



**Ellicott City, MD 21043**

**(410) 750-0020**

*(Address, including zip code, and telephone number,  
including area code, of registrant's principal executive offices)*

**Mary Ann Scully**

**President, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer**

**Howard Bancorp, Inc.**

**6011 University Blvd., Suite 370**

**Ellicott City, MD 21043**

**(410) 750-0020**

*(Name, address, including zip code, and telephone number,  
including area code, of agent for service)*

***With copies to:***

**Michael P. Reed**

**Christopher J. DeCresce**

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**One CityCenter**

**850 Tenth Street N.W.**

**Washington, D.C. 20001**

**(202) 662-6000**

**Approximate date of commencement of proposed sale to the public:** From time to time after this registration statement becomes effective.

If the only securities being registered on this Form are being offered pursuant to dividend or interest reinvestment plans, please check the following box. "

If any of the securities being registered on this Form are to be offered on a delayed or continuous basis pursuant to Rule 415 under the Securities Act of 1933, other than securities offered only in connection with dividend or interest reinvestment plans, please check the following box.

If this Form is filed to register additional securities for an offering pursuant to Rule 462(b) under the Securities Act, please check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering.

If this Form is a post-effective amendment filed pursuant to Rule 462(c) under the Securities Act, please check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering.

If this Form is a registration statement pursuant to General Instruction I.D. or a post-effective amendment thereto that shall become effective upon filing with the Commission pursuant to Rule 462(e) under the Securities Act, check the following box.

If this Form is a post-effective amendment to a registration statement filed pursuant to General Instruction I.D. filed to register additional securities or additional classes of securities pursuant to Rule 413(b) under the Securities Act, check the following box.

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer, a smaller reporting company, or an emerging growth company. See the definitions of "large accelerated filer," "accelerated filer," "smaller reporting company" and "emerging growth company" in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Large accelerated filer <input type="checkbox"/>   | Accelerated filer <input type="checkbox"/>       |
| Non-accelerated filer <input type="checkbox"/> (Do not check if a smaller reporting company) | Small reporting company <input type="checkbox"/> |
|  | Emerging growth company <input type="checkbox"/> |

If an emerging growth company, indicate by check mark if the registrant has elected not to use the extended transition period for complying with any new or revised financial accounting standards provided pursuant to Section 7(a)(2)(B) of Securities Act.

**CALCULATION OF REGISTRATION FEE**

| <b>Title of each Class of Securities to be Registered</b> | <b>Amount to be Registered<sup>(1)</sup></b> | <b>Proposed Maximum Offering Price Per Unit<sup>(1)</sup></b> | <b>Proposed Maximum Aggregate Offering Price<sup>(1)</sup></b> | <b>Amount of Registration Fee<sup>(2)</sup></b> |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| Common Stock, par value \$0.01 per share                  |  |   |  |   |
| Preferred Stock, par value \$0.01 per share               |  |   |  |   |
| Warrants <sup>(3)</sup>                                   |  |   |  |   |
| Subscription Rights                                       |  |   |  |   |
| Debt Securities   |  |   |  |   |
| Depositary Shares <sup>(4)</sup>                          |  |   |  |   |
| Purchase Contracts <sup>(5)</sup>                         |  |   |  |   |
| Purchase Units <sup>(6)</sup>                             |  |   |  |   |
| Units <sup>(7)</sup>                                      |  |   |  |   |
| <b>Total</b>  |  |   | <b>\$75,000,000</b>  | <b>\$ 8,692.50</b>                              |

An indeterminate number of securities of each identified class are being registered as may from time to time be offered at indeterminate prices, including an indeterminate number or amount of securities that may be issued upon the conversion, exercise, settlement or exchange of securities offered hereunder, which together shall have an aggregate initial offering price not to exceed \$75,000,000. If any of the securities are issued in an amount (1) denominated in a foreign currency or composite currency, such amount as shall result in an aggregate initial offering price equivalent thereto in United States dollars at the time of initial offering. Separate consideration may or may not be received for securities that are issuable on conversion, exercise, settlement or exchange of convertible or exchangeable securities.

Calculated pursuant to Rule 457(o) under the Securities Act of 1933. Pursuant to Rule 415(a)(6) under the Securities Act of 1933, this registration statement includes \$8,600,000 aggregate offering price of unsold securities previously registered under the Registration Statement on Form S-3 (File No. 333-214333), which was declared effective on December 13, 2016. Pursuant to Rule 457(p) under the Securities Act of 1933, the registration fee of (2) \$996.74 previously paid with respect to such unsold securities in connection with the previous registration statement is offset against the filing fee due hereunder. Pursuant to Rule 415(a)(6) under the Securities Act, the offering of unsold securities under such previous registration statement will be deemed terminated as of the date of effectiveness of this registration statement.

(3) Includes warrants to purchase common stock, preferred stock or debt securities.

(4) Each depositary share will be issued under a deposit agreement and will represent a fractional share or multiple shares of preferred stock.

(5) Purchase contracts may be issued separately or as purchase units.

Purchase units may consist of a purchase contract and debt securities registered under this registration statement or (6) debt obligations of third parties, including U.S. treasury securities, securing the holders' obligations to purchase the common stock, preferred stock or debt securities under the purchase contracts.

(7) Each unit will be issued under a unit agreement and will represent an interest in two or more securities registered hereunder, which may or may not be separable from one another.

**The registrant hereby amends this registration statement on such date or dates as may be necessary to delay its effective date until the registrant shall file a further amendment which specifically states that this registration statement shall thereafter become effective in accordance with Section 8(a) of the Securities Act of 1933 or until the registration statement shall become effective on such date as the Commission, acting pursuant to said Section 8(a), may determine.**

**The information in this prospectus is not complete and may be changed. We may not sell these securities until the registration statement filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission is effective. This prospectus is not an offer to sell these securities and it is not soliciting an offer to buy these securities in any state where the offer or sale is not permitted.**

**Subject to completion, dated July 17, 2017**

**PROSPECTUS**

**Howard Bancorp, Inc.**

**\$75,000,000**

**Common Stock**

**Preferred Stock**

**Warrants**

**Subscription Rights**

**Debt Securities**

**Depositary Shares**

**Purchase Contracts**

**Purchase Units**

**Units**

We may offer and sell from time to time, together or separately, in one or more offerings, any combination of the securities listed above. The securities we may offer may be convertible into or exchangeable for other securities. The maximum aggregate initial public offering price of the securities offered through this prospectus is \$75,000,000, or the foreign currency equivalent thereof.

This prospectus provides a general description of these securities. We will provide the specific terms of the securities offered in supplements to this prospectus at the time we offer the securities. This prospectus may not be used to sell securities unless accompanied by a prospectus supplement. The prospectus supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. Please read this prospectus, the applicable prospectus supplement, as well as any documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement, carefully before you invest in any of our securities.

The securities may be offered directly by us on a continuous or delayed basis, through agents designated from time to time by us, to or through dealers or underwriters, or directly to purchasers. The prospectus supplement for each offering of securities will describe in detail the plan of distribution for that offering. If any agents, dealers or underwriters are involved in the sale of any of the securities, their names, and any applicable purchase price, fee, commission or discount arrangement between or among them will be set forth, or will be calculable from the information set forth, in the applicable prospectus supplement. See the sections of this prospectus entitled “About This Prospectus” and “Plan of Distribution” for more information. Net proceeds from the sale of securities will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Our common stock is listed on The Nasdaq Capital Market under the symbol “HBMD.” On July 14, 2017, the last reported sales price per share of our common stock on The Nasdaq Capital Market was \$19.90.

**Investing in the securities involves certain risks. See “Risk Factors” beginning on page 5 of this prospectus and contained in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2016, which is incorporated herein by reference, as well as any risk factors included in, or incorporated by reference into, the applicable prospectus supplement, to read about factors you should consider before buying any securities issued by us.**

**These securities are not savings accounts, deposits or other obligations of any of our bank and non-bank subsidiaries and are not insured or guaranteed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or any other government agency.**

**Neither the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, any state securities commission, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System nor any other regulatory body**



**has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus is accurate or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.**

The date of this prospectus is \_\_\_\_\_, 2017.

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## ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of a registration statement on Form S-3 that we filed with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (the “SEC”) using a “shelf” registration process. Under this shelf registration statement, we may offer and sell any combination of the securities described in this prospectus from time to time in one or more offerings up to a total dollar amount of \$75,000,000, or the foreign currency equivalent thereof.

This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities we may offer. Each time we offer and sell securities, we will provide a prospectus supplement that will contain specific information about the terms of that offering. We may also authorize one or more free writing prospectuses to be provided to you that may contain material information relating to that offering. The applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus that we may authorize to be provided to you may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus or in the documents that we have incorporated by reference. This prospectus does not contain all of the information set forth in the registration statement and the exhibits to the registration statement. You should read this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus together with additional information from the sources described in “Where You Can Find More Information” in this prospectus. You should not assume that the information in this prospectus, the prospectus supplements, any free writing prospectus or any document incorporated by reference is accurate as of any date other than the date of the applicable document.

The distribution of this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement and the offering of the securities in certain jurisdictions may be restricted by law. Persons into whose possession this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement come should inform themselves about and observe any such restrictions. This prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement do not constitute, and may not be used in connection with, an offer or solicitation by anyone in any jurisdiction in which such offer or solicitation is not authorized or in which the person making such offer or solicitation is not qualified to do so or to any person to whom it is unlawful to make such offer or solicitation.

References to “we,” “us,” “our,” “Howard Bancorp” or the “Company” refer to Howard Bancorp, Inc. and its subsidiaries, unless the context otherwise requires, and references to the “Bank” refer to Howard Bank.

## WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. Our SEC filings are available to the public at the SEC's web site at [www.sec.gov](http://www.sec.gov). You may also read and copy any document we file at the SEC's public reference room at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the public reference room.

The SEC allows us to "incorporate by reference" into this prospectus the information in documents we file with the SEC, which means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to those documents. The information incorporated by reference is considered to be a part of this prospectus and should be read with the same care. When we update the information contained in documents that have been incorporated by reference, by making future filings with the SEC, the information incorporated by reference in this prospectus is considered to be automatically updated and superseded. In other words, in all cases, if you are considering whether to rely on information contained in this prospectus or information incorporated by reference into this prospectus, you should rely on the information contained in the document that was filed later. We incorporate by reference the documents listed below (File No. 001-35489 except where stated), which are considered to be a part of this prospectus:

- our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2016 (our "2016 Form 10-K"), filed with the SEC on March 16, 2017 (including the portions of our Definitive Proxy Statement on Schedule 14A, filed with the SEC on April 11, 2017, incorporated by reference therein);

- our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2017, filed with the SEC on May 10, 2017;

- our Current Reports on Form 8-K filed on January 24, 2017 (filed under Items 5.03 and 9.01), February 1, 2017, March 24, 2017 and May 24, 2017 (filed under Item 5.07); and

- the description of our common stock contained in Amendment No. 4 to our Registration Statement on Form S-1 (File No. 333-178204), filed with the SEC on May 14, 2012, as updated and amended from time to time.

All reports and other documents we subsequently file under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the "Exchange Act"), prior to the termination of this offering, including all such documents we may file with the SEC after the date of the initial registration statement and prior to the effectiveness of the registration statement, but excluding any information furnished to, rather than filed with, the SEC, will also be incorporated by reference into this prospectus and deemed to be part of this prospectus from the date of the filing of such reports and documents. The most recent information that we file with the SEC automatically updates and supersedes older information. The information contained in any such filing will be deemed to be a part of this prospectus commencing on the date on which the document is filed.

Any documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus are available without charge to you on the Internet at [www.howardbank.com](http://www.howardbank.com) or if you call or write to: George C. Coffman, Executive Vice President, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer, Howard Bancorp, Inc., 6011 University Blvd., Suite 370, Ellicott City, Maryland 21043, telephone: (410) 750-0020. The reference to our website is not intended to be an active link and the information on our website is not, and you must not consider the information to be, a part of this prospectus.

**You should rely only on the information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement. Neither we nor any underwriter or agent have authorized anyone else to provide you with additional or different information. We may only use this prospectus to sell securities if it is accompanied by a prospectus supplement. We are only offering these securities in jurisdictions where the offer is permitted. You should not assume that the information in this prospectus or the applicable prospectus supplement or any document incorporated by reference is accurate as of any date other than the dates of the applicable documents.**

## FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus, any applicable prospectus supplement and the documents incorporated by reference herein and therein may contain “forward-looking statements” within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the “Securities Act”), and Section 21E of the Exchange Act. All statements that are not descriptions of historical facts are forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements often use words such as “anticipate,” “believe,” “contemplate,” “estimate,” “expect,” “forecast,” “intend,” “may,” “plan,” “project,” “should” “will,” or other words meaning. You can also identify them by the fact that they do not relate strictly to historical or current facts.

Forward-looking statements include statements with respect to our belief, plans, objectives, goals, expectations, anticipations, assumptions, estimates, intensions and future performance, including our growth strategy and expansion plans, including potential acquisitions. Forward-looking statements involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors, which may be beyond or control, and which may cause our actual results, performance or achievements to be materially different from future results, performance or achievements expressed or implied by such forward-looking statements. Factors that could cause actual results and performance to differ from those expressed in any of our forward-looking statements include, but are not limited to:

- deterioration in general economic conditions, either nationally or in our market area, or a return to recessionary conditions;

- competition among depository and other financial institutions;

- inflation and changes in the interest rate environment that reduce our margins or reduce the fair value of financial instruments;

- adverse changes in the securities markets;

- changes in laws or government regulations or policies affecting financial institutions, including changes in regulatory fees and capital requirements;

- our ability to enter new markets successfully and capitalize on growth opportunities, and to otherwise implement our growth strategy;

- our ability to successfully integrate acquired entities, if any;

changes in consumer spending, borrowing and savings habits;

changes in accounting policies and practices, as may be adopted by the bank regulatory agencies, the Financial Accounting Standards Board, the SEC and the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board; and

loss of key personnel.

These and other risks and uncertainties are more fully discussed in the risk factors identified in “Item 1A. Risk Factors” in Part I of our 2016 Form 10-K, and in other filings we make with the SEC. All forward-looking statements included in this prospectus, any applicable prospectus supplement or in a document incorporated by reference herein or therein speak only as of the date such document. We undertake no obligation to update any forward-looking statement to reflect factual assumptions, circumstances or events that have changed after we have made the forward-looking statements. You should not put undue reliance on any forward-looking statements.

## THE COMPANY

Howard Bancorp, Inc., the parent company of Howard Bank, was incorporated in April 2005 under the laws of the State of Maryland.

Howard Bank, which was formed in 2004, is headquartered in Ellicott City, which is located in Howard County, Maryland. The Bank has branches in Howard County as well as in Anne Arundel County, Baltimore County, Baltimore City, Cecil County and Harford County in Maryland. We engage in a general commercial banking business, making various types of loans and accepting deposits. We market our financial services to small and medium sized businesses and their owners, professionals and executives, high-net-worth individuals (the “mass affluent”) and consumers generally.

Our core business strategy involves driving organic loan growth by delivering advice and superior customer service to clients through local decision makers. We combine the Bank’s specialized focus on both local markets and small and medium-sized business related market segments with a broad array of products, new technology and seasoned banking professionals to position the Bank differently from most competitors. Our experienced executives establish a relationship with each client and bring value to all phases of a client’s business and personal banking needs. To develop this strategy, we have established long-standing relationships with key customers in the community and with local business leaders who can create business opportunities. It is this philosophy toward the business which has afforded the Company great success in attracting and retaining top-tier, high quality lending teams from other institutions.

Our primary source of revenue is net interest income, with fees generated by lending, mortgage banking and depository service charges constituting a smaller, but growing, percentage of revenues. We have positioned the balance sheet to hold a high percentage of earning assets and, in turn, to have those earning assets dominated by loans rather than investment securities. Generally, our loans earn more attractive returns than investments and are a key source of product cross sales and customer referrals.

As of March 31, 2017, we had consolidated total assets, net loans, deposits and stockholders’ equity of \$1.05 billion, \$840.6 million, \$852.0 million and \$126.0 million, respectively.

Our principal executive offices are located at 6011 University Blvd., Suite 370, Ellicott City, Maryland 21043 and our telephone number is (410) 750-0020.





## RISK FACTORS

Investing in securities issued by us involves certain risks. Before you invest in any securities issued by us, in addition to the other information included in, or incorporated by reference into, this prospectus, you should carefully consider the risk factors contained in Part I, Item 1A under the caption “Risk Factors” and elsewhere in our 2016 Form 10-K, which is incorporated by reference into this prospectus, as updated by our annual or quarterly reports for subsequent fiscal years or fiscal quarters that we file with the SEC and that are so incorporated. See “Where You Can Find More Information” for information about how to obtain a copy of these documents. You should also carefully consider the risks and other information that may be contained in, or incorporated by reference into, any prospectus supplement relating to specific offerings of securities.

## CONSOLIDATED RATIOS OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES AND PREFERRED STOCK DIVIDENDS

Our consolidated ratio of earnings to fixed charges (from continuing operations) and earnings to fixed charges and preferred stock dividends for the most recent interim period ended as of March 31, 2017, and for each of the five fiscal years ended December 31, 2016, 2015, 2014, 2013 and 2012 are as follows:

|  | Three<br>Months<br>Ended<br>March 31,<br>2017 | Year Ended December 31, |      |       |       |       |
|--|---|-------------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|
|  |   | 2016                    | 2015 | 2014  | 2013  | 2012  |
| Ratio of earnings to fixed charges                               |   |                         |      |       |       |       |
| Including interest on deposits                                   | 3.25  | 2.81                    | 1.69 | 8.19  | 2.55  | 2.38  |
| Excluding interest on deposits                                   | 11.77   | 8.54                    | 5.59 | 54.45 | 13.02 | 13.15 |
| Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges and Preferred Stock Dividends |   |                         |      |       |       |       |
| Including interest on deposits                                   | 3.25  | 2.66                    | 1.57 | 7.53  | 2.26  | 1.56  |
| Excluding interest on deposits                                   | 11.77   | 6.91                    | 3.71 | 33.06 | 6.47  | 2.34  |

For purposes of determining the ratios of earnings to fixed charges and earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends, earnings are defined as the sum of pre-tax income from continuing operations and fixed charges. Fixed charges means the sum of interest expensed and capitalized.

On May 6, 2016, we redeemed 12,562 shares of our Senior Non-Cumulative Perpetual Preferred Stock, Series AA, which we had issued to the U.S. Department of the Treasury on September 22, 2011 pursuant to its Small Business

Lending Fund. The aggregate redemption price was approximately \$12.7 million, including approximately \$0.1 million of dividends accrued but unpaid through the redemption date.

#### USE OF PROCEEDS

We intend to use the net proceeds from the sales of the securities in the manner and for the purposes set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement, which may include general corporate purposes.

## **DESCRIPTION OF COMMON STOCK**

*The following description sets forth certain general terms and provisions of our common stock. The statements below describing the common stock are in all respects subject to and qualified in their entirety by reference to the applicable provisions of our Articles of Incorporation, as amended (the “charter”), Amended and Restated Bylaws (the “bylaws”), and applicable provisions of the Maryland General Corporation Law (the “MGCL”).*

### **Authorized and Outstanding Shares**

As of the date of this prospectus, we were authorized to issue 20,000,000 shares of common stock, par value \$0.01 per share. As of June 30, 2017, we had 9,796,103 shares of common stock issued and outstanding. On June 30, 2017, 93,118 shares of our common stock were issuable upon exercise of outstanding stock options or the vesting of unvested restricted stock units and approximately 656,942 shares were reserved for future issuance under our stock compensation plans.

### **Dividend Rights**

Subject to all rights of holders of any other class or series of stock, holders of common stock are entitled to receive dividends if and when the board of directors declares dividends from funds legally available therefor. Under Maryland law, we are not permitted to pay dividends if, as a result, we would be unable to pay our debts as they come due in the ordinary course of business or if our total assets would be less than the sum of our total liabilities plus the amount that would be needed, if we were to be dissolved at the time the dividend is paid, to satisfy the preferential rights on dissolution of any stockholders whose preferential rights on dissolution are superior to those stockholders receiving the dividend.

### **Voting Rights**

In general, each outstanding share of common stock entitles the holder to vote for the election of directors and on all other matters requiring stockholder action, and each share is entitled to one vote.

### **Preemptive Rights; Conversion, Sinking Fund or Redemption**

Holders of our common stock have no preemptive rights to purchase additional shares of common stock. Holders of common stock have no conversion, sinking fund or redemption rights.

### **Additional Shares**

Our charter grants our board of directors the right to classify or reclassify any unissued shares of common stock from time to time by setting or changing the preferences, conversion and other rights, voting powers, restrictions, limitations as to dividends, qualifications and terms or conditions of redemption. Accordingly, our board of directors could authorize the issuance of additional shares of common stock with terms and conditions that could have the effect of discouraging a takeover or other transaction which the holders of some, or a majority, of shares of common stock might believe to be otherwise in their best interests or in which the holders of some, or a majority, of shares of common stock might receive a premium for their shares of common stock over the then market price of such shares. As of the date hereof, our board of directors has no plans to classify or reclassify any unissued shares of common stock.

### **Restrictions on Ownership**

The Bank Holding Company Act requires any “bank holding company,” to obtain the approval of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve (the “FRB”) before acquiring 5% or more of our common stock. Any person, other than a bank holding company, is required to obtain the approval of the FRB before acquiring 25% or more of our voting stock and in certain circumstances, more than 10% of our voting stock.

## **Liquidation Rights**

If we voluntarily or involuntarily liquidate, dissolve or wind up, holders of our common stock are entitled to share ratably in our net assets remaining, after the payment of liabilities and distributions, in accordance with their respective rights and interests.

## **Listing; Transfer Agent and Registrar**

Our common stock is listed on The Nasdaq Capital Market under the symbol “HBMD.” The transfer agent and registrar for our common stock is Computershare Trust Company, NA.

## **Anti-Takeover Provisions of Maryland law and Our Charter and Bylaws**

A number of provisions of Maryland law, our charter and our bylaws deal with matters of corporate governance and certain rights of stockholders. The following discussion is a general summary of certain provisions of Maryland law, our charter and bylaws that might be deemed to have a potential “anti-takeover” effect. The following description of certain of the provisions of our charter and bylaws is necessarily general and reference should be made in each case to our charter and bylaws.

### *Maryland Anti-Takeover Statute*

*Business Combinations.* Under the MGCL, certain “business combinations” between a Maryland corporation and an “Interested Stockholder” (as described in the MGCL) are prohibited for five years after the most recent date on which the Interested Stockholder became an Interested Stockholder, unless an exemption is available. Thereafter a business combination must be recommended by the board of directors of the corporation and approved by the affirmative vote of at least (i) 80% of the votes entitled to be cast by holders of outstanding voting shares of the corporation and (ii) two-thirds of the votes entitled to be cast by holders of outstanding voting shares of the corporation other than shares held by the Interested Stockholder with whom the business combination is to be effected, unless the corporation’s stockholders receive a minimum price (as described in the MGCL) for their shares and the consideration is received in cash or in the same form as previously paid by the Interested Stockholder for its shares.

Maryland's business combination statute does not apply to business combinations that are approved or exempted by the board of directors prior to the time that the Interested Stockholder becomes an Interested Stockholder. In addition, Maryland's business combination statute does not apply to a corporation that "opts out" of the business combination statute through a provision in its articles of incorporation. We have not elected to "opt out" of Maryland's business combination statute through such a provision.

*Control Share Acquisitions.* The MGCL provides that holders of "control shares" of a Maryland corporation acquired in a "control share acquisition" have no voting rights with respect to the "control shares" except to the extent approved by a vote of holders of two-thirds of the shares entitled to be voted on the matter, excluding shares of stock owned by the acquirer or by officers or directors who are employees of the corporation. "Control shares" are voting shares of stock which, if aggregated with all other such shares of stock previously acquired by the acquirer, or in respect of which the acquirer is able to exercise or direct the exercise of voting power except solely by virtue of a revocable proxy, would entitle the acquirer to exercise voting power in electing directors within one of the following ranges of voting power: (i) one-tenth or more but less than one-third; (ii) one-third or more but less than a majority; or (iii) a majority of all voting power. Control shares do not include shares the acquiring person is then entitled to vote as a result of having previously obtained stockholder approval. A "control share acquisition" means the acquisition of control shares, subject to certain exceptions.

A person who has made or proposes to make a control share acquisition, upon satisfaction of certain conditions (including an undertaking to pay expenses and delivery of an "acquiring person statement"), may compel the corporation's board of directors to call a special meeting of stockholders to be held within 50 days of demand to consider the voting rights of the shares. If no request for a meeting is made, the corporation may itself present the question at any stockholders' meeting.

Unless the corporation's articles of incorporation or bylaws provide otherwise, if voting rights are not approved at the meeting or if the acquiring person does not deliver an acquiring person statement within 10 days following a control share acquisition then, subject to certain conditions and limitations, the corporation may redeem any or all of the control shares (except those for which voting rights have previously been approved) for fair value determined, without regard to the absence of voting rights for the control shares, as of the date of the last control share acquisition or of any meeting of stockholders at which the voting rights of such shares are considered and not approved. Moreover, unless the articles of incorporation or bylaws provides otherwise, if voting rights for control shares are approved at a stockholders' meeting and the acquirer becomes entitled to exercise or direct the exercise of a majority or more of all voting power, other stockholders may exercise dissenters' rights. The fair value of the shares as determined for purposes of such dissenters' rights may not be less than the highest price per share paid by the acquirer in the control share acquisition.

Maryland's control share acquisition statute does not apply to individuals or transactions that are approved or exempted (whether generally or specifically) in a provision of the corporation's articles of incorporation or bylaws before the control share acquisition occurs. We have not approved or exempted any individuals or transactions through such a provision.

#### *Provisions of Our Charter and Bylaws*

*Classification of the Board of Directors.* Our charter provides that we will have not less than five nor more than 25 directors, and our bylaws provide that the exact number shall be fixed by its board of directors and that the number of directors may be increased or decreased by the board of directors. Our board of directors is currently composed of 13 directors.

Our directors are divided into three classes - Class I, Class II, and Class III - each class consisting of an equal number of directors, or as nearly equal as possible. Each director generally serves for a term ending on the date of the third annual meeting following the annual meeting at which such director was elected. A classified board of directors promotes continuity and stability of management, but makes it more difficult for our stockholders to change a majority of the directors because it generally takes at least two annual elections of directors for this to occur. We believe that classification of the board of directors will help to assure the continuity and stability of its business strategies and policies as determined by its board of directors.

*Extraordinary Transactions.* Pursuant to the MGCL, a Maryland corporation generally cannot (except under and in compliance with specifically enumerated provisions of the MGCL) amend its articles of incorporation, consolidate, merge, sell, lease or exchange all or substantially all of its assets, engage in a share exchange, or liquidate, dissolve or wind-up unless such acts are approved by the affirmative vote of holders of at least two-thirds of the shares entitled to vote on the matter, unless a lesser or greater percentage is set forth in the corporation's articles of incorporation. Our



charter requires that such acts (other than an amendment to the charter to increase or decrease the number of authorized shares of our capital stock, which the charter authorizes the board of directors to approve without stockholder approval) be approved by the affirmative vote of holders of at least 80% of all the votes entitled to be cast on the matter unless, other than with respect to amendments to its articles of incorporation, the transaction is approved by a majority of its board of directors.

*Charter Amendments.* In general, other than with respect to increasing or decreasing the aggregate number of shares of stock or the number of shares of stock of any class that we have the authority to issue, the current provisions of our charter may be amended only upon the affirmative vote of holders of at least 80% of all the votes entitled to be cast on the matter.

*Bylaws Amendments.* Our bylaws may be amended only by the board of directors. Our charter and bylaws provide that stockholders have no power or authority to amend, alter, change or repeal our bylaws.

*Removal of Directors.* Our charter and bylaws provide that a director may only be removed by the affirmative vote of holders of at least 80% of the votes entitled to be cast in the election of directors. In addition, the MGCL provides that if a corporation's directors are divided into classes, a director may only be removed for cause.

*No Dissenters' Rights.* Our charter provides that our stockholders and other security holders are not entitled to exercise any rights of an objecting stockholder under the MGCL unless otherwise determined by our board of directors in its sole discretion.

*Procedures for Stockholder Nominations and Proposals.* Our bylaws provide that any stockholder desiring to make a nomination for the election of directors or a proposal for new business at an annual meeting of stockholders must submit written notice to its secretary not less than 90 days nor more than 120 days before the anniversary of the mailing date of the proxy materials in connection with its prior year's annual meeting, unless we provide prior public disclosure, as defined in our bylaws, of less than 100 days of such annual meeting, in which case such notice must be received not later than the tenth day following the day on which we first make such public disclosure of the date of the meeting. With respect to an election to be held at a special meeting of stockholders, notice of nominees for director must be received no later than the tenth day following the day on which prior public disclosure of the date of the special meeting is first made.

A stockholder's notice to the secretary must set forth as to each matter such stockholder proposes to bring before the annual meeting (i) a brief description of the business desired to be brought before the annual meeting and the reasons for conducting such business at the annual meeting, (ii) the name and address, as they appear on our books, of the stockholder proposing such business and, to the extent known, any other stockholders known by such stockholder to be supporting such proposal, (iii) the class and number of shares of our capital stock that are beneficially owned by such stockholder on the date of such stockholder notice and, to the extent known, by any other stockholders known by such stockholder to be supporting such proposal on the date of such stockholder notice, (iv) the identification of any person retained or to be compensated by the stockholder submitting the proposal, or any person acting on his or her behalf, to make solicitations or recommendations to stockholders for the purpose of assisting in the passage of such proposal and a brief description of the terms of such employment, retainer or arrangement for compensation, and (v) any material interest of the stockholder in such business.

A stockholder's notice with respect to the nomination of a director candidate must set forth: (a) as to each person whom the stockholder proposes to nominate for election or re-election as a director and as to the stockholder giving the notice (i) the name, age, business address and residence address of the person (and as the address appears on our books, if different), (ii) the principal occupation or employment of the person, (iii) the class and number of shares of our stock that are beneficially owned by the person on the date of such stockholder notice, and (iv) any other information relating to the person that is required to be disclosed in solicitations for proxies for election of directors pursuant to the proxy rules under the Exchange Act or any successor rule thereto (to the extent such rules are applicable to us); (b) as to any person known by the stockholder giving the notice to be supporting any such nominee (i) the name and address, as they appear on our books, of such persons and (ii) the class and number of shares of our stock that are beneficially owned by such persons; (c) a representation that the stockholder giving the notice intends to appear in person or by proxy at the meeting to nominate the person or persons specified in the notice; (d) a description of all arrangements or understandings between the stockholder giving the notice and each nominee and any arrangements or understandings between the stockholder and each nominee and any other person or persons (naming such person or persons) pursuant to which the nomination or nominations are to be made by the stockholder; and (e) the consent of each nominee to serve as a director if so elected.

Nominations and proposals that fail to follow the prescribed procedures will not be considered. We believe that it is in our and our stockholders' best interests to provide sufficient time to enable management to disclose to stockholders information about a dissident slate of nominations for directors or proposals for new business. This advance notice

requirement also may give management time to solicit its own proxies in an attempt to defeat any dissident slate of nominations should management determine that doing so is in the best interest of stockholders generally. Similarly, adequate advance notice of stockholder proposals will give management time to study such proposals and to determine whether to recommend to the stockholders that such proposals be adopted.

*Absence of Cumulative Voting.* There is no cumulative voting in the election of our directors. Cumulative voting means that holders of stock of a corporation are entitled, in the election of directors, to cast a number of votes equal to the number of shares that they own multiplied by the number of directors to be elected. Because a stockholder entitled to cumulative voting may cast all of his, her or its votes for one nominee or disperse his, her or its votes among nominees as the stockholder chooses, cumulative voting is generally considered to increase the ability of minority stockholders to elect nominees to a corporation's board of directors. The absence of cumulative voting means that the holders of a majority of our voting shares can elect all of the directors then standing for election and the holders of the remaining shares will not be able to elect any directors.

*Authorized Shares.* As indicated above, our charter currently authorizes the issuance of 20,000,000 shares of common stock and 5,000,000 shares of preferred stock and authorizes a majority of our board of directors, without stockholder approval, to increase or decrease the aggregate number of shares of its stock or the number of shares of stock of any class that we have authority to issue. The authorization of shares of common stock and preferred stock in excess of the amount issued, and the authority of a majority of the board of directors to increase our authorized capital stock or any class thereof without stockholder approval, provides our board of directors with flexibility to effect, among other transactions, financings, acquisitions, stock dividends, stock splits and stock options or other stock-based compensation. The unissued authorized shares also may be used by our board of directors consistent with its fiduciary duty to deter future attempts to gain control of the Company. Also, as indicated above, our board of directors' right to set the terms of one or more series of preferred stock has anti-takeover effects.

#### *Effect of Anti-Takeover Provisions*

The foregoing provisions of our charter and bylaws and Maryland law could have the effect of discouraging an acquisition of the Company or stock purchases in furtherance of an acquisition, and could accordingly, under certain circumstances, discourage transactions that might otherwise have a favorable effect on the price of our common stock. In addition, such provisions may make us less attractive to a potential acquirer and/or might result in stockholders receiving a lesser amount of consideration for their shares of common stock than otherwise could have been available.

Our board of directors believes that the provisions described above are prudent and will reduce our vulnerability to takeover attempts and certain other transactions that are not negotiated with and approved by our board of directors. Our board of directors believes that these provisions are in our best interests and the best interests of our stockholders. In the board of directors' judgment, the board of directors is in the best position to determine our true value and to negotiate more effectively for what may be in the best interests of our stockholders. Accordingly, the board of directors believes that it is in our best interests and in the best interests of our stockholders to encourage potential acquirers to negotiate directly with the board of directors and that these provisions will encourage such negotiations and discourage hostile takeover attempts.

Despite the board of directors' belief as to the benefits of the foregoing provisions, these provisions also may have the effect of discouraging a future takeover attempt in which stockholders might receive a substantial premium for their shares over then current market prices and may tend to perpetuate existing management. As a result, stockholders who might desire to participate in such a transaction may not have an opportunity to do so. Our board of directors, however, believes that the potential benefits of these provisions outweigh their possible disadvantages.

#### **DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED STOCK**

As of the date of this prospectus, we are authorized to issue 5,000,000 shares of preferred stock, par value \$0.01 per share. Pursuant to our charter, our board of directors has the power to authorize the issuance of up to 5,000,000 shares of our preferred stock, without stockholder approval, in one or more series or without series. Prior to issuance of shares of each series of preferred stock, the board of directors is required to fix for each series the designation, preferences, conversion and other rights, voting powers, restrictions, limitations as to dividends, qualifications and terms or conditions of redemption. As discussed below under "Certain Anti-Takeover Provisions," the board of directors could authorize the issuance of shares of preferred stock with terms and conditions that could have the effect of discouraging a takeover or other transaction that some of our stockholders might believe to be in their best interests or in which they might receive a premium for their shares of common stock over the market price of such shares.

As of the date of this prospectus, no shares of preferred stock are outstanding.

Prior to the issuance of preferred stock, we will amend our charter by filing articles supplementary, which will designate the series of preferred stock, if any, and the number of shares and terms of such preferred stock. The issuance of any preferred stock could adversely affect the rights of holders of common stock and, therefore, reduce the value of the common stock.

The terms of any preferred stock sold pursuant to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement (and any applicable free writing prospectus) relating to the offering of such preferred stock, including, where applicable:

title and stated or liquidation value;

the number of shares offered and the initial offering price;

voting rights and other protective provisions;

any dividend rate(s), payment period(s) and/or payment date(s) or method(s) of calculation of any of those terms that apply to those shares;

the date from which dividends will accumulate, if applicable;

the terms and amount of a sinking fund, if any, for purchase or redemption;

redemption rights, including conditions and the redemption price(s), if applicable;

the terms and conditions upon which shares will be convertible into common stock or any other securities, including the conversion price, rate or other manner of calculation, conversion period and anti-dilution provisions, if applicable;

the relative ranking and preference as to dividend rights and rights upon liquidation, dissolution or the winding up of our affairs, including liquidation preference amount;

any limitation on issuance of any series of preferred stock ranking senior to or on a parity with that series of preferred stock as to dividend rights and rights upon liquidation, dissolution or the winding up of our affairs;

the condition and restrictions, if any, on the payment of dividends or on the making of other distributions on, or the purchase, redemption or other acquisition by us or any subsidiary, of the common stock or any other class of our shares ranking junior to such shares as to dividends or upon liquidation;

the conditions and restrictions, if any, on the creation of indebtedness of us or any subsidiary, or on the issuance of any additional stock ranking on a parity with or prior to such shares as to dividends or upon liquidation; and

· any other specific terms, preferences, rights, privileges, limitations or restrictions.

The transfer agent and registrar for the preferred stock will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Refer to “Description of Common Stock — Anti-Takeover Effects of Maryland Law and our Charter and Bylaws” for a discussion of provisions of the MGCL and our charter and bylaws that may have the effect of delaying, deferring or preventing a change of control.

## DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS

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

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

· title of the warrants;

· the aggregate number of warrants;

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

· the designation, number, aggregate principal amount, denominations and terms of the securities that may be purchased on exercise of the warrants;

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

· the date, if any, on and after which the warrants and the securities offered with the warrants, if any, will be separately transferable;

· the purchase price for each security purchasable on exercise of the warrants;

· the dates on which the right to purchase certain securities upon exercise of the warrants will begin and end;



- the periods during which and places at which such warrants are exercisable;
- the minimum or maximum amount of the warrants that may be exercised at any one time;
- any anti-dilution protection provisions;
- the provisions, if any, for changes to or adjustments in the exercise price of the warrants;
- the terms of any right that we may have to redeem or call the warrants;
- the currency or currencies in which such warrants are exercisable, if other than U.S. dollars;
- the effect of any merger, consolidation, sale or other transfer of our business on the warrants and the applicable warrant agreement;
- the name and address of the warrant agent, if any;
- whether the warrants will be issued in certificated or book-entry form; and
- any other material terms, including terms, procedures and limitations relating to the transferability, exchange, exercise or amendment of such warrants.

Until any warrants to purchase our securities are exercised, holders of the warrants will not have any rights of holders of the underlying securities.

## DESCRIPTION OF SUBSCRIPTION RIGHTS

We may issue subscription rights to purchase our common stock, preferred stock or debt securities. These subscription rights may be issued independently or together with any other security offered hereby and may or may not be transferable by the stockholder receiving the subscription rights in such offering. In connection with any offering of subscription rights, we may enter into a standby arrangement with one or more underwriters or other purchasers pursuant to which the underwriters or other purchasers may be required to purchase any securities remaining unsubscribed for after such offering.

The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the specific terms of any offering of subscription rights for which this prospectus is being delivered, including the following:

the price, if any, for the subscription rights;

the exercise price payable for each share of our common stock or preferred stock or for debt securities upon the exercise of the subscription rights;

the number of subscription rights issued to each stockholder;

the number and terms of each share of our common stock or preferred stock or for debt securities which may be purchased per each subscription right;

the extent to which the subscription rights are transferable;

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

any other terms of the subscription rights, including the terms, procedures and limitations relating to the exchange and exercise of the subscription rights;

the date on which the right to exercise the subscription rights shall commence, and the date on which the subscription rights shall expire;

the extent to which the subscription rights may include an over-subscription privilege with respect to unsubscribed securities; and

if applicable, the material terms of any standby underwriting or purchase arrangement entered into by us in connection with the offering of subscription rights.

The description in the applicable prospectus supplement of any subscription rights we offer will not necessarily be complete and is subject to, and will be qualified in its entirety by reference to, the applicable subscription rights agreement and subscription rights certificate, which will be filed with the SEC in connection with any offering of subscription rights.

## DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES

*The complete terms of the debt securities will be contained in the indenture and supplemental indenture applicable to the debt securities. These documents have been or will be included or incorporated by reference as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part. You should read the indenture and applicable supplemental indenture. You should also read the prospectus supplement, which will contain additional information and which may update or change some of the information below.*

We may issue, separately or together with, or upon conversion, exercise or exchange of other securities, debt securities, including debentures, notes, bonds and other evidences of indebtedness as set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. The debt securities may be either secured or unsecured and will either be senior debt securities or subordinated debt securities. The debt securities will be issued under one or more separate indentures between us and a trustee to be specified in an accompanying prospectus supplement. Senior debt securities will be issued under a senior indenture and subordinated debt securities will be issued under a subordinated indenture. We refer to the senior indenture and the subordinated indenture together as the indentures. This prospectus, together with the applicable prospectus supplement, will describe the terms of each series of debt securities that we may offer from time to time.

The following summary of the material provisions of the indentures and the debt securities does not purport to be complete and is subject to, and is qualified in its entirety by reference to, the provisions of the applicable indenture and certificates evidencing the applicable debt securities. The specific terms of the applicable indenture and debt securities will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement. If any particular terms of the indenture or debt securities described in a prospectus supplement differ from any of the terms described below, then the terms described below will be deemed to have been superseded by those described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Capitalized terms used in this section but not defined have the meanings given to those terms in the accompanying prospectus or, if not defined in the accompanying prospectus, in the applicable indenture.

In this section “Description of Debt Securities,” the “Company,” “we,” “our,” or “us” refer only to Howard Bancorp, Inc. and not to any of its subsidiaries.

### General

Debt securities may be issued in separate series without limitation as to aggregate principal amount. We may specify a maximum aggregate principal amount for the debt securities of any series. We are not limited as to the amount of debt securities that we may issue under the indentures. Unless otherwise provided in a prospectus supplement, a series of debt securities may be reopened to issue additional debt securities of such series. The subordinated debt securities will be subordinated as described below under the heading "Subordinated Debt."

The prospectus supplement relating to a particular series of debt securities will set forth the material terms of the debt securities being offered, including:

- the title of the debt securities and whether they are senior debt securities or subordinated debt securities;
- the offering price;
- the aggregate principal amount of such series which may be authenticated and delivered under the indentures;
- the maturity date or dates;

if applicable, whether the debt securities shall be subject to the defeasance provisions described below under "Satisfaction and Discharge" or such other defeasance provisions specified in the applicable prospectus supplement for the debt securities;

any conversion or exchange provisions;

any deletions of, or changes or additions to, the events of default, acceleration provisions or covenants;

the date of the debt securities if other than the date of original issuance;

the person who shall be entitled to receive interest, if other than the record holder on the record date;

the date or dates on which the principal of the debt securities of such series is payable;

the rate or rates, and if applicable the method used to determine the rate, at which the debt securities of such series shall bear interest, if any, the date or dates from which such interest shall accrue, the date or dates on which such interest shall be payable and the record date or dates for the interest payable on any debt securities on any interest payment date;

the place or places where payments of principal and interest may be made;

the obligation, if any, of the Company to redeem or purchase the debt securities of such series, at the option of the Company or at the option of a holder thereof, pursuant to any sinking fund or other redemption provisions and the period or periods within which, the price or prices at which and the terms and conditions upon which the debt securities of the series may be so redeemed or purchased, in whole or in part;

if issued other than in denominations of \$1,000 or any multiple of \$1,000, the denominations in which the debt securities shall be issuable;

the portion of the principal amount that will be payable upon acceleration of maturity, if other than the entire principal amount;

if other than U.S. currency, the currency or currency units in which principal, premium, if any, or interest will be payable, whether we or a holder may elect payment to be made in a different currency and the designation of the original currency determination agent;

if the amount of payments of principal of (and premium, if any, on) or any interest on the debt securities of the series may be determined with reference to an index, the manner in which such amounts shall be determined;

whether the debt securities will be issuable in the form of a global security;

any interest rate calculation agents, paying agents, authenticating agents, security registrars or other agents for the debt securities, if other than the trustee;

whether and under what circumstances we will pay Additional Amounts in respect of any series of debt securities and whether we have the option to redeem such debt securities rather than pay such Additional Amounts;

any provisions relating to the extension of maturity of, or the renewal of, the debt securities of such series, or the conversion of the debt securities of such series into other securities of the Company;

any provisions relating to the purchase or redemption of all or any portion of a tranche or series of debt securities, including the period of notice required to redeem those debt securities;

the terms and conditions, if any, pursuant to which the debt securities are secured;

any subordination provisions applicable to the subordinated debt securities if different from those described below under "Subordinated Debt"; and

any other specific terms of such debt securities.

If we denominate the purchase price of any of the debt securities in a foreign currency or currencies, or if the principal of or premium, if any, or interest on any series of debt securities is payable in a foreign currency or currencies, we will include in the applicable prospectus supplement information on the restrictions, elections, material United States federal income tax considerations, specific terms and other information with respect to that issue of debt securities and the foreign currency or currencies.

Unless otherwise specified in the prospectus supplement, the debt securities will be registered debt securities. Debt securities may be sold at a substantial discount below their stated principal amount, bearing no interest or interest at a rate which at the time of issuance is below market rates. The material United States federal income tax considerations applicable to debt securities sold at a discount will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

### **Senior Debt**

Except as otherwise provided in a supplemental indenture or prospectus supplement, senior debt securities will be unsecured and will rank equally with all other unsecured and unsubordinated debt of the Company, and will rank senior in right of payment to any subordinated debt.

### **Subordinated Debt**

Except as otherwise provided in a supplemental indenture or prospectus supplement, subordinated debt securities will be unsecured and will be subordinated in right of payment, to the prior payment in full of all of our “senior indebtedness,” as more fully described in the applicable prospectus supplement. Notwithstanding the foregoing, if a deposit is made in accordance with the terms of the indenture with respect to any debt securities (and provided all other conditions set out in the indenture shall have been satisfied with respect to such debt securities), then, when the 90th day after such deposit has ended, no money obligations so deposited, and no proceeds thereon, will be subject to any rights of holders of Senior Indebtedness.

Under the subordinated debt indenture, “senior indebtedness” means, without duplication, the principal, premium, if any, unpaid interest (including interest accruing on or after the filing of any petition in bankruptcy or for reorganization, whether or not a claim for post-filing interest is allowed in such proceeding), fees, charges, expenses, reimbursement and indemnification obligations, and all other amounts payable under or in respect of the following indebtedness, whether any such indebtedness exists as of the date of the indenture or is created, incurred or assumed



after such date:

all obligations for borrowed money;

all obligations evidenced by debentures, debt securities or other similar instruments;

all obligations in respect of letters of credit or bankers acceptances or similar instruments (or reimbursement obligations with respect thereto),

all obligations to pay the deferred purchase price of property or services, except trade accounts payable arising in the ordinary course of business;

all indebtedness of others guaranteed by us or any of our subsidiaries or for which we or any of our subsidiaries is legally responsible or liable (whether by agreement to purchase indebtedness of, or to supply funds or to invest in, others); and

indebtedness secured by any mortgage, pledge, lien, charge, encumbrance or any security interest existing on property owned by the Company but excluding any obligations of the Company which are required (as opposed to elected to be treated) as capitalized leases under GAAP.

### **Methods of Receiving Payments on the Notes**

Unless otherwise indicated in a prospectus supplement, the debt securities will be payable as to principal, redemption premium, if any, and interest at the office or agency of the paying agent (which may be us), or, at our option, payment of interest may be made by check mailed to the holders of the debt securities at their addresses set forth in the register of holders.

### **Events of Default; Waiver**

Unless we indicate otherwise in a prospectus supplement with respect to a particular series of debt securities, an “event of default,” when used in the indentures, means any of the following:

our default in the payment of the principal, premium, if any, or any payment required by a sinking or analogous fund with respect to any of the debt securities when due, either at maturity, upon redemption, by declaration or otherwise;

our default in the payment of any interest on the debt securities when due, and continuance of such default for a period of 90 days;

our failure to observe or perform any other covenant or agreement in the debt securities or the applicable indenture and the continuance of such default or breach for a period of 90 days after our receipt of notice from the trustee or the holders of at least 25% in aggregate principal amount of the debt securities of that series specifying such failure and requiring it to be remedied;

a court having jurisdiction enters a decree or order for relief in respect of us or a Material Subsidiary in an involuntary case or proceeding under any applicable bankruptcy, insolvency or other similar law, or appointing a receiver, liquidator, assignee, custodian, trustee, sequestrator (or similar official) of us or a Material Subsidiary or for any substantial part of our or its respective property, or ordering the winding-up or liquidation of our affairs shall have been entered and remained unstayed and in effect for a period of 60 consecutive days;

we or a Material Subsidiary commence a voluntary case under any applicable bankruptcy, insolvency or other similar law, or consent to the entry of a decree or order for relief in an involuntary case or proceeding under any such law, or the consent to the appointment of or taking possession by a receiver, liquidator, assignee, trustee, custodian, sequestrator (or other similar official) of us or a Material Subsidiary or of any substantial part of our or its respective property, or the making by us or a Material Subsidiary of a general assignment for the benefit of creditors; or

any other event of default provided with respect to a particular series of debt securities, as described in the prospectus supplement with respect to the offering of such series.

A Material Subsidiary means Howard Bank or any successor thereof or any of our subsidiaries that is a depository institution and that has consolidated assets equal to 80% or more of our consolidated assets.

If an event of default occurs and continues, either the trustee or the holders of at least 25% in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities by notice to us (with a copy to the trustee, if given by holders) may declare the principal to be immediately due and payable with respect to all the debt securities of that series, in the case of an event of default described in the first, second, third or sixth bullet above, or all of the debt securities issued under the indentures, in the case of an event of default described in the fourth or fifth bullet above.

The indentures also provide that the holders of a majority in principal amount of the debt securities may waive any existing default with respect to the debt securities and its consequences, except a default in the payment of the principal of and interest on the debt securities, if we have cured the event of default and deposited with the trustee a sum sufficient to pay the principal, premium, if any, and matured installments of interest which shall have become due otherwise than by acceleration.

The holders of a majority in principal amount of the debt securities of each series may direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for exercising any remedy available to the trustee or exercising any trust or power conferred on the trustee. However, the trustee may refuse to follow any direction that conflicts with law or the indentures or that the trustee determines may be unjustly prejudicial to the holders of the debt securities not joining in the direction or that may involve the trustee in personal liability. In addition, the trustee may take any other action it deems proper consistent with any such direction received from the holders of the debt securities.

The trustee shall be under no obligation to exercise any of the rights or powers vested in it by the indentures at the request, order or direction of any of the holders pursuant to the indentures, unless such holders shall have offered to the trustee reasonable security or indemnity satisfactory to it against the costs, expenses and liabilities which might be incurred by it in compliance with such request or direction. Except to enforce the right to receive payment of principal, premium, if any, or interest, when due, no holder of a note will have any right to institute any proceeding, judicial or otherwise, with respect to the indenture, or for the appointment of a receiver or trustee, or for any other remedy under the indenture unless:

· such holder has previously given the trustee written notice of a continuing event of default;

holders of at least 25% in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities have made a written request to the trustee to pursue the remedy;

such holders provide to the trustee reasonable indemnity acceptable to the trustee against the costs, expenses and liabilities to be incurred with such request;

the trustee has failed to institute a proceeding within 60 days after its receipt of the notice, request and offer of indemnity; and

the holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities do not give the trustee a direction inconsistent with the request within such 60-day period.

Each indenture requires the applicable trustee to notify the holders of a series regarding the existence of any default, unless the default has been cured or waived. In addition, in the case of a default in payment of principal or interest on any note, or the payment of any sinking or purchase fund installment, the trustee may withhold notice of a default if and so long as a committee of its directors and/or responsible officers in good faith determines that withholding the notice is in the interests of the holders of the debt securities. Furthermore, the trustee shall not provide notice of default to the holders of debt securities following the third event of default described in this section unless at least 30 days after the occurrence thereof. For purposes of these requirements, a “default” means any event which is, or after notice or lapse of time or both would become, an event of default under the indentures with respect to the debt securities of such series.

We are required to deliver to the trustee, within 120 days after the end of our fiscal year, commencing in the year during which the first series of debt securities is issued under an indenture, a written statement from our applicable officers regarding whether we have fulfilled all of our obligations under the indenture throughout the year and specifying any known default and its status.

**Merger, Consolidation, Sale, Lease or Conveyance**

Unless otherwise indicated in a prospectus supplement with respect to a particular series of debt securities, we will not merge into or consolidate with any other corporation, or sell or convey all or substantially all of our assets to any person, firm, or corporation unless:

we are either the continuing corporation or the successor corporation is a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the United States or a state thereof or the District of Columbia and expressly assumes the due and punctual payment of the principal, premium, if any, and interest on all the debt securities according to their tenor, and the due and punctual performance and observance of all of the covenants and conditions of the indenture to be performed by us by supplemental indenture satisfactory to the trustee, executed and delivered to the trustee by such successor corporation;

neither we nor such successor corporation, immediately after giving effect to such merger, consolidation, sale or conveyance, will be in default in the performance of any covenant or condition under the applicable indenture; and

we shall have delivered to the trustee an officers' certificate and an opinion of counsel, each stating that the transaction complies with the terms of the applicable indenture and that all conditions precedent in such indenture provided for relating to such transaction have been complied with.

In the case of any such consolidation or merger, sale or conveyance and upon any such assumption by the successor corporation, the successor corporation shall succeed to, and be substituted for, us under the applicable indenture with the same effect as if it had been an original party to such indenture. As a result, we will be released from all our liabilities and obligations under such indenture and under the debt securities issued thereunder.

Although there is a limited body of case law interpreting the phrase "substantially all" and similar phrases, there is no precise established definition of the phrase under applicable law. Accordingly, in certain circumstances there may be a degree of uncertainty as to whether a particular transaction would involve "substantially all" the property or assets of a person.

### **Certain Covenants**

The applicable prospectus supplement will describe any restrictive covenants applicable to any debt securities we offer for sale.

### **Modification of the Indenture**

Unless we indicate otherwise in a prospectus supplement and except as set forth below, modification and amendment of an indenture, or entry into a supplemental indenture applicable to the debt securities may be made only when authorized by the board of directors and with the consent of the holders of not less than a majority in principal amount of the debt securities affected by such supplemental indenture, voting together as a single class.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, no modification or amendment of an indenture as applicable to any series of debt securities may:

extend the fixed maturity of any debt security, or reduce the principal amount thereof or premium, if any, or reduce the rate or extend the time of payment of interest thereon, without the consent of the holder of each debt security so affected;

reduce the percentage in principal amount of outstanding debt securities that is required for any supplemental indenture without the consent of the holders of all debt securities then outstanding;

- modify the subordination provision in a manner adverse to the holders of any debt security; or

- modify such provisions with respect to modification and waiver.

In addition, we and the trustee may modify or amend the indentures as applicable to the debt securities, without the consent of any holder of the debt securities, for any of the following purposes:

to evidence the succession of another corporation to the Company and provide for the successor's assumption of the covenants, agreements and obligations under the indentures and the debt securities issued thereunder;

to add further covenants, restrictions, conditions or provisions as our board of directors considers to be for the protection of the holders of the debt securities, and to make the occurrence, or the occurrence and continuance, of a default in any of such additional covenants, restrictions, conditions or provisions an Event of Default permitting the enforcement of all or any of the remedies provided under the applicable indenture, with such period of grace and subject to such conditions as such supplemental indenture may provide;

to add or change any of the provisions of the indenture to provide that the debt securities may be registrable as to principal, to change or eliminate any restrictions on the payment of principal of or any premium or interest on Bearer Securities, to permit Bearer Securities to be issued in exchange for Registered Securities, to permit Bearer Securities to be issued in exchange for Bearer Securities of other authorized denominations or to permit or facilitate the issuance of debt securities in uncertificated form; provided, that no such action shall adversely affect the interests of the holders of the debt securities or any related coupons in any material respect;

to modify, eliminate or add provisions of the indenture in order to effect the qualification of the applicable indenture under the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended (the "Trust Indenture Act"), and to add such other provisions as may be expressly permitted by the Trust Indenture Act, excluding Section 316(a)(2) thereof;

to modify, eliminate or add to any provisions of the indenture; provided that any such change or elimination becomes effective only when there are no outstanding debt securities or does not apply to any outstanding debt security;

(i) to cure any ambiguity or to correct or supplement any provision in the indenture or any supplemental indenture which may be defective or inconsistent with any other provision, to convey, transfer, assign, mortgage or pledge any property to or with the trustee or to make such other provisions in regard to matters or questions arising under the indenture; provided, that no such provision, shall adversely affect in any material respect the interests of the holders of the debt securities or any related coupons, including provisions necessary or desirable to provide for or facilitate the administration of the trusts;

to secure any series of debt securities; and

to evidence and provide for the acceptance and appointment by a successor trustee with respect to the debt securities of one or more series and to add or change any provisions of the indenture as necessary to provide for or facilitate the administration of the trusts by more than one trustee.

The trustee shall not be obligated to enter into any amendment or supplemental indenture, which adversely affects the trustee's own rights, duties or immunities under the applicable indenture or otherwise.

Subject to the requirements for the holders to waive a default and to pursue a remedy with respect to the applicable indenture or the debt securities and the rights of any holder of a debt security to receive payment of principal of, premium, if any, on and interest on such note, holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of the debt securities voting as a single class may waive compliance in a particular instance by us with any provision of the applicable indenture or the debt security and rescind and annul such declaration and its consequences, except as otherwise stated above, but no waiver or rescission and annulment will extend to or affect any subsequent default or impair any other right.

#### **Outstanding Notes; Determinations of Holders' Actions**

Debt securities outstanding at any time are the debt securities authenticated and delivered by the trustee except for those cancelled by the trustee or delivered to the trustee for cancellation, those debt securities, or portions thereof, for which we have deposited in trust with the trustee or any paying agent, a sufficient amount of money for the payment



or redemption thereof, those debt securities that been defeased under the indenture, and those debt securities that have been exchanged for other debt securities issued under the indenture or that have been mutilated, destroyed, lost or stolen and replaced by the trustee. A debt security does not cease to be outstanding because we or an affiliate of us holds the debt security; provided, that in determining whether the holders of the requisite aggregate principal amount of debt securities have given or concurred in any request, demand, authorization, notice, direction, consent, or waiver, debt securities owned by us any other obligor of the debt securities, or any other person directly or indirectly controlling or controlled by or under direct or indirect common control with us or any other obligor on the debt securities, will be disregarded and deemed not to be outstanding for the purpose of any such determination, except for certain instances where the debt securities have been pledged in good faith.

The trustee may make reasonable rules for action by or at a meeting of holders of the debt securities. The registrar or paying agent may make reasonable rules and set reasonable requirements for its functions.

## Satisfaction and Discharge

Each indenture may be discharged and cease to be of further effect as to the applicable debt securities, when:

either:

all debt securities of any series that have been authenticated and all coupons, if any, appertaining thereto have been delivered to the trustee for cancellation, except (a) coupons on Bearer Securities that meet certain conditions, (b) debt securities and coupons that have been destroyed, lost or stolen and that have been replaced or paid as provided in the indenture, (c) coupons relating to debt securities called for redemption and maturing after the relevant redemption date, whose surrender has been waived, and (d) debt securities and coupons for which payment has been deposited in trust or segregated and held in trust by us and thereafter repaid to us or discharged from such trust; or

all debt securities and certain coupons discussed above that have not been delivered to the trustee for cancellation (a) have become due and payable, (b) are by their terms due and payable within one year, or (c) are to be called for redemption within one year under arrangements satisfactory to the trustee for the giving of notice of redemption, and in the case of clauses (a) and (c) in the preceding bullet, we have deposited or caused to be deposited with the trustee as trust funds the entire amount (other than moneys repaid by the trustee or any paying agent to us under the terms of the indenture) sufficient to pay at maturity or upon redemption all debt securities of such series and coupons not delivered to the trustee for cancellation, including principal (and premium, if any) and any interest due or to become due to such date of maturity or date of redemption;

we have paid or caused to be paid all other sums payable by us under the applicable indenture with respect to the debt securities;

upon demand of and at our cost and expense, the trustee has executed proper instruments acknowledging the satisfaction and discharge of the applicable indenture with respect to the debt securities; and

we have delivered to the trustee an officers' certificate and an opinion of counsel stating that the conditions precedent to the satisfaction and discharge of the debt securities have been complied with.

## Legal Defeasance and Covenant Defeasance

### *Legal Defeasance*

Under the terms of the indentures and unless as otherwise provided in a supplemental indenture, we will be deemed to have paid and will be discharged from any and all obligations in respect of the debt securities on the 123<sup>rd</sup> day (or later as described below) after we have made the deposit referred to below, and the provisions of the applicable indenture will cease to be applicable with respect to the debt securities (except for, among other matters, certain rights of the holders to receive payments of principal, premium and interest on such debt securities from the trust fund, and our obligations to register the transfer of or exchange of the debt securities, prepare temporary debt securities, to replace stolen, lost or mutilated debt securities, to maintain paying agencies and to hold funds for payment in trust, and rights, powers, trusts, duties, and immunities with respect to the trustee) if:

we have irrevocably deposited or caused to be deposited with the trustee, in trust, money in an amount and/or non-callable or non-redeemable government securities that will provide funds in amount sufficient, in the opinion of a nationally recognized public accounting firm expressed in a written certification delivered to the trustee, to pay the principal of, premium, if any, and accrued interest on the debt securities at the time such payments are due or on the applicable redemption date in accordance with the terms of the applicable indenture and any mandatory sinking fund payments or analogous payments applicable to such debt securities;

no default or event that after notice or lapse of time, or both, would become a default with respect to such debt securities, will have occurred and be continuing on the date of such deposit, or insofar as events of default due to certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization in respect of us are concerned, during the period ending on the 123<sup>rd</sup> day after the date of such deposit or, if longer, ending on the day following the expiration of the longest preference period applicable to the company with respect to such deposit;

such defeasance or covenant defeasance does not (i) cause the trustee for the debt securities to have a conflicting interest under the terms of the indenture or the Trust Indenture Act or (ii) result in the trust arising from such deposit to constitute, unless it is qualified, a regulated investment company under the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended;

such defeasance or covenant defeasance shall not result in a breach or violation of, or constitute a default under, the indenture or any other agreement or instrument to which we are a party or by which we are bound;

such defeasance or covenant defeasance does not cause any debt securities of such series then listed on any registered national securities exchange under the Exchange Act to be delisted;

we have delivered to the trustee an opinion of counsel stating that (a) we have received from, or there has been published by, the Internal Revenue Service a ruling, or (b) since the date of the indenture there has been a change in the applicable federal income tax law, to the effect that, and based thereon, holders of the debt securities will not recognize income, gain or loss for federal income tax purposes as a result of such defeasance and will be subject to federal income tax on the same amounts and in the same manner and at the same times as would have been the case if such defeasance had not occurred;

such defeasance is effected in compliance with any terms, conditions or limitations which may be imposed on the Company in connection with a supplemental indenture or board resolutions establishing such series of debt securities; and

we shall have delivered to the trustee an officers' certificate and an opinion of counsel, each stating that, all conditions precedent and subsequent provided for in the indenture relating to the defeasance have been complied with.

#### *Covenant Defeasance*

Under the terms of the indentures and unless as otherwise provided in a supplemental indenture, we will not need to comply with certain restrictive covenants, and the provisions of the applicable indenture will cease to be applicable with respect to an event of default under the debt securities other than an event of default due to our failure to pay the principal of or interest on the debt securities when due, upon:

·the satisfaction of the conditions described in “–Legal Defeasance,” other than with respect to the sixth bullet point; and

our delivery to the trustee of an opinion of counsel to the effect that the holders of the debt securities will not recognize income, gain or loss for United States federal income tax purposes as a result of such covenant defeasance and will be subject to United States federal income tax on the same amount and in the same manner and at the same times as would have been the case if such covenant defeasance had not occurred.

If we exercise our option to omit compliance with certain provisions of the applicable indenture as described in the immediately preceding paragraph and the debt securities are declared due and payable because of the occurrence of an event of default that remains applicable, the amount of money and/or non-callable government securities on deposit with the trustee may not be sufficient to pay amounts due on the debt securities at the time of acceleration resulting from such event of default. In such event, we will remain liable for such payments.

### **Limitation on Individual Liability**

No incorporator or past, present or future stockholder, officer or director of us or any successor corporation, as such, will have any liability for any obligations of us under the debt securities or the indentures or for any claim based on, in respect of, or by reason of, such obligations or their creation. Each holder of a debt security, by accepting a note waives and releases such liability. The waiver and release are part of the consideration for the issuance of the debt securities. Such waiver may not be effective to waive liabilities under the federal securities laws.

### **Trustee**

The accompanying prospectus supplement will specify the trustee for the particular series of debt securities to be issued under the indentures.

At all times, the trustee must be a corporation organized and doing business under the laws of the United States or any state or territory thereof or of the District of Columbia, with authority to exercise corporate trust powers, be subject to the supervision or examination by federal, state, territorial or District of Columbia authority, have at all times a combined capital and surplus of not less than \$5,000,000 and not be the Company or any person directly or indirectly controlled or controlled by or under common control with the Company.

If the trustee acquires any conflicting interest, as defined in the Trust Indenture Act, with respect to the debt securities, within 90 days after the trustee has or acquired a conflicting interest, which has not been cured or waived, the trustee would generally be required by the Trust Indenture Act to eliminate that conflicting interest or resign as trustee with respect to the debt securities issued under the applicable indenture. If the trustee resigns, we are required to promptly appoint a successor trustee with respect to the affected securities. The trustee and/or certain of its affiliates may provide banking, investment and other services to us.

### **Notices**

Any notices required to be given to the holders of the debt securities will be given by mail to the addresses of the holders in the security register.

## **Governing Law**

The indentures and the debt securities are governed by, and will be construed in accordance with, the laws of the State of New York. The indentures will be subject to the provisions of the Trust Indenture Act that are required to be part of the indentures and shall, to the extent applicable, be governed by such provisions.

## **Book-Entry Delivery and Settlement**

### *Global Notes*

We will issue any debt securities in the form of one or more global notes in definitive, fully registered, book-entry form. The global notes will be deposited with or on behalf of DTC, and registered in the name of Cede & Co., as nominee of DTC. Beneficial interests in the global notes will be represented through book-entry accounts of financial institutions acting on behalf of beneficial owners as direct and indirect participants in DTC. Investors may hold interests in the global notes through DTC.

DTC has advised us that:

DTC is a limited-purpose trust company organized under the New York Banking Law, a “banking organization” within the meaning of the New York Banking Law, a member of the Federal Reserve System, a “clearing corporation” within the meaning of the New York Uniform Commercial Code and a “clearing agency” registered under Section 17A of the Exchange Act.

DTC holds securities that its participants deposit with DTC and facilitates the settlement among participants of securities transactions, such as transfers and pledges, in deposited securities through electronic computerized book-entry changes in participants’ accounts, thereby eliminating the need for physical movement of securities certificates.

Direct participants include securities brokers and dealers, banks, trust companies, clearing corporations and other organizations, some of whom, and/or their representatives, own DTC.

DTC is a wholly owned subsidiary of The Depository Trust & Clearing Corporation, or "DTCC." DTCC is the holding company for DTC, National Securities Clearing Corporation and Fixed Income Clearing Corporation, all of which are registered clearing agencies. DTCC is owned by the users of its regulated subsidiaries.

Access to the DTC system is also available to others such as securities brokers and dealers, banks and trust companies that clear through or maintain a custodial relationship with a direct participant, either directly or indirectly.

The rules applicable to DTC and its direct and indirect participants are on file with the SEC.

We have provided the description of the operations and procedures of DTC in this prospectus solely as a matter of convenience. These operations and procedures are solely within the control of those organizations and are subject to change by them from time to time. None of us, any underwriters nor any trustee takes any responsibility for these operations or procedures, and you are urged to contact DTC or their participants directly to discuss these matters.

We expect that under procedures established by DTC:

upon deposit of the global notes with DTC or its custodian, DTC will credit on its internal system the accounts of direct participants designated by any underwriters with portions of the principal amounts of the global notes; and

ownership of the debt securities will be shown on, and the transfer of ownership thereof will be effected only through, records maintained by DTC or its nominee, with respect to interests of direct participants, and the records of direct and indirect participants, with respect to interests of persons other than participants.

The laws of some jurisdictions may require that purchasers of securities take physical delivery of those securities in definitive form. Accordingly, the ability to transfer interests in the debt securities represented by a global note to those persons may be limited. In addition, because DTC can act only on behalf of its participants, who in turn act on behalf of persons who hold interests through participants, the ability of a person having an interest in debt securities represented by a global note to pledge or transfer those interests to persons or entities that do not participate in DTC's system, or otherwise to take actions in respect of such interest, may be affected by the lack of a physical definitive security in respect of such interest.



So long as DTC or its nominee is the registered owner of a global note, DTC or that nominee will be considered the sole owner or holder of the debt securities represented by that global note for all purposes under the indenture and under the debt securities. Except as provided below, owners of beneficial interests in a global note will not be entitled to have debt securities represented by that global note registered in their names, will not receive or be entitled to receive physical delivery of certificated notes and will not be considered the owners or holders thereof under the applicable indenture or under the debt securities for any purpose, including with respect to the giving of any direction, instruction or approval to the trustee. Accordingly, each holder owning a beneficial interest in a global note must rely on the procedures of DTC and, if that holder is not a direct or indirect participant, on the procedures of the participant through which that holder owns its interest, to exercise any rights of a holder of debt securities under the applicable indenture or a global note.

Neither we nor any trustee will have any responsibility or liability for any aspect of the records relating to or payments made on account of debt securities by DTC, or for maintaining, supervising or reviewing any records of those organizations relating to the debt securities.

Payments on the debt securities represented by the global notes will be made to DTC or its nominee, as the case may be, as the registered owner thereof. We expect that DTC or its nominee, upon receipt of any payment on the debt securities represented by a global note, will credit participants' accounts with payments in amounts proportionate to their respective beneficial interests in the global note as shown in the records of DTC or its nominee. We also expect that payments by participants to owners of beneficial interests in the global note held through such participants will be governed by standing instructions and customary practice as is now the case with securities held for the accounts of customers registered in the names of nominees for such customers. The participants will be responsible for those payments.

#### *Settlement Procedures*

Secondary market trading between DTC participants will occur in the ordinary way in accordance with DTC rules and will be settled in immediately available funds.

#### *Certificated Notes*

Individual certificates in respect of any debt securities will not be issued in exchange for the global notes, except in very limited circumstances. We will issue or cause to be issued certificated notes to each person that DTC identifies as the beneficial owner of the debt securities represented by a global note upon surrender by DTC of the global note if:

DTC notifies us that it is no longer willing or able to act as a depository for such global note or ceases to be a clearing agency registered under the Exchange Act, and we have not appointed a successor depository within 90 days of that notice or becoming aware that DTC is no longer so registered;

· an event of default has occurred and is continuing, and DTC requests the issuance of certificated notes; or

· subject to DTC's procedures, we determine not to have the debt securities of such series represented by a global note.

Neither we nor any trustee will be liable for any delay by DTC, its nominee or any direct or indirect participant in identifying the beneficial owners of the debt securities. We and any trustee may conclusively rely on, and will be protected in relying on, instructions from DTC or its nominee for all purposes, including with respect to the registration and delivery, and the respective principal amounts, of the certificated notes to be issued.

## **DESCRIPTION OF DEPOSITARY SHARES**

We may elect to offer fractional interests in shares of our preferred stock, in which case we will issue receipts for depositary shares and each of these depositary shares will represent a fraction of a share of the applicable series of our preferred stock, as set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. The following summary of the terms of the depositary shares does not purport to be complete and is subject to, and is qualified in its entirety by reference to, the terms of the depositary shares and our preferred stock, as well as the form of the deposit agreement, our charter and the articles supplementary relating to the applicable series of our preferred stock that are, or will be, filed with the SEC. Therefore, you should carefully consider the actual provisions of these documents.

### **General**

Each owner of a depositary share will be entitled, in proportion to the applicable fractional interest in shares of our preferred stock underlying that depositary share, to all rights and preferences of our preferred stock underlying that depositary share. These rights may include dividend, voting, redemption and liquidation rights.

The shares of our preferred stock underlying the depositary shares will be deposited with a bank or trust company selected by us to act as depositary, under a deposit agreement between us, the depositary and the holders of the depositary receipts. The depositary will be the transfer agent, registrar and dividend disbursing agent for the depositary shares. The name and address of the principal executive office of the depositary will be included in the prospectus supplement relating to the issue.

The depositary shares will be evidenced by depositary receipts issued pursuant to the depositary agreement. Holders of depositary receipts agree to be bound by the deposit agreement, which requires holders to take certain actions such as filing proof of residence and paying certain charges.

### **Dividends and Other Distributions**

The depositary will distribute cash dividends or other cash distributions, if any, received in respect of the series of our preferred stock underlying the depositary shares to the record holders of depositary receipts in proportion to the number of depositary shares owned by those holders on the relevant record date. The relevant record date for depositary shares will be the same date as the record date for our preferred stock.

In the event of a distribution other than in cash, the depositary will distribute property received by it to the record holders of depositary receipts that are entitled to receive the distribution, unless the depositary determines that it is not feasible to make the distribution. If this occurs, the depositary, with our approval, may adopt another method for the distribution, including selling the property and distributing the net proceeds to the holders.

### **Liquidation Preference**

If a series of our preferred stock underlying the depositary shares has a liquidation preference, in the event of our voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up, holders of depositary shares will be entitled to receive the fraction of the liquidation preference accorded each share of the applicable series of our preferred stock, as set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement.

### **Redemption**

If a series of our preferred stock underlying the depositary shares is subject to redemption, the depositary shares will be redeemed from the proceeds received by the depositary resulting from the redemption, in whole or in part, of our preferred stock held by the depositary. Whenever we redeem any of our preferred stock held by the depositary, the depositary will redeem, as of the same redemption date, the number of depositary shares representing our preferred stock so redeemed. The depositary will mail the notice of redemption to the record holders of the depositary receipts promptly upon receiving the notice from us and no fewer than 20 nor more than 60 days, unless otherwise provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, prior to the date fixed for redemption of our preferred stock.

After the date fixed for redemption, the depositary shares called for redemption will no longer be outstanding. When the depositary shares are no longer outstanding, all rights of the holders will end, except the right to receive money, securities or other property payable upon redemption.

### **Voting**

Upon receipt of notice of any meeting at which the holders of our preferred stock are entitled to vote, the depositary will mail the information contained in the notice of meeting to the record holders of the depositary receipts underlying our preferred stock. Each record holder of those depositary receipts on the record date will be entitled to instruct the depositary as to the exercise of the voting rights pertaining to the amount of our preferred stock underlying that holder's depositary shares. The record date for the depositary will be the same date as the record date for our preferred stock. The depositary will try, as far as practicable, to vote our preferred stock underlying the depositary shares in accordance with these instructions. We will agree to take all action that may be deemed necessary by the depositary in order to enable the depositary to vote our preferred stock in accordance with these instructions. The depositary will not vote our preferred stock to the extent that it does not receive specific instructions from the holders of depositary receipts.

### **Withdrawal of Preferred Stock**

Owners of depositary shares will be entitled to receive upon surrender of depositary receipts at the principal office of the depositary and payment of any unpaid amount due to the depositary, the number of whole shares of our preferred stock underlying their depositary shares.

Partial shares of our preferred stock will not be issued. Holders of our preferred stock will not be entitled to deposit the shares under the deposit agreement or to receive depositary receipts evidencing depositary shares for our preferred stock.

### **Amendment and Termination of the Deposit Agreement**

The form of depositary receipt evidencing the depositary shares and any provision of the deposit agreement may be amended by agreement between the depositary and us. However, any amendment which materially and adversely alters the rights of the holders of depositary shares, other than fee changes, will not be effective unless the amendment has been approved by the holders of at least a majority of the outstanding depositary shares. The deposit agreement may be terminated by the depositary or us only if:

- all outstanding depositary shares have been redeemed; or

- there has been a final distribution of our preferred stock in connection with our dissolution and such distribution has been made to all the holders of depositary shares.

### **Charges of Depositary**

We will pay all transfer and other taxes and governmental charges arising solely from the existence of the depositary arrangement. We will also pay charges of the depositary in connection with:

- the initial deposit of our preferred stock;

- the initial issuance of the depositary shares;

- any redemption of our preferred stock; and

- all withdrawals of our preferred stock by owners of depositary shares.



information provided by holders of depositary receipts or other persons believed in good faith to be competent to give such information; and

- documents believed to be genuine and to have been signed or presented by the proper party or parties.

### **Resignation and Removal of Depositary**

The depositary may resign at any time by delivering a notice to us. We may remove the depositary at any time. Any such resignation or removal will take effect upon the appointment of a successor depositary and its acceptance of such appointment. The successor depositary must be appointed within 60 days after delivery of the notice for resignation or removal. The successor depositary must be a bank and trust company having its principal office in the United States of America and having a combined capital and surplus of at least \$50,000,000.



## DESCRIPTION OF PURCHASE CONTRACTS AND PURCHASE UNITS

We may issue purchase contracts for the purchase or sale of our common stock, preferred stock or debt securities issued by us or by third parties as specified in the applicable prospectus supplement. Each purchase contract will entitle the holder thereof to purchase or sell, and obligate us to sell or purchase on specified dates, such securities at a specified purchase price, which may be based on a formula, all as set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. We may, however, satisfy our obligations, if any, with respect to any purchase contract by delivering the cash value of such purchase contract or the cash value of the securities otherwise deliverable, as set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. The applicable prospectus supplement will also specify the methods by which the holders may purchase or sell such securities, and any acceleration, cancellation or termination provisions or other provisions relating to the settlement of a purchase contract. The price per security and the number of securities may be fixed at the time the purchase contracts are entered into or may be determined by reference to a specific formula set forth in the applicable purchase contracts.

The purchase contracts may be issued separately or as part of units consisting of a purchase contract and debt securities or debt obligations of third parties, including U.S. treasury securities, or any other securities described in the applicable prospectus supplement or any combination of the foregoing, securing the holders' obligations to purchase the securities under the purchase contracts, which we refer to herein as "purchase units." The purchase contracts may require holders to secure their obligations under the purchase contracts in a specified manner. The purchase contracts also may require us to make periodic payments to the holders of the purchase contracts or the purchase units, as the case may be, or vice versa, and those payments may be unsecured or pre-funded on some basis.

The prospectus supplement relating to any offering of purchase contracts or purchase units will contain the specific terms of the purchase contracts or purchase units. These terms may include, without limitation, the following:

- whether the purchase contracts obligate the holder or us to purchase or sell, or both purchase and sell, the securities subject to purchase under the purchase contract, and the nature and amount of each of those securities, or the method of determining those amounts;

- whether the purchase contracts are to be prepaid or not;

- whether the purchase contracts are to be settled by delivery, or by reference or linkage to the value, performance or level of the securities subject to purchase under the purchase contract;

- any acceleration, cancellation, termination or other provisions relating to the settlement of the purchase contracts or purchase units;

a discussion of the material U.S. federal income tax considerations applicable to the purchase contracts or purchase units;

- whether the purchase contracts or purchase units will be issued in fully registered or global form; and
- any other terms of the purchase contracts or purchase units and any securities subject to such purchase contracts.

The description in the applicable prospectus supplement of any purchase contracts and purchase units we offer will not necessarily be complete and will be qualified in its entirety by reference to the applicable purchase contract or unit agreement, which will be filed with the SEC in connection with any offering of such securities.

#### DESCRIPTION OF UNITS

We may issue units comprised of any combination of two or more of the other securities described in this prospectus and as specified in the applicable prospectus supplement. Each unit will be issued so that the holder of the unit is also the holder, with rights and obligations of a holder, of each security included in the unit. The units may be issued under unit agreements to be entered into between us and a unit agent.

The applicable prospectus supplement will specify the terms of the units, including:

the designation and terms of the units and of any of the securities comprising the units, including whether and under what circumstances the securities comprising the units may be traded separately;

- a description of the terms of any unit agreement governing the units;
- a description of the provisions for the payment, settlement, transfer or exchange of the units;
- a discussion of the material U.S. federal income tax considerations, if applicable; and
- whether the units if issued as a separate security will be issued in fully registered or global form.

The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the terms of any units. The description in the applicable prospectus supplement of any units we offer will not necessarily be complete and will be qualified in its entirety by reference to the applicable unit agreement, which will be filed with the SEC in connection with any offering of units.

## PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We may sell the securities offered under this prospectus from time to time pursuant to underwritten public offerings, negotiated transactions, block trades or a combination of these methods or through underwriters, dealers or agents or directly to one or more purchasers. The securities may be distributed from time to time in one or more transactions at:

- a fixed price or prices, which may be changed;
- market prices prevailing at the time of sale;
- prices related to the prevailing market price; or
- negotiated prices.

For each type and series of securities offered, the applicable prospectus supplement will set forth the terms of the offering, including, without limitation:

- the initial public offering price;
- the names of any underwriters, dealers or agents;
- the purchase price of the securities;
- the use of proceeds from the sale of the securities;

any underwriting discounts, concessions, commissions, agency fees or other compensation payable to underwriters, dealers or agents;

- any discounts or concessions allowed or re-allowed or repaid to dealers;
- estimated offering expenses; and

the securities exchanges on which the securities will be listed, if any.

We may grant underwriters options to purchase additional securities at the public offering price, with additional underwriting commissions or discounts, as applicable, set forth in the prospectus supplement. The terms of any such option will be set forth in the prospectus supplement for those securities.

Underwriters or agents may make sales in privately negotiated transactions and/or any other method permitted by law, including sales deemed to be an “at-the-market” offering as defined in Rule 415 under the Securities Act, which includes sales made directly on the Nasdaq Capital Market, the existing trading market for our common stock, or sales made to or through a market maker other than on an exchange.

We may issue to our existing security holders, through a dividend or similar distribution, rights to purchase shares of our common stock or preferred stock, which may or may not be transferable. In any distribution of rights to our existing security holders, if all of the underlying securities are not subscribed for, we may then sell the unsubscribed securities directly to third parties or may engage the services of one or more underwriters, dealers or agents, including standby underwriters, to facilitate the distribution of the unsubscribed securities. The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the specific terms of any offering of our common stock or preferred stock through the issuance of rights including, if applicable, the material terms of any standby underwriting agreement or purchase agreement.

### **Sales Through Underwriters, Dealers or Agents; Direct Sales**

If we use underwriters in any sale of securities offered under this prospectus, the underwriters will buy the securities for their own account, including through underwriting, purchase, security lending or repurchase agreements with us. The underwriters may then resell the securities in one or more transactions at a fixed public offering price or at varying prices determined at the time of sale or thereafter. Unless otherwise indicated in the prospectus supplement, the obligations of the underwriters to purchase the securities will be subject to certain conditions and the underwriters will be obligated to purchase all the securities offered if they purchase any securities. The initial public offering price and any discounts or concessions allowed or re-allowed or paid to dealers may be changed from time to time. In connection with an offering, underwriters and their affiliates may engage in transactions to stabilize, maintain or otherwise affect the market price of the securities in accordance with applicable law.

If we use dealers in any sale of securities offered under this prospectus, the securities will be sold to such dealers as principals. The dealers may then resell the securities to the public at varying prices to be determined by such dealers at the time of resale.

If agents are used in any sale of securities offered under this prospectus, they will use their reasonable best efforts to solicit purchases for the period of their appointment.

If securities offered under this prospectus are sold directly, no underwriters, dealers or agents would be involved. We are not making an offer of securities in any state that does not permit such an offer. If we sell securities through dealers or agents, or directly, the terms of any such sales will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

### **Delayed Delivery Contracts**

We may authorize underwriters, dealers or agents to solicit offers from certain institutions whereby the institution contractually agrees to purchase the securities offered under this prospectus from us on a future date at a specific price. This type of contract may be made only with institutions that we specifically approve. Such institutions could include banks, insurance companies, pension funds, investment companies and educational and charitable institutions. The underwriters, dealers or agents will not be responsible for the validity or performance of these contracts.

### **Market Making, Stabilization and Other Transactions**

Each issue of a new series of preferred stock, warrants or rights will be a new issue of securities with no established trading market, except as indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement. Unless indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, we do not expect to list the offered securities on a securities exchange, except for our common stock, which is listed on the Nasdaq Capital Market. We can provide no assurance as to whether the securities will have a liquid trading market.

In order to facilitate the offering of any of the securities offered under this prospectus, the underwriters with respect to any such offering may, as described in the prospectus supplement, engage in transactions that stabilize, maintain or otherwise affect the price of the securities or any other securities the prices of which may be used to determine payments on these securities. Stabilizing transactions involve bids to purchase the underlying security in the open market for the purpose of preventing or retarding a decline in the price of the securities. Syndicate covering transactions involve purchases of the securities in the open market after the distribution has been completed in order to cover syndicate short positions. Penalty bids permit the underwriters to reclaim a selling concession from a syndicate member when the securities originally sold by the syndicate member are purchased in a stabilizing or syndicate covering transaction to cover syndicate short positions. Any of these activities may have the effect of raising or maintaining the market price of our securities or preventing or retarding a decline in the market price of our securities. As a result, the market price of the securities may be higher than it otherwise would be in the absence of these transactions. The underwriters are not required to engage in these activities, and may end any of these activities at any time, all as described in the prospectus supplement.

Any person participating in the distribution of securities will be subject to applicable provisions of the Exchange Act and the rules and regulations under the Exchange Act, including without limitation Regulation M, which may limit the timing of transactions involving the securities offered under this prospectus. Furthermore, Regulation M may restrict the ability of any person engaged in the distribution of such securities to engage in market-making activities with respect to the particular securities being distributed. All of the above may affect the marketability of the securities offered under this prospectus and the ability of any person or entity to engage in market-making activities with respect to such securities.

Under the securities law of various states, the securities offered under this prospectus may be sold in those states only through registered or licensed brokers or dealers. In addition, in various states the securities offered under this prospectus may not be offered and sold unless such securities have been registered or qualified for sale in the state or an exemption from such registration or qualification is available and is complied with.

### **Derivative Transactions and Hedging**

We, the underwriters or other agents may engage in derivative transactions involving the securities. These derivatives may consist of short sale transactions and other hedging activities. The underwriters or agents may acquire a long or short position in the securities, hold or resell securities acquired and purchase options or futures on the securities and other derivative instruments with returns linked to or related to changes in the price of the securities. In order to facilitate these derivative transactions, we may enter into security lending or repurchase agreements with the underwriters or agents. The underwriters or agents may effect the derivative transactions through sales of the securities to the public, including short sales, or by lending the securities in order to facilitate short sale transactions by others. The underwriters or agents may also use the securities purchased or borrowed from us or others (or, in the case of derivatives, securities received from us in settlement of those derivatives) to directly or indirectly settle sales of the securities or close out any related open borrowings of the securities.

### **General Information**

We expect that any agreements we may have with underwriters, dealers and agents will include provisions indemnifying them against certain civil liabilities, including certain liabilities under the Securities Act, or providing for contribution with respect to payments that they may be required to make. An underwriter, dealer or agent, or any of their affiliates, may be customers of, or otherwise engage in transactions with or perform services for us in the ordinary course of business.

The specific terms of any lock-up provisions with respect to any given offering will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

In compliance with guidelines of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, Inc. (“FINRA”) and unless otherwise disclosed in the applicable prospectus supplement, we do not intend for the maximum consideration or discount to be received by any FINRA member or independent broker dealer to exceed 8.0% of the aggregate amount of the securities offered pursuant to this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement.



## LEGAL MATTERS

Unless otherwise indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, the validity of the securities offered under this prospectus will be passed upon for us by Covington & Burling LLP, Washington, D.C., and Shulman, Rogers, Gandal, Pordy & Ecker, P.A., Potomac, Maryland. Counsel for any underwriters, dealers or agents will be named in the applicable prospectus supplement.

## EXPERTS

The audited consolidated financial statements of the Company as of and for the year ended December 31, 2016 appearing in the 2016 Form 10-K have been audited by Dixon Hughes Goodman LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, as set forth in its report included therein, which is incorporated herein by reference. Such consolidated financial statements are incorporated herein by reference in reliance upon such report given on the authority of such firm as experts in auditing and accounting.

The audited consolidated financial statements of the Company as of and for each of the two years ended December 31, 2015 appearing in the 2016 Form 10-K have been audited by Stegman & Company, an independent registered public accounting firm, as set forth in its report included therein, which is incorporated herein by reference. Such consolidated financial statements are incorporated herein by reference in reliance upon such report given on the authority of such firm as experts in auditing and accounting.

**PART II****INFORMATION NOT REQUIRED IN PROSPECTUS**

## Item 14. Other Expenses of Issuance and Distribution.

The following table sets forth the various expenses payable by us in connection with the sale and distribution of the securities being registered hereby.

|  | Amount<br>to be paid |
|--|----------------------|
| SEC registration fee                     | \$ 8,692.50          |
| Legal fees and expenses                  | (1 )                 |
| Accounting fees and expenses             | (1 )                 |
| Printing fees                            | (1 )                 |
| Trustee and depositary fees and expenses | (1 )                 |
| Blue sky fees and expenses               | (1 )                 |
| Rating agency fees                       | (1 )                 |
| Listing fees and expenses                | (1 )                 |
| Miscellaneous                            | (1 )                 |
| Total                                    | \$(1 )               |

These fees are calculated based on the numbers of issuances and amount of securities offered and, accordingly, (1) cannot be estimated at this time. The estimate of such expenses incurred in connection with securities to be offered and sold pursuant to this registration statement will be included in the applicable prospectus supplement.

## Item 15. Indemnification of Directors and Officers.

The Company is incorporated under the laws of the State of Maryland. The MGCL permits a Maryland corporation to include in its charter a provision eliminating the liability of its directors and officers to the corporation and its shareholders for money damages, other than for liability resulting from (i) actual receipt of an improper benefit or profit in money, property or services or (ii) active and deliberate dishonesty that was established by a final judgment and was material to the cause of action. The Company's charter and bylaws contain a provision that eliminates the

liability of our directors and officers to the maximum extent permitted by Maryland law.

The MGCL requires a Maryland corporation (unless its charter provides otherwise, which the Company's charter does not) to indemnify a director or officer who has been successful, on the merits or otherwise, in the defense of any proceeding to which he or she is made a party by reason of his or her service in that capacity. The MGCL permits a Maryland corporation to indemnify its present and former directors and officers, among others, against judgments, penalties, fines, settlements and reasonable expenses actually incurred by them in connection with any proceeding to which they may be made a party by reason of their service in those or other capacities unless it is established that (i) the act or omission of the director or officer was material to the matter giving rise to the proceeding and (a) was committed in bad faith or (b) was the result of active and deliberate dishonesty, (ii) the director or officer actually received an improper personal benefit in money, property or services or (iii) in the case of any criminal proceeding, the director or officer had reasonable cause to believe that the act or omission was unlawful.

Under the MGCL, a Maryland corporation also may not indemnify for an adverse judgment in a suit by or on behalf of the corporation or for a judgment of liability on the basis that personal benefit was improperly received. A court may order indemnification if it determines that the director or officer is fairly and reasonably entitled to indemnification, even though the director or officer did not meet the prescribed standard of conduct or was adjudged liable on the basis that personal benefit was improperly received. However, indemnification for an adverse judgment in a suit by or on behalf of the corporation, or for a judgment of liability on the basis that personal benefit was improperly received, is limited to expenses.

In addition, Maryland law permits a Maryland corporation to advance reasonable expenses to a director or officer upon receipt of (a) a written affirmation by the director or officer of his or her good faith belief that he or she has met the standard of conduct necessary for indemnification by the corporation and (b) a written undertaking by him or her on his or her behalf to repay the amount paid or reimbursed by the corporation if it is ultimately determined that the standard of conduct was not met.

The Company's charter and bylaws require the Company, to the fullest extent permitted by Maryland law as in effect from time to time, to indemnify and advance expenses to its directors and officers, whether serving the Company or at the Company's request, any other entity, who were or are parties or are threatened to be made parties to any threatened or actual suit, investigation or other proceeding, including administrative actions, as a result of their status or actions as directors or officers of the Company. The Company's charter and bylaws authorize the Company to provide the same indemnification and advancement of expenses to the Company's employees and agents, other than a director or officer of the Company.

The indemnification and advancement of expenses provided for in the Company's charter and bylaws shall not be deemed exclusive of any other right, in respect of indemnification or otherwise, to which those seeking such indemnification or advancement of expenses may be entitled under any insurance or other agreement, vote of stockholders or disinterested directors or otherwise.

The Company may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was our director, officer, employee or agent, or while a director, officer, employee or agent is or was serving at our request as a director, officer, employee or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, other enterprise or employee benefit plan, against any liability asserted against and incurred by such person in any such capacity or arising out of such person's position, whether or not we would have the power to indemnify such person under Maryland law.

Insofar as indemnification for liabilities arising under the Securities Act may be permitted to directors, officers or persons controlling us pursuant to the foregoing provisions, the Company has been informed that, in the opinion of the SEC, such indemnification is against public policy as expressed in the Securities Act and is therefore unenforceable.

## **Item 16. Exhibits**

A list of exhibits filed herewith is contained in the exhibit index that immediately precedes such exhibits and is incorporated herein by reference.

**Item 17. Undertakings.**

The undersigned registrant hereby undertakes:

(1) To file, during any period in which offers or sales are being made, a post-effective amendment to this registration statement:

(i) To include any prospectus required by Section 10(a)(3) of the Securities Act of 1933;

(ii) To reflect in the prospectus any facts or events arising after the effective date of the registration statement (or the most recent post-effective amendment thereof) which, individually or in the aggregate, represent a fundamental change in the information set forth in the registration statement. Notwithstanding the foregoing, any increase or decrease in volume of securities offered (if the total dollar value of securities offered would not exceed that which was registered) and any deviation from the low or high end of the estimated maximum offering range may be reflected in the form of prospectus filed with the SEC pursuant to Rule 424(b) if, in the aggregate, the changes in volume and price represent no more than a 20% change in the maximum aggregate offering price set forth in the "Calculation of Registration Fee" table in the effective registration statement; and

(iii) To include any material information with respect to the plan of distribution not previously disclosed in the registration statement or any material change to such information in the registration statement;

provided, however, that the undertakings set forth in paragraphs (1)(i), (1)(ii) and (1)(iii) do not apply if the information required to be included in a post-effective amendment by those paragraphs is contained in reports filed with or furnished to the SEC by the registrant pursuant to Section 13 or Section 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 that are incorporated by reference in this registration statement, or is contained in a form of prospectus filed pursuant to Rule 424(b) that is part of the registration statement.

(2) That, for the purpose of determining any liability under the Securities Act of 1933, each such post-effective amendment shall be deemed to be a new registration statement relating to the securities offered therein, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial bona fide offering thereof.

(3) To remove from registration by means of a post-effective amendment any of the securities being registered which remain unsold at the termination of the offering.

(4) That, for the purpose of determining liability under the Securities Act of 1933 to any purchaser:

(i) Each prospectus filed by the registrant pursuant to Rule 424(b)(3) shall be deemed to be part of the registration statement as of the date the filed prospectus was deemed part of and included in the registration statement; and

(ii) Each prospectus required to be filed pursuant to Rule 424(b)(2), (b)(5), or (b)(7) as part of a registration statement in reliance on Rule 430B relating to an offering made pursuant to Rule 415(a)(1)(i), (vii), or (x) for the purpose of providing the information required by Section 10(a) of the Securities Act of 1933 shall be deemed to be part of and included in the registration statement as of the earlier of the date such form of prospectus is first used after effectiveness or the date of the first contract of sale of securities in the offering described in the prospectus. As provided in Rule 430B, for liability purposes of the issuer and any person that is at that date an underwriter, such date shall be deemed to be a new effective date of the registration statement relating to the securities in the registration statement to which that prospectus relates, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial bona fide offering thereof. Provided, however, that no statement made in a registration statement or prospectus that is part of the registration statement or made in a document incorporated or deemed incorporated by reference into the registration statement or prospectus that is part of the registration statement will, as to a purchaser with a time of contract of sale prior to such effective date, supersede or modify any statement that was made in the registration statement or prospectus that was part of the registration statement or made in any such document immediately prior to such effective date.

(5) That, for the purpose of determining liability of the registrant under the Securities Act of 1933 to any purchaser in the initial distribution of the securities: The undersigned registrant undertakes that in a primary offering of securities

of the undersigned registrant pursuant to this registration statement, regardless of the underwriting method used to sell the securities to the purchaser, if the securities are offered or sold to such purchaser by means of any of the following communications, the undersigned registrant will be a seller to the purchaser and will be considered to offer or sell such securities to such purchaser:

(i) Any preliminary prospectus or prospectus of the undersigned registrant relating to the offering required to be filed pursuant to Rule 424;

(ii) Any free writing prospectus relating to the offering prepared by or on behalf of the undersigned registrant or used or referred to by the undersigned registrant;

(iii) The portion of any other free writing prospectus relating to the offering containing material information about the undersigned registrant or its securities provided by or on behalf of the undersigned registrant; and

(iv) Any other communication that is an offer in the offering made by the undersigned registrant to the purchaser.

(6) That, for purposes of determining any liability under the Securities Act of 1933, each filing of the registrant's annual report pursuant to Section 13(a) or Section 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 that is incorporated by reference in the registration statement shall be deemed to be a new registration statement relating to the securities offered therein, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial bona fide offering thereof.

(7) Insofar as indemnification for liabilities arising under the Securities Act of 1933 may be permitted to directors, officers and controlling persons of the registrant pursuant to the foregoing provisions, or otherwise, the registrant has been advised that in the opinion of the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission such indemnification is against public policy as expressed in the Securities Act of 1933 and is, therefore, unenforceable. In the event that a claim for indemnification against such liabilities (other than the payment by the registrant of expenses incurred or paid by a director, officer or controlling person of the registrant in the successful defense of any action, suit or proceeding) is asserted by such director, officer or controlling person in connection with the securities being registered, the registrant will, unless in the opinion of its counsel the matter has been settled by controlling precedent, submit to a court of appropriate jurisdiction the question whether such indemnification by it is against public policy as expressed in the Securities Act of 1933 and will be governed by the final adjudication of such issue.

(8) To file an application for the purpose of determining the eligibility of the trustee to act under subsection (a) of Section 310 of the Trust Indenture Act in accordance with the rules and regulations prescribed by the SEC under Section 305(b)(2) of the Trust Indenture Act.



## SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, the registrant certifies that it has reasonable grounds to believe that it meets all of the requirements for filing on Form S-3 and has duly caused this registration statement to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized, in the City of Ellicott City, State of Maryland, on July 17, 2017.

### HOWARD BANCORP, INC.

By: /s/ Mary Ann Scully  
Mary Ann Scully  
President, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer

## POWER OF ATTORNEY

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS, that each of the persons whose signature appears below appoints and constitutes Mary Ann Scully and George C. Coffman, his or her true and lawful attorney-in-fact and agent, each acting alone, with full power of substitution and resubstitution, for him or her and in his or her name, place and stead, in any and all capacities, to execute any and all amendments (including post-effective amendments) to the within registration statement (as well as any registration statement for the same offering covered by this registration statement that is to be effective upon filing pursuant to Rule 462(b) under the Securities Act of 1933), and to file the same, together with all exhibits thereto and all other documents in connection therewith, with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission and such other agencies, offices and persons as may be required by applicable law, granting unto each said attorney-in-fact and agent, each acting alone, full power and authority to do and perform each and every act and thing requisite or necessary to be done in and about the premises, as fully to all intents and purposes as he or she might or could do in person, hereby ratifying and confirming all that each said attorney-in-fact and agent, each acting alone may lawfully do or cause to be done by virtue hereof.

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, this amendment to the registration statement has been signed by the following persons in the capacities and on the date indicated.

| Name                                   | Capacities  | Date          |
|--|---|---------------|
| /s/ Mary Ann Scully<br>Mary Ann Scully | President, Chief Executive Officer, Chairman<br>(Principal Executive Officer) | July 17, 2017 |

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/s/ George C. Coffman Chief Financial Officer July 17, 2017  
George C. Coffman (Principal Accounting and Financial Officer)

/s/ Richard G. Arnold Director July 17, 2017  
Richard G. Arnold

/s/ Nasser Basir Director July 17, 2017  
Nasser Basir

/s/Gary R. Bozel Director July 17, 2017  
Gary R. Bozel

/s/ Robert J. Hartson      Director July 17, 2017  
Robert J. Hartson

/s/ John J. Keenan      Director July 17, 2017  
John J. Keenan

/s/ Paul I. Latta, Jr.      Director July 17, 2017  
Paul I. Latta, Jr.

/s/ Kenneth C. Lundeen      Director July 17, 2017  
Kenneth C. Lundeen

/s/ Karen D. McGraw      Director July 17, 2017  
Karen D. McGraw

/s/ Richard J. Morgan      Director July 17, 2017  
Richard J. Morgan

/s/ Thomas P. O'Neill      Director July 17, 2017  
Thomas P. O'Neill

/s/ Robert W. Smith, Jr.      Director July 17, 2017  
Robert W. Smith, Jr.

/s/ Donna Hill Staton      Director July 17, 2017  
Donna Hill Staton

**EXHIBIT INDEX**

| <b>Exhibit<br/>Number</b> | <b>Description</b>  |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1.1                       | Form of Underwriting Agreement.*  |
| 3.1                       | Articles of Incorporation of Howard Bancorp, Inc. (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 3.1 to the Company's Registration Statement on Form S-1 filed on November 28, 2011 (File No. 333-178204)).                          |
| 3.2                       | Articles of Amendment to Articles of Incorporation of Howard Bancorp, Inc. (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 3.2 to the Company's Registration Statement on Form S-1 filed on November 28, 2011 (File No. 333-178204)). |
| 3.3                       | Articles of Amendment to Articles of Incorporation of Howard Bancorp, Inc. (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 3.3 to the Company's Current Report on Form 8-K filed on January 24, 2017 (File No. 001-35489)).           |
| 3.4                       | Amended and Restated Bylaws of Howard Bancorp, Inc. (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 3.1 to the Company's Current Report on Form 8-K on March 4, 2015 (File No. 001-35489)).   |
| 4.1                       | Specimen Common Stock Certificate of Howard Bancorp, Inc. (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 4.1 to the Company's Registration Statement on Form S-1 filed on November 28, 2011 (File No. 333-178204)).                  |
| 4.2                       | Form of Preferred Stock Certificate.*   |
| 4.3                       | Form of Warrant Agreement and Certificate.*   |
| 4.4                       | Form of Subscription Rights (including form of Subscription Rights Certificate).*   |
| 4.5                       | Form of Senior Debt Indenture.  |
| 4.6                       | Form of Subordinated Debt Indenture.  |
| 4.7                       | Form of Senior Debt Security.*  |
| 4.8                       | Form of Subordinated Debt Security.*  |
| 4.9                       | Form of Depositary Agreement and Certificate.*  |
| 4.10                      | Form of Purchase Contract Agreement.*   |
| 4.11                      | Form of Unit Agreement and Unit Certificate.*   |
| 5.1                       | Opinion of Covington & Burling LLP.   |

- 5.2 Opinion of Shulman, Rogers, Gandal, Porcy & Ecker, P.A.
- 12.1 Computation of Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges and Preferred Stock Dividends.
- 23.1 Consent of Dixon Hughes Goodman LLP.
- 23.2 Consent of Stegman & Company.
- 23.3 Consent of Covington & Burling LLP (included in Exhibit 5.1).
- 23.4 Consent of Shulman, Rogers, Gandal, Porcy & Ecker, P.A. (included in Exhibit 5.2).
- 24.1 Powers of attorney (included on the signature pages herewith).
- 25.1 Form T-1 Statement of Eligibility of Trustee under the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended, for the Senior Debt Indenture.\*\*
- 25.2 Form T-1 Statement of Eligibility of Trustee under the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended, for the Subordinated Debt Indenture.\*\*

\* To be filed by amendment or as an exhibit to a report filed pursuant to Section 13(a) or Section 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 and incorporated herein by reference.

\*\*To be filed separately pursuant to Section 305(b)(2) of the Trust Indenture Act of 1939.