock transfer books of the Company on such record dates as shall be fixed by our board of directors.

Dividends on any series of the preferred stock offered hereby may be cumulative or non-cumulative, as provided in the applicable prospectus supplement. Dividends, if cumulative, will be cumulative from and after the date set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. If our board of directors fails to declare a dividend payable on a dividend payment date on any series of the preferred stock for which dividends are noncumulative, then the holders of such series of the preferred stock will have no right to receive a dividend in respect of the dividend period ending on such dividend payment date, and we will have no obligation to pay the dividend accrued for such period, whether or not dividends on such series are declared payable on any future dividend payment date.

No dividends (other than in common stock or other capital stock ranking junior to the preferred stock of any series as to dividends and upon liquidation) will be declared or paid or set aside for payment (nor will any other distribution be declared or made upon the common stock, or any other capital stock of us ranking junior to

11

or on a parity with the preferred stock of such series as to dividends or upon liquidation), nor will any common stock or any other of our capital stock ranking junior to or on a parity with the preferred stock of such series as to dividends or upon liquidation be redeemed, purchased or otherwise acquired for any consideration (or any moneys be paid to or made available for a sinking fund for the redemption of any shares of any such stock) by us (except by conversion into or exchange for other capital stock of us ranking junior to the preferred stock of such series as to dividends and upon liquidation) unless (i) if such series of preferred stock has a cumulative dividend, full cumulative dividends on the preferred stock of such series have been or contemporaneously are declared and paid or declared and a sum sufficient for the payment thereof set apart for payment for all past dividend periods and the then current dividend period, and (ii) if such series of preferred stock does not have a cumulative dividend, full dividends on the preferred stock of such series have been or contemporaneously are declared and paid or declared and a sum sufficient for the payment thereof set apart for payment for the then current dividend period.

Any dividend payment made on shares of a series of cumulative preferred stock offered hereby will first be credited against the earliest accrued but unpaid dividend due with respect to shares of such series which remains payable.

Redemption. If so provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, the shares of preferred stock will be subject to mandatory redemption or redemption at our option, in whole or in part, in each case upon the terms, at the times and at the redemption prices set forth in such prospectus supplement.

The prospectus supplement relating to a series of preferred stock offered hereby that is subject to mandatory redemption will specify the number of shares of such preferred stock that will be redeemed by us in each year commencing after a date to be specified, at a redemption price per share to be specified, together with an amount equal to all accrued and unpaid dividends thereon (which will not, if such preferred stock does not have a cumulative dividend, include any accumulation in respect of unpaid dividends for prior dividend periods) to the date of redemption. The redemption price may be payable in cash, securities or other property, as specified in the applicable

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

prospectus supplement.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, no shares of any series of preferred stock offered hereby will be redeemed and we will not purchase or otherwise acquire directly or indirectly any shares of preferred stock of such series (except by conversion into or exchange for capital stock of us ranking junior to the preferred stock of such series as to dividends and upon liquidation) unless all outstanding shares of preferred stock of such series are simultaneously redeemed unless, in each case, (i) if such series of preferred stock has a cumulative dividend, full cumulative dividends on the preferred stock of such series will have been or contemporaneously are declared and paid or declared and a sum sufficient for the payment thereof set apart for payment for all past dividend periods and the then current dividend period and (ii) if such series of preferred stock does not have a cumulative dividend, full dividends on the preferred stock of such series have been or contemporaneously are declared and paid or declared and a sum sufficient for the payment thereof set apart for payment for the then current dividend period; provided, however, that the foregoing shall not prevent the purchase or acquisition of shares of preferred stock of such series pursuant to a purchase or exchange offer made on the same terms to holders of all outstanding shares of preferred stock of such series.

If fewer than all of the outstanding shares of preferred stock of any series offered hereby are to be redeemed, the number of shares to be redeemed will be determined by us and such shares may be redeemed pro rata from the holders of record of such shares in proportion to the number of such shares held by such holders (with adjustments to avoid redemption of fractional shares) or any other equitable method determined by us.

Notice of redemption will be mailed at least 30 days but not more than 60 days before the redemption date to each holder of record of preferred stock of any series to be redeemed at the address shown on our stock transfer books. Each notice will state: (i) the redemption date; (ii) the number of shares and series of the preferred stock to be redeemed; (iii) the redemption price; (iv) the place or places where certificates for such preferred stock are to be surrendered for payment of the redemption price; (v) that dividends on the shares to be redeemed

12

will cease to accrue on such redemption date; and (vi) the date upon which the holder's conversion rights, if any, as to such shares shall terminate. If fewer than all the shares of preferred stock of any series are to be redeemed, the notice mailed to each such holder thereof shall also specify the number of shares of preferred stock to be redeemed from each such holder and, upon redemption, a new certificate shall be issued representing the unredeemed shares without cost to the holder thereof. In order to facilitate the redemption of shares of preferred stock, our board of directors may fix a record date for the determination of shares of preferred stock to be redeemed, such record date to be not less than 30 or more than 60 days prior to the date fixed for such redemption.

Notice having been given as provided above, from and after the date specified therein as the date of redemption, unless we default in providing funds for the payment of the redemption price on such date, all dividends on the preferred stock called for redemption will cease. From and after the redemption date, unless we so default, all rights of the holders of the preferred stock as our shareholders, except the right to receive the redemption price (but without interest), will cease.

Subject to applicable law and the limitation on purchases when dividends on

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

preferred stock are in arrears, we may, at any time and from time to time, purchase any shares of preferred stock in the open market, by tender or by private agreement.

Liquidation Preference. Upon any voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up of our affairs, then, before any distribution or payment shall be made to the holders of any common stock or any other class or series of our capital stock ranking junior to any series of the preferred stock in the distribution of assets upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up, the holders of such series of preferred stock will be entitled to receive out of our assets legally available for distribution to shareholders liquidating distributions in the amount of the liquidation preference per share (set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement), plus an amount equal to all dividends accrued and unpaid thereon (which shall not include any accumulation in respect of unpaid dividends for prior dividend periods if such preferred stock does not have a cumulative dividend). After payment of the full amount of the liquidating distributions to which they are entitled, the holders of preferred stock will have no right or claim to any of our remaining assets. In the event that, upon any such voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up, our legally available assets are insufficient to pay the amount of the liquidating distributions on all outstanding shares of any series of preferred stock and the corresponding amounts payable on all shares of other classes or series of our capital stock ranking on a parity with the preferred stock in the distribution of assets upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up, then the holders of such series of preferred stock and all other such classes or series of capital stock shall share ratably in any such distribution of assets in proportion to the full liquidating distributions to which they would otherwise be respectively entitled.

If liquidating distributions shall have been made in full to all holders of preferred stock, our remaining assets will be distributed among the holders of any other classes or series of capital stock ranking junior to such series of preferred stock upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up, according to their respective rights and preferences and in each case according to their respective number of shares. For such purposes, our consolidation or merger with or into any other corporation, or the sale, lease, transfer or conveyance of all or substantially all of our property or business will not be deemed to constitute a liquidation, dissolution or winding up.

Voting Rights. Holders of the preferred stock offered hereby will not have any voting rights, except as set forth below or as otherwise expressly required by law or as indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement.

If the equivalent of six quarterly dividends payable on any series of preferred stock are in default (whether or not declared or consecutive), the holders of all such series of preferred stock, voting as a single class with all other series of preferred stock upon which similar voting rights have been conferred and are exercisable, will be entitled to elect two additional directors until all dividends in default have been paid or declared and set apart for payment.

Such right to vote separately to elect directors shall, when vested, be subject, always, to the same provisions for vesting of such right to elect directors separately in the case of future dividend defaults. At any time when

such right to elect directors separately shall have so vested, we may, and upon the written request of the holders of record of not less than 20% of our total number of preferred shares then outstanding shall, call a special meeting of shareholders for the election of directors. In the case of such a

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

written request, such special meeting shall be held within 90 days after the delivery of such request and, in either case, at the place and upon the notice provided by law and in the bylaws, provided that we will not be required to call such a special meeting if such request is received less than 120 days before the date fixed for the next ensuing annual meeting of shareholders, and the holders of all classes of outstanding preferred stock are offered the opportunity to elect such directors (or fill any vacancy) at such annual meeting of shareholders. Directors so elected will serve until the next annual meeting of shareholders or until their respective successors are elected and qualify. If, prior to the end of the term of any director so elected, a vacancy in the office of such director shall occur, during the continuance of a default by reason of death, resignation, or disability, such vacancy shall be filled for the unexpired term of such former director by the appointment of a new director by the remaining director or directors so elected.

The affirmative vote or consent of the holders of at least a majority of the outstanding shares of each series of preferred stock will be required to amend or repeal any provision of or add any provision to, our articles of incorporation, including the certificate of determination, if such action would materially and adversely alter or change the rights, preferences or privileges of such series of preferred stock.

No consent or approval of the holders of any series of preferred stock offered hereby will be required for the issuance from our authorized but unissued preferred stock of other shares of any series of preferred stock ranking on a parity with or junior to such series of preferred stock, or senior to a series of preferred stock expressly made junior to other series of preferred stock as to payment of dividends and distribution of assets, including other shares of such series of preferred stock.

The foregoing voting provisions will not apply if, at or prior to the time when the act with respect to which such vote would otherwise be required shall be effected, all outstanding shares of such series of preferred stock had been redeemed or called for redemption upon proper notice and sufficient funds had been deposited in trust to effect such redemption.

Conversion Rights. The terms and conditions, if any, upon which shares of any series of preferred stock offered hereby are convertible into common stock will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement relating thereto. Such terms will include the number of shares of common stock into which the preferred stock is convertible, the conversion price (or manner of calculation thereof), the conversion period, provisions as to whether conversion will be at our option or at the option of the holders of the preferred stock or automatically upon the occurrence of certain events, the events requiring an adjustment of the conversion price and provisions affecting conversion in the event of the redemption of such preferred stock.

DESCRIPTION OF EQUITY STOCK

We are authorized to issue 100,000,000 shares of equity stock. At April 30, 1999, we had no outstanding shares of equity stock. Our articles of incorporation provide that the equity stock may be issued from time to time in one or more series and give our board of directors broad authority to fix the dividend and distribution rights, conversion and voting rights, redemption provisions and liquidation rights of each series of equity stocks. Holders of equity stock have no preemptive rights. The shares of equity stock will be, when issued, fully paid and nonassessable.

The issuance of equity stock with special voting rights (or common stock) could be used to deter attempts by a single shareholder or group of shareholders to obtain control of us in transactions not approved by our board of directors. We have no intention to issue the equity stock (or common stock)

for such purposes.

14

Ownership Limitations

For a discussion of the ownership limitations that apply to equity stock, see "Description of Common Stock--Ownership Limitations."

Terms of Equity Stock

The following description of equity stock sets forth certain general terms and provisions of the equity stock to which any prospectus supplement may relate. The statements below describing the equity stock are in all respects subject to and qualified in their entirety by reference to the applicable provisions of our articles of incorporation (including the applicable form of certificate of determination) and bylaws.

Reference is made to the prospectus supplement relating to the equity stock offered thereby for specific terms, including, where applicable, the following: (1) the designation of such equity stock; (2) the number of shares of such equity stock offered, the liquidation rights and the offering price of such equity stock; (3) the dividend rate(s), period(s) and/or payment date(s) or method(s) of calculation applicable to such equity stock; (4) the provision for redemption, if applicable, of such equity stock; (5) any listing of such equity stock on any securities exchange; (6) the terms and conditions, if applicable, upon which such equity stock will be convertible into common stock, including the conversion price (or manner of calculation thereof); (7) the voting rights, if any, of such equity stock; (8) any other specific terms, rights, limitations or restrictions of such equity stock; and (9) the relative ranking of such equity stock as to dividend rights and rights upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up of our affairs.

Ranking. The ranking of the equity stock is set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. Unless otherwise specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, such equity stock will, with respect to dividend rights and rights upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up of our affairs, rank on a parity with the common stock.

Dividends. Holders of shares of the equity stock of each series offered hereby shall be entitled to receive, when, as and if declared by our board of directors, out of our assets legally available for payment, cash dividends at such rates and on such dates as will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. Each such dividend shall be payable to holders of record as they appear on our stock transfer books on such record dates as shall be fixed by our board of directors. Unless otherwise specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, dividends on such equity stock will be non-cumulative.

Redemption. If so provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, the shares of equity stock will be subject to mandatory redemption or redemption at our option, in whole or in part, in each case upon the terms, at the times and at the redemption prices set forth in such prospectus supplement.

The prospectus supplement relating to a series of equity stock offered hereby that is subject to mandatory redemption will specify the number of shares of such equity stock that we redeem in each year commencing after a date to be specified, at a redemption price per share to be specified, together with an amount equal to all accrued and unpaid dividends thereon (which shall not, if such equity stock does not have a cumulative dividend, include any accumulation in respect of unpaid dividends for prior dividend periods) to the date of redemption. The redemption price may be payable in

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

cash, securities or other property, as specified in the applicable prospectus supplement.

If fewer than all of the outstanding shares of equity stock of any series offered hereby are to be redeemed, the number of shares to be redeemed will be determined by us and such shares may be redeemed pro rata from the holders of record of such shares in proportion to the number of such shares held by such holders (with adjustments to avoid redemption of fractional shares) or any other equitable method determined by us.

Notice of redemption will be mailed at least 30 days but not more than 60 days before the redemption date to each holder of record of equity stock of any series to be redeemed at the address shown on our stock transfer

15

books. Each notice shall state: (i) the redemption date; (ii) the number of shares and series of the equity stock to be redeemed; (iii) the redemption price; (iv) the place or places where certificates for such equity stock are to be surrendered for payment of the redemption price; (v) that dividends on the shares to be redeemed will cease to accrue on such redemption date; and (vi) the date upon which the holder's conversion rights, if any, as to such shares shall terminate. If fewer than all the shares of equity stock of any series are to be redeemed, the notice mailed to each such holder thereof shall also specify the number of shares of equity stock to be redeemed from each such holder and, upon redemption, a new certificate shall be issued representing the unredeemed shares without cost to the holder thereof. In order to facilitate the redemption of shares of equity stock, our board of directors may fix a record date for the determination of shares of equity stock to be redeemed, such record date to be not less than 30 or more than 60 days prior to the date fixed for such redemption.

Notice having been given as provided above, from and after the date specified therein as the date of redemption, unless we default in providing funds for the payment of the redemption price on such date, all dividends on the Equity Stock called for redemption will cease. From and after the redemption date, unless we so default, all rights of the holders of the equity stock as our shareholders, except the right to receive the redemption price (but without interest), will cease.

Liquidation Rights. If we voluntarily or involuntarily liquidate, dissolve or wind-up our affairs, then, before any distribution or payment may be made to the holders of the equity stock or any other class or series of our capital stock ranking junior to any series of the preferred stock in the distribution of assets upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up, the holders of such series of preferred stock will be entitled to receive out of our assets legally available for distribution to shareholders liquidating distributions in the amount of the liquidation preference per share, plus an amount equal to all dividends accrued and unpaid thereon (which shall not include any accumulation in respect of unpaid dividends for prior dividend periods if such preferred stock does not have a cumulative dividend). After payment of the full amount of the liquidating distributions to which they are entitled, the holders of Preferred Stock will have no right or claim to any of our remaining assets. If we voluntarily or involuntarily liquidate, dissolve or wind-up our affairs and our legally available assets are insufficient to pay the amount of the liquidating distributions on all outstanding shares of any series of preferred stock and the corresponding amounts payable on all shares of other classes or series of our capital stock ranking on a parity with the preferred stock in the distribution of assets upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up, then the holders of such series of preferred stock and all other such classes or series of capital stock shall share ratably in any such

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

distribution of assets in proportion to the full liquidating distributions to which they would otherwise be respectively entitled.

If liquidating distributions have been made in full to all holders of preferred stock, our remaining assets will be distributed among the holders of any other classes or series of capital stock ranking junior to such series of preferred stock upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up, including the equity stock, according to their respective rights and in each case according to their respective number of shares. For such purposes, our consolidation or merger with or into any other corporation, or the sale, lease, transfer or conveyance of all or substantially all of our property or business, will not be deemed to constitute a liquidation, dissolution or winding up.

Unless otherwise specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, upon any voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up of our affairs, holders of the equity stock will rank on a parity with the holders of the common stock, subject to any maximum or minimum distribution to holders of equity stock specified in such prospectus supplement.

Voting Rights. Unless otherwise specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, holders of the equity stock will have the same voting rights as holders of the common stock.

No consent or approval of the holders of any series of equity stock will be required for the issuance from our authorized but unissued equity stock of other shares of any series of equity stock including shares of such series of equity stock.

16

Conversion Rights. The terms and conditions, if any, upon which shares of any series of equity stock offered hereby are convertible into common stock will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement relating thereto. Such terms will include the number of shares of common stock into which the equity stock is convertible, the conversion price (or manner of calculation), the conversion period, provisions as to whether conversion will be at our option or at the option of the holders of the equity stock or automatically upon the occurrence of certain events, the events requiring an adjustment of the conversion price and provisions affecting conversion in the event of the redemption of such equity stock.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DEPOSITARY SHARES

We may, at our option, elect to offer depositary shares rather than full shares of preferred stock or equity stock. In the event such option is exercised, each of the depositary shares will represent ownership of and entitlement to all rights and preferences of a fraction of a share of preferred stock or equity stock of a specified series (including dividend, voting, redemption and liquidation rights). The applicable fraction will be specified in the prospectus supplement. The shares of preferred stock or equity stock represented by the depositary shares will be deposited with a depositary named in the applicable prospectus supplement, under a deposit agreement, among the depositary, the holders of the depositary receipts and us. Depositary receipts, which are certificates evidencing depositary shares, will be delivered to those persons purchasing depositary shares in the offering. The depositary will be the transfer agent, registrar and dividend disbursing agent for the depositary shares. Holders of depositary receipts agree to be bound by the deposit agreement, which requires holders to take certain actions such as filing proof of residence and paying certain charges.

The summary of terms of the depositary shares contained in this prospectus

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

does not purport to be complete and is subject to, and qualified in its entirety by, the provisions of the deposit agreement, our articles of incorporation and the form of certificate of determination for the applicable series of preferred stock or equity stock.

Dividends

The depositary will distribute all cash dividends or other cash distributions received in respect of the series of preferred stock represented by the depositary shares to the record holders of depositary receipts in proportion to the number of depositary shares owned by such holders on the relevant record date, which will be the same date as the record date fixed by us for the applicable series of preferred stock or equity stock. The depositary, however, will distribute only such amount as can be distributed without attributing to any depositary share a fraction of one cent, and any balance not so distributed will be added to and treated as part of the next sum received by the depositary for distribution to record holders of depositary receipts then outstanding.

In the event of a distribution other than in cash, the depositary will distribute property received by it to the record holders of depositary receipts entitled thereto, in proportion, as nearly as may be practicable, to the number of depositary shares owned by such holders on the relevant record date, unless the depositary determines (after consultation with us) that it is not feasible to make such distribution, in which case the depositary may (with our approval) adopt any other method for such distribution as it deems equitable and appropriate, including the sale of such property (at such place or places and upon such terms as it may deem equitable and appropriate) and distribution of the net proceeds from such sale to such holders.

Liquidation Rights

In the event of the liquidation, dissolution or winding up of our affairs, whether voluntary or involuntary, the holders of each depositary share will be entitled to the fraction of the liquidation amount accorded each share of the applicable series of preferred stock or equity stock, as set forth in the prospectus supplement.

17

Redemption

If the series of preferred stock represented by the applicable series of depositary shares is redeemable, such depositary shares will be redeemed from the proceeds received by the depositary resulting from the redemption, in whole or in part, of preferred stock or equity stock held by the depositary. Whenever we redeem any preferred stock or equity stock held by the depositary, the depositary will redeem as of the same redemption date the number of depositary shares representing the preferred stock or equity stock so redeemed. The depositary will mail the notice of redemption promptly upon receipt of such notice from us and not less than 30 nor more than 60 days prior to the date fixed for redemption of the preferred stock or equity stock and the depositary shares to the record holders of the depositary receipts.

Conversion

If the series of preferred stock or equity stock represented by the applicable series of depositary shares is convertible into a different class of our securities, the depositary shares will be also be convertible on the terms described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

Voting

Promptly upon receipt of notice of any meeting at which the holders of the series of preferred stock or equity stock represented by the applicable series of depositary shares are entitled to vote, the depositary will mail the information contained in such notice of meeting to the record holders of the depositary receipts as of the record date for such meeting. Each such record holder of depositary receipts will be entitled to instruct the depositary as to the exercise of the voting rights pertaining to the number of shares of preferred stock or equity stock represented by such record holder's depositary shares. The depositary will endeavor, insofar as practicable, to vote such preferred stock or equity stock represented by such depositary shares in accordance with such instructions, and we will agree to take all action which may be deemed necessary by the depositary in order to enable the depositary to do so. The depositary will abstain from voting any of the preferred stock or equity stock to the extent that it does not receive specific instructions from the holders of depositary receipts.

Withdrawal of Preferred Stock

Upon surrender of depositary receipts at the principal office of the depositary, upon payment of any unpaid amount due the depositary, and subject to the terms of the deposit agreement, the owner of the depositary shares evidenced thereby is entitled to delivery of the number of whole shares of preferred stock or equity stock and all money and other property, if any, represented by such depositary shares. Partial shares of preferred stock or equity stock will not be issued. If the depositary receipts delivered by the holder evidence a number of depositary shares in excess of the number of depositary shares representing the number of whole shares of preferred stock or equity stock to be withdrawn, the depositary will deliver to such holder at the same time a new depositary receipt evidencing such excess number of depositary shares. Holders of preferred stock or equity stock thus withdrawn will not thereafter be entitled to deposit such shares under the deposit agreement or to receive depositary receipts evidencing depositary shares therefor.

Amendment and Termination of Deposit Agreement

The form of depositary receipt evidencing the depositary shares and any provision of the deposit agreement may at any time and from time to time be amended by agreement between the Depositary and us. However, any amendment which materially and adversely alters the rights of the holders (other than any change in fees) of depositary shares will not be effective unless such amendment has been approved by at least a majority of the depositary shares then outstanding. No such amendment may impair the right, subject to the terms of the deposit agreement, of any owner of any depositary shares to surrender the depositary receipt evidencing such depositary shares with instructions to the depositary to deliver to the holder the preferred stock and all money and other property, if any, represented thereby, except in order to comply with mandatory provisions of applicable law. The deposit agreement may be terminated by the depositary or us only if (i) all outstanding depositary shares

18

have been redeemed or (ii) there has been a final distribution in respect of the preferred stock or equity stock in connection with our liquidation, dissolution or winding up and such distribution has been made to all the holders of depositary shares.

Charges of Depositary

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

We will pay all transfer and other taxes and governmental charges arising solely from the existence of the depositary arrangements. We will pay charges of the depositary in connection with the initial deposit of the preferred stock or equity stock and the initial issuance of the depositary shares, and redemption of the preferred stock or equity stock and all withdrawals of preferred stock or equity stock by owners of depositary shares. Holders of depositary receipts will pay transfer, income and other taxes and governmental charges and certain other charges as are provided in the deposit agreement to be for their accounts. In certain circumstances, the depositary may refuse to transfer depositary shares, may withhold dividends and distributions and sell the depositary shares evidenced by such depositary receipt if such charges are not paid.

Miscellaneous

The depositary will forward to the holders of depositary receipts all reports and communications from us which are delivered to the depositary and which we are required to furnish to the holders of the preferred stock. In addition, the depositary will make available for inspection by holders of depositary receipts at the principal office of the depositary, and at such other places as it may from time to time deem advisable, any reports and communications received from us which are received by the depositary as the holder of preferred stock or equity stock.

Neither the depositary nor we assume any obligation or will be subject to any liability under the deposit agreement to holders of depositary receipts other than for its negligence or willful misconduct. Neither the depositary nor we will be liable if the depositary is prevented or delayed by law or any circumstance beyond its control in performing its obligations under the deposit agreement. Our obligations and those of the depositary under the deposit agreement will be limited to performance in good faith of their duties thereunder, and they will not be obligated to prosecute or defend any legal proceeding in respect of any depositary shares or preferred stock unless satisfactory indemnity is furnished. We and the depositary may rely on written advice of counsel or accountants, on information provided by holders of depositary receipts or other persons believed in good faith to be competent to give such information and on documents believed to be genuine and to have been signed or presented by the proper party or parties.

Resignation and Removal of Depositary

The depositary may resign at any time by delivering to us notice of its election to do so, and we may at any time remove the depositary, any such resignation or removal to take effect upon the appointment of a successor depositary and its acceptance of such appointment. Such successor depositary must be appointed within 60 days after delivery of the notice for resignation or removal and must be a bank or trust company having its principal office in the United States of America and having a combined capital and surplus of at least \$150,000,000.

Federal Income Tax Considerations

Owners of the depositary shares will be treated for federal income tax purposes as if they were owners of the preferred stock or equity stock represented by such depositary shares. Accordingly, such owners will be entitled to take into account, for federal income tax purposes, income and deductions to which they would be entitled if they were holders of such preferred stock. In addition, (i) no gain or loss will be recognized for federal income tax purposes upon the withdrawal of preferred stock in exchange for depositary shares, (ii) the tax basis of each share of preferred stock or equity stock to an exchanging owner of depositary shares will, upon such

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

exchange, be the same as the aggregate tax basis of the depositary shares exchanged therefor, and (iii) the holding period for preferred stock or equity stock in the hands of an exchanging owner of depositary shares will include the period during which such person owned such depositary shares.

19

DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS

We have no warrants outstanding (other than options issued under our stock option plan). We may issue warrants for the purchase of common stock, preferred stock or equity stock. Warrants may be issued independently or together with any other securities offered by any prospectus supplement and may be attached to or separate from such securities. Each series of warrants will be issued under a separate warrant agreement to be entered into between the Company, a warrant agent specified in the applicable prospectus supplement and us. The warrant agent will act solely as our agent in connection with the warrants of such series and will not assume any obligation or relationship of agency or trust for or with any holders or beneficial owners of warrants. The following sets forth certain general terms and provisions of the warrants offered hereby. Further terms of the warrants and the applicable warrant agreement will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement.

The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the terms of the warrants in respect of which this prospectus is being delivered, including, where applicable, the following: (1) the title of such warrants; (2) the aggregate number of such warrants; (3) the price or prices at which such warrants will be issued; (4) the designation, number and terms of the shares of common stock, preferred stock or equity stock purchasable upon exercise of such warrants; (5) the designation and terms of the other securities, if any, with which such warrants are issued and the number of such warrants issued with each such security; (6) the date, if any, on and after which such warrants and the related common stock, preferred stock or equity stock, if any, will be separately transferable; (7) the price at which each share of common stock, preferred stock or equity stock purchasable upon exercise of such warrants may be purchased; (8) the date on which the right to exercise such warrants shall commence and the date on which such right shall expire; (9) the minimum or maximum amount of such warrants which may be exercised at any one time; and (10) any other terms of such warrants, including terms, procedures and limitations relating to the exchange and exercise of such warrants.

CERTAIN FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSIDERATIONS

The following discussion summarizes certain federal income tax considerations relating to the Company and to the acquisition, ownership and disposition of Common Stock. The applicable Prospectus Supplement will contain information about additional federal income tax considerations, if any, relating to Securities other than Common Stock. The following discussion, which is not exhaustive of all possible tax considerations, does not give a detailed description of any state, local, or foreign tax considerations. Nor does it discuss all of the aspects of federal income taxation that may be relevant to a prospective Shareholder in light of his or her particular circumstances or to certain types of Shareholders (including insurance companies, tax-exempt entities, financial institutions or broker-dealers, foreign corporations and persons who are not citizens or residents of the United States) who are subject to special treatment under federal income tax laws. The information in this section is based on the Code, current, temporary and proposed Treasury Regulations thereunder, the legislative history of the Code, current administrative interpretations and practices of the IRS (including its practices and policies as endorsed in private letter rulings, which are not binding on the IRS except with respect to the taxpayer that

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

receives such a ruling), and court decisions, all as of the date hereof. No assurance can be given that future legislation, Treasury Regulations, administrative interpretations and court decisions will not significantly change current law or adversely affect existing interpretations of current law. Any such change could apply retroactively to transactions preceding the date of the change. The Company has not requested and does not plan to request any rulings from the IRS concerning the tax treatment of the Company or the Operating Partnership. Thus, no assurance can be provided that the statements set forth herein (which do not bind the IRS or the courts) will not be challenged by the IRS or will be sustained by a court if so challenged.

EACH PROSPECTIVE INVESTOR IS ADVISED TO CONSULT THE APPLICABLE PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT, AS WELL AS HIS OR HER TAX ADVISOR, REGARDING THE TAX CONSEQUENCES TO HIM OR HER OF THE ACQUISITION, OWNERSHIP AND SALE OF THE SECURITIES, INCLUDING THE FEDERAL, STATE, LOCAL, FOREIGN AND OTHER TAX CONSEQUENCES OF SUCH ACQUISITION, OWNERSHIP AND SALE AND OF POTENTIAL CHANGES IN APPLICABLE TAX LAWS.

20

As used under this heading, the term "Company" refers solely to PS Business Parks, Inc., "AOPP" refers to American Office Park Properties, Inc. and "Merger" refers to the merger with AOPP.

Taxation of the Company

General. The Company has elected to be taxed as a REIT under Sections 856 through 860 of the Code commencing with its taxable year ended December 31, 1990. The Company believes that it has been organized and operated in a manner so as to qualify as a REIT, and the Company intends to continue to operate in such a manner. So long as the Company qualifies for taxation as a REIT, it generally will not be subject to federal corporate income taxes on net income that it distributes currently to Shareholders. However, the Company will be subject to federal income tax in the following circumstances. First, the Company will be taxed at regular corporate rates on any undistributed REIT taxable income, including undistributed net capital gains. Second, under certain circumstances, the Company may be subject to the "alternative minimum tax" on its items of tax preference. Third, if the Company has (i) net income from the sale or other disposition of "foreclosure property" (which is, in general, property acquired by foreclosure or otherwise on default of a lease or a loan secured by the property) which is held primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of business or (ii) other nonqualifying income from foreclosure property, it will be subject to tax at the highest corporate rate on such income. Fourth, if the Company has net income from prohibited transactions (which are, in general, certain sales or other dispositions of property (other than foreclosure property) held primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of business), such income will be subject to a 100% tax. Fifth, if the Company should fail to satisfy the 75% gross income test or the 95% gross income test (as discussed below), and has nonetheless maintained its qualification as a REIT because certain other requirements have been met, it will be subject to a 100% tax on the net income attributable to the greater of the amount by which the Company fails the 75% or 95% gross income test. Sixth, if the Company should fail to distribute during each calendar year at least the sum of (i) 85% of its REIT ordinary income for such year, (ii) 95% of its REIT capital gain net income for such year, and (iii) any undistributed taxable income from prior periods, it would be subject to a 4% excise tax on the excess of such required distribution over the amounts actually distributed. Seventh, if the Company acquires or has acquired any asset from a taxable C corporation in a transaction in which the basis of the asset in the acquiror's hands is determined by reference to the basis of the asset (or any other asset) in the hands of the C corporation and

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

the acquiror recognizes gain on the disposition of such asset during the 10 year period beginning on the date on which such asset was acquired by it, then to the extent of such asset's "Built-In Gain" (i.e., the excess of (a) the fair market value of such asset at the time of the acquisition by the Company over (b) the adjusted basis in such asset, determined at the time of such acquisition), such gain will be subject to tax at the highest regular corporate rate applicable, pursuant to anticipated Treasury Regulations that have yet to be promulgated. The results described above with respect to the recognition of Built-In Gain assume that the Company will make an election pursuant to Notice 88-19 with respect to any such acquisition. Prior to 1997, AOPP was taxable as a regular C corporation. In making its election to be taxed as a REIT for 1997, AOPP elected to be subject to the Built-In Gain rules of Notice 88-19.

Requirements for Qualification. 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 of stock, or by transferable certificates of beneficial interest, (3) that would be taxable as a domestic corporation, but for Sections 856 through 860 of the Code, (4) that is neither a financial institution nor an insurance company subject to certain provisions of the Code, (5) the beneficial ownership of which is held by 100 or more persons, (6) that during the last half of each taxable year not more than 50% in value of the outstanding stock of which is owned, directly or indirectly, by five or fewer individuals (as defined in the Code to include certain entities), (7) that makes an election to be taxable as a REIT, or has made such election for a previous taxable year which has not been revoked or terminated, and satisfies all relevant filing and other administrative requirements established by the IRS that must be met in order to elect and maintain REIT status; (8) that uses a calendar year for federal income tax purposes and complies with recordkeeping requirements of the Code and regulations promulgated thereunder; and (9) that meets certain other tests, described below, regarding the nature of its income and assets and the amount of its distributions. The Code provides that conditions (1) through (4), inclusive, must be met during the entire taxable year and that condition (5) must be

21

met during at least 335 days of a taxable year of 12 months, or during a proportionate part of a taxable year of less than 12 months. For purposes of determining stock ownership under condition (6), a supplemental unemployment compensation benefits plan, a private foundation or a portion of a trust permanently set aside or used exclusively for charitable purposes generally is considered an individual. However, a trust that is a qualified trust under Code section 401(a) generally is not considered an individual and beneficiaries of such trust are treated as holding shares of a REIT in proportion to their actuarial interests in such trust for purposes of condition (6).

The Company's Articles of Incorporation contain restrictions regarding the transfer of its capital stock that are intended to assist the Company in continuing to satisfy the stock ownership requirements described in conditions (5) and (6). See "Description of Common Stock--Ownership Limitations." In connection with condition (6), a REIT is required to send annual letters to its shareholders requesting information regarding the actual ownership of shares. For the Company's taxable years commencing on or after January 1, 1998, if the Company complies with the annual letters requirement and the Company does not know, or exercising reasonable diligence would not have known, whether it failed to meet requirement (6) above, the Company will be treated as having met the requirement.

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

The ownership restrictions in the Company's articles of incorporation generally prohibit the actual or constructive ownership of more than 7% of the outstanding shares of Common Stock (excluding the interest held by Public Storage) or more than 9.9% of the outstanding shares of each class or series of shares of Preferred Stock, unless an exception is established by the Board of Directors. The restrictions provide that if, at any time, for any reason, those ownership limitations are violated or more than 50% in value of the Company's outstanding stock otherwise would be considered owned by five or fewer individuals, then a number of shares of stock necessary to cure the violation will automatically and irrevocably be transferred from the person causing the violation to a designated charitable beneficiary.

The REIT protective provisions are modeled after certain arrangements that the IRS has ruled in private letter rulings will preclude a REIT from being considered to violate the ownership restrictions so long as the arrangements are enforceable as a matter of state law and the REIT seeks to enforce them as and when necessary. There can be no assurance, however, that the IRS might not seek to take a different position with respect to the Company (a private letter ruling is legally binding only with respect to the taxpayer to whom it was issued and the Company will not seek a private ruling on this or any other issue) or contend that the Company failed to enforce these various arrangements. Moreover, the Company's limitations will not apply to the ownership of shares at the time of the Merger, or to shares of stock of the Company deemed to be owned by a person as a result of such person's ownership of shares of Public Storage (however, such deemed ownership will be taken into account in determining whether a subsequent acquisition or transfer of shares of the Company (but not Public Storage) violates the limitations), exceptions not contained in the private letter rulings previously issued by the IRS. Accordingly, there can be no assurance that these arrangements necessarily will preserve the Company's REIT status. The Company believes, however, that it has issued and outstanding sufficient shares with sufficient diversity of ownership to allow it to satisfy the REIT ownership requirements.

A REIT is not permitted to have at the end of any taxable year any undistributed earnings and profits that are attributable to a "C corporation" taxable year. As a result of the Merger, the Company succeeded to various tax attributes of AOPP, including any undistributed earnings and profits. AOPP was taxable as a "C corporation" prior to 1997, and does not believe that it has transferred any undistributed "C corporation earnings and profits" to the Company. However, neither AOPP nor the Company has sought an opinion of counsel or outside accountants to the effect that the Company has not acquired any "C corporation earnings and profits" from AOPP. There can be no assurance that the IRS would not contend otherwise on a subsequent audit of AOPP. It appears that the Company could keep from being disqualified as a REIT by using "deficiency dividend" procedures to distribute the "C corporation" earnings and profits. In order to use this procedure, an affected REIT would have to make an additional distribution to its shareholders (in addition to distributions made for purposes of satisfying the normal REIT distribution requirements), within 90 days of the IRS determination.

22

In addition, the REIT would have to pay to the IRS an interest charge on 50% of the acquired C corporation earnings and profits that were not distributed prior to the end of the REIT's taxable year in which they were acquired. If C corporation earnings and profits were deemed to have been acquired by the Company, there can be no assurance, however, that the IRS would not take the position either that the procedure is not available at all (in which case the Company would fail to qualify as a REIT) or, alternatively, that even if the procedure is available, the Company cannot qualify as a REIT for its taxable year in which the earnings and profits were acquired, but it could qualify as

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

a REIT for subsequent taxable years. Finally, if AOPP were determined not to have qualified as a REIT for the taxable year ended December 31, 1997 or its short taxable year ending at the time of the Merger, the Company would not be eligible to elect REIT status for up to four years after the year in which AOPP failed to qualify as a REIT. AOPP made an election to be taxed as a REIT commencing with its taxable year ended December 31, 1997. The Company and AOPP believe that AOPP's election is valid and that AOPP was organized, and operated in 1997 and until the time of the Merger, in conformity with the requirements for taxation as a REIT.

Income Tests. In order to maintain qualification as a REIT, the Company must satisfy certain gross income requirements, which are applied on an annual basis. First, at least 75% of the Company's gross income (excluding gross income from prohibited transactions) for each taxable year must be derived directly or indirectly from investments relating to real property or mortgages on real property (including "rents from real property" and, in certain circumstances, interest) or from certain types of temporary investments. Second, at least 95% of the Company's gross income (excluding gross income from prohibited transactions) for each taxable year must be derived from the same items which qualify under the 75% income test, and from dividends, interest and gain from the sale or disposition of stock or securities, or from any combination of the foregoing.

Rents received by the Company will qualify as "rents from real property" in satisfying the gross income requirements described above only if several conditions are met. First, the amount of rent must not be based in whole or in part on the income or profits of any person. However, an amount received or accrued generally will not be excluded from the term "rents from real property" solely by reason of being based on a fixed percentage or percentages of receipts or sales. The Company anticipates that none of its annual gross income will be attributable to rents that are based in whole or in part on the income of any person (excluding rents based on a percentage of receipts or sales, which, as described above, are permitted). Second, the Code provides that rents received from a tenant will not qualify as "rents from real property" if the Company, or an owner of 10% or more of the Company, directly or constructively owns 10% or more of such tenant (a "Related Party Tenant"). The Company does not anticipate that it will receive income from Related Party Tenants. Third, if rent attributable to personal property, leased in connection with a lease of real property, is greater than 15% of the total rent received under the lease, then the portion of rent attributable to such personal property will not qualify as "rents from real property." The Company does not anticipate deriving rent attributable to personal property leased in connection with real property that exceeds 15% of the total rents. Finally, for rents to qualify as "rents from real property," the Company generally must not operate or manage the property or furnish or render services to tenants, other than through an "independent contractor" that is adequately compensated and from whom the Company derives no revenue. The "independent contractor" requirement, however, does not apply to the extent the services provided by the Company are "usually or customarily rendered" in connection with the rental of space for occupancy only and are not otherwise considered "rendered to the occupant." Any services with respect to certain properties that the Company believes may not be provided by the Company directly without jeopardizing the qualification of rent as "rents from real property" will be performed by "independent contractors."

For the Company's taxable years commencing on or after January 1, 1998, rents received generally will qualify as rents from real property even if the Company were to provide services that are not permissible services so long as the amount received for such services meets a de minimis standard. The amount received for "impermissible services" with respect to a property (or, if services are available only to certain tenants, possibly with respect to such tenants) cannot exceed 1% of all amounts received, directly or indirectly, by

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

the Company with respect to such property (or, if services are available only to certain tenants, possibly with respect to such tenants). In computing any such amounts, the amount that the Company would be deemed to have received for

23

performing "impermissible services" will be the greater of the actual amount so received or 150% of the direct cost to the Company of providing those services. If the impermissible service income exceeds 1% of the Company's total income from a property, then all of the income from that property will fail to qualify as rents from real property.

If the Company fails to satisfy one or both of the 75% or 95% gross income tests for any taxable year, it may nevertheless qualify as a REIT for such year if it is entitled to relief under certain provisions of the Code. It is not possible, however, to state whether in all circumstances the Company would be entitled to the benefit of these relief provisions. Even if these relief provisions were to apply, however, a 100% tax would be imposed with respect to the "excess net income" attributable to the failure to satisfy the 75% and 95% gross income tests.

Asset Tests. The Company, at the close of each quarter of its taxable year, must satisfy three tests relating to the nature of its assets. First, at least 75% of the value of the Company's total assets must be represented by real estate assets. The Company's real estate assets include, for this purpose, its allocable share of real estate assets held by the Operating Partnership and the non-corporate subsidiaries of the Operating Partnership, as well as stock or debt instruments held for less than one year purchased with the proceeds of a stock offering, or long-term (at least five years) debt offering of the Company, cash, cash items and government securities. Second, not more than 25% of the Company's total assets may be represented by securities other than those in the 75% asset class. Third, of the investments included in the 25% asset class, the value of any one issuer's securities owned by the Company may not exceed 5% of the value of the Company's total assets, and, except for REITs or "qualified REIT subsidiaries," the Company may not own more than 10% of any one issuer's outstanding voting securities.

After initially meeting the asset tests at the close of any quarter, the Company will not lose its status as a REIT for failure to satisfy the 25% or 5% asset tests at the end of a later quarter solely by reason of changes in the relative values of its assets. If the failure to satisfy the 25% or 5% asset tests results from an acquisition of securities or other property during a quarter, including, for example, as a result of the Company increasing its interest in the Operating Partnership as a result of a merger, the exercise of unit redemption rights or an additional capital contribution of proceeds of an offering of shares by the Company, the failure can be cured by disposition of sufficient nonqualifying assets within 30 days after the close of that quarter. The Company intends to maintain adequate records of the value of its assets to ensure compliance with the asset tests and to take any available actions within 30 days after the close of any quarter as may be required to cure any noncompliance with the 25% or 5% asset tests. If the Company fails to cure noncompliance with the asset tests within such time period, the Company would cease to qualify as a REIT.

Annual Distribution Requirements. The Company, in order to qualify as a REIT, is required to distribute dividends (other than capital gain dividends) to its shareholders in an amount at least equal to (i) the sum of (a) 95% of the Company's "REIT taxable income" (computed without regard to the dividends paid deduction and the Company's net capital gain) and (b) 95% of the net income (after tax), if any, from foreclosure property, minus (ii) the sum of certain items of non-cash income. In addition, if the Company disposes of any

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

Built-In Gain Asset during the 10 year period beginning on the date the Company acquired that asset, the Company will be required, pursuant to Treasury Regulations which have not yet been promulgated, to distribute at least 95% of the Built-In Gain (after tax), if any, recognized on the disposition of such asset. See "--General" above for a discussion of "Built-In Gain Assets." Such distributions must be paid in the taxable year to which they relate, or in the following taxable year if declared before the Company timely files its tax return for such year and if paid on or before the first regular dividend payment date after such declaration.

To the extent that the Company does not distribute all of its net capital gain or distributes at least 95%, but less than 100%, of its "REIT taxable income," as adjusted, it will be subject to tax thereon at regular ordinary and capital gain corporate tax rates. The Company may elect to require the shareholders to include the Company's undistributed net capital gains in their income by designating, in a written notice to shareholders, those amounts as undistributed capital gains in respect of its shareholders' shares. If the Company makes such

24

an election, the shareholders will (i) include in their income as capital gains their proportionate share of such undistributed capital gains and (ii) be deemed to have paid their proportionate share of the tax paid by the Company on such undistributed capital gains and thereby receive a credit or refund for such amount. A shareholder will increase the basis in its Common Shares by the difference between the amount of capital gain included in its income and the amount of the tax that the Company is deemed to have paid on the shareholder's behalf. The earnings and profits of the Company will be adjusted appropriately. For a more detailed description of the tax consequences to a shareholder of such a designation, see "--Taxation of U.S. Shareholders Holding Common Stock."

In addition, if the Company should fail to distribute during each calendar year at least the sum of (i) 85% of its REIT ordinary income for such year, (ii) 95% of its REIT capital gain income for such year, and (iii) any undistributed taxable income from prior periods, the Company would be subject to a 4% excise tax on the excess of such required distribution over the sum of amounts actually distributed during the calendar year by the REIT and the amount, if any, on which the REIT paid income tax for such year.

The Company intends to make timely distributions sufficient to satisfy its annual distribution requirements. It is expected that the Company's REIT taxable income will be less than its cash flow due to the allowance of depreciation and other non-cash charges in computing REIT taxable income. Accordingly, the Company anticipates that it will generally have sufficient cash or liquid assets to enable it to satisfy the distribution requirements described above. It is possible, however, that the Company, from time to time, may not have sufficient cash or other liquid assets to meet these distribution requirements due to timing differences between (i) the actual receipt of income and actual payment of deductible expenses and (ii) the inclusion of such income and deduction of such expenses in arriving at taxable income of the Company, or due to the need to make nondeductible payments, such as principal payments on any indebtedness it may have. If such circumstances occur, in order to meet the distribution requirements, the Company may find it necessary to arrange for short-term, or possibly long-term, borrowings or to pay dividends in the form of taxable stock dividends.

Under certain circumstances, the Company may be able to rectify a failure to meet the distribution requirement for a year by paying "deficiency dividends" to shareholders in a later year, which may be included in the Company's

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

deduction for dividends paid for the earlier year. Thus, the Company may be able to avoid being taxed on amounts distributed as deficiency dividends; however, the Company will be required to pay interest based upon the amount of any deduction taken for deficiency dividends.

Recordkeeping Requirements. Pursuant to applicable Treasury Regulations, the Company must comply with certain recordkeeping requirements to qualify for taxation as a REIT.

Failure of the Company to Qualify as a REIT. For any taxable year that the Company fails to qualify as a REIT, the Company would be taxed at the usual corporate rates on all of its taxable income. Those taxes would reduce the amount of cash available to the Company for distribution to its Shareholders. Distributions to shareholders in any year in which the Company fails to qualify as a REIT will not be deductible and will not be required to be made. In addition, if the Company fails to qualify as a REIT, all distributions to shareholders will be taxed as ordinary income, to the extent of the Company's current and accumulated earnings and profits, and, subject to certain limitations of the Code, corporate distributees may be eligible for the dividends received deduction.

Unless certain relief provisions apply, the Company's election to be treated as a REIT will terminate automatically if the Company fails to meet the qualification requirements described above and the Company will not be eligible to elect REIT status again until the fifth taxable year that begins after the first year for which the Company's election was terminated (or revoked). If the Company loses its REIT status, but later qualifies and elects to be taxed as a REIT again, the Company may face significant adverse tax consequences.

25

Taxation of U.S. Shareholders Holding Common Stock

As used herein, the term "U.S. Shareholder" means a holder of shares of Common Stock who (for United States federal income tax purposes) (i) is a citizen or resident of the United States, (ii) is a corporation, partnership, or other entity created or organized in or under the laws of the United States or any political subdivision thereof, (iii) is an estate the income of which is subject to United States federal income taxation regardless of its source or (iv) is a trust the administration of which is subject to the primary supervision of a United States court and which has one or more United States persons who have the authority to control all substantial decisions of the trust. Notwithstanding the preceding sentence, to the extent provided in regulations, certain trusts in existence on August 20, 1996, and treated as United States persons prior to such date that elect to continue to be treated as United States persons, shall also be considered U.S. Shareholders.

Distributions by the Company. As long as the Company qualifies as a REIT, distributions made to the Company's taxable U.S. Shareholders (and not designated as capital gain dividends) will generally be taxable to such Shareholders as ordinary income to the extent of the Company's current or accumulated earnings and profits. For purposes of determining whether distributions on shares of Common Stock are out of current or accumulated earnings and profits, the earnings and profits of the Company will be allocated first to shares of Preferred Stock and second to shares of Common Stock. There can be no assurance that the Company will have sufficient earnings and profits to cover distributions on any shares of Preferred Stock. Such distributions will not be eligible for the dividends received deductions in the case of Shareholders that are corporations. Dividends declared during the last quarter of a calendar year and actually paid during January of the

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

immediately following calendar year generally are treated as if received by the Shareholders on December 31 of the calendar year during which they were declared.

Distributions designated by the Company as capital gain dividends generally will be taxed as gain from the sale or exchange of a capital asset held for more than one year (to the extent that the distributions do not exceed the Company's actual net capital gain for the taxable year) without regard to the period for which the Shareholder has held its stock. Corporate Shareholders however, may be required to treat up to 20% of certain capital gain dividends as ordinary income.

Shareholders may not include in their individual income tax returns any net operating losses or capital losses of the Company. Instead, such losses would be carried over by the Company for potential offset against future income (subject to certain limitations). Distributions made by the Company and gain arising from the sale or exchange by a holder of Common Stock will not be treated as passive activity income, and, as a result, holders of Common Stock generally will not be able to apply any "passive losses" against such income or gain. Future regulations may require that Shareholders take into account, for purposes of computing their individual alternative minimum tax liability, certain tax preference items of the Company. In addition, taxable distributions from the Company generally will be treated as investment income for purposes of the investment interest limitations. Capital gain dividends and capital gain from the disposition of shares, including distributions treated as such, however, will be treated as investment income for purposes of the investment interest limitation only if the U.S. Shareholder so elects, in which case such capital gains will be taxed at ordinary income rates. The Company will notify shareholders after the close of the Company's taxable year as to the portions of distributions attributable to that year that constitute ordinary income, return of capital and capital gain.

Distributions in excess of current or accumulated earnings and profits will not be taxable to a U.S. shareholder to the extent that they do not exceed the adjusted basis of the shareholder's shares of Common Stock, but rather will reduce the adjusted basis of such shares of Common Stock. To the extent that such distributions exceed the adjusted basis of a U.S. shareholder's shares of Common Stock, they will be included in income as capital gains, assuming the shares of Common Stock are a capital asset in the hands of the U.S. Shareholder.

For the Company's taxable years commencing on or after January 1, 1998, the Company may elect to require the holders of Common Stock to include the Company's undistributed net long-term capital gains in their income. If the Company makes such an election, the holders of Common Stock will (i) include in their income as long-term capital gains their proportionate share of such undistributed capital gains and (ii) be deemed to have

26

paid their proportionate share of the tax paid by the Company on such undistributed capital gains and thereby receive a credit or refund for such amount. A holder of Common Stock will increase the basis in its Common Stock by the difference between the amount of capital gain included in its income and the amount of the tax it is deemed to have paid. The earnings and profits of the Company will be adjusted appropriately. With respect to such long-term capital gain of a taxable domestic shareholder that is an individual or an estate or trust, the IRS has authority to issue regulations that could apply the special tax rate applicable to sales of depreciable real property by an individual or an estate or trust to the portion of the long-term capital gains of an individual or an estate or trust attributable to deductions for

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

depreciation taken with respect to depreciable real property.

Sales of Shares. In general, a U.S. Shareholder will realize gain or loss on the disposition of shares of Common Stock equal to the difference between (i) the amount of cash and the fair market value of any property received on such disposition and (ii) the shareholder's adjusted basis of such shares of Common Stock. Such gain or loss will be capital gain or loss if the shares have been held as a capital asset. In the case of a taxable U.S. Shareholder who is an individual or an estate or trust, such gain or loss will be long-term capital gain or loss, and such long-term capital gain shall be subject to the maximum capital gain rate of 20%. In the case of a taxable U.S. Shareholder that is a corporation, such gain or loss will be long-term capital gain or loss if such shares have been held for more than one year and any such capital gain shall be subject to the maximum capital gain rate of 35%. Loss upon a sale or exchange of shares of Common Stock by a shareholder who has held such shares of Common Stock for six months or less (after applying certain holding period rules) will be treated as a long-term capital loss to the extent of distributions from the Company required to be treated by such shareholder as long-term capital gain.

Taxpayer Relief Act and IRS Restructuring Act Changes to Capital Gain Taxation. The Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997 (the "Taxpayer Relief Act") altered the taxation of capital gain income. Under the Taxpayer Relief Act, individuals, trusts and estates that hold certain investments for more than 18 months may be taxed at a maximum long-term capital gain rate of 20% on the sale or exchange of those investments. Individuals, trusts and estates that hold certain assets for more than one year but not more than 18 months may be taxed at a maximum long-term capital gain rate of 28% on the sale or exchange of those investments. The Taxpayer Relief Act also provides a maximum rate of 25% for "unrecaptured Section 1250 gain" for individuals, trusts and estates, special rules for "qualified 5-year gain" and other changes to prior law. The recently enacted IRS Restructuring Act of 1998, however, reduced the holding period requirement established by the Taxpayer Relief Act for the application of the 20% and 25% capital gain tax rates to 12 months from 18 months for sales of capital gain assets after December 31, 1997 and thus eliminated the 28% rate. The Taxpayer Relief Act allows the IRS to prescribe regulations on how the Taxpayer Relief Act's capital gain rates will apply to sales of capital assets by "pass-through entities," including REITs, such as the Company and to sales of interests in "pass-through entities." Shareholders are urged to consult with their own tax advisors with respect to the rules contained in the Taxpayer Relief Act and the IRS Restructuring Act.

On November 10, 1997, the IRS issued IRS Notice 97-64, which provides generally that the Company may classify portions of its designated capital-gain dividend as (i) a 20% rate gain distribution (which would be taxed as long-term capital gain in the 20% group), (ii) an unrecaptured Section 1250 gain distribution (which would be taxed as long-term capital gain in the 25% group), or (iii) a 28% rate gain distribution (which would be taxed as long-term capital gain in the 28% group). (If no designation is made, the entire designated capital gain dividend will be treated as a 28% rate gain distribution.) IRS Notice 97-64 provides that a REIT must determine the maximum amounts that it may designate as 20% and 25% rate capital gain dividends by performing the computation required by the Code as if the REIT were an individual whose ordinary income were subject to a marginal tax rate of at least 28%. The Notice further provides that designations made by the REIT will only be effective to the extent that they comply with Revenue Ruling 89-81, which requires that distributions made to different classes of shares be composed proportionately of dividends of a particular type. Although Notice 97-64 will apply to sales of capital gain assets after July 28, 1997 and before January 1, 1998, it is expected that the IRS will issue clarifying guidance, most likely applying the same principles set forth in Notice 97-64, regarding a REIT's designation of capital gain dividends in light of the new

holding period requirements.

27

Backup Withholding. The Company will report to its domestic shareholders and the IRS the amount of dividends paid during each calendar year, and the amount of tax withheld, if any, with respect thereto. Under the backup withholding rules, a shareholder may be subject to backup withholding at the rate of 31% with respect to dividends paid unless such holder (a) is a corporation or comes within certain other exempt categories and, when required, demonstrates this fact, or (b) provides a taxpayer identification number and certifies as to no loss of exemption from backup withholding. Amounts withheld as backup withholding will be creditable against the stockholder's income tax liability. In addition, the Company may be required to withhold a portion of capital gain distributions made to any shareholders who fail to certify their non-foreign status to the Company. See "--Taxation of Non-U.S. Shareholders" below.

Taxation of Tax-Exempt Shareholders. As a general rule, amounts distributed to a tax-exempt entity by a corporation do not constitute "unrelated business taxable income" ("UBTI"), and thus distributions by the Company to a stockholder that is a tax-exempt entity generally should not constitute UBTI, provided that the tax-exempt entity has not financed the acquisition of its shares of Common Stock with "acquisition indebtedness" within the meaning of the Code and the shares of Common Stock are not otherwise used in an unrelated trade or business of the tax-exempt entity. However, distributions by a REIT to a tax-exempt employee's pension trust that owns more than 10% of the REIT will be treated as UBTI in an amount equal to the percentage of gross income of the REIT that is derived from an "unrelated trade or business" (determined as if the REIT were a pension trust) divided by the gross income of the REIT for the year in which the dividends are paid. This rule only applies, however, if (i) the percentage of gross income of the REIT that is derived from an unrelated trade or business for the year in which the dividends are paid is at least 5%, (ii) the REIT qualifies as a REIT only because the pension trust is not treated as a single individual for purposes of the "five-or-fewer rule" (see "--Taxation of the Company--Requirements for Qualification" above), and (iii) (A) one pension trust owns more than 25 percent of the value of the REIT or, (B) a group of pension trusts individually holding more than 10 percent of the value of the REIT collectively own more than 50 percent of the value of the REIT. The Company currently does not expect that this rule will apply.

Taxation of Non-U.S. Shareholders

The rules governing U.S. federal income taxation of non-U.S. Shareholders are complex, and the following discussion is intended only as a summary of such rules. Prospective non-U.S. Shareholders should consult with their tax advisors to determine the impact of federal, state, local and foreign income tax laws on an investment in the Company, including any reporting requirements.

Distributions by the Company. Distributions to a non-U.S. Shareholder that are not attributable to gain from sales or exchanges by the Company of U.S. real property interests and not designated by the Company as capital gain dividends will generally be subject to tax as ordinary income to the extent of the Company's current or accumulated earnings and profits as determined for U.S. federal income tax purposes. Such distributions will generally be subject to a withholding tax equal to 30% of the gross amount of the distribution, unless reduced by an applicable tax treaty or unless such dividends are treated as effectively connected with a United States trade or business. If the amount distributed exceeds a non-U.S. Shareholder's allocable share of such earnings and profits, the excess will be treated as a tax-free return of capital to the extent of such non-U.S. Shareholder's adjusted basis in the

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

Common Stock. To the extent that such distributions exceed the adjusted basis of a non-U.S. Shareholder's Common Stock, such distributions will generally be subject to tax if such non-U.S. Shareholder would otherwise be subject to tax on any gain from the sale or disposition of its Common Stock, as described below.

For withholding tax purposes, the Company currently is required to treat all distributions as if made out of its current or accumulated earnings and profits and thus intends to withhold at the rate of 30% (or a reduced treaty rate if applicable) on the amount of any distribution (other than distributions designated as capital gain dividends) made to a Non-U.S. Shareholder. Under regulations generally effective for distributions on or after January 1, 1999, the Company would not be required to withhold at the 30% rate on distributions it reasonably

28

estimates to be in excess of the Company's current and accumulated earnings and profits. If it cannot be determined at the time a distribution is made whether such distribution will be in excess of current and accumulated earnings and profits, the distribution will be subject to withholding at the rate applicable to ordinary dividends. As a result of a legislative change made by the Small Business Job Protection Act of 1996, under current law, it appears that the Company will be required to withhold 10% of any distribution to a non-U.S. Shareholder in excess of the Company's current and accumulated earnings and profits. Consequently, although the Company intends to withhold at a rate of 30% on the entire amount of any distribution to a non-U.S. Shareholder (or lower applicable treaty rate), to the extent the Company does not do so, any portion of such a distribution not subject to withholding at a rate of 30% (or lower applicable treaty rate) will be subject to withholding at a rate of 10%. However, the non-U.S. Shareholder may seek a refund of such amounts from the IRS if it subsequently determined that such distribution was, in fact, in excess of current or accumulated earnings and profits of the Company, and the amount withheld exceeded the non-U.S. Shareholder's United States tax liability, if any, with respect to the distribution.

Distributions to a non-U.S. Shareholder that are designated by the Company at the time of distribution as capital gains dividends (other than those arising from the disposition of a United States real property interest) generally will not be subject to United States federal income taxation, unless (i) the investment in the Common Stock is effectively connected with the non-U.S. Shareholder's United States trade or business, in which case the non-U.S. Shareholder will be subject to the same treatment as U.S. Shareholders with respect to such gain (except that a shareholder that is a foreign corporation may also be subject to the 30% branch profits tax) or (ii) the non-U.S. Shareholder is a nonresident alien individual who is present in the United States for 183 days or more during the taxable year and certain other requirements are met, in which case the nonresident alien individual will be subject to a 30% tax on the individual's capital gains.

Under the Foreign Investment in Real Property Tax Act ("FIRPTA"), distributions to a non-U.S. Shareholder that are attributable to gain from sales or exchanges by the Company of United States real property interests (whether or not designated as a capital gain dividend) will be taxed to a non-U.S. Shareholder at the normal capital gains rates applicable to domestic Shareholders (subject to a special alternative minimum tax in the case of nonresident alien individuals). Also, distributions subject to FIRPTA may be subject to a 30% branch profits tax in the hands of a non-U.S. Shareholder that is a corporation and that is not entitled to treaty relief or exemption. The Company is required by applicable FIRPTA Treasury Regulations to withhold 35% of any such distribution that is or could be designated by the Company as

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

a capital gain dividend. That amount is creditable against the non-U.S. Shareholder's United States FIRPTA tax liability.

Even if the Company does not qualify or ceases to be a domestically controlled REIT, gain arising from the sale or exchange by a non-U.S. Shareholder of Common Stock would still not be subject to U.S. taxation under FIRPTA as a sale of a United States real property interest if (i) the class or series of shares being sold is "regularly traded," as defined by applicable Treasury Regulations, on an established securities market such as the New York Stock Exchange, and (ii) the selling non-U.S. Shareholder owned 5% or less of the value of the outstanding class or series of shares being sold throughout the five-year period ending on the date of the sale or exchange.

If gain on the sale or exchange of Common Stock were subject to taxation under FIRPTA, the non-U.S. Shareholder would be subject to regular United States income tax with respect to such gain in the same manner as a taxable U.S. Shareholder, subject to any applicable alternative minimum tax, a special alternative minimum tax in the case of nonresident alien individuals and the possible application of the 30% branch profits tax in the case of foreign corporations. The purchaser of the Common Stock would be required to withhold and remit to the IRS 10% of the purchase price.

Although the law is not entirely clear on the matter, it appears that amounts designated by the Company pursuant to the Taxpayer Relief Act as undistributed capital gains in respect of shares of Common Stock (see "Taxation of U.S. Shareholders Holding Common Stock" above) would be treated with respect to non-U.S. Shareholders in the manner outlined in the preceding paragraph for actual distributions by the Company of

29

capital gain dividends. Under that approach, the non-U.S. Shareholders would be able to offset as a credit against their United States federal income tax liability resulting therefrom their proportionate share of the tax paid by the Company on such undistributed capital gains (and to receive from the IRS a refund to the extent their proportionate share of such tax paid by the Company were to exceed their actual United States federal income tax liability).

Sale of Common Stock. Gain recognized by a non-U.S. Shareholder upon a sale of its Common Stock will generally not be subject to tax under FIRPTA if the Company is a "domestically controlled REIT," which is defined generally as a REIT in which at all times during a specified testing period less than 50% in value of its shares were held directly or indirectly by non-U.S. persons. Because only a minority of the Shareholders are non-U.S. Shareholders, the Company expects to qualify as a "domestically controlled REIT." Accordingly, a non-U.S. Shareholder should not be subject to U.S. tax on gains recognized upon disposition of the Common Stock, provided that such gain is not effectively connected with the conduct of a United States trade or business and, in the case of an individual Shareholder, such holder is not present in the United States for 183 days or more during the year of sale and certain other requirements are met.

Backup Withholding Tax and Information Reporting. Backup withholding tax (which generally is a withholding tax imposed at a rate of 31% on certain payments to persons that fail to furnish certain information under the United States information reporting requirements) and information reporting will generally not apply to distributions paid to non-U.S. Shareholders outside the United States that are treated as (i) dividends subject to the 30% (or lower treaty rate) withholding tax discussed above, (ii) capital gains dividends, or (iii) distributions attributable to gain from the sale or exchange by the Company of United States real property interests. As a general matter, backup

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

withholding and information reporting will not apply to a payment of the proceeds of a sale of Common Stock by or through a foreign office of a foreign broker. Information reporting (but not backup withholding) will apply, however, to a payment of the proceeds of a sale of Common Stock by a foreign office of a broker that (a) is a United States person, (b) derives 50% or more of its gross income for certain periods from the conduct of a trade or business in the United States or (c) is a "controlled foreign corporation" (generally a foreign corporation controlled by United States Shareholders) for United States tax purposes, unless the broker has documentary evidence in its records that the holder is a non-U.S. Shareholder and certain other conditions are met, or the Shareholder otherwise establishes an exemption. Payment to or through a United States office of a broker of the proceeds of a sale of Common Stock is subject to both backup withholding and information reporting unless the Shareholder certifies under penalty of perjury that the Shareholder is a non-U.S. Shareholder, or otherwise establishes an exemption. A non-U.S. Shareholder may obtain a refund of any amounts withheld under the backup withholding rules by filing the appropriate claim for refund with the IRS.

The United States Treasury Department has recently finalized regulations regarding the withholding and information reporting rules discussed above. In general, these regulations do not alter the substantive withholding and information reporting requirements but unify certification procedures and forms and clarify and modify reliance standards. These regulations generally are effective for payments made after December 31, 1999, subject to certain transition rules. Valid withholding certificates that are held on December 31, 1999, will remain valid until the earlier of December 31, 2000, or the date of the expiration of the certificate under rules currently in effect, unless otherwise invalidated due to changes in the circumstances of the person whose name is on such certificate. A non-U.S. Shareholder should consult its advisor regarding the effect of the new Treasury Regulations.

Administration's Proposed Changes to REIT Qualification Requirements

The administration's fiscal year 2000 budget proposal, announced February 1, 1999, includes a proposal that would change the 10% voting securities test to a 10% vote or value test. Under the proposal, a REIT would not be able to own more than 10% of the vote or value of the outstanding securities of any corporation, except for a qualified REIT subsidiary or another REIT (see "Taxation of the Company--Asset Tests" above). The proposal also contains an exception to the 5% and 10% asset tests that would allow a REIT to have "taxable

30

REIT subsidiaries," including both "qualified independent contractor subsidiaries," which could perform noncustomary and other currently prohibited services for tenants and other customers, and "qualified business subsidiaries," which could undertake third-party management and development activities as well as other non-real estate related activities. Under the proposal, no more than 15% of a REIT's total assets could consist of taxable REIT subsidiaries and no more than 5% of a REIT's total assets could consist of qualified independent contractor subsidiaries. Under the budget proposal, a taxable REIT subsidiary would not be entitled to deduct any interest on debt funded directly or indirectly by the REIT. This proposal would be effective after the date of enactment and a REIT would be allowed to combine and convert existing corporate subsidiaries into taxable REIT subsidiaries tax-free prior to a certain date. A transition period would allow for conversion of existing corporate subsidiaries before the 10% vote or value test would become effective. For the Company's taxable years after the effective date of the proposal and after any applicable transition period, the 10% vote or value test would apply to the Company's ownership in any of the non-qualified REIT

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

subsidiaries not converted into taxable REIT subsidiaries. It is presently uncertain whether any proposal regarding REIT subsidiaries, including the budget proposal, will be enacted or, if enacted, what the terms, including the effective date, of such proposal will be.

On April 28, 1999, the Real Estate Investment Trust Modernization Act of 1999 (the "bill") was introduced in Congress. The bill is similar to the administration's proposal in several respects. Like the administration's proposal, the bill would create "taxable REIT subsidiaries" that would not be subject to the 5% asset test, but that would remain subject to the 25% asset test (see "Taxation of the Company--Asset Tests" above). The "taxable REIT subsidiaries" would also be subject to "earnings stripping" limitations on the deductibility of interest. Under the bill, a REIT would be able to rent up to 10% of a property to a taxable REIT subsidiary and generally have the rent qualify as good income. The bill would also change the 10% voting securities test to a 10% vote or value test unless the corporation elects to be a taxable REIT subsidiary or the securities qualify for the "grandfather rule." In general, the "grandfather rule" would apply to securities of a corporation in which the REIT owned an interest on April 28, 1999. The grandfather rule would also apply to securities acquired in a tax-free exchange for "grandfathered securities" and to securities acquired in a qualifying tax-free reorganization with another REIT, if those securities were grandfathered in the hands of the other REIT. Securities of a corporation will lose their "grandfathered" status if the corporation acquires any substantial asset or engages in a substantial new line of business after April 28, 1999 (other than pursuant to a binding contract in effect on that date).

Tax Aspects of the Company's Ownership of Interests in the Operating Partnership

General. A significant portion of the Company's investments will be held indirectly through the Operating Partnership. In general, partnerships are "pass-through" entities that are not subject to federal income tax. Rather, partners are allocated their proportionate shares of the items of income, gain, loss, deduction and credit of a partnership, and are potentially subject to tax on those items, without regard to whether the partners receive a distribution from the partnership. In the case of a REIT which is a partner in a partnership, Treasury Regulations provide that for purposes of applying the REIT gross income and gross asset tests, the REIT will be deemed to own its proportionate share of the assets of the partnership and will be deemed to be entitled to the income of the partnership attributable to that share, in each case based on its "capital interest" in the partnership. In addition, the character of the gross income and assets of the partnership shall retain the same character in the hands of the REIT for purposes of Section 856 of the Code which includes the gross income and asset tests described above. The Company will have direct control of the Operating Partnership and intends to operate it consistent with the requirements for qualification as a REIT. The Company will include in its income its proportionate share of the foregoing partnership items for purposes of the various REIT income tests and will take into account its distributive share of partnership items in the computation of its REIT taxable income. Moreover, for purposes of the REIT asset tests, the Company will include its proportionate share of assets held through the Operating Partnership.

Entity Classification. If the Operating Partnership were treated as an association, the entity would be taxable as a corporation and therefore would be subject to an entity level tax on its income. In such a situation,

the character of the Company's assets and items of gross income would change

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

and would preclude the Company from qualifying as a REIT. The same result could occur if any subsidiary partnership failed to qualify for treatment as a partnership.

Prior to January 1, 1997, an organization formed as a partnership or a limited liability company was treated as a partnership for federal income tax purposes rather than as a corporation only if it had no more than two of the four corporate characteristics that the Treasury Regulations in effect at that time used to distinguish a partnership from a corporation for tax purposes. These four characteristics were (i) continuity of life, (ii) centralization of management, (iii) limited liability and (iv) free transferability of interests.

Under final Treasury Regulations that became effective January 1, 1997, the four factor test has been eliminated and an entity formed as a partnership or as a limited liability company will be taxed as a partnership for federal income tax purposes unless it specifically elects otherwise. The Treasury Regulations provide that the IRS will not challenge the classification of an existing partnership or limited liability company for tax periods prior to January 1, 1997 so long as (1) the entity had a reasonable basis for its claimed classification, (2) the entity and all its members recognized the federal income tax consequences of any changes in the entity's classification within the 60 months prior to January 1, 1997, and (3) neither the entity nor any member of the entity had been notified in writing on or before May 8, 1996, that the classification of the entity was under examination by the IRS.

The Company believes that the Operating Partnership will be treated as a partnership for federal income tax purposes (and not as an association taxable as a corporation).

Partnership Allocations. Although a partnership agreement will generally determine the allocation of income and loss among partners, those allocations will be disregarded for tax purposes if they do not comply with the provisions of Section 704(b) of the Code and the related Treasury Regulations. Generally, those provisions require that partnership allocations reflect the economic arrangement of the partners. The allocations of taxable income and loss provided for in the Operating Partnership Agreement are intended to comply with the requirements of Section 704(b) of the Code and the related Treasury Regulations. If an allocation is not recognized for federal income tax purposes, the item subject to the allocation will be reallocated in accordance with the partners' interests in the partnership, which will be determined by taking into account all of the facts and circumstances relating to the economic arrangement of the partners with respect to that item.

Tax Allocations with Respect to the Properties. Pursuant to Section 704(c) of the Code, income, gain, loss and deduction attributable to appreciated or depreciated property that is contributed to a partnership in exchange for an interest in the partnership, must be allocated in a manner so that the contributing partner is charged with, or benefits from, respectively, the unrealized gain or unrealized loss associated with the property at the time of the contribution. The amount of the unrealized gain or unrealized loss is generally equal to the difference between the fair market value of contributed property at the time of contribution and the adjusted tax basis of the property at that time (a "Book-Tax Difference"). These allocations are solely for federal income tax purposes and do not affect the book capital accounts or other economic or legal arrangements among the partners. Similar rules can apply in the case of appreciated or depreciated properties held by a partnership at the time of new contributions to the partnership. The Operating Partnership was formed by way of contributions of appreciated and depreciated properties. Consequently, the Operating Partnership Agreement requires that those allocations be made in a manner consistent with Section 704(c) of the Code.

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

In general, the partners of the Operating Partnership who contributed assets will be allocated differing depreciation deductions than if they had retained the contributed property. In addition, on the disposition of any contributed asset that has a Book-Tax Difference, the income or loss attributable to the Book-Tax Difference generally will be allocated to the contributing partner. These allocations will tend to eliminate the Book-Tax Difference over the life of the Operating Partnership. However, the special allocation rules of Section 704(c) do not always entirely eliminate the Book-Tax Difference on an annual basis or with respect to a specific taxable transaction such as a sale. Thus, the carryover basis of the contributed assets in the hands of the Operating

32

Partnership may cause the Company to be allocated lower depreciation and other deductions, and possibly an amount of taxable income in the event of a sale of the contributed assets in excess of the economic or book income allocated to it as a result of that sale. Such an allocation might cause the Company to recognize taxable income in excess of cash proceeds, which might adversely affect the Company's ability to comply with the REIT distribution requirements.

Treasury Regulations under Section 704(c) of the Code provide partnerships with a choice of several methods of accounting for Book-Tax Differences, including the "traditional method" or the election of certain methods that would permit any distortions caused by a Book-Tax Difference to be entirely rectified on an annual basis or with respect to a specific taxable transaction such as a sale. The Operating Partnership and the Company will determine with respect to each contribution to the Operating Partnership which method to use.

Taxation of Holders of Preferred Stock, Equity Stock, Depositary Shares and Warrants

If the Company offers one or more series of Preferred Stock, Equity Stock, Depositary Shares or Warrants, there may be tax consequences for the holders of such Securities not discussed herein. For a discussion of any such additional consequences, see the applicable Prospectus Supplement.

State and Local Taxes

The tax treatment of the Company and the Shareholders in states having taxing jurisdiction over them may differ from the federal income tax treatment. Accordingly, no discussion of state taxation of the Company and the Shareholders is provided nor is any representation made as to the tax status of the Company in such states. All investors should consult their tax advisors as to the treatment of the Company under the respective state tax laws applicable to them.

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We may sell the securities to one or more underwriters for public offering and sale by them or may sell the securities to investors directly or through agents. Any such underwriter or agent involved in the offer and sale of the securities will be named in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Direct sales to investors may be accomplished through subscription offerings or through shareholder purchase rights distributed to shareholders. In connection with subscription offerings or the distribution of shareholder purchase rights to shareholders, if all of the underlying securities are not subscribed for, we may sell such unsubscribed securities to third parties directly or through underwriters or agents and, in addition, whether or not

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

all of the underlying securities are subscribed for, we may concurrently offer additional securities to third parties directly or through underwriters or agents. Any such underwriter or agent involved in the offer and sale of the securities will be named in the applicable prospectus supplement. If securities are to be sold through shareholder purchase rights, such shareholder purchase rights will be distributed as a dividend to the shareholders for which they will pay no separate consideration. The prospectus supplement with respect to the offer of securities pursuant to shareholder purchase rights will set forth the relevant terms of the shareholder purchase rights, including (i) whether common shares or common share warrants, or both, will be offered pursuant to the shareholder purchase rights and the number of common shares and common share warrants, as applicable, which will be offered pursuant to the shareholder purchase rights, (ii) the period during which and the price at which the shareholder purchase rights will be exercisable, (iii) the number of shareholder purchase rights then outstanding, (iv) any provisions for changes to or adjustments in the exercise price of the shareholder purchase rights and (v) any other material terms of the shareholder purchase rights.

Underwriters may offer and sell the securities at a fixed price or prices, which may be changed, at prices related to the prevailing market prices at the time of sale or at negotiated prices. We also may, from time to time, authorize underwriters acting as our agents to offer and sell the securities upon the terms and conditions as are set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. In connection with the sale of securities, underwriters may

33

be deemed to have received compensation from us in the form of underwriting discounts or commissions and may also receive commissions from purchasers of securities for whom they may act as agent. Underwriters may sell securities to or through dealers, and such dealers may receive compensation in the form of discounts, concessions or commissions from the underwriters and/or commissions from the purchasers for whom they may act as agent.

Any underwriting compensation paid by us to underwriters or agents in connection with the offering of securities, and any discounts, concessions or commissions allowed by underwriters to participating dealers, will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. Underwriters, dealers and agents participating in the distribution of the securities may be deemed to be underwriters, and any discounts and commissions received by them and any profit realized by them on resale of the securities may be deemed to be underwriting discounts and commissions, under the Securities Act. Underwriters, dealers and agents may be entitled, under agreements entered into with us, to indemnification against and contribution toward certain civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act.

Securities may also be offered and sold, if so indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, in connection with a remarketing upon their purchase, in accordance with a redemption or repayment pursuant to their terms, or otherwise, by one or more firms ("remarketing firms"), acting as principals for their own accounts or as our agents. Any remarketing firm will be identified and the terms of its agreement, if any, with us and its compensation will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement. Remarketing firms may be deemed to be underwriters in connection with the securities remarketed thereby. Remarketing firms may be entitled under agreements which may be entered into with us to indemnification by us against certain liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act, and may be customers of, engage in transactions with or perform services for us in the ordinary course of business.

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

If so indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, we will authorize dealers acting as our agents to solicit offers by certain institutions to purchase securities at the offering price set forth in such prospectus supplement pursuant to delayed delivery contracts providing for payment and delivery on the date or dates stated in such prospectus supplement. Each contract will be for an amount not less than, and the aggregate principal amount of securities sold pursuant to contracts shall be not less nor more than, the respective amounts stated in the applicable prospectus supplement. Institutions with whom contracts, when authorized, may be made include commercial and savings banks, insurance companies, pension funds, investment companies, educational and charitable institutions, and other institutions but will in all cases be subject to our approval. Contracts will not be subject to any conditions except (i) the purchase by an institution of the securities covered by its contracts will not at the time of delivery be prohibited under the laws of any jurisdiction in the United States to which such institution is subject, and (ii) if the securities are being sold to underwriters, we will have sold to such underwriters the total principal amount of the securities less the principal amount thereof covered by contracts. Agents and underwriters will have no responsibility in respect of the delivery or performance of contracts.

Certain of the underwriters, if any, and their affiliates may be customers of, engage in transactions with and perform services for us in the ordinary course of business.

34

This prospectus may also be used in registered resales by the following holders of common stock:

Name	Shares of Common Stock Beneficially Owned	Percentage of Outstanding Shares of Common Stock	Shares of Common Stock Being Registered for Resale	Shares of Common Stock Beneficially Owned After Resale	Perc Outsta of Co Benefi Aft
Acquiport Two Corporation.....	6,110,265	25.8%	6,110,265	0	
State Treasurer, State of Michigan.....	2,131,611	9.0%	888,172 (1)	1,243,439	
Cohen & Steers Capital Management, Inc.(2)....	1,176,234	4.9%	888,171 (1)	288,063	
Morgan Stanley Asset Management(2).....	693,493	2.9%	693,493 (1)	0	
Harvard Private Capital Realty, Inc.....	874,074	3.7%	592,114 (1)	281,960	
ABKB/LaSalle Securities Limited Partnership(2).....	2,331,148	9.9%	592,113 (1)	1,739,035	
Fidelity Real Estate Investment Portfolio...	348,219	1.5%	348,219 (1)	0	
Stanford University.....	437,037	1.8%	296,058 (1)	140,979	
The Fidelity REIT Collective Pool.....	66,048	(3)	44,742 (1)	21,306	
State Employees' Retirement Fund of the State of Delaware.....	30,911	(3)	20,940 (1)	9,971	
J.W. McConnell Family					

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

Foundation..... 7,821 (3) 5,298(1) 2,523

- (1) Reflects an aggregate of 4,588,885 shares issued to these holders in May 1998 pursuant to a Common Stock Purchase Agreement dated as of January 23, 1998.
- (2) All shares of common stock held as agent for and for the benefit of certain of such holder's clients.
- (3) Less than 1%.

This prospectus may also be used in registered resales of common stock by the following persons upon exchange of interests in our operating partnership for common stock:

Name	Shares of Common Stock Beneficially Owned(1) (2)	Shares of Common Stock Being Registered for Resale(1)	Shares of Common Stock Beneficially Owned After Resale
----	-----	-----	-----
Galaxy Partnership.....	14,384	14,384	0
Galaxy Associates, L.L.C.....	79,464	79,464	0
Galaxy Associates II, L.L.C.	13,669	13,669	0
Faraton Corp.....	1,748	1,748	0

- (1) Reflects shares to be issued upon exchange of interests in our operating partnership.
- (2) Less than 1% of the outstanding shares of common stock.

We have registered the shares of common stock by the holders in the tables above to provide them with freely tradeable common stock, but the registration of such shares does not necessarily mean that all of such shares will be issued by us or any will be offered or sold by such holders. We will not receive any proceeds from the offering by such holders.

The holders in the tables above may sell the shares of common stock to investors directly or through agents or to one or more underwriters for public offering and sale by them in any of the types of transactions described above. Any such underwriter or agent involved in the offer and sale of such shares will be named in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Any profits realized on sales pursuant to this prospectus by the holders in the tables above of such shares may be regarded as underwriting compensation. We will pay all expenses incident to the offering and sale of such shares, other than commissions, discounts and fees of underwriters, broker-dealers or agents. We have agreed to indemnify the holders of such shares against certain losses, claims, damages and liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act.

LEGAL OPINIONS

David Goldberg, our vice president and counsel, has delivered an opinion to

Edgar Filing: PS BUSINESS PARKS INC/CA - Form 424B5

the effect that the securities offered by this prospectus will be validly issued, fully paid and nonassessable. Hogan & Hartson L.L.P., Washington, D.C., has delivered an opinion as to our status as a REIT. See "Certain Federal Income Tax Considerations." Mr. Goldberg owns 4,256 shares of common stock, and has options to acquire an additional 7,991 shares of common stock.

EXPERTS

Ernst & Young LLP, independent auditors, have audited our consolidated financial statements and schedule included in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 1998, as set forth in their report, which is incorporated by reference in this prospectus and elsewhere in the registration statement. Our financial statements and schedule are incorporated by reference in reliance on Ernst & Young LLP's report, given on their authority as experts in accounting and auditing.

36

1,500,000 Shares

PS Business Parks, Inc.

Depository Shares
Each Representing 1/1,000 of a Share of
% Cumulative Preferred Stock, Series F

[LOGO OF PS BUSINESS PARKS, INC. (SM)]

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT
January , 2002

Salomon Smith Barney
Credit Suisse First Boston
A.G. Edwards & Sons, Inc.
Morgan Stanley Dean Witter
CIBC World Markets Corp.
Tucker Anthony Sutro Capital Markets
Wachovia Securities
