

ISTAR FINANCIAL INC  
Form 424B3  
December 13, 2007

[QuickLinks](#) -- Click here to rapidly navigate through this document

Filed Pursuant to Rule 424(b)(3)  
Registration No. 333-142539

**The information in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus is not complete and may be changed. This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus are not an offer to sell these securities and are not soliciting an offer to buy these securities in any state where the offer or sale is not permitted.**

**Subject to completion, dated December 12, 2007**

**PRELIMINARY PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT  
(TO PROSPECTUS DATED OCTOBER 9, 2007)**

## **6,000,000 Shares**

### **Common Stock**

We are offering and selling 6,000,000 shares of our common stock. Our common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol "SFI." The last reported sale price of our common stock on the New York Stock Exchange on December 12, 2007 was \$30.72 per share.

**Investing in our common stock involves risks. For a description of these risks, see "Risk Factors" beginning on page 16 of our Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2006.**

	<b>Per share</b>	<b>Total</b>
Public offering price	\$	\$
Underwriting discount	\$	\$
Proceeds to us (before expenses)	\$	\$

**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.**

The underwriters may also purchase up to 900,000 additional shares of common stock from us at the public offering price, less the underwriting discounts and commissions, within 30 days from the date of this prospectus supplement. The underwriters may exercise this option only to cover over-allotments, if any. If the underwriters exercise this option in full, the total underwriting discounts and commissions will be \$ , and total proceeds to us, before expenses, will be \$ .

The underwriters expect to deliver the common stock on or about December , 2007.

*Joint Book-Running Managers*

**Citi**

**JPMorgan**

**Wachovia Securities**

*Co-Managers*

**Banc of America Securities LLC**

**Bear, Stearns & Co. Inc.**

**Deutsche Bank Securities**

**Lehman Brothers**

**UBS Investment Bank**

The date of this prospectus supplement is December , 2007

---

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Prospectus Supplement</b>	
Forward-looking statements	ii
iStar Financial Inc.	S-1
Recent developments	S-1
The offering	S-2
Use of proceeds	S-2
Capitalization	S-3
Underwriting	S-4
Legal matters	S-8
<b>Prospectus</b>	
About this prospectus	1
Forward-looking statements	1
iStar Financial Inc.	2
Ratio of earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends and earnings to fixed charges	3
Use of proceeds	3
Description of debt securities	4
Description of warrants	6
Description of common stock and preferred stock	7
Description of depositary shares	12
Certain U.S. federal income tax consequences	13
Plan of distribution	33
Legal matters	34
Experts	34
Incorporation of certain documents by reference	35
Information we file	35

You should rely only on the information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. We have not, and the underwriters have not, authorized any other person to provide you with different information. If anyone provides you with different or inconsistent information, you should not rely on it. We are not, and the underwriters are not, making an offer to sell these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted. You should assume that the information appearing in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference is accurate only as of their respective dates. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since those dates.

Unless otherwise stated or the context requires otherwise, references to "iStar," "the Company," "we," "us" and "our" are to iStar Financial Inc. and its consolidated subsidiaries.

**FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS**

We make statements in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and the documents we incorporate by reference that are considered "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933 and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, which are usually identified by the use of words such as "will," "anticipates," "believes," "estimates," "expects," "projects," "plans," "intends," "should" or similar expressions. We intend these forward-looking statements to be covered by the safe harbor provisions for forward-looking statements contained in the Private Securities Reform Act of 1995 and are including this statement for purposes of complying with those safe harbor provisions. These forward-looking statements reflect our current views about our plans, strategies and prospects, which are based on the information currently available to us and on assumptions we have made. Although we believe that our plans, intentions and expectations as reflected in or suggested by those forward-looking statements are reasonable, we can give no assurance that the plans, intentions or expectations will be achieved. We have discussed in this prospectus supplement and in the documents we incorporate by reference some important risks, uncertainties and contingencies which could cause our actual results, performance or achievements to be materially different from the forward-looking statements we make in these documents.

We assume no obligation to update publicly any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise. In evaluating forward-looking statements, you should consider these risks and uncertainties, and you should not place undue reliance on those statements.

**ISTAR FINANCIAL INC.**

We are a leading publicly-traded finance company focused on the commercial real estate industry. We primarily provide custom-tailored investment capital to high-end private and corporate owners of real estate, including senior and mezzanine real estate debt, senior and mezzanine corporate capital, as well as corporate net lease financing and equity. We seek to deliver strong dividends and superior risk-adjusted returns on equity to shareholders by providing innovative and value-added financing solutions to our customers. We are taxed as a real estate investment trust, or REIT, for U.S. federal income tax purposes.

Our principal executive offices are located at 1114 Avenue of the Americas, New York, New York 10036, and our telephone number is (212) 930-9400. Our website is [www.istarfinancial.com](http://www.istarfinancial.com). The information on our website is not considered part of this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus. Our primary regional offices are located in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Hartford, Irvine, Los Angeles, Phoenix, San Francisco and Washington, D.C. iStar Asset Services, our loan servicing subsidiary, is located in Hartford, and iStar Real Estate Services, Inc., our corporate facilities management division, is headquartered in Atlanta. We also have a subsidiary, iStar Europe Ltd., with an office located in London.

**RECENT DEVELOPMENTS**

*Convertible Senior Floating Rate Notes Offering*

On October 15, 2007, we issued \$800,000,000 aggregate principal amount of convertible senior floating rate notes due 2012, or the convertible senior notes, in a public offering. The convertible senior notes were issued at par, mature on October 1, 2012, and bear interest at a rate per annum equal to three-month LIBOR plus 0.50%. On or after August 15, 2012, or prior to that date upon the occurrence of specific events, the convertible senior notes are convertible into cash, shares of our common stock or any combination of cash or shares of common stock, at our option, at a conversion rate of 22.2 shares of common stock per \$1,000 principal amount of convertible senior notes, which is equivalent to an initial conversion price per share of \$45.05. Prior to August 15, 2012, we may elect to settle our future conversion obligations through the "net share settlement" method as described in the indenture governing the convertible senior notes.

We may not redeem the convertible senior notes prior to the date on which they mature except to the extent necessary to preserve our qualification as a REIT. Following the occurrence of a fundamental change, holders may require us to repurchase convertible senior notes in whole or in part for cash at 100% of the principal amount of the convertible senior notes to be repurchased plus accrued and unpaid interest.

*iStar Acquisition Corporation*

iStar Acquisition Corporation, or iStar Acquisition, a special purpose acquisition company, has filed a registration statement with the Securities and Exchange Commission for an initial public offering. We are a sponsor of iStar Acquisition and will own approximately 15% of its outstanding common stock immediately following completion of the offering if it is completed. Our chairman and chief executive officer, Jay Sugarman, will be the chairman of iStar Acquisition, and our president, Jay S. Nydick, will be the chief executive officer and a director of iStar Acquisition. We will provide iStar Acquisition with general and administrative services in consideration of a monthly fee of \$7,500. iStar Acquisition intends initially to seek to acquire an operating business in the alternative asset management industry; however, it may also pursue opportunities outside that industry. The registration statement for iStar Acquisition's initial public offering is not yet effective and there can be no assurance that iStar Acquisition will complete either its initial public offering or a business combination transaction.

*Common Stock Dividend*

We declared a regular quarterly dividend of \$0.87 per share of common stock payable on December 31, 2007 to holders of record of our common stock as of the close of business on December 17, 2007. If the offering to which this prospectus supplement relates closes after December 17, 2007, purchasers of shares in this offering will not receive this dividend.

**THE OFFERING**

<b>Common stock offered by us</b>	6,000,000(1)
<b>Common stock outstanding after completion of the offering</b>	131,913,711 shares(2)(3)
<b>Use of proceeds</b>	We intend to use the net proceeds to repay outstanding indebtedness incurred under an unsecured interim financing facility we used to fund our acquisition of the commercial real estate lending business of Fremont Investment & Loan, or Fremont, a subsidiary of Fremont General Corporation, in July 2007. See "Use of Proceeds."
<b>NYSE symbol</b>	SFI

- (1) 6,900,000 if the underwriters exercise their over-allotment option in full.
- (2) Based on shares of common stock outstanding as of December 10, 2007
- (3) This number excludes the underwriters' over-allotment option.

**USE OF PROCEEDS**

The net proceeds from the sale of the common stock, after deducting underwriting discounts and commissions and fees and expenses related to the offering, are expected to be approximately \$ million (\$ million if the underwriters exercise their over-allotment option in full). We intend to use all of the net proceeds to repay outstanding indebtedness incurred by us under an unsecured interim financing facility we used to fund our acquisition of the commercial real estate lending business of Fremont in July 2007. The interest rate of the unsecured interim financing facility is currently approximately 5.62%, and the maturity date is June 24, 2008. Affiliates of the underwriters of this offering are lenders under the unsecured interim financing facility and will, therefore, receive their proportionate share of the net proceeds from the sale of the common stock. For more information, please see the "Underwriting" section of this prospectus supplement.

## CAPITALIZATION

The following table sets forth (1) our capitalization at September 30, 2007 on an actual basis, (2) our capitalization on a pro forma basis at September 30, 2007, after giving effect to the issuance of the convertible senior notes and the application of the net proceeds of the convertible senior notes issuance, and (3) our capitalization on a pro forma, as adjusted basis at September 30, 2007, after giving further effect to the issuance of the common stock in this offering and the application of the net proceeds of this offering as described under "Use of Proceeds," assuming no exercise of the underwriters' over-allotment option. This table should be read in conjunction with our historical and pro forma consolidated financial statements and the notes thereto incorporated by reference in this document.

	As of September 30, 2007		
	Actual	Pro Forma	Pro Forma as Adjusted
	(in thousands)		
<b>Debt obligations, including current maturities:</b>			
Unsecured senior notes, less discount	\$ 7,119,466	\$ 7,119,466	\$ 7,119,466
Unsecured convertible senior notes		782,896	782,896
Unsecured credit facilities	4,078,049	3,295,153	
Secured term loans, less discount	452,964	452,964	452,964
Other debt obligations	98,029	98,029	98,029
<b>Total long-term debt</b>	<b>11,748,508</b>	<b>11,748,508</b>	
Shareholders' equity	3,034,600	3,034,600	
<b>Total capitalization</b>	<b>\$ 14,783,108</b>	<b>\$ 14,783,108</b>	<b>\$ 14,783,108</b>

S-3

**UNDERWRITING**

Subject to the terms and conditions of an Underwriting Agreement, dated December 10, 2007, the underwriters named below, acting through their representatives, Citigroup Global Markets Inc., J.P. Morgan Securities Inc. and Wachovia Capital Markets, LLC, have severally agreed with us, subject to the terms and conditions of the Underwriting Agreement, to purchase from us the number of shares of common stock set forth below opposite their respective names.

<b>Underwriters</b>	<b>Number of Shares</b>
Citigroup Global Markets Inc.	
J.P. Morgan Securities Inc.	
Wachovia Capital Markets, LLC	
Banc of America Securities LLC	
Bear, Stearns & Co. Inc.	
Deutsche Bank Securities Inc.	
Lehman Brothers Inc.	
UBS Securities LLC	
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,000,000</b>

The Underwriting Agreement provides that the obligations of the several underwriters to purchase and accept delivery of the common stock offered by this prospectus supplement are subject to approval by their counsel of legal matters and to other conditions set forth in the Underwriting Agreement. The underwriters are obligated to purchase and accept delivery of all the common stock offered hereby, other than those shares covered by the over-allotment option described below, if any are purchased.

The representatives have advised us that the underwriters propose to offer common stock to the public at the public offering price set forth on the cover page of this prospectus supplement and to certain dealers at that price less a concession not in excess of \_\_\_\_\_ per share. After this offering, the public offering price, concession and reallowance to dealers may be reduced by the representatives. No such reduction shall change the amount of proceeds to be received by us as set forth on the cover page of this prospectus supplement. The shares of common stock are offered by the underwriters as stated herein, subject to receipt and acceptance by them and subject to their right to reject any order in whole or in part.

We have granted to the underwriters an option, exercisable within 30 days after the date of the prospectus supplement, to purchase from time to time up to an aggregate of 900,000 shares of common stock to cover over-allotments, if any, at the public offering price less underwriting discounts and commissions. If the underwriters exercise their over-allotment option to purchase any of the 900,000 additional shares, each underwriter, subject to certain conditions, will become obligated to purchase its pro-rata portion of these additional shares based on the underwriter's percentage underwriting commitment in this offering as indicated in the preceding table. If purchased, these additional shares will be sold by the underwriters on the same terms as those on which the shares offered hereby are being sold. We will be obligated, pursuant to the over-allotment option, to sell shares to the underwriters to the extent the over-allotment option is exercised. The underwriters may exercise the over-allotment option only to cover over-allotments made in connection with the sale of the common stock offered in this offering.



## Edgar Filing: ISTAR FINANCIAL INC - Form 424B3

The following table shows the public offering price, underwriting discounts and commissions and proceeds, before expenses, to us. Such amounts are shown assuming both no exercise and full exercise of the underwriters' over-allotment option to purchase additional shares.

	Total		
	Per Share	Without Over- Allotment	With Over- Allotment
Public offering price	\$	\$	\$
Underwriting discounts and commissions payable by us			
Proceeds, before expenses, to us			

We estimate expenses payable by us in connection with this offering, other than the underwriting discounts and commissions referred to above, will be approximately \$400,000.

We have agreed to indemnify the underwriters against certain liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, and liabilities arising from breaches of representations and warranties contained in the Underwriting Agreement, or to contribute to payments that the underwriters may be required to make in respect of those liabilities.

We and each of our executive officers and directors have agreed, subject to specified exceptions, not to:

offer, pledge, sell, contract to sell, sell any option or contract to purchase, purchase any option or contract to sell, grant any option, right or warrant for the sale of, or otherwise dispose of or transfer any shares of common stock or any securities convertible into or exercisable or exchangeable for common stock or file any registration statement with respect to any of the foregoing; or

enter into any swap or any other agreement or any transaction that transfers, in whole or in part, directly or indirectly, the economic consequence of ownership of the common stock, whether any such swap or transaction described above is to be settled by delivery of common stock or such other securities, in cash or otherwise,

for a period of 60 days after the date of this prospectus supplement without the prior written consent of Citigroup Global Markets Inc., J.P. Morgan Securities Inc and Wachovia Capital Markets, LLC. This restriction terminates after the close of trading of the shares of common stock on and including the 60 days after the date of this prospectus supplement.

The 60-day restricted period described in the preceding paragraph will be automatically extended if: (1) during the last 17 days of the 60-day restricted period we issue an earnings release or announce material news or a material event; or (2) prior to the expiration of the 60-day restricted period, we announce that we will release earnings results during the 15-day period following the last day of the 60-day period, in which case the restrictions described in the preceding paragraph will continue to apply until the expiration of the 18-day period beginning on the issuance of the earnings release or the announcement of the material news or material event.

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

offered by this prospectus supplement in any jurisdiction in which such an offer or a solicitation is unlawful.

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

To the extent that the offer of the common stock is made in any Member State of the European Economic Area that has implemented the Prospectus Directive before the date of publication of a prospectus in relation to the common stock which has been approved by the competent authority in the Member State in accordance with the Prospectus Directive (or, where appropriate, published in accordance with the Prospectus Directive and notified to the competent authority in the Member State in accordance with the Prospectus Directive), the offer (including any offer pursuant to this document) is only addressed to qualified investors in that Member State within the meaning of the Prospectus Directive or has been or will be made otherwise in circumstances that do not require us to publish a prospectus pursuant to the Prospectus Directive.

In relation to each Member State of the European Economic Area which has implemented the Prospectus Directive (each, a "Relevant Member State"), each underwriter has represented and agreed that with effect from and including the date on which the Prospectus Directive is implemented in that Relevant Member State (the "Relevant Implementation Date") it has not made and will not make an offer of shares to the public in that Relevant Member State prior to the publication of a prospectus in relation to the shares which has been approved by the competent authority in that Relevant Member State or, where appropriate, approved in another Relevant Member State and notified to the competent authority in that Relevant Member State, all in accordance with the Prospectus Directive, except that it may, with effect from and including the Relevant Implementation Date, make an offer of shares to the public in that Relevant Member State at any time:

- (a) to legal entities which are authorized or regulated to operate in the financial markets or, if not so authorized or regulated, whose corporate purpose is solely to invest in securities;
- (b) to any legal entity which has two or more of (1) an average of at least 250 employees during the last financial year; (2) a total balance sheet of more than €43,000,000 and (3) an annual net turnover of more than €50,000,000, as shown in its last annual or consolidated accounts; or
- (c) in any other circumstances which do not require the publication by the Issuer of a prospectus pursuant to Article 3 of the Prospectus Directive.

For the purposes of this provision, the expression an "offer of shares to the public" in relation to any shares in any Relevant Member State means the communication in any form and by any means of sufficient information on the terms of the offer and the shares to be offered so as to enable an investor to decide to purchase or subscribe the shares, as the same may be varied in that Member State by any measure implementing the Prospectus Directive in that Member State and the expression "Prospectus Directive" means Directive 2003/71/EC and includes any relevant implementing measure in each Relevant Member State.

Each of the underwriters has represented and agreed that:

- (a) it has only communicated or caused to be communicated and will only communicate or cause to be communicated an invitation or inducement to engage in investment activity (within the meaning

of Section 21 of the FSMA) received by it in connection with the issue or sale of the shares in circumstances in which Section 21(1) of the FSMA does not apply to us; and

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

Our shares of common stock are traded on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol "SFI."

A prospectus supplement in electronic format may be made available on the Internet sites or through other online services maintained by one or more of the underwriters of this offering, or by their affiliates. In those cases, prospective investors may view offering terms online and, depending upon the particular underwriter, prospective investors may be allowed to place orders online. The underwriters may agree with us to allocate a specific number of shares for sale to online brokerage account holders. Any such allocation for online distributions will be made by the representatives on the same basis as other allocations. Other than the prospectus supplement in electronic format, the information on any underwriter's web site and any information contained in any other web site maintained by an underwriter is not part of the prospectus supplement or the registration statement of which this prospectus supplement forms a part, has not been approved and/or endorsed by us or any underwriter in its capacity as underwriter and should not be relied upon by investors.

The representatives have advised us that, pursuant to Regulation M under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, Citigroup Global Markets Inc. may engage in transactions, including stabilizing bids, syndicate covering transactions or the imposition of penalty bids, that may have the effect of stabilizing or maintaining the market price of the common stock at a level above that which might otherwise prevail in the open market. A "stabilizing bid" is a bid for or the purchase of common stock on behalf of the underwriters for the purpose of fixing or maintaining the price of the common stock. A "syndicate covering transaction" is the bid for or purchase of common stock on behalf of the underwriters to reduce a short position incurred by the underwriters in connection with the offering. A "penalty bid" is an arrangement permitting the representatives to reclaim the selling concession otherwise accruing to an underwriter or syndicate member in connection with this offering if the common stock originally sold by such underwriter or syndicate member are purchased by the representatives in a syndicate covering transaction and have therefore not been effectively placed by such underwriter or syndicate member. Citigroup Global Markets Inc. has advised us that such transactions may be effected on the New York Stock Exchange or otherwise and, if commenced, may be discontinued at any time.

Certain of the underwriters from time to time perform investment banking and other financial services for us and our affiliates for which they receive advisory or transaction fees, as applicable, plus out-of-pocket expenses, of the nature and in amounts customary in the industry for these financial services. In addition, affiliates of certain underwriters of this offering are lenders under our unsecured interim financing facility. Accordingly, these affiliates will receive their proportionate share of the net proceeds of this offering. This offering is being conducted pursuant to Conduct Rule 2710(h) of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, or FINRA. Because a bona fide independent market exists for our common stock, the FINRA does not require that we use a qualified independent underwriter for this offering.

**LEGAL MATTERS**

The legality of the shares of common stock offered by this prospectus supplement will be passed upon for us by Clifford Chance US LLP, New York, New York. Clifford Chance US LLP will rely upon the opinion of Venable LLP with respect to certain matters of Maryland law. Certain matters will be passed upon for the underwriters by Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP.

S-8

---

PROSPECTUS

**iSTAR FINANCIAL INC.**

**Common Stock  
Preferred Stock  
Depositary Shares  
Debt Securities  
and  
Warrants**

---

We may from time to time offer our common stock, preferred stock (which we may issue in one or more series), depositary shares representing shares of preferred stock, debt securities (which we may issue in one or more series) or warrants entitling the holders to purchase common stock, preferred stock, depositary shares or debt securities. We will determine when we sell securities, the amounts of securities we will sell and the prices and other terms on which we will sell them. We may sell securities to or through underwriters, through agents or directly to purchasers.

We will describe in a prospectus supplement, which we will deliver with this prospectus, the terms of particular securities which we offer in the future. We may describe the terms of those securities in a term sheet which will precede the prospectus supplement.

In each prospectus supplement we will include the following information:

The names of the underwriters or agents, if any, through which we will sell the securities.

The proposed amount of securities, if any, which the underwriters will purchase.

The compensation, if any, of those underwriters or agents.

The initial public offering price of the securities.

Information about securities exchanges, electronic communications networks or automated quotation systems on which the securities will be listed or traded.

Any other material information about the offering and sale of the securities.

**NEITHER THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION NOR ANY STATE SECURITIES COMMISSION HAS APPROVED OR DISAPPROVED OF THESE SECURITIES OR DETERMINED THAT THIS PROSPECTUS IS TRUTHFUL OR COMPLETE. ANY REPRESENTATION TO THE CONTRARY IS A CRIMINAL OFFENSE.**

**October 9, 2007**

---

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS	1
FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS	1
ISTAR FINANCIAL INC.	2
RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES	3
USE OF PROCEEDS	3
DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES	4
DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS	6
DESCRIPTION OF COMMON STOCK AND PREFERRED STOCK	7
DESCRIPTION OF DEPOSITARY SHARES	12
CERTAIN U.S. FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSEQUENCES	13
PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION	33
LEGAL MATTERS	34
EXPERTS	34
INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BY REFERENCE	35
INFORMATION WE FILE	35

## ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of a shelf registration statement. Under this shelf registration statement, we may sell any combination of common stock, preferred stock, depositary shares representing shares of preferred stock, debt securities or warrants entitling the holders to purchase common stock, preferred stock, depositary shares or debt securities in one or more offerings. This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities we may offer. Each time we sell securities, we will provide a prospectus supplement that will contain specific information about the terms of that offering. The prospectus supplement may add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. Before you buy any of our securities, it is important for you to consider the information contained in this prospectus and any prospectus supplement together with additional information described under the heading "Incorporation of Certain Documents By Reference."

## FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

We make statements in this prospectus and the documents we incorporate by reference that are considered "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933 and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, which are usually identified by the use of words such as "will," "anticipates," "believes," "estimates," "expects," "projects," "plans," "intends," "should" or similar expressions. We intend those forward-looking statements to be covered by the safe harbor provisions for forward-looking statements contained in the Private Securities Reform Act of 1995 and are including this statement for purposes of complying with these safe harbor provisions. These forward-looking statements reflect our current views about our plans, strategies and prospects, which are based on the information currently available to us and on assumptions we have made. Although we believe that our plans, intentions and expectations as reflected in or suggested by those forward-looking statements are reasonable, we can give no assurance that the plans, intentions or expectations will be achieved. We have listed below and have discussed elsewhere in this prospectus some important risks, uncertainties and contingencies which could cause our actual results, performances or achievements to be materially different from the forward-looking statements we make in this prospectus. These risks, uncertainties and contingencies include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. The success or failure of our efforts to implement our current business strategy.
2. Economic conditions generally and in the commercial finance and real estate markets specifically.
3. The performance and financial condition of borrowers and corporate customers.
4. The actions of our competitors and our ability to respond to those actions.
5. The cost of our capital, which depends in part on our asset quality, the nature of our relationships with our lenders and other capital providers, our business prospects and outlook, our credit rating and general market conditions.
6. Changes in governmental regulations, tax rates and similar matters.
7. Legislative and regulatory changes (including changes to laws governing the taxation of real estate investment trusts ("REITs")).
8. Other factors discussed under the heading "Risk Factors" in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2006 and any subsequent report incorporated in this registration statement by reference, or which may be discussed in a prospectus supplement.

We assume no obligation to update publicly any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise. In evaluating forward-looking statements, you should consider these risks and uncertainties, together with the other risks described from time to time in our

---

reports and documents filed with the SEC, and you should not place undue reliance on those statements.

**ISTAR FINANCIAL INC.**

We are a leading publicly-traded finance company focused on the commercial real estate industry. We primarily provide custom-tailored investment capital to high-end private and corporate owners of real estate, including senior and mezzanine real estate debt, senior and mezzanine corporate capital, as well as corporate net lease financing and equity. We seek to deliver strong dividends and superior risk-adjusted returns on equity to shareholders by providing innovative and value-added financing solutions to our customers. We are taxed as a REIT for U.S. federal income tax purposes.

Our principal executive offices are located at 1114 Avenue of the Americas, New York, New York 10036, and our telephone number is (212) 930-9400. Our website is [www.istarfinancial.com](http://www.istarfinancial.com). The information on our website is not considered part of this prospectus. Our primary regional offices are located in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Hartford, Irvine, Los Angeles, Phoenix, San Francisco and Washington, D.C. iStar Asset Services, our loan servicing subsidiary, is located in Hartford, and iStar Real Estate Services, our corporate facilities management division, is headquartered in Atlanta. We also have a subsidiary, iStar Europe Ltd. with an office located in London.



**RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES**

	Years Ended December 31,				
	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Ratio of earnings to fixed charges and preferred stock dividends(1)	1.6x	1.7x(2)	1.5x(3)	2.0x	1.7x
Ratio of earnings to fixed charges(1)	1.8x	1.9x(2)	1.8x(3)	2.3x	2.0x

- (1) For the purposes of calculating the ratio of earnings to fixed charges, "earnings" consist of income from continuing operations before adjustment for minority interest in consolidated subsidiaries, or income or loss from equity investees, income taxes and cumulative effect of change in accounting principle plus "fixed charges" and certain other adjustments. "Fixed charges" consist of interest incurred on all indebtedness (including amortization of original issue discount) and the implied interest component of our rent obligations in the periods presented.
- (2) Includes the effect of STARs asset-backed notes redemption charge of \$44.3 million. Excluding this charge, the ratio of earnings to fixed charges and preferred stock dividends and the ratio of earnings to fixed charges would have been 1.8x and 2.0x respectively.
- (3) Includes the effect of chief executive officer, chief financial officer and ACRE Partners compensation charges of \$106.9 million, 8.75% Senior Notes due 2008 redemption charge of \$11.5 million and, for the ratio of earnings to fixed charges and preferred dividends, preferred stock redemption charge of \$9.0 million. Excluding these charges, the ratio of earnings to fixed charges and preferred stock dividends and the ratio of earnings to fixed charges would have been 2.0x and 2.3x, respectively.

**USE OF PROCEEDS**

Except as may be set forth in a particular prospectus supplement, we will add the net proceeds from sales of securities to our general corporate funds, which we may use to repay indebtedness, for new investments, or for other general corporate purposes.

## DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES

We will issue the debt securities under an indenture dated as of February 5, 2001 with US Bank Trust National Association, as trustee, which we may supplement from time to time. The following paragraphs describe the provisions of the indenture. We have filed the indenture as an exhibit to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part and you may inspect it at the office of the trustee.

### General

The debt securities will be our direct, unsecured obligations and may be either senior debt securities or subordinated debt securities. The indenture does not limit the principal amount of debt securities that we may issue. We may issue debt securities in one or more series. A supplemental indenture will set forth specific terms of each series of debt securities. There will be prospectus supplements relating to particular series of debt securities. Each prospectus supplement will describe:

The title of the debt securities and whether the debt securities are senior or subordinated debt securities.

Any limit upon the aggregate principal amount of a series of debt securities which we may issue.

The date or dates on which principal of the debt securities will be payable and the amount of principal which will be payable.

The rate or rates (which may be fixed or variable) at which the debt securities will bear interest, if any, as well as the dates from which interest will accrue, the dates on which interest will be payable, the persons to whom interest will be payable, if other than the registered holders on the record date, and the record date for the interest payable on any payment date.

The currency or currencies in which principal, premium, if any, and interest, if any, will be paid.

The place or places where principal, premium, if any, and interest, if any, on the debt securities will be payable and where debt securities which are in registered form can be presented for registration of transfer or exchange.

Any provisions regarding our right to prepay debt securities or of holders to require us to prepay debt securities.

The right, if any, of holders of the debt securities to convert them into common stock or other securities, including any provisions intended to prevent dilution of the conversion rights.

Any provisions requiring or permitting us to make payments to a sinking fund which will be used to redeem debt securities or a purchase fund which will be used to purchase debt securities.

Any index or formula used to determine the required payments of principal, premium, if any, or interest, if any.

The percentage of the principal amount of the debt securities which is payable if maturity of the debt securities is accelerated because of a default.

Any special or modified events of default or covenants with respect to the debt securities.

Any other material terms of the debt securities.

## Edgar Filing: ISTAR FINANCIAL INC - Form 424B3

The indenture does not contain any restrictions on the payment of dividends or the repurchase of our securities or any financial covenants. However, supplemental indentures relating to particular series of debt securities may contain provisions of that type.

We may issue debt securities at a discount from their stated principal amount. A prospectus supplement may describe U.S. federal income tax considerations and other special considerations applicable to a debt security issued with original issue discount.

If the principal of, premium, if any, or interest with regard to any series of debt securities is payable in a foreign currency, we will describe in the prospectus supplement relating to those debt securities any restrictions on currency conversions, tax considerations or other material restrictions with respect to that issue of debt securities.

### **Form of Debt Securities**

We may issue debt securities in certificated or uncertificated form, in registered form with or without coupons or in bearer form with coupons, if applicable.

We may issue debt securities of a series in the form of one or more global certificates evidencing all or a portion of the aggregate principal amount of the debt securities of that series. We may deposit the global certificates with depositories, and the certificates may be subject to restrictions upon transfer or upon exchange for debt securities in individually certificated form.

### **Events of Default and Remedies**

An event of default with respect to each series of debt securities will include:

Our default in payment of the principal of or premium, if any, on any debt securities of any series beyond any applicable grace period.

Our default for 30 days or a period specified in a supplemental indenture, which may be no period, in payment of any installment of interest due with regard to debt securities of any series.

Our default for 60 days after notice in the observance or performance of any other covenants in the indenture.

Certain events involving our bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization.

Supplemental indentures relating to particular series of debt securities may include other events of default.

The indenture provides that the trustee may withhold notice to the holders of any series of debt securities of any default (except a default in payment of principal, premium, if any, or interest, if any) if the trustee considers it in the interest of the holders of the series to do so.

The indenture provides that if any event of default has occurred and is continuing, the trustee or the holders of not less than 25% in principal amount of a series of debt securities then outstanding may declare the principal of and accrued interest, if any, on that series of debt securities to be due and payable immediately. However, if we cure all defaults (except the failure to pay principal, premium or interest which became due solely because of the acceleration) and certain other conditions are met, that declaration may be annulled and past defaults may be waived by the holders of a majority in principal amount of the applicable series of debt securities.

The holders of a majority of the outstanding principal amount of a series of debt securities will have the right to direct the time, method and place of conducting proceedings for any remedy available to the trustee, subject to certain limitations specified in the indenture.

A prospectus supplement will describe any additional or different events of default which apply to any series of debt securities.

### **Modification of the Indenture**

We and the trustee may:

Without the consent of holders of debt securities, modify the indenture to cure errors or clarify ambiguities.

With the consent of the holders of not less than a majority in principal amount of the debt securities which are outstanding under the indenture, modify the indenture or the rights of the holders of the debt securities generally.

With the consent of the holders of not less than a majority in outstanding principal amount of any series of debt securities, modify any supplemental indenture relating solely to that series of debt securities or the rights of the holders of that series of debt securities.

However, we may not:

Extend the fixed maturity of any debt securities, reduce the rate or extend the time for payment of interest, if any, on any debt securities, reduce the principal amount of any debt securities or the premium, if any, on any debt securities, impair or affect the right of a holder to institute suit for the payment of principal, premium, if any, or interest, if any, with regard to any debt securities, change the currency in which any debt securities are payable or impair the right, if any, to convert any debt securities into common stock or any of our other securities, without the consent of each holder of debt securities who will be affected.

Reduce the percentage of holders of debt securities required to consent to an amendment, supplement or waiver, without the consent of the holders of all the then outstanding debt securities or outstanding debt securities of the series which will be affected.

### **Mergers and Other Transactions**

We may not consolidate with or merge into any other entity, or transfer or lease our properties and assets substantially as an entirety to another person, unless: (1) the entity formed by the consolidation or into which we are merged, or which acquires or leases our properties and assets substantially as an entirety, assumes by a supplemental indenture all our obligations with regard to outstanding debt securities and our other covenants under the indenture; and (2) with regard to each series of debt securities, immediately after giving effect to the transaction, no event of default, with respect to that series of debt securities, and no event which would become an event of default, will have occurred and be continuing.

### **Governing Law**

The indenture, each supplemental indenture, and the debt securities issued under them will be governed by, and construed in accordance with, the laws of New York.

### **DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS**

Each issue of warrants will be the subject of a warrant agreement which will contain the terms of the warrants. We will distribute a prospectus supplement with regard to each issue of warrants. Each prospectus supplement will describe, as to the warrants to which it relates:

The securities which may be purchased by exercising the warrants (which may be common stock, preferred stock, debt securities, depositary shares or units consisting of two or more of those types of securities).

Edgar Filing: ISTAR FINANCIAL INC - Form 424B3

The exercise price of the warrants (which may be wholly or partly payable in cash or wholly or partly payable with other types of consideration).

## Edgar Filing: ISTAR FINANCIAL INC - Form 424B3

The period during which the warrants may be exercised.

Any provision adjusting the securities which may be purchased on exercise of the warrants and the exercise price of the warrants in order to prevent dilution or otherwise.

The place or places where warrants can be presented for exercise or for registration of transfer or exchange.

Any other material terms of the warrants.

### DESCRIPTION OF COMMON STOCK AND PREFERRED STOCK

Our authorized capital stock consists of 200,000,000 shares of common stock, \$0.001 par value, 45,000 shares of High Performance Common Stock and 30,000,000 shares of preferred stock, \$0.001 par value, of which 4,600,000 shares are designated 8.000% Series D Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Stock, \$0.001 par value, 9,000,000 shares are designated 7.875% Series E Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Stock, \$0.001 par value, 4,600,000 shares are designated 7.800% Series F Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Stock, \$0.001 par value, 3,200,000 shares are designated 7.650% Series G Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Stock, \$0.001 par value and 5,000,000 shares are designated 7.500% Series I Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Stock, \$0.001 par value. At January 31, 2007, 126,701,213 shares of common stock, 45,000 shares of High Performance Common Stock, 4,000,000 shares of Series D preferred stock, 5,600,000 shares of Series E preferred Stock, 4,000,000 shares of Series F preferred stock, 3,200,000 shares of Series G preferred stock and 5,000,000 shares of our Series I preferred stock were outstanding. We previously had authorized and issued series of preferred stock designated Series A, B, C, and H preferred stock; however, we have retired each of those series, which makes the shares available for re-issuance and re-designation.

#### Common Stock

Holders of common stock will be entitled to receive distributions on common stock if, as and when the Board of Directors authorizes and declares distributions. However, rights to distributions may be subordinated to the rights of holders of preferred stock, when preferred stock is issued and outstanding. In the event of our liquidation, dissolution or winding up, each outstanding share of common stock will entitle its holder to a proportionate share of the assets that remain after we pay our liabilities and any preferential distributions owed to preferred stockholders.

Holders of the common stock are entitled to one vote for each share on all matters submitted to a stockholder vote. Holders of the Series D preferred stock are entitled to 0.25 of a vote for each share on all matters submitted to a stockholder vote. They will vote with the common stock as a single class. There is no cumulative voting in the election of directors.

Holders of shares of common stock have no preference, conversion, sinking fund, redemption, appraisal or exchange rights or any preemptive rights to subscribe for any of our securities. All shares of common stock have equal dividend, distribution, liquidation and other rights.

We may be dissolved if the Board of Directors, by resolution adopted by a majority of the entire Board of Directors, declares the dissolution advisable and directs that the proposed dissolution be submitted for consideration at either an annual or special meeting of stockholders. Dissolution will occur once it is approved by the affirmative vote of a majority of stockholders entitled to cast votes on the matter.

Our charter grants the Board of Directors the power to authorize the issuance of additional authorized but unissued shares of common stock and preferred stock. The Board of Directors may also classify or reclassify unissued shares of common stock or preferred stock and authorize their issuance.

Our charter also provides that, to the extent permitted by the General Corporate Law of Maryland, the Board of Directors may, without any action by the stockholders, amend our charter from time to time to increase or decrease the aggregate number of shares of stock or the number of shares of stock of any class or series that we have authority to issue.

We believe that these powers of the Board of Directors provide increased flexibility in structuring possible future financings and acquisitions and in meeting other needs which might arise. Although the Board of Directors does not intend to do so at the present time, it could authorize the issuance of a class or series that could delay, defer or prevent a change of control or other transaction that might involve a premium price for the common stock or otherwise be in the best interest of the stockholders.

### **High Performance Unit Program**

In May 2002 and June 2003, the Company's stockholders initially approved two iStar Financial High Performance Unit Programs. The programs, as more fully described in the Company's annual proxy statements dated April 8, 2002, April 21, 2003, April 27, 2004, April 25, 2005 and May 1, 2006 are performance-based employee, director and officer compensation plans that only have material value to the participants if the Company provides superior returns to its stockholders. The programs entitle the employee, director and officer participants to receive cash distributions in the nature of common stock dividends if the total rate of return on the Company's Common Stock (share price appreciation plus dividends) exceeds certain performance levels.

Initially, there were three plans within the employee program: the 2002 plan, the 2003 plan, and the 2004 plan. Each plan has 5,000 shares of High Performance Common Stock associated with it. Each share of High Performance Common Stock carries 0.25 votes per share.

For these three plans, the Company's performance is measured over a one-, two-, or three-year valuation period, beginning on January 1, 2002 and ending on December 31, 2002, December 31, 2003 and December 31, 2004, respectively. The end of the valuation period (i.e., the "valuation date") will be accelerated if there is a change in control of the Company. The High Performance Common Stock has a nominal value unless the total rate of stockholder return for the relevant valuation period exceeds the greater of: (1) 10.00%, 20.00%, or 30.00% for the 2002 plan, the 2003 plan and the 2004 plan, respectively; and (2) a weighted industry index total rate of return consisting of equal weightings of the Russell 1000 Financial Index and the Morgan Stanley REIT Index for the relevant period.

If the total rate of return on the Company's Common Stock exceeds the threshold performance levels for a particular plan, then distributions will be paid on the shares of High Performance Common Stock related to that plan in the same amounts and at the same times as distributions are paid on a number of shares of the Company's Common Stock equal to the following: 7.50% of the Company's excess total rate of return (over the higher of the two threshold performance levels) multiplied by the weighted average market value of the Company's common equity capitalization during the measurement period, all as divided by the average closing price of a share of the Company's Common Stock for the 20 trading days immediately preceding the applicable valuation date.

If the total rate of return on the Company's Common Stock does not exceed the threshold performance levels for a particular plan, then the shares of High Performance Common Stock related to that plan will have only nominal value. In this event, each of the 5,000 shares will be entitled to dividends equal to 0.01 times the dividend paid on a share of Common Stock, if and when dividends are declared on the common stock.

Regardless of how much the Company's total rate of return exceeds the threshold performance levels, the dilutive impact to the Company's stockholders resulting from distributions on High Performance Common Stock in each plan is limited to 1.00% of the number of shares of the Company's Common Stock outstanding, on a fully diluted basis, on the valuation date for each plan.



Subsequent plans were established for each of 2005 through 2008. Each of these plans had 5,000 authorized shares of High Performance Common Stock; however, the shares associated with the 2005 and 2006 plans were redeemed for a nominal amount because the plans did not meet the performance thresholds. The provisions of the 2005 through 2008 plans are substantially the same as the prior plans, except that the measurement period for each plan is three years.

The iStar Financial Executive and Director High Performance Unit Program was established in 2003. This program is substantially similar to the employee program. There are four plans within the Executive and Director HPU Program, the 2005 plan, the 2006 plan, the 2007 plan and the 2008 plan. Each plan had 5,000 shares associated with it. Each share will carry 0.25 votes and pay dividends equal to 0.01 times the dividend paid on a share of our common stock, if and when dividends are declared on our common stock. The valuation date of the 2007 plan is December 31, 2007 and the valuation date of the 2008 plan is December 31, 2008. The valuation dates will be accelerated if there is a change of control of the Company. Prior to the valuation dates, the High Performance Common Stock will have little intrinsic value.

The shares will continue to have only the nominal value described above unless, on the applicable valuation date, the three-year total rate of return (dividends plus share price appreciation) on a share of our common stock exceeds the greater of: (1) 30.00%, and (2) a weighted industry index total rate of return consisting of equal weightings of the Russell 1000 Financial Index and the Morgan Stanley REIT Index for the three-year period. If the total rate of return on the common stock exceeds the threshold performance levels for a particular plan, then distributions are paid in the same manner as they are in the employee programs.

The Executive and Director HPU Plans differ from the employee plans regarding dilution. The dilutive impact to our stockholders resulting from distributions on High Performance Common Stock in each plan under the Executive and Director HPU Plans will be limited to 0.50% of the number of shares of our common stock outstanding, on a fully diluted basis, on the valuation date for each plan, unlike the 1.00% limit in the employee plans.

#### **Restrictions on Ownership and Transfer**

To maintain our REIT qualification under the Internal Revenue Code, no group of five or fewer individuals can own, actually or constructively, more than 50% in value of our issued and outstanding stock at any time during the last half of a taxable year. Additionally, at least 100 persons must beneficially own our stock (the "5/50 Test") during at least 335 days of a taxable year. To assist us in meeting these tests, our charter provides that no person other than persons who were our stockholders as of November 3, 1999 or persons exempted by our Board of Directors may beneficially or constructively own more than 9.8% of the number or value of our capital stock (the "Ownership Limit").

Each person who is a beneficial or constructive owner of shares of stock and each person, including the stockholder of record, who is holding shares of stock for a beneficial or constructive owner must provide us in writing any information with respect to direct, indirect and constructive ownership of shares of stock as the Board of Directors deems reasonably necessary to comply with the provisions of the Internal Revenue Code applicable to a REIT, to determine our qualification as a REIT, to comply with the requirements of any taxing authority or governmental agency or to determine any such compliance.

Any issuance or transfer of shares of our stock that would result in (1) a violation of the 5/50 Test, (2) our stock being beneficially owned by fewer than 100 persons (determined without reference to any rules of attribution), or (3) our otherwise failing to qualify as a REIT, shall be void and the intended transferee shall acquire no rights in such shares of our stock. Shares of our stock issued or transferred that would cause any stockholder (a "Prohibited Owner") to own more than the Ownership Limit or

otherwise cause us to fail to qualify as a REIT will constitute shares of excess stock. All excess stock will be automatically transferred, without action by the Prohibited Owner, to a trust for the exclusive benefit of one or more charitable beneficiaries that we select, and the Prohibited Owner will not acquire any rights in the shares of excess stock. Such automatic transfer shall be deemed to be effective as of the close of business on the day prior to the date of the transfer causing a violation. If the transfer to the trust would not be effective for any reason to prevent a stockholder from owning more than the Ownership Limit or otherwise cause us to fail to qualify as a REIT, then the transfer of that number of shares necessary to cause such ownership or failure will be void and the intended transferee shall acquire no rights in such shares of our stock. The trustee of the trust shall be appointed by us and must be independent of us and the Prohibited Owner. The Prohibited Owner shall have no right to receive dividends or other distributions with respect to, or be entitled to vote, any excess stock held in the trust. Any dividend or other distribution paid prior to the discovery by us that excess stock has been transferred to the trust must be paid by the recipient of the dividend or distribution to the trustee upon demand for the benefit of the charitable beneficiaries, and any dividend or other distribution authorized but unpaid shall be paid when due to the trust. The trust shall have all dividend and voting rights with respect to the shares of excess stock held in the trust, which rights shall be exercised for the exclusive benefit of the charitable beneficiary. Any dividend or distribution so paid to the trust shall be held in trust for the charitable beneficiary.

Within 60 days after the latest of (i) the date of the transfer which resulted in such transfer to the charitable trust and (ii) the date the Board of Directors determines in good faith that a transfer resulting in the transfer to the charitable trust has occurred, the trustee will sell the excess stock held in the trust to a person, designated by the trustee, whose ownership of the shares will not violate the ownership limitations set forth in our charter. Upon such sale, any interest of the charitable beneficiary in the excess stock sold shall terminate and the trustee shall distribute the net proceeds of the sale to the Prohibited Owner and to the charitable beneficiary as follows. The Prohibited Owner shall receive the lesser of (a) the price paid by the Prohibited Owner for the excess stock (or, in the case of a devise, gift or other transaction in which no value was given for such shares held by the charitable trust, the Market Price (as defined in our charter) at the time of such devise, gift or other transaction), and (b) the price per share received by the trustee from the sale or other disposition of the excess stock held in the trust. Any net sale proceeds in excess of the amount payable to the Prohibited Owner shall be paid immediately to the charitable beneficiary. Shares of our stock held by the charitable trust shall be deemed to have been offered for sale to us, or our designee, at a price per share equal to the lesser of (i) the price per share in the transaction that created such shares held by the trust (or, in the case of a devise, gift or other transaction in which no value was given for such shares held by the trust, the Market Price at the time of such devise, gift or other transaction) and (ii) the Market Price of the shares of our stock to which such shares held by the trust relates on the date we, or our designee, accepts such offer (the "Redemption Price"). We shall have the right to accept such offer until the trustee has sold the shares of our stock held in the charitable trust. Upon such a sale, the interest of the charitable beneficiary in the shares of stock sold shall terminate and the trustee shall distribute the net proceeds of the sale to the purported record transferee of such shares. If any of the foregoing restrictions on transfer of our shares held by the trust are determined to be void or invalid, then the purported record transferee of such shares may be deemed, at our option, to have acted as our agent in acquiring such shares and to hold such shares on our behalf.

These restrictions on ownership and transfer will not apply to our stock if the Board of Directors determines that it is no longer in our best interests to qualify as a REIT.

These restrictions on ownership and transfer could delay, defer or prevent a transaction or a change of control of us that might involve a premium price for shares of our stock or otherwise be in the best interest of our stockholders.

**Preferred Stock**

We may issue preferred stock in series with any rights and preferences which may be authorized by our board of directors. We will distribute a prospectus supplement with regard to each series of preferred stock. Each prospectus supplement will describe, as to the preferred stock to which it relates:

The title of the series.

Any limit upon the number of shares of the series which may be issued.

The preference, if any, to which holders of the series will be entitled upon our liquidation.

The date or dates on which we will be required or permitted to redeem shares of the series.

The terms, if any, on which we or holders of the series will have the option to cause shares of the series to be redeemed.

The voting rights of the holders of the preferred stock.

The dividends, if any, which will be payable with regard to the series (which may be fixed dividends or participating dividends and may be cumulative or non-cumulative).

The right, if any, of holders of the series to convert them into another class of our stock or securities, including provisions intended to prevent dilution of those conversion rights.

Any provisions by which we will be required or permitted to make payments to a sinking fund which will be used to redeem shares of the series or a purchase fund which will be used to purchase shares of the series.

Any other material terms of the series.

Holders of shares of preferred stock will not have preemptive rights.

**Transfer Agent and Registrar**

The transfer agent and registrar for our common stock and preferred stock is Computershare Trust Company, N.A.

## DESCRIPTION OF DEPOSITARY SHARES

We may issue depositary receipts representing interests in shares of particular series of preferred stock which are called depositary shares. We will deposit the preferred stock of a series which is the subject of depositary shares with a depositary, which will hold that preferred stock for the benefit of the holders of the depositary shares, in accordance with a deposit agreement between the depositary and us. The holders of depositary shares will be entitled to all the rights and preferences of the preferred stock to which the depositary shares relate, including dividend, voting, conversion, redemption and liquidation rights, to the extent of their interests in that preferred stock.

While the deposit agreement relating to a particular series of preferred stock may have provisions applicable solely to that series of preferred stock, all deposit agreements relating to preferred stock we issue will include the following provisions:

**Dividends and Other Distributions.** Each time we pay a cash dividend or make any other type of cash distribution with regard to preferred stock of a series, the depositary will distribute to the holder of record of each depositary share relating to that series of preferred stock an amount equal to the dividend or other distribution per depositary share the depositary receives. If there is a distribution of property other than cash, the depositary either will distribute the property to the holders of depositary shares in proportion to the depositary shares held by each of them, or the depositary will, if we approve, sell the property and distribute the net proceeds to the holders of the depositary shares in proportion to the depositary shares held by them.

**Withdrawal of Preferred Stock.** A holder of depositary shares will be entitled to receive, upon surrender of depositary receipts representing depositary shares, the number of whole or fractional shares of the applicable series of preferred stock, and any money or other property, to which the depositary shares relate.

**Redemption of Depositary Shares.** Whenever we redeem shares of preferred stock held by a depositary, the depositary will be required to redeem, on the same redemption date, depositary shares constituting, in total, the number of shares of preferred stock held by the depositary which we redeem, subject to the depositary's receiving the redemption price of those shares of preferred stock. If fewer than all the depositary shares relating to a series are to be redeemed, the depositary shares to be redeemed will be selected by lot or by another method we determine to be equitable.

**Voting.** Any time we send a notice of meeting or other materials relating to a meeting to the holders of a series of preferred stock to which depositary shares relate, we will provide the depositary with sufficient copies of those materials so they can be sent to all holders of record of the applicable depositary shares, and the depositary will send those materials to the holders of record of the depositary shares on the record date for the meeting. The depositary will solicit voting instructions from holders of depositary shares and will vote or not vote the preferred stock to which the depositary shares relate in accordance with those instructions.

**Liquidation Preference.** Upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up, the holder of each depositary share will be entitled to what the holder of the depositary share would have received if the holder had owned the number of shares (or fraction of a share) of preferred stock which is represented by the depositary share.

**Conversion.** If shares of a series of preferred stock are convertible into common stock or other of our securities or property, holders of depositary shares relating to that series of preferred stock will, if they surrender depositary receipts representing depositary shares and appropriate instructions to convert them, receive the shares of common stock or other securities or property into which the number of shares (or fractions of shares) of preferred stock to which the depositary shares relate could at the time be converted.

**Amendment and Termination of a Deposit Agreement.** We and the depositary may amend a deposit agreement, except that an amendment which materially and adversely affects the rights of holders of depositary shares, or would be materially and adversely inconsistent with the rights granted to the holders of the preferred stock to which they relate, must be approved by holders of at least two-thirds of the outstanding depositary shares. No amendment will impair the right of a holder of depositary shares to surrender the depositary receipts evidencing those depositary shares and receive the preferred stock to which they relate, except as required to comply with law. We may terminate a deposit agreement with the consent of holders of a majority of the depositary shares to which it relates. Upon termination of a deposit agreement, the depositary will make the whole or fractional shares of preferred stock to which the depositary shares issued under the deposit agreement relate available to the holders of those depositary shares. A deposit agreement will automatically terminate if:

All outstanding depositary shares to which it relates have been redeemed or converted.

The depositary has made a final distribution to the holders of the depositary shares issued under the deposit agreement upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up.

**Miscellaneous.** There will be provisions: (1) requiring the depositary to forward to holders of record of depositary shares any reports or communications from us which the depositary receives with respect to the preferred stock to which the depositary shares relate; (2) regarding compensation of the depositary; (3) regarding resignation of the depositary; (4) limiting our liability and the liability of the depositary under the deposit agreement (usually to failure to act in good faith, gross negligence or willful misconduct); and (5) indemnifying the depositary against certain possible liabilities.

#### CERTAIN U.S. FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSEQUENCES

THE FOLLOWING IS A SUMMARY OF THE U.S. FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSEQUENCES RELEVANT TO AN INVESTMENT IN US AND OUR QUALIFICATION AS A REIT. THIS SUMMARY IS BASED ON CURRENT LAW. YOUR TAX CONSEQUENCES RELATED TO AN INVESTMENT IN US MAY VARY DEPENDING ON YOUR PARTICULAR SITUATION AND THIS DISCUSSION DOES NOT PURPORT TO DISCUSS ALL ASPECTS OF TAXATION THAT MAY BE RELEVANT TO A HOLDER OF OUR SECURITIES IN LIGHT OF HIS OR HER PERSONAL INVESTMENT OR TAX CIRCUMSTANCES, OR TO HOLDERS OF OUR SECURITIES SUBJECT TO SPECIAL TREATMENT UNDER THE U.S. FEDERAL INCOME TAX LAWS, EXCEPT TO THE EXTENT DISCUSSED UNDER THE HEADINGS " TAXATION OF TAX-EXEMPT STOCKHOLDERS" AND " TAXATION OF NON-U.S. STOCKHOLDERS." INVESTORS SUBJECT TO SPECIAL TREATMENT INCLUDE, WITHOUT LIMITATION, INSURANCE COMPANIES, FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS, BROKER-DEALERS, TAX-EXEMPT ORGANIZATIONS, GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS, INVESTORS HOLDING SECURITIES AS PART OF A CONVERSION TRANSACTION, OR A HEDGE OR HEDGING TRANSACTION OR AS A POSITION IN A STRADDLE FOR TAX PURPOSES, FOREIGN CORPORATIONS OR PARTNERSHIPS, AND PERSONS WHO ARE NOT CITIZENS OR RESIDENTS OF THE UNITED STATES. IN ADDITION, THE SUMMARY BELOW DOES NOT CONSIDER THE EFFECT OF ANY FOREIGN, STATE, LOCAL OR OTHER TAX LAWS THAT MAY BE APPLICABLE TO YOU AS A HOLDER OF OUR SECURITIES.

This discussion is based on the Internal Revenue Code, current, temporary and proposed Treasury regulations promulgated under the Internal Revenue Code, the legislative history of the Internal Revenue Code, current administrative interpretations and practices of the Internal Revenue Service, and court decisions, all as of the date of this prospectus. The administrative interpretations and practices of the Internal Revenue Service upon which this summary is based include its practices and policies as expressed in private letter rulings which are not binding on the Internal Revenue Service, except with respect to the taxpayers who requested and received such rulings. Future legislation,

Treasury regulations, administrative interpretations and practices, and court decisions may affect the tax consequences contained in this summary, possibly on a retroactive basis. We have not requested, and do not plan to request, any rulings from the Internal Revenue Service concerning our tax treatment or the tax consequences contained in this summary, and the statements in this prospectus are not binding on the Internal Revenue Service or a court. Thus, we can provide no assurance that the tax consequences contained in this summary will not be challenged by the Internal Revenue Service or sustained by a court if so challenged.

YOU ARE URGED TO CONSULT YOUR TAX ADVISOR REGARDING THE SPECIFIC TAX CONSEQUENCES TO YOU OF: (1) THE ACQUISITION, OWNERSHIP AND SALE OR OTHER DISPOSITION OF OUR SECURITIES, INCLUDING THE U.S. FEDERAL, STATE, LOCAL, FOREIGN AND OTHER TAX CONSEQUENCES; (2) OUR ELECTION TO BE TAXED AS A REIT FOR U.S. FEDERAL INCOME TAX PURPOSES; AND (3) POTENTIAL CHANGES IN APPLICABLE TAX LAWS.

#### **Taxation of iStar Financial General**

We have elected to be taxed as a REIT under Sections 856 through 860 of the Internal Revenue Code, commencing with our taxable year ended December 31, 1998. We believe that we have been organized and have operated in a manner which allows us to qualify for taxation as a REIT under the Internal Revenue Code and we intend to continue to be organized and to operate in this manner. Our qualification and taxation as a REIT, however, depend upon our ability to meet, through actual annual operating results, asset requirements, distribution levels, diversity of stock ownership, and the various other requirements imposed under the Internal Revenue Code. Accordingly, there can be no assurance that we have operated or will continue to operate in a manner so as to qualify or remain qualified as a REIT. See " Failure to Qualify."

In the opinion of Clifford Chance US LLP, commencing with our taxable year ended December 31, 1998, we have been organized and operated in conformity with the requirements for qualification as a REIT, and our present and proposed method of operation, as represented by us, will enable us to meet the requirements for qualification as a REIT under the Internal Revenue Code. It must be emphasized that this opinion is based and conditioned upon certain assumptions and representations made by us as to factual matters (including our representations concerning our income and properties and the past, present, and future conduct of our business operations as set forth in this prospectus and one or more factual certificates provided by our officers). The opinion is expressed as of the date of this prospectus and Clifford Chance US LLP has no obligation to advise of any subsequent change in the matters stated, represented or assumed or any subsequent change in the applicable law. Moreover, our qualification and taxation as a REIT depends upon our ability to meet, through actual annual operating results, distribution levels and diversity of stock ownership, the various requirements imposed under the Internal Revenue Code as discussed below, the results of which will not be reviewed by Clifford Chance US LLP. Accordingly, no assurance can be given that the actual results of our operation for any one taxable year will satisfy such requirements. See " Failure to Qualify." An opinion of counsel is not binding on the Internal Revenue Service, and no assurance can be given that the Internal Revenue Service will not challenge our qualification as a REIT.

The sections of the Internal Revenue Code that relate to the qualification and taxation of REITs are highly technical and complex. The following describes the material aspects of the sections of the Internal Revenue Code that govern the U.S. federal income tax treatment of a REIT and its stockholders. This summary is qualified in its entirety by the applicable Internal Revenue Code provisions, rules and regulations promulgated under the Internal Revenue Code, and administrative and judicial interpretations of the Internal Revenue Code.

Provided we qualify for taxation as a REIT, we generally will not be subject to U.S. federal corporate income tax on our net income that is currently distributed to our stockholders. This treatment substantially eliminates the "double taxation" that generally results from an investment in a corporation. Double taxation means taxation once at the corporate level when income is earned and once again at the stockholder level when such income is distributed. For tax years through 2010, stockholders who are taxed at individual U.S. federal income tax rates are generally taxed on corporate dividends at a maximum U.S. federal income tax rate of 15% (the same as long-term capital gains), thereby substantially reducing, though not completely eliminating, the double taxation that has historically applied to corporate dividends. With limited exceptions, however, dividends received from us or other entities that are taxed as REITs will continue to be taxed at rates applicable to ordinary income, which will be as high as 35% through 2010.

Even if we qualify for taxation as a REIT, however, we will be subject to U.S. federal income taxation as follows:

We will be required to pay tax at regular corporate rates on any undistributed REIT taxable income, including undistributed net capital gains.

We may be subject to the "alternative minimum tax" on items of tax preference, if any.

If we have: (1) net income from the sale or other disposition of "foreclosure property" which is held primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of business; or (2) other nonqualifying income from foreclosure property, we will be required to pay tax at the highest corporate rate on this income. In general, foreclosure property is property acquired through foreclosure after a default on a loan secured by the property or on a lease of the property.

We will be required to pay a 100% tax on any net income from prohibited transactions. In general, prohibited transactions are sales or other taxable dispositions of property, other than foreclosure property, held for sale to customers in the ordinary course of business.

If we fail to satisfy the 75% or 95% gross income tests, as described below, but have, nevertheless, maintained our qualification as a REIT, we will be subject to a tax equal to the gross income attributable to the greater of either (a) the amount by which 75% of our gross income exceeds the amount qualifying under the 75% test for the taxable year or (b) the amount by which 90% of our gross income exceeds the amount of our income qualifying under the 95% test for the taxable year multiplied in either case by a fraction intended to reflect our profitability.

If we fail to satisfy any of the REIT asset tests, as described below, by larger than a *de minimis* amount, but our failure is due to reasonable cause and we nonetheless maintain our REIT qualification because of specified cure provisions, we will be required to pay a tax equal to the greater of \$50,000 or 35% of the net income generated by the nonqualifying assets during the period in which we failed to satisfy the asset tests.

If we fail to satisfy any provision of the Internal Revenue Code that would result in our failure to qualify as a REIT (other than a gross income or asset test requirement) and that violation is due to reasonable cause, we may retain our REIT qualification, but we will be required to pay a penalty of \$50,000 for each such failure.

We will generally be subject to tax on the portion of any excess inclusion income derived from an investment in residual interests in REMICs and certain taxable mortgage pods to the extent our shares are held in record name by specified tax-exempt organizations not subject to tax on unrelated business taxable income. To the extent that we own a REMIC residual interest or a taxable mortgage pool through a taxable REIT subsidiary, we will not be subject to this tax. For a discussion of "excess inclusion income," see "Certain U.S. Federal Income Tax

## Edgar Filing: ISTAR FINANCIAL INC - Form 424B3

Consequences Effect of Subsidiary Entities Taxable Mortgage Pools" and " Excess Inclusion Income."

We will be required to pay a 4% excise tax on the amount by which our annual distributions to our stockholders is less than the sum of: (1) 85% of our ordinary income for the year; (2) 95% of our REIT capital gain net income for the year; and (3) any undistributed taxable income from prior periods.

If we acquire an asset from a corporation which is or has been a C corporation in a transaction in which the basis of the asset in our hands is determined by reference to the basis of the asset in the hands of the C corporation, and we subsequently recognize gain on the disposition of the asset within the ten-year period beginning on the date on which we acquired the asset, then we would be required to pay tax at the highest regular corporate tax rate on this gain to the extent the fair market value of the asset exceeds our adjusted tax basis in the asset, in each case, determined as of the date on which we acquired the asset. The results described in this paragraph assume that no election will be made under Treasury regulation Section 1.337(d)-7 for the C corporation to be subject to an immediate tax when the asset is acquired.

We will be subject to a 100% tax on any "redetermined rents," "redetermined deductions" or "excess interest." In general, redetermined rents are rents from real property that are overstated as a result of services furnished by a "taxable REIT subsidiary" of our company to any of our tenants. Redetermined deductions and excess interest represent amounts that are deducted by our taxable REIT subsidiary for amounts paid to us that are in excess of the amounts that would have been deducted based on arm's length negotiations.

We own subsidiaries or interests in entities that are C corporations for U.S. federal income tax purposes, including taxable REIT subsidiaries, the earnings of which are generally subject to U.S. federal corporate income tax.

In addition, our subsidiaries and we may be subject to a variety of taxes other than U.S. federal income tax, including payroll taxes and state, local, and foreign income, franchise property and other taxes. We could also be subject to tax in situations and on transactions not presently contemplated.

### **Requirements for Qualification as a REIT**

#### ***General***

The Internal Revenue Code defines a REIT as a corporation, trust or association:

- (1) that is managed by one or more trustees or directors;
- (2) that issues transferable shares or transferable certificates to its owners;
- (3) that would be taxable as a regular corporation, but for its election to be taxed as a REIT;
- (4) that is not a financial institution or an insurance company under the Internal Revenue Code;
- (5) that is owned by 100 or more persons;
- (6) not more than 50% in value of the outstanding stock of which is owned, actually or constructively, by five or fewer individuals, as defined in the Internal Revenue Code to include certain entities, during the last half of each year; and
- (7) that meets other tests, described below, regarding the nature of its income and assets, and the amount of its distributions.



Edgar Filing: ISTAR FINANCIAL INC - Form 424B3

The Internal Revenue Code provides that conditions (1) to (4) must be met during the entire year and that condition (5) must be met during at least 335 days of a year of twelve months, or during a

proportionate part of a shorter taxable year. Conditions (5) and (6) do not apply to the first taxable year for which an election is made to be taxed as a REIT.

We believe that we currently satisfy conditions (1) through (7) above. In addition, our Charter provides for restrictions regarding ownership and transfer of our stock. These restrictions are intended to assist us in satisfying the share ownership requirements described in (5) and (6) above. These restrictions, however, may not ensure that we will, in all cases, be able to satisfy the share ownership requirements described in (5) and (6) above. If we fail to satisfy these share ownership requirements, our qualification as a REIT would terminate. If, however, we comply with the rules contained in applicable Treasury regulations that require us to determine the actual ownership of our shares and we do not know, or would not have known through the exercise of reasonable diligence, that we failed to meet the requirement described in condition (6) above, we would not be disqualified as a REIT.

In addition, a corporation may not qualify as a REIT unless its taxable year is the calendar year. We have and will continue to have a calendar taxable year.

### **Effect of Subsidiary Entities**

#### ***Ownership of a Partnership Interest***

In the case of a REIT that is a partner in a partnership, Treasury regulations provide that the REIT is deemed to own its proportionate share of the partnership's assets and to earn its proportionate share of the partnership's gross income based on its *pro rata* share of capital interests in the partnership for purposes of the REIT asset and gross income tests described below. In addition, the assets and gross income of the partnership generally are deemed to retain the same character in the hands of the REIT. For purposes of the 10% value test only, however, the determination of a REIT's interest in partnership assets will be based on the REIT's proportionate interest in any securities issued by the partnership, excluding certain securities described in the Internal Revenue Code. Thus, our proportionate share of the assets and income of partnerships in which we own an equity interest are treated as our assets and items of income for purposes of applying the REIT asset and gross income requirements described below. Consequently, to the extent that we directly or indirectly hold a preferred or other equity interest in a partnership, the partnership's assets and operations may affect our ability to qualify as a REIT, even though we may have no control, or only limited influence, over the partnership. A summary of certain rules governing the U.S. federal income taxation of partnerships and their partners is provided below in " Tax Aspects of Investments in Partnerships."

#### ***Qualified REIT Subsidiaries.***

A "qualified REIT subsidiary" is a corporation, other than a taxable REIT subsidiary, all of the stock of which is owned by a REIT. Under the Internal Revenue Code, a qualified REIT subsidiary is not treated as a separate corporation from the REIT. Rather, all of the assets, liabilities, and items of income, deduction, and credit of the qualified REIT subsidiary are treated as the assets, liabilities, and items of income, deduction, and credit of the REIT for purposes of the REIT income and asset tests described below.

#### ***Taxable REIT Subsidiaries.***

A "taxable REIT subsidiary" is a corporation which, together with a REIT that owns an interest in such corporation, makes an election to be treated as a taxable REIT subsidiary. A taxable REIT subsidiary may earn income that would be nonqualifying income if earned directly by a REIT and is generally subject to full corporate level tax. A REIT may own up to 100% of the stock of a taxable REIT subsidiary.

Certain restrictions imposed on taxable REIT subsidiaries are intended to ensure that such entities will be subject to appropriate levels of U.S. federal income taxation. First, if a taxable REIT subsidiary has a debt to equity ratio as of the close of the taxable year exceeding 1.5 to 1, it may not deduct interest payments made in any year to an affiliated REIT to the extent that such payments exceed, generally, 50% of the taxable REIT subsidiary's adjusted taxable income for that year (although the taxable REIT subsidiary may carry forward to, and deduct in, a succeeding year the disallowed interest amount if the 50% test is satisfied in that year). In addition, if a taxable REIT subsidiary pays interest, rent or another amount to a REIT that exceeds the amount that would be paid to an unrelated party in an arm's length transaction, the REIT generally will be subject to an excise tax equal to 100% of such excess. Finally, a taxable REIT subsidiary's ability to derive income from lodging and health care related properties is subject to certain limitations under the Internal Revenue Code.

### ***Taxable Mortgage Pools***

An entity, or a portion of an entity, may be classified as a taxable mortgage pool under the Internal Revenue Code if:

substantially all of its assets consist of debt obligations or interests in debt obligations;

more than 50% of those debt obligations are real estate mortgage loans or interests in real estate mortgage loans as of specified testing dates;

the entity has issued debt obligations that have two or more maturities; and

the payments required to be made by the entity on its debt obligations "bear a relationship" to the payments to be received by the entity on the debt obligations that it holds as assets.

Under Treasury regulations, if less than 80% of the assets of an entity (or a portion of an entity) consist of debt obligations, these debt obligations are considered not to comprise "substantially all" of its assets, and therefore the entity would not be treated as a taxable mortgage pool.

A taxable mortgage pool generally is treated as a corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes. However, special rules apply to a REIT, a portion of a REIT, or a qualified REIT subsidiary that is a taxable mortgage pool. If a REIT owns directly, or indirectly through one or more qualified REIT subsidiaries or other entities that are disregarded as separate entities for U.S. federal income tax purposes, 100% of the equity interests in the taxable mortgage pool, the taxable mortgage pool will be a qualified REIT subsidiary and, therefore, ignored as an entity separate from the REIT for U.S. federal income tax purposes and would not generally affect the tax qualification of the REIT. Rather, the consequences of the taxable mortgage pool classification would generally, except as described below, be limited to the REIT's stockholders. See " Excess Inclusion Income."

If we own less than 100% of the ownership interests in a subsidiary that is a taxable mortgage pool, the foregoing rules would not apply. Rather, the subsidiary would be treated as a corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes, and would potentially be subject to corporate income tax. In addition, this characterization would alter our REIT income and asset test calculations and could adversely affect our compliance with those requirements. We do not expect that we would form any subsidiary in which we own some, but less than all, of the ownership interests that would become a taxable mortgage pool, and we intend to monitor the structure of any taxable mortgage pools in which we have an interest to ensure that they will not adversely affect our qualification as a REIT.

### **Income Tests**

We must meet two annual gross income requirements to qualify as a REIT. First, each year we must derive at least 75% of our gross income, excluding gross income from prohibited transactions, from investments relating to real property or mortgages on real property, including "rents from real

property" and mortgage interest, or from specified temporary investments. Second, each year we must derive at least 95% of our gross income, excluding gross income from prohibited transactions, from investments meeting the 75% test described above, or from dividends, interest and gain from the sale or disposition of stock or securities. For these purposes, the term "interest" generally does not include any interest of which the amount received depends on the income or profits of any person. An amount will generally not be excluded from the term "interest," however, if such amount is based on a fixed percentage of gross receipts or sales.

Any amount includable in gross income by us with respect to a regular or residual interest in a REMIC is generally treated as interest on an obligation secured by a mortgage on real property for purposes of the 75% gross income test. If, however, less than 95% of the assets of a REMIC consist of real estate assets, we will be treated as receiving directly our proportionate share of the income of the REMIC, which would generally include non-qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test. In addition, if we receive interest income with respect to a mortgage loan that is secured by both real property and other property and the principal amount of the loan exceeds the fair market value of the real property on the date we made the mortgage loan, interest income on the loan will be apportioned between the real property and the other property, which apportionment would cause us to recognize income that is not qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test.

We may invest in mezzanine loans, which are loans secured by equity interests in an entity that directly or indirectly owns real property, rather than by a direct mortgage of the real property. The IRS has issued Revenue Procedure 2003-65, which provides a safe harbor applicable to mezzanine loans. Under the Revenue Procedure, if a mezzanine loan meets each of the requirements contained in the Revenue Procedure, (1) the mezzanine loan will be treated by the IRS as a real estate-asset for purposes of the asset tests described below, and (2) interest derived from the mezzanine loan will be treated as qualifying mortgage interest for purposes of the 75% income test. Although the Revenue Procedure provides a safe harbor on which taxpayers may rely, it does not prescribe rules of substantive tax law. We intend to structure any investments in mezzanine loans in a manner that complies or attempts to comply with the various requirements applicable to our qualification as a REIT. However, to the extent that any of our mezzanine loans do not meet all of the requirements for reliance on the safe harbor set forth in the Revenue Procedure, there can be no assurance that the IRS will not challenge the tax treatment of these loans.

We may also hold certain participation interests, including B Notes, in mortgage loans and mezzanine loans originated by other lenders. B Notes are an interests in underlying loans created by virtue of participations or similar agreement to which the originator of the loan is a party, along with one or more participants. The borrower on the underlying loan is typically not a party to the participation agreement. The performance of this investment depends upon the performance of the underlying loan and, if the underlying borrower defaults, the participant typically has no recourse against the originator of the loan. The originator often retains a senior position in the underlying loan and grants junior participations which absorb losses first in the event of a default by the borrower. We generally expect to treat our participation interests as qualifying real estate assets for purposes of the REIT asset tests described below and interest that we derive from such investments as qualifying mortgage interest for purposes of the 75% income test. The appropriate treatment of participation interests for federal income tax purposes is not entirely certain, however, and no assurance can be given that the IRS will not challenge our treatment of our participation interests. In the event of a determination that such participation interests do not qualify as real estate assets, or that the income that we derive from such participation interests does not qualify as mortgage interest for purposes of the REIT asset and income tests, we could be subject to a penalty tax, or could fail to qualify as a REIT.

We may make loans that have shared appreciation provisions. To the extent interest on a loan is based on the cash proceeds from the sale or value of property, income attributable to such provision

would be treated as gain from the sale of the secured property, which generally should qualify for purposes of the 75% and 95% gross income tests.

We may own assets or incur obligations in currencies other than the U.S. dollar and, as a result, we may recognize foreign currency gains for U.S. federal income tax purposes. In May 2007, the IRS issued Revenue Ruling 2007-33 and Notice 2007-42. The Revenue Ruling provides that foreign currency gains recognized by a REIT will be treated as qualifying income for purposes of the REIT 95% and 75% gross income tests to the extent the income underlying the foreign currency gains so qualifies. The Notice provides interim guidance that generally extends the foregoing treatment to foreign currency gains recognized by a REIT through a foreign office. For example, if we derive interest from a mortgage loan that qualifies for purposes of the REIT 95% and 75% gross income tests, any foreign currency gains we recognize that are attributable to the mortgage loan would also qualify for purposes of the REIT 95% and 75% gross income tests. We may, however, recognize foreign currency gains that are not treated as qualifying income for purposes of the REIT 95% and 75% gross income tests. To reduce the risk of non-qualifying foreign currency gains adversely affecting our REIT qualification, we may be required to defer the repatriation of cash from foreign jurisdictions or to employ other structures that could affect the timing, character or amount of income we receive or expense we incur from our non-U.S. dollar denominated assets and obligations. While we intend to manage our non-U.S. dollar denominated assets and obligations in a manner that does not jeopardize our ability to qualify as a REIT, there can be no assurance that the IRS will not challenge our qualification as a REIT as a result of foreign currency gains derived from our non-U.S. dollar denominated assets and obligations.

Lease income we receive will qualify as "rents from real property" only if the following conditions are met:

The amount of lease income may not be based in whole or in part on the income or profits of any person. "Rents from real property" may, however, include lease income based on a fixed percentage of receipts or sales. Some of the leases we have entered into provide for participation or similar rights in the net cash flow of the lessee in the excess of a threshold amount. Any amount received or accrued that is attributable to any such participation or similar rights would cause all rents received or accrued by us with respect to such lease to fail to qualify as "rents from real property." We have not received or accrued and do not expect to receive or accrue any amount attributable to any participation or similar rights with respect to these leases which, together with other nonqualifying income (for purposes of the 75% or 95% gross income tests) received or accrued during the same taxable year, would have caused or would cause us to violate the 75% or 95% gross income test for that taxable year.

Lease income received from a tenant will not qualify as "rents from real property" if iStar Financial, or an actual or constructive owner of 10% or more of iStar Financial, actually or constructively owns 10% or more of such tenant.

Lease income attributable to personal property leased in connection with a lease of real property does not exceed 15% of the total lease income received under the lease.

We generally may not render services to tenants of the property, other than through an independent contractor from whom we derive no revenue. We may, however, provide services that are "usually or customarily rendered" in connection with the rental of space for occupancy only and are not otherwise considered "rendered to the occupant" of the property. In addition, we may provide a *de minimis* amount of non-customary services. Finally, we may provide certain non-customary services to tenants through a taxable REIT subsidiary.

## Edgar Filing: ISTAR FINANCIAL INC - Form 424B3

We intend to maintain our REIT qualification by carefully monitoring any potential nonqualifying income for purposes of the 75% and 95% gross income tests discussed above. If we fail to satisfy one or both of the 75% or 95% gross income tests for any year, we may still qualify as a REIT if we are entitled to relief under the Internal Revenue Code. Generally, we may be entitled to relief if:

our failure to meet the gross income tests was due to reasonable cause and not due to willful neglect;

we attach a schedule of the sources of our income to our U.S. federal income tax return; and

any incorrect information on the schedule was not due to fraud with the intent to evade tax.

Beginning with our 2005 tax year, if we fail to satisfy one or both of the 75% or 95% gross income tests for any year, we may still qualify as a REIT if our failure to meet these tests was due to reasonable cause and not due to willful neglect and, following the identification of such failure, we set forth a description of each item of our gross income that satisfies the gross income tests in a schedule for the taxable year filed in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Treasury.

It is not possible to state whether in all circumstances we would be entitled to rely on these relief provisions. If these relief provisions do not apply to a particular set of circumstances, we would not qualify as a REIT. As discussed above in "Taxation of iStar Financial General," even if these relief provisions apply, and we retain our qualification as a REIT, a tax would be imposed with respect to our income that does not meet the gross income tests. We may not always be able to maintain compliance with the gross income tests for REIT qualification despite periodically monitoring our income.

### ***Foreclosure Property***

Net income realized by us from foreclosure property would generally be subject to tax at the maximum U.S. federal corporate tax rate (currently 35%). Foreclosure property means real property and related personal property that: (1) is acquired by us through foreclosure following a default on a lease of such property or a default on indebtedness owed to us that is secured by the property; and (2) for which we make an election to treat the property as foreclosure property.

### ***Prohibited Transaction Income***

Any gain realized by us on the sale of any property, other than foreclosure property, held as inventory or otherwise held primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of business will be prohibited transaction income, and subject to a 100% penalty tax. Prohibited transaction income may also adversely affect our ability to satisfy the gross income tests for qualification as a REIT. Whether property is held as inventory or primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of a trade or business depends on all the facts and circumstances surrounding the particular transaction. While the Internal Revenue Code provides standards which, if met, would not result in prohibited transaction income, we may not be able to meet these standards in all circumstances.

### ***Hedging Transactions***

We may enter into hedging transactions with respect to one or more of our assets or liabilities. Our hedging transactions could take a variety of forms, including interest rate swaps or cap agreements, options, futures contracts, forward rate agreements, or similar financial instruments. Except to the extent provided by Treasury regulations, any income from a hedging transaction to manage risk of interest rate or price changes or currency fluctuations with respect to borrowings made or to be made, or ordinary obligations incurred or to be incurred by us to acquire or own real estate assets, which is clearly identified as such before the close of the day on which it was acquired, originated or entered into, including gain from the disposition of such a transaction, will not constitute gross income for

purposes of the 95% gross income test (but generally will constitute non-qualifying gross income for purposes of the 75% income test). To the extent we enter into other types of hedging transactions, the income from those transactions is likely to be treated as non-qualifying income for purposes of both the 75% and 95% gross income tests. We intend to structure any hedging transactions in a manner that does not jeopardize our ability to qualify as a REIT.

### ***Foreign Investments***

To the extent that we make investments and incur obligations in currencies other than the U.S. dollar, we may generate foreign currency gains and losses. As noted above, the IRS recently ruled that foreign currency gains recognized by a REIT will be treated as qualifying income for purposes of the REIT 95% and 75% gross income tests to the extent the income underlying the foreign currency gains so qualifies. We may, however, recognize foreign currency gains that are not treated as qualifying income for purposes of the REIT 95% and 75% gross income tests. To reduce the risk of non-qualifying foreign currency gains adversely affecting our REIT qualification, we may be required to defer the repatriation of cash from foreign jurisdictions or employ other structures that affect the treatment of our foreign obligations and the timing, character and amount of income we receive from our foreign investments. In addition, certain income we derive from an equity investment in a foreign corporation may not be treated as qualifying income for purposes of the REIT 95% gross income test (and will not be treated as qualifying income for purposes of the REIT 75% gross income test). No assurance can be given that the IRS will not challenge our qualification as a REIT as a result of our foreign currency gains derived from our non-U.S. dollar denominated assets and obligations or income we derive from equity investments in foreign corporations.

### **Excess Inclusion Income**

If we are deemed to have issued debt obligations having two or more maturities, the payments on which correspond to payments on mortgage loans owned by us, such arrangement may be treated as a taxable mortgage pool for U.S. federal income tax purposes. If all or a portion of our company is considered a taxable mortgage pool, our qualification as a REIT generally should not be impaired; however, a portion of our taxable income may be characterized as "excess inclusion income". In addition, if we acquire residual interest in a REMIC, a portion of our income derived from such residual interest may also be characterized as excess inclusion income.

Recently issued IRS guidance indicates that our excess inclusion income will be allocated among our stockholders in proportion to our dividends paid. A stockholder's share of our excess inclusion income (i) would not be allowed to be offset by any net operating losses otherwise available to the stockholder, (ii) would be subject to tax as unrelated business taxable income in the hands of most tax-exempt stockholders, and (iii) would result in the application of U.S. federal income tax withholding at a rate of 30%, without reduction for any otherwise applicable income tax treaty, in the hands of a non-U.S. stockholder. In addition, the IRS has taken the position that we are subject to tax at the highest U.S. federal corporate income tax rate on our excess inclusion income allocated to "disqualified organizations" (generally, tax-exempt investors that are not subject to U.S. federal income tax on unrelated business taxable income, including governmental organizations and charitable remainder trusts) that hold our stock in record name. Further, the IRS has taken the position that broker/dealers and nominees holding our stock in "street name" on behalf of disqualified organizations are subject to U.S. federal income tax at the highest U.S. federal corporate income tax rate on our excess inclusion income allocated to such disqualified organizations. Similarly, a regulated investment company or other pass-through entity may be subject to U.S. federal income tax at the highest U.S. federal corporate income tax rate on our excess inclusion income to the extent such entities are owned by disqualified organizations.

Although we do not intend to invest a material portion of our assets in REMICs or taxable mortgage pools, in each case, of which we own or are treated as owning residual interests, we have owned such assets in the past. Stockholders are urged to consult their tax advisors with regard to the U.S. federal, state and local income tax consequences to them of excess inclusion income.

#### Asset Tests

At the close of each quarter of each of our taxable years, we must satisfy four tests relating to the nature and diversification of our assets. First, at least 75% of the value of our total assets must be real estate assets, cash, cash items and government securities. For purposes of this test, real estate assets include real estate mortgages, real property, interests in other REITs and stock or debt instruments held for one year or less that are purchased with the proceeds of a stock offering or a long-term public debt offering. In addition, any regular or residual interests we hold in a REMIC are generally treated as a real estate asset for purposes of the asset tests described above. If, however, less than 95% of the assets of a REMIC consist of real estate assets, we will be treated as holding our proportionate share of the assets of the REMIC, which generally would include assets both qualifying and not qualifying as real estate assets. Second, not more than 25% of our total assets may be represented by securities, other than those securities includable in the 75% asset class. Third, of the investments included in the 25% asset class and, except for investments in REITs, qualified REIT subsidiaries and taxable REIT subsidiaries, the value of any one issuer's securities that we hold may not exceed 5% of the value of our total assets, and we may not own more than 10% of the total vote or value of the outstanding securities of any one issuer. Fourth, not more than 20% of the value of our total assets may be represented by securities in one or more taxable REIT subsidiaries.

The 5% and 10% asset tests do not apply to securities of taxable REIT subsidiaries, qualified REIT subsidiaries or securities that are "real estate assets" for purposes of the 75% gross asset test described above. The 10% value test does not apply to certain "straight debt" and other excluded securities, as described in the Internal Revenue Code including, but not limited to, any loan to an individual or estate, any obligation to pay rents from real property and any security issued by a REIT. In addition, (a) a REIT's interest as a partner in a partnership is not considered a security for purposes of applying the 10% value test to securities issued by the partnership, (b) any debt instrument issued by a partnership (other than straight debt or another excluded security) will not be considered a security issued by the partnership if at least 75% of the partnership's gross income is derived from sources that would qualify for the 75% REIT gross income test, and (c) any debt instrument issued by a partnership (other than straight debt or another excluded security) will not be considered a security issued by the partnership to the extent of the REIT's interest as a partner in the partnership.

For purposes of the 10% value test, "straight debt" means a written unconditional promise to pay on demand on a specified date a sum certain in money if (i) the debt is not convertible, directly or indirectly, into stock, (ii) the interest rate and interest payment dates are not contingent on profits, the borrower's discretion, or similar factors other than certain contingencies relating to the timing and amount of principal and interest payments, as described in the Internal Revenue Code and (iii) in the case of an issuer which is a corporation or a partnership, securities that otherwise would be considered straight debt will not be so considered if we, and any of our "controlled taxable REIT subsidiaries" as defined in the Internal Revenue Code, hold any securities of the corporate or partnership issuer which: (a) are not straight debt or other excluded securities (prior to the application of this rule), and (b) have an aggregate value greater than 1% of the issuer's outstanding securities (including, for the purposes of a partnership issuer, our interest as a partner in the partnership).

We expect that any real property and temporary investments that we acquire will generally be qualifying assets for purposes of the 75% asset test, except to the extent that less than 95% of the assets of a REMIC in which we own an interest consists of "real estate assets." Mortgage loans will



generally be qualifying assets for purposes of the 75% asset test to the extent that the principal balance of each mortgage loan does not exceed the value of the associated real property.

Certain of our mezzanine loans may qualify for the safe harbor in Revenue Procedure 2003-65 pursuant to which certain loans secured by a first priority security interest in ownership interests in a partnership or limited liability company will be treated as qualifying assets for purposes of the 75% real estate asset test and the 10% vote or value test. See "Income Tests." We may make some mezzanine loans that do not qualify for that safe harbor and that do not qualify as "straight debt" securities or for one of the other exclusions from the definition of "securities" for purposes of the 10% value test. We intend to make such investments in such a manner as not to fail the asset tests described above. However, to the extent that our mezzanine loans do not meet all of the requirements for reliance on the safe harbor set forth in the Revenue Procedure, there can be no assurance that the IRS will not challenge the tax treatment of these loans.

The asset tests must be satisfied not only on the last day of the calendar quarter in which we acquire securities in the applicable issuer, but also on the last day of the calendar quarter in which we increase our ownership of securities of such issuer. After initially meeting the asset tests at the close of any quarter, we will not lose our status as a REIT for failure to satisfy the asset tests at the end of a later quarter solely by reason of changes in asset values. If we fail to satisfy an asset test because we acquire securities or other property during a quarter, we can cure this failure by disposing of sufficient non-qualifying assets within 30 days after the close of the quarter. If we fail the 5% asset test or the 10% asset test at the end of any quarter, and the such failure is not cured within 30 days thereafter, we may dispose of sufficient assets (generally, within six months after the last day of the quarter in which our identification of the failure to satisfy those asset tests occurred) to cure the violation, provided that the non-permitted assets do not exceed the lesser of 1% of our assets at the end of the relevant quarter or \$10,000,000. If we fail any of the other asset tests, or our failure of the 5% and 10% asset tests is in excess of this amount, as long as the failure was due to reasonable cause and not willful neglect, we are permitted to avoid disqualification as a REIT, after the thirty day cure period, by taking steps, including the disposition of sufficient assets to meet the asset tests (generally within six months after the last day of the quarter in which our identification of the failure to satisfy the REIT asset test occurred), and paying a tax equal to the greater of \$50,000 or 35% of the net income generated by the nonqualifying assets during the period in which we failed to satisfy the relevant asset test.

We believe that our holdings of securities and other assets will comply with the foregoing REIT asset test requirements, and we intend to monitor our compliance with such tests on an ongoing basis. However, the values of some of our assets may not be precisely valued, and values are subject to change in the future. Furthermore, the proper classification of an instrument as debt or equity for U.S. federal income tax purposes may be uncertain in some circumstances and we may not meet the IRS safe harbor described above with respect to one or more of our mezzanine loans, which could affect the application of the REIT asset tests. Accordingly, there can be no assurance that the Internal Revenue Service will not contend that our assets do not meet the requirements of the REIT asset tests.

#### **Annual Distribution Requirements**

To qualify as a REIT, we are required to distribute dividends, other than capital gain dividends, to our stockholders in an amount at least equal to the sum of: (1) 90% of our "REIT taxable income"; and (2) 90% of our after tax net income, if any, from foreclosure property; minus (3) the excess of the sum of certain items of non-cash income over 5% of our "REIT taxable income". In general, "REIT taxable income" means taxable ordinary income without regard to the dividends paid deduction.

We are required to distribute income in the taxable year in which it is earned, or in the following taxable year if such dividend distributions are declared in October, November or December of the taxable year, payable to stockholders of record on a specified date during such period and paid during

January of the following year. Such distributions are treated as paid by us and received by our stockholders on December 31 of the year in which they are declared. In addition, at our election, a distribution for a taxable year may be declared before we timely file our tax return and paid on or before our first regular dividend payment following such declaration, provided such payment is made during the twelve-month period following the close of our taxable year. These distributions are taxable to holders of common stock in the year in which paid, even though these distributions relate to our prior year for purposes of our 90% distribution requirement. To the extent that we do not distribute all of our net capital gain or distribute at least 90%, but less than 100% of our "REIT taxable income," we will be subject to tax at regular corporate tax rates.

From time to time we may not have sufficient cash or other liquid assets to meet the above distribution requirements due to timing differences between the actual receipt of cash and payment of expenses, and the inclusion of income and deduction of expenses in arriving at our taxable income. If these timing differences occur, in order to meet the REIT distribution requirements, we may need to arrange for short-term, or possibly long-term, borrowings, or to pay dividends in the form of taxable stock dividends.

Under certain circumstances, we may be able to rectify a failure to meet a distribution requirement for a year by paying "deficiency dividends" to our stockholders in a later year, which may be included in our deduction for dividends paid for the earlier year. Thus, we may be able to avoid being subject to tax on amounts distributed as deficiency dividends. We will be required, however, to pay interest based upon the amount of any deduction claimed for deficiency dividends. In addition, we will be subject to a 4% excise tax on the excess of the required distribution over the amounts actually distributed if we should fail to distribute each year at least the sum of 85% of our ordinary income for the year, 95% of our capital gain income for the year, and any undistributed taxable income from prior periods.

#### **Recordkeeping Requirements**

We are required to maintain records and request on an annual basis information from specified stockholders. These requirements are designed to assist us in determining the actual ownership of our outstanding stock and maintaining our qualifications as a REIT.

#### **Failure to Qualify**

In the event we violate a provision of the Internal Revenue Code that would result in our failure to qualify as a REIT, specified relief provisions will be available to us to avoid such disqualification if (1) the violation is due to reasonable cause, (2) we pay a penalty of \$50,000 for each failure to satisfy the provision and (3) the violation does not include a violation of the gross income or asset tests described above (for which other specified relief provisions are available). This cure provision reduces the instances that could lead to our disqualification as a REIT for violations due to reasonable cause.

If we fail to qualify for taxation as a REIT in any taxable year, and the relief provisions of the Internal Revenue Code do not apply, we will be subject to tax, including any applicable alternative minimum tax, and possibly increased state and local taxes, on our taxable income at regular corporate rates. Such taxation would reduce the cash available for distribution by us to our stockholders. Distributions to our stockholders in any year in which we fail to qualify as a REIT will not be deductible by us and we will not be required to distribute any amounts to our stockholders. In this situation, to the extent of current and accumulated earnings and profits, and, subject to limitations of the Internal Revenue Code, distributions to our stockholders through 2010 will generally be taxable to stockholders who are individual U.S. stockholders at a maximum rate of 15%, and dividends received by our corporate U.S. stockholders may be eligible for the dividends received deduction. Unless entitled to relief under specific statutory provisions, we would also be disqualified from taxation as a

REIT for the four taxable years following the year during which we lost our qualification. It is not possible to state whether in all circumstances we would be entitled to statutory relief.

## **Tax Aspects of Investments in Partnerships**

### ***General***

We may hold investments through entities that are classified as partnerships for U.S. federal income tax purposes. In general, partnerships are "pass-through" entities that are not subject to U.S. 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 subject to tax on such items without regard to whether the partners receive a distribution from the partnership. We will include in our income our proportionate share of these partnership items for purposes of the various REIT gross income tests, based on our capital interest in such partnership, and we will include our share of partnership items in our computation of our taxable income. Moreover, for purposes of the REIT asset tests, we will include our proportionate share of assets held by subsidiary partnerships (other than for purposes of the 10% value test, for which the determination of our interest in partnership assets will be based on our proportionate interest in any securities issued by the partnership, excluding for these purposes, certain excluded securities as described in the Internal Revenue Code). See "Effect of Subsidiary Entities Ownership of a Partnership Interest" above. Consequently, to the extent that we hold an equity interest in a partnership, the partnership's assets and operations may affect our ability to qualify as a REIT, even though we may have no control, or only limited influence, over the partnership.

### ***Entity Classification***

The investment by us in partnerships involves special tax considerations, including the possibility of a challenge by the Internal Revenue Service of the status of any of our subsidiary partnerships as a partnership, as opposed to an association taxable as a corporation, for U.S. federal income tax purposes. If any of these entities were treated as an association for U.S. federal income tax purposes, it would be taxable as a corporation and, therefore, would be subject to an entity-level tax on its net income. In such a situation, the character of our assets and items of our gross income would change and could preclude us from satisfying the REIT asset tests (particularly the tests generally preventing a REIT from owning more than 10% of the voting securities, or more than 10% of the value of the securities, of a corporation) or the gross income tests as discussed in "Requirements for Qualification as a REIT Asset Tests" and "Income Tests" above, and in turn could prevent us from qualifying as a REIT. See "Requirements for Qualification as a REIT Failure to Qualify," below, for a discussion of the effect of our failure to meet these tests for a taxable year. In addition, any change in the status of any of our subsidiary partnerships for U.S. federal income tax purposes might be treated as a taxable event, in which case we could have taxable income that is subject to the REIT distribution requirements without receiving any cash.

### ***Allocations with Respect to Partnership Properties***

Under the Internal Revenue Code and the Treasury regulations, 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 for tax purposes in a manner such that the contributing partner is charged with, or benefits from, 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 the contributed property and the adjusted tax basis of such property at the time of the contribution (a "book-tax difference"). Such allocations are solely for U.S. federal income tax purposes and do not affect the partnership's capital accounts or the other economic or legal arrangements among the partners.

To the extent that any of our subsidiary partnerships acquire appreciated (or depreciated) properties by way of capital contributions, allocations would need to be made in a manner consistent with these requirements. As a result, we could be allocated greater or lesser amounts of depreciation and taxable income in respect of such contributed properties than would have been the case if all of the partnership's assets had been acquired in exchange for cash at their agreed upon fair market value.

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

When we use the term "U.S. stockholder," we mean a beneficial owner of shares of our stock who is, for U.S. federal income tax purposes:

a citizen or resident of the United States;

a corporation, or other entity treated as a corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes created or organized in or under the laws of the United States or of any state thereof or in the District of Columbia, unless Treasury regulations provide otherwise;

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

a trust (a) whose administration 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 or (b) in existence on August 20, 1996, and treated as a United States person prior to such date, that has elected to continue to be treated as a United States person.

If a partnership holds shares of our stock, the tax treatment of a partner in the partnership will generally depend upon the status of the partner and the activities of the partnership. If you are a partner of a partnership holding shares of our stock, you should consult your tax advisor regarding the consequences of the ownership and disposition of shares of our stock.

### **Distributions Generally**

Distributions out of our current or accumulated earnings and profits, other than capital gain dividends will generally be taxable to our U.S. stockholders as ordinary income. For this purpose, our earnings and profits will be allocated first to our outstanding preferred shares, and then to our outstanding common shares. Provided we qualify as a REIT, our dividends will not be eligible for the dividends received deduction generally available to U.S. stockholders that are corporations.

Dividends received from REITs are generally not eligible to be taxed at the preferential qualified dividend income rates applicable to individual U.S. stockholders who receive dividends from taxable C corporations. An exception applies, however, and individual U.S. stockholders are taxed at such rates on dividends designated by and received from REITs, to the extent that the dividends are attributable to (i) "REIT taxable income" that the REIT previously retained in the prior year, and on which it was subject to corporate level tax, (ii) dividends received by the REIT from taxable domestic C corporations (including taxable REIT subsidiaries) and certain foreign corporations or (iii) income from sales of appreciated property acquired from C corporations in carryover basis transactions that has been subject to tax at the REIT level.

To the extent that we make distributions in excess of our current and accumulated earnings and profits, these distributions will be treated as a tax-free return of capital to each U.S. stockholder, and will reduce the adjusted tax basis which each U.S. stockholder has in its shares of stock by the amount of the distribution, but not below zero. Return of capital distributions in excess of a U.S. stockholder's adjusted tax basis in its shares will be taxable as capital gain, provided that the shares have been held

as capital assets, and will be taxable as long-term capital gain if the shares have been held for more than one year.

Dividends we declare in October, November, or December of any year and pay to a stockholder of record on a specified date in any of those months will be treated as both paid by us and received by the stockholder on December 31 of that year, provided we pay the dividend in January of the following year. Stockholders may not include in their own income tax returns any of our net operating losses or capital losses, or any credits for foreign taxes incurred by us. In addition stockholders are not allowed to use any of their net operating losses to offset any portion of our dividends treated as excess inclusion income. (See " Excess Inclusion Income").

#### ***Capital Gain Distributions***

Distributions designated as net capital gain dividends will be taxable to U.S. stockholders as capital gain income. Such capital gain income will be taxable to U.S. stockholders at a maximum rate of 15% (through 2010) in the case of U.S. stockholders who are individuals and 35% for corporations. Capital gains attributable to the sale of depreciable real property held for more than 12 months are subject to a 25% maximum U.S. federal income tax rate for U.S. stockholders to the extent of previously claimed depreciation deductions. U.S. stockholders that are corporations may be required to treat up to 20% of certain capital gain dividends as ordinary income.

#### ***Retention of Net Capital Gains***

We may elect to retain, rather than distribute as a capital gain dividend, our net capital gains. If we make this election, we would pay tax on such retained capital gains. In such a case, our stockholders would generally:

include their proportionate share of our undistributed net capital gains in their taxable income;

receive a credit for their proportionate share of the tax paid by us; and

increase the adjusted basis of their stock by the difference between the amount of their capital gain and their share of the tax paid by us.

#### ***Passive Activity Losses and Investment Interest Limitations***

Distributions we make and gain arising from the sale or exchange by a U.S. stockholder of our shares will not be treated as passive activity income. As a result, U.S. stockholders will not be able to apply any "passive losses" against income or gain relating to our stock. Distributions we make, to the extent they do not constitute a return of capital, generally will be treated as investment income for purposes of computing the investment interest limitation but the foregoing rule will not apply to distributions representing dividends to the extent such amounts are taxed at the preferential rates as discussed below unless the U.S. stockholders elect to be taxed on such amounts at a higher rate.

#### ***Dispositions of Stock***

If you are a U.S. stockholder and you sell or dispose of your shares of stock, you will recognize gain or loss for U.S. federal income tax purposes in an amount equal to the difference between the amount of cash and the fair market value of any property you receive on the sale or other disposition and your adjusted tax basis in the shares of stock. In general, capital gains recognized by individuals and other non-corporate U.S. stockholders upon the sale or disposition of shares of our stock will be subject to a maximum U.S. federal income tax rate of 15% for taxable years through 2010, if the shares are held for more than 12 months, and will be taxed at ordinary income rates (of up to 35% through 2010) if the shares are held for 12 months or less. Gains recognized by U.S. stockholders that are

corporations are subject to U.S. federal income tax at a maximum rate of 35%, whether or not classified as long-term capital gains. Capital losses recognized by a U.S. stockholder upon the disposition of our common stock are generally available only to offset capital gain income of the U.S. stockholder but not ordinary income (except in the case of individuals, who may offset up to \$3,000 of ordinary income each year). In addition, if you are a U.S. stockholder and you recognize loss upon the sale or other disposition of stock that you have held for six months or less, the loss you recognize will be treated as a long-term capital loss to the extent you received distributions from us which were required to be treated as long-term capital gains.

If a U.S. stockholder recognizes a loss upon a subsequent disposition of shares of our common stock in an amount that exceeds a prescribed threshold, it is possible that the provisions of recently adopted Treasury regulations involving "reportable transactions" could apply, with a resulting requirement to separately disclose the loss generating transaction to the Internal Revenue Service. While these regulations are directed towards "tax shelters," they are broadly written, and apply to transactions that would not typically be considered tax shelters. In addition, legislative proposals have been introduced in Congress, that, if enacted, would impose significant penalties for failure to comply with these requirements. You should consult your tax advisor concerning any possible disclosure obligation with respect to the receipt or disposition of shares of our common stock, or transactions that might be undertaken directly or indirectly by us. Moreover, you should be aware that we and other participants in transactions involving us (including their advisors) might be subject to disclosure or other requirements pursuant to these regulations.

### ***Backup Withholding***

We report to our U.S. stockholders and the Internal Revenue Service the amount of dividends paid during each calendar year, and the amount of any tax withheld. Under the backup withholding rules, a stockholder may be subject to backup withholding with respect to dividends paid unless the holder is a corporation or comes within other exempt categories and, when required, demonstrates this fact, or provides a taxpayer identification number or social security number, certifies as to no loss of exemption from backup withholding, and otherwise complies with applicable requirements of the backup withholding rules. A U.S. stockholder that does not provide us with his correct taxpayer identification number or social security number may also be subject to penalties imposed by the Internal Revenue Service. Backup withholding is not an additional tax. Any amount paid as backup withholding will be creditable against the stockholder's income tax liability. In addition, we may be required to withhold a portion of capital gain distributions to any stockholders who fail to certify their non-foreign status.

### **Taxation of Tax-Exempt Stockholders**

Except as provided below, the Internal Revenue Service has ruled that amounts distributed as dividends by a REIT do not constitute unrelated business taxable income when received by a tax-exempt entity, provided that the shares of the REIT are not otherwise used in an unrelated trade or business. Based on that ruling, provided that a tax-exempt stockholder has not held its shares as "debt financed property" within the meaning of the Internal Revenue Code (i.e., where the acquisition or holding of the property is financed through a borrowing by the tax exempt stockholder), the shares are not otherwise used in a unrelated trade or business, and we do not hold an asset that gives rise to "excess inclusion income" (see " Taxable Mortgage Pools" and " Excess Inclusion Income") dividend income on our stock and income from the sale of our stock should not be unrelated business taxable income to a tax-exempt stockholder. We may engage in transactions that would result in a portion of our dividend income being considered "excess inclusion income," and accordingly, a portion of our dividends received by a tax-exempt stockholder could be treated as unrelated businesses taxable income (See " Taxation of Tax-Exempt Stockholders Excess Inclusion Income").

## Edgar Filing: ISTAR FINANCIAL INC - Form 424B3

For tax-exempt stockholders which are social clubs, voluntary employee benefit associations, supplemental unemployment benefit trusts, and qualified group legal services plans exempt from U.S. federal income taxation under Sections 501(c)(7), (c)(9), (c)(17) and (c)(20) of the Internal Revenue Code, respectively, income from an investment in our shares will constitute unrelated business taxable income unless the organization is able to claim properly a deduction for amounts set aside or placed in reserve for certain purposes so as to offset the income generated by its investment in our shares. These prospective investors should consult their tax advisors concerning these "set aside" and reserve requirements.

Notwithstanding the above, however, a portion of the dividends paid by a "pension-held REIT" may be treated as unrelated business taxable income as to any pension trust which:

is described in Section 401(a) of the Internal Revenue Code;

is tax-exempt under Section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code; and

holds more than 10%, by value, of the interests in the REIT.

Tax-exempt pension funds that are described in Section 401(a) of the Internal Revenue Code are referred to below as "qualified trusts." A REIT is a "pension held REIT" if:

it would not have qualified as a REIT but for the fact that Section 856(h)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code provides that stock owned by a qualified trust is treated, for purposes of the  $\frac{5}{50}$  rule, as owned by the beneficiaries of the trust, rather than by the trust itself; and

either at least one qualified trust holds more than 25%, by value, of the interests in the REIT, or one or more qualified trusts, each of which owns more than 10%, by value, of the interests in the REIT, holds in the aggregate more than 50%, by value, of the interests in the REIT.

The percentage of any REIT dividend treated as unrelated business taxable income is equal to the ratio of:

the unrelated business taxable income earned by the REIT, treating the REIT as if it were a qualified trust and therefore subject to tax on unrelated business taxable income, to

the total gross income of the REIT.

A *de minimis* exception applies where the percentage is less than 5% for any year. As a result of the limitations on the transfer and ownership of stock contained in our Charter, we do not expect to be classified as a "pension-held REIT."

### ***Excess Inclusion Income:***

A portion of our net income (and, therefore, a portion of the dividends payable by us) may be treated as excess inclusion income from a residual interest in a REMIL or taxable mortgage pool, which may constitute unrelated business taxable income to a tax-exempt stockholder. (See " Excess Inclusion Income".) Although we do not currently own any residual interests in a REMIL or taxable mortgage pool, it is possible that we may own such interests in the future. Prospective stockholders should consult their tax advisors regarding the U.S. federal income tax consequences to them of incurring excess inclusion income.

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

The rules governing U.S. federal income taxation of beneficial owners of our stock that are not U.S. stockholders ("Non-U.S. stockholders") are complex and no attempt will be made herein to provide more than a summary of such rules.

PROSPECTIVE NON-U.S. STOCKHOLDERS SHOULD CONSULT THEIR TAX ADVISOR TO DETERMINE THE IMPACT OF FOREIGN, U.S. FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL INCOME TAX LAWS WITH REGARD TO AN INVESTMENT IN OUR SECURITIES AND OF OUR ELECTION TO BE TAXED AS A REIT INCLUDING ANY REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.

Distributions to Non-U.S. stockholders that are not attributable to gain from sales or exchanges by us of U.S. real property interests and are not designated by us as capital gain dividends or retained capital gains will be treated as dividends of ordinary income to the extent that they are made out of our current or accumulated earnings and profits. Such distributions will generally be subject to a withholding tax equal to 30% of the distribution unless an applicable tax treaty reduces or eliminates that tax. However, if income from an investment in our stock is treated as effectively connected with the Non-U.S. stockholder's conduct of a U.S. trade or business, the Non-U.S. stockholder generally will be subject to U.S. federal income tax at graduated rates, in the same manner as U.S. stockholders are taxed with respect to such distributions (and also may be subject to the 30% branch profits tax in the case of a Non-U.S. stockholder that is a corporation). We expect to withhold U.S. income tax at the rate of 30% on the gross amount of any distributions made to a Non-U.S. stockholder unless: (1) a lower treaty rate applies and any required form, such as an IRS Form W-8BEN, evidencing eligibility for that reduced rate is provided by the Non-U.S. stockholder to us; or (2) the Non-U.S. stockholder provides us with an IRS Form W-8ECI certifying that the distribution is effectively connected income.

Any portion of the dividends paid to Non-U.S. stockholders that is treated as excess inclusion income will not be eligible for exemption from the 30% withholding tax or a reduced treaty rate. (See " Excess Inclusion Income.")

Distributions in excess of our current and accumulated earnings and profits will not be taxable to a stockholder to the extent that such distributions do not exceed the adjusted basis of the stockholder's stock, but rather will reduce the adjusted basis of such shares. To the extent that distributions in excess of current and accumulated earnings and profits exceed the adjusted basis of a Non-U.S. stockholder's stock, such distributions will give rise to tax liability if the Non-U.S. stockholder would otherwise be subject to tax on any gain from the sale or disposition of its stock, as described below. Because it generally cannot be determined at the time a distribution is made whether or not such distribution will be in excess of current and accumulated earnings and profits, the entire amount of any distribution normally will be subject to withholding at the same rate as a dividend. However, amounts so withheld are refundable to the extent it is subsequently determined that such distribution was, in fact, in excess of our current and accumulated earnings and profits. We are also required to withhold 10% of any distribution in excess of our current and accumulated earnings and profits. Consequently, although we intend to withhold at a rate of 30% on the entire amount of any distribution, to the extent that we do not do so, any portion of a distribution not subject to withholding at a rate of 30% will be subject to withholding at a rate of 10%.

For any year in which we qualify as a REIT, distributions that are attributable to gain from sales or exchanges of a U.S. real property interest, which includes certain interests in U.S. real property, but generally does not include mortgage loans, will be taxed to a Non-U.S. stockholder under the provisions of the Foreign Investment in Real Property Tax Act of 1980 ("FIRPTA"). We hold both assets that constitute U.S. real property interests and assets that do not. To the extent our assets do not constitute U.S. real property interests, distributions by us from the sales of such assets will not be subject to tax under the FIRPTA rules. Under FIRPTA, distributions attributable to gain from sales of U.S. real property interests are taxed to a Non-U.S. stockholder as if such gain were effectively connected with a U.S. business. Non-U.S. stockholders thus would be taxed at the normal capital gain rates applicable to U.S. stockholders (subject to applicable alternative minimum tax and a special alternative minimum tax in the case of nonresident alien individuals). Distributions subject to FIRPTA also may be subject to the 30% branch profits tax in the hands of a Non-U.S. stockholder that is a corporation. However, the 35% withholding tax will not apply to any capital gain dividend with respect



to any class of our stock which is regularly traded on an established securities market located in the United States if the Non-U.S. stockholder did not own more than 5% of such class of stock at any time during the taxable year. Instead, any capital gain dividend will be treated as a distribution subject to the rules discussed above under "Taxation of Non-U.S. Stockholders." Also, the branch profits tax will not apply to such a distribution.

Gain recognized by a Non-U.S. stockholder upon a sale of our stock generally will not be taxed under FIRPTA if we are a "domestically controlled REIT," which is a REIT in which at all times during a specified testing period less than 50% in value of the stock was held directly or indirectly by Non-U.S. persons. Although we currently believe that we are a domestically controlled REIT, because our stock is publicly traded, no assurance can be given that we are or will remain a domestically controlled REIT. Even if we do not qualify as a domestically controlled REIT, an alternative exemption to tax under FIRPTA might be available if either (a) we are not (and have not been for the five year period prior to the sale) a U.S. real property holding corporation (as defined in the Internal Revenue Code and applicable Treasury regulations to generally include a corporation, 50% or more of the assets of which consist of U.S. real property interests) or (b) the selling Non-U.S. stockholder owns, actually or constructively, 5% or less of our stock throughout a specified testing period and our shares are regularly traded (as defined in applicable Treasury regulations) on an established securities market. If we did not qualify as a domestically controlled REIT and a Non-U.S. stockholder does not qualify for the above exception, amounts realized by such Non-U.S. stockholder upon a sale of our stock generally would be subject to withholding under FIRPTA at a rate of 10%.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, if a Non-U.S. stockholder disposes of our stock during the 30-day period preceding a dividend payment, and such Non-U.S. stockholder (or a person related to such Non-U.S. stockholder) acquires or enters into a contract or option to acquire our stock within 61 days of the 1st day of the 30-day described above, and any portion of such dividend payment would, but for the disposition, be subject to tax under FIRPTA to such Non-U.S. stockholder, then such Non-U.S. stockholder will be subject to tax under FIRPTA in amount that, but for the disposition, would have been subject to tax under FIRPTA.

Gain not subject to FIRPTA will be taxable to a Non-U.S. stockholder if: (1) the Non-U.S. stockholder's investment in the stock is effectively connected with a U.S. trade or business, in which case the Non-U.S. stockholder will be subject to the same treatment as U.S. stockholders with respect to such gain; or (2) the Non-U.S. stockholder is a nonresident alien individual who was present in the U.S. for 183 days or more during the taxable year and other conditions are met, in which case the nonresident alien individual will be subject to a 30% tax on the individual's capital gains. If the gain on the sale of the stock were to be subject to taxation under FIRPTA, the Non-U.S. stockholder would be subject to the same treatment as U.S. stockholders with respect to such gain (subject to 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 Non-U.S. corporations).

#### **State, Local and Foreign Taxation**

We may be required to pay state, local and foreign taxes in various state, local and foreign jurisdictions, including those in which we transact business or make investments, and our stockholders may be required to pay state, local and foreign taxes in various state, local and foreign jurisdictions, including those in which they reside. Our state, local and foreign tax treatment may not conform to the U.S. federal income tax consequences summarized above. In addition, your state, local and foreign tax treatment may not conform to the U.S. federal income tax consequences summarized above. Consequently, you should consult your tax advisor regarding the effect of state, local and foreign tax laws on an investment in our securities.

### **Possible Legislative or Other Actions Affecting REITs**

The rules dealing with U.S. federal income taxation are constantly under review by persons involved in the legislative process and by the Internal Revenue Service and the U.S. Treasury Department. Changes to the tax law, which may have retroactive application, could adversely affect us and our investors. It cannot be predicted whether, when, in what forms, or with what effective dates, the tax law applicable to us or our investors will be changed.

### **PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION**

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

Underwriters may offer and sell the securities at a fixed price or prices, which may be changed, 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 agents to offer and sell the securities to purchasers upon the terms and conditions set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. In connection with the sale of securities, underwriters may 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 the 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.

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

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 of 1933, as amended. Underwriters, dealers and agents may be entitled, under agreements entered into with us and our operating partnership, to indemnification against and contribution toward civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended.

Any securities issued hereunder (other than common stock) will be new issues of securities with no established trading market. Any underwriters or agents to or through whom such securities are sold by us or the operating partnership for public offering and sale may make a market in such securities, but such underwriters or agents will not be obligated to do so and may discontinue any market making at any time without notice. We cannot assure you as to the liquidity of the trading market for any such securities.

In connection with the offering of the securities described in this prospectus and an accompanying prospectus supplement, certain underwriters and selling group members and their respective affiliates, may engage in transactions that stabilize, maintain or otherwise affect the market price of the security being offered. These transactions may include stabilization transactions effected in accordance with Rule 104 of Regulation M promulgated by the SEC pursuant to which these persons may bid for or purchase securities for the purpose of stabilizing their market price.

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

Any underwriters and their affiliates may be customers of, engage in transactions with and perform services for us and the operating partnership and its subsidiaries in the ordinary course of business.

#### **LEGAL MATTERS**

Clifford Chance US LLP, 31 West 52nd Street, New York, New York 10019, will pass upon the validity of the securities we are offering by this prospectus. If the validity of any securities is also passed upon by counsel for the underwriters of an offering of those securities, that counsel will be named in the prospectus supplement relating to that offering. Clifford Chance US LLP will rely upon the opinion of Venable LLP with respect to certain matters of Maryland law.

#### **EXPERTS**

The financial statements and management's assessment of the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting (which is included in Management's Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting) incorporated in this Registration Statement by reference to the Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2006 have been so incorporated in reliance on the report of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, given on the authority of said firm as experts in auditing and accounting.

**INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BY REFERENCE**

We are incorporating by reference in this prospectus the following documents which we have previously filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission under the File Number 333-142539:

- (1) Annual Report on Form 10-K for fiscal year ended December 31, 2006.
- (3) Definitive Proxy Statement dated April 27, 2007.
- (4) Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on May 9, 2007 and August 9, 2007.
- (5) Current Reports on Form 8-K filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on January 16, 2007, January 25, 2007, March 15, 2007, May 24, 2007, July 2, 2007, July 9, 2007 and September 18, 2007.
- (6) The description of the shares of common stock contained in the Registration Statement on Form 8-A on October 5, 1999.

Whenever after the date of this prospectus we file reports or documents under Section 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, those reports and documents will be deemed to be part of this prospectus from the time they are filed. If anything in a report or document we file after the date of this prospectus changes anything in it, this prospectus will be deemed to be changed by that subsequently filed report or document beginning on the date the report or document is filed.

We will provide to each person to whom a copy of this prospectus is delivered a copy of any or all of the information that has been incorporated by reference in this prospectus, but not delivered with this prospectus. We will provide this information at no cost to the requestor upon written or oral request addressed to iStar Financial Inc., 1114 Avenue of the Americas, New York, New York 10036, attention: Investor Relations Department (Telephone: (212) 930-9400).

**INFORMATION WE FILE**

We file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other materials with the SEC. The public may read and copy any materials we file with the SEC at the SEC's Public Reference Room at 450 Fifth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20549. The public may obtain information on the operation of the Public Reference Room by calling the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330. The SEC maintains an Internet site that contains reports, proxy and information statements and other information regarding issuers (including us) that file electronically with the SEC. The address of that site is <http://www.sec.gov>.

Reports, proxy statements and other information we file also can be inspected at the offices of the New York Stock Exchange, 20 Broad Street, New York, New York 10005.

**6,000,000 Shares**

**Common Stock**

---

**PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT**

**December , 2007**

---

*Joint Book-Running Managers*

**Citi**

**JPMorgan**

**Wachovia Securities**

*Co-Managers*

**Banc of America Securities LLC**

**Bear, Stearns & Co. Inc.**

**Deutsche Bank Securities**

**Lehman Brothers**

**UBS Investment Bank**

---

---

---

QuickLinks

[6.000.000 Shares](#)

[TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)

[FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS](#)

[iSTAR FINANCIAL INC.](#)

[RECENT DEVELOPMENTS](#)

[THE OFFERING](#)

[USE OF PROCEEDS](#)

[CAPITALIZATION](#)

[UNDERWRITING](#)

[LEGAL MATTERS](#)

[TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)

[ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS](#)

[FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS](#)

[iSTAR FINANCIAL INC.](#)

[RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES](#)

[USE OF PROCEEDS](#)

[DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES](#)

[DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS](#)

[DESCRIPTION OF COMMON STOCK AND PREFERRED STOCK](#)

[DESCRIPTION OF DEPOSITARY SHARES](#)

[CERTAIN U.S. FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSEQUENCES](#)

[PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION](#)

[LEGAL MATTERS](#)

[EXPERTS](#)

[INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BY REFERENCE](#)

[INFORMATION WE FILE](#)