

ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/
Form 424B5
November 14, 2005
Table of Contents

Filed Pursuant to Rule 424(b)(5)

Registration No. 333-120515

The information in this preliminary prospectus supplement is not complete and may be changed. The preliminary prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus are not an offer to sell nor do they seek an offer to buy these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted.

Subject to Completion. Dated November 9, 2005

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

(TO PROSPECTUS DATED DECEMBER 30, 2004)

\$600,000,000

ZIONS BANCORPORATION

% SUBORDINATED NOTES DUE NOVEMBER , 2015

FLOATING RATE SUBORDINATED NOTES DUE NOVEMBER , 2015

We will issue an aggregate of \$600 million principal amount of our subordinated notes, consisting of \$ million principal amount of our % Subordinated Notes due November , 2015, referred to as the fixed rate notes, and \$ million principal amount of our Floating Rate Subordinated Notes due November , 2015, referred to as the floating rate notes. The fixed rate notes and the floating rate notes are collectively referred to as the notes.

The fixed rate notes will bear interest at % per year. We will pay interest on the fixed rate notes on May and November of each year beginning May , 2006. The floating rate notes will bear interest at the initial interest rate (as further described in Description of Notes) for the first interest period and, thereafter, at a rate equal to the then applicable U.S. dollar three-month LIBOR plus %. We will pay interest on the floating rate notes on February , May , August and November of each year, beginning February , 2006. The notes will be issued only in denominations of \$1,000 and integral multiples of \$1,000.

Edgar Filing: ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/ - Form 424B5

The notes are subordinated in right of payment to all our senior indebtedness and effectively subordinated to all existing and future debt and all other liabilities of our subsidiaries and, upon the occurrence of certain events of insolvency, are subordinated to the prior payment in full of our general obligations. As of September 30, 2005, the aggregate amount of our outstanding senior indebtedness and general obligations was approximately \$440 million and the aggregate amount of our outstanding subordinated debt, including debt issued by us to financing trust subsidiaries that have issued trust preferred securities and including our subordinated guarantee of a subsidiary's debt, was approximately \$1.5 billion. In addition, as of that date, the aggregate amount of all debt and other liabilities of our subsidiaries, other than the trust preferred securities and guaranteed debt referred to above, was approximately \$28.5 billion.

We cannot redeem the notes prior to maturity.

The notes will not be listed on any national securities exchange. Currently, there is no public market for the notes.

The notes are our unsecured obligations. The notes are not savings accounts, deposits or other obligations of any of our banks or non-bank subsidiaries and are not insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System or any other government agency.

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

	Fixed Rate Notes		Floating Rate Notes	
	Per Note	Total	Per Note	Total
Initial public offering price	%	\$	%	\$
Underwriting discount	%	\$	%	\$
Proceeds, before expenses, to us	%	\$	%	\$

The initial public offering prices set forth above do not include accrued interest, if any. Interest on the notes will accrue from November , 2005 and must be paid by the purchasers if the notes are delivered after November , 2005.

The underwriters expect to deliver the notes through the facilities of The Depository Trust Company against payment in New York, New York on November , 2005.

LEHMAN BROTHERS

BARCLAYS CAPITAL

FTN FINANCIAL SECURITIES CORP.

KEEFE, BRUYETTE & WOODS

MERRILL LYNCH & CO.

SANDLER O NEILL & PARTNERS, L.P.

ZIONS INVESTMENT SECURITIES, INC.

The date of this Prospectus Supplement is November , 2005

Table of Contents**TABLE OF CONTENTS****Prospectus Supplement**

	Page
<u>Prospectus Supplement Summary</u>	S-1
<u>Selected Historical Consolidated Financial Data</u>	S-5
<u>Use of Proceeds</u>	S-7
<u>Capitalization</u>	S-7
<u>Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges</u>	S-8
<u>Description of Notes</u>	S-9
<u>Federal Income Tax Consequences to United States Alien Holders</u>	S-21
<u>Underwriting</u>	S-24
<u>Validity of Notes</u>	S-26
<u>Experts</u>	S-26
<u>Incorporation by Reference</u>	S-26

Prospectus

<u>About This Prospectus</u>	1
<u>Where You Can Find More Information</u>	2
<u>Disclosure Regarding Forward-Looking Statements</u>	2
<u>Zions Bancorporation</u>	4
<u>Selected Historical Consolidated Financial Data</u>	5
<u>Use of Proceeds</u>	7
<u>Regulatory Considerations</u>	8
<u>Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges</u>	9
<u>Description of Debt Securities We May Offer</u>	10
<u>Legal Ownership and Book-Entry Issuance</u>	30
<u>Securities Issued in Bearer Form</u>	35
<u>Considerations Relating to Indexed Securities</u>	39
<u>Plan of Distribution</u>	41
<u>Employee Retirement Income Security Act</u>	43
<u>Validity of the Debt Securities</u>	44
<u>Experts</u>	44

You should rely only on information contained in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus or information to which we have referred you. We have not, and the underwriters have not, authorized anyone to provide you with information that is different. This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus may only be used where it is legal to sell these securities. The information in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus may only be accurate as of the date of this prospectus supplement.

We are offering to sell, and are seeking offers to buy, the notes only in jurisdictions where offers and sales are permitted. The distribution of this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus and the offering of the notes in certain jurisdictions may be restricted by law. Persons outside the United States who come into possession of this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus must inform themselves about and observe any restrictions relating to the offering of the notes and the distribution of this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus outside the United States. This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus do not constitute, and may not be used in connection with, an offer to sell, or a solicitation of an offer to buy, any securities offered by this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus by any person in any jurisdiction in which it is unlawful for such person to make such an offer or solicitation.

Table of Contents

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT SUMMARY

The following summary is qualified in its entirety by the more detailed information, including our consolidated financial statements and related notes, included or incorporated by reference in the accompanying prospectus. Unless the context otherwise requires, the terms Zions, we, us and our refer to Zions and Zions subsidiaries.

Zions Bancorporation

We are a financial holding company organized under the laws of Utah in 1955 and registered as a bank holding company and a financial holding company under the Bank Holding Company Act of 1956. According to SNL DataSource, we are the 24th largest domestic bank holding company by deposits as of June 30, 2005. We currently own and operate seven commercial banks with a total of 390 branch offices, with each bank operating under a separate charter, name and management team. We provide a full range of banking and related services through our banking and other subsidiaries, primarily in Utah, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon and Washington. On September 30, 2005, we had consolidated assets of approximately \$33.4 billion, consolidated loans (net of unearned income and fees) of approximately \$23.9 billion, consolidated deposits of approximately \$25.4 billion and shareholders' equity of approximately \$3.0 billion. Active full-time equivalent employees totaled 7,977 at September 30, 2005.

We focus on providing community-minded banking through the strength of our core business lines, including retail banking, small and medium-sized business lending, residential mortgage and investment activities. Our banks provide a wide variety of commercial and retail banking and mortgage-lending products and services. Commercial products and services include commercial loans, lease financing, cash management, lockbox, customized draft processing, and other special financial services for business and other commercial banking customers. Our wide range of personal banking services include bank card, student and other installment loans and home equity lines of credit, checking accounts, savings accounts, time certificates of various types and maturities, trust services, safe deposit facilities, direct deposit and 24-hour ATM access.

Third Quarter Results

On October 20, 2005, we announced our financial results for the quarter ended September 30, 2005. We reported third-quarter net income of \$123.0 million, or \$1.34 per diluted share. Net income and earnings per share increased 20.0% and 18.6%, respectively, over the \$102.5 million, or \$1.13 per diluted share for the third quarter of 2004. At September 30, 2005, our total consolidated assets were \$33.4 billion, up from \$30.7 billion, our total consolidated deposits were \$25.4 billion, up from \$23.2 billion, and our shareholders' equity was \$3.0 billion, up from \$2.7 billion, in each case compared to the amounts at September 30, 2004. The return on average common equity was 16.41% in the third quarter of 2005, up from 15.23% for the same period in 2004.

Amegy Acquisition

On July 5, 2005, we entered into a merger agreement with Amegy Bancorporation, Inc., a Texas corporation, pursuant to which Amegy will merge into a wholly-owned subsidiary of Zions. As a result of the merger, Amegy will become a wholly-owned subsidiary of Zions.

Edgar Filing: ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/ - Form 424B5

Pursuant to the merger agreement, Amegy shareholders will receive for each share of Amegy common stock they hold, at their election, cash or shares of Zions common stock, in either case having a value equal to \$8.50 plus the product of 0.2020 times the average closing price of Zions common stock for the ten trading days prior

S-1

Table of Contents

to the closing date. Based on the price of Zions shares at the close of business on July 5, 2005, the total consideration will consist of approximately \$600 million in cash and approximately 14.25 million shares of Zions common stock prior to giving effect to any outstanding options.

The merger has been approved by Amegy shareholders, but remains subject to certain regulatory approvals and other customary closing conditions. We currently expect that the merger will close by the end of the fourth quarter of 2005 subject to the satisfaction of these conditions.

Amegy Bancorporation, Inc., the parent company of Amegy Bank, N.A., is an independent bank holding company headquartered in Houston, Texas. Amegy Bank focuses on commercial and consumer banking services, as well as trust and investment management, treasury management, brokerage, leasing, factoring and item processing services, primarily in the greater Houston and Dallas-Fort Worth markets. Amegy provides these services to small, middle market and larger corporate businesses, private banking individuals, and retail consumers in the Houston metropolitan area through its 73 full service banking facilities and in the Dallas-Fort Worth market through its five full service banking facilities.

Table of Contents

The Offering

Issuer	Zions Bancorporation.
Securities Offered	<p>Fixed rate notes: \$ aggregate principal amount of % Subordinated Notes due November , 2015.</p> <p>Floating rate notes: \$ aggregate principal amount of Floating Rate Subordinated Notes due November , 2015.</p>
Offering Price	<p>Fixed rate notes: % of the principal amount, plus accrued interest, if any, from November , 2005.</p> <p>Floating rate notes: % of the principal amount, plus accrued interest, if any, from November , 2005.</p>
Maturity Date	<p>Fixed rate notes: November , 2015.</p> <p>Floating rate notes: November , 2015.</p>
Interest	<p>Fixed rate notes: We will pay interest on the fixed rate notes semi-annually on May and November of each year, commencing May , 2006, at a rate of % per year.</p> <p>Floating rate notes: We will pay interest on the floating rate notes quarterly on February , May , August and November of each year, beginning February , 2006, at the initial interest rate (as further described in Description of Notes) for the first interest period and, thereafter, at a rate equal to the then applicable U.S. dollar three-month LIBOR (determined as described below under Description of Notes General) plus %.</p>
Ranking	<p>The notes will be our unsecured obligations subordinated in right of payment to all our senior indebtedness and effectively subordinated to all existing and future debt and all other liabilities of our subsidiaries and, upon the occurrence of certain events of insolvency, will be subordinated to the prior payment in full of our general obligations. As of September 30, 2005, the aggregate amount of our outstanding senior indebtedness and general obligations was approximately \$440 million and the aggregate amount of our outstanding subordinated debt, including debt issued by us to financing trust subsidiaries that have issued trust preferred securities and including our subordinated guarantee of a subsidiary's debt, was approximately \$1.5 billion. In addition, as of that date, the aggregate amount of all debt and other liabilities of our subsidiaries, other than the trust preferred securities and guaranteed debt referred to above, was approximately \$28.5 billion.</p>
Redemption	The notes are not redeemable prior to maturity.

Global Note; Book-Entry System

The notes will be issued only in fully registered form without interest coupons and in minimum denominations of \$1,000. The notes will be evidenced by global notes deposited with the trustee for the notes, as custodian for The Depository Trust Company, or DTC. Beneficial interests in the global notes will be shown on, and transfers of those beneficial interest can only be made through, records maintained by DTC and its participants. See Description of Notes Form, Denomination, Transfer, Exchange and Book-Entry Procedures.

S-3

Table of Contents

Use of Proceeds

We will use the net cash proceeds from this offering to finance, in part, the acquisition of Amegy and for general corporate purposes. See Use of Proceeds.

Listing

The notes will not be listed on any national securities exchange.

S-4

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

The following selected consolidated financial data for the five-year period ended December 31, 2004 and the nine-month periods ended September 30, 2004 and September 30, 2005 are derived from and qualified by reference to our consolidated financial statements. Certain amounts for such periods have been reclassified from interest income to noninterest income as further described in footnote (1) below. You should read this data in conjunction with the financial statements, related notes and other financial information incorporated by reference in the accompanying prospectus. See [Where You Can Find More Information](#) in the accompanying prospectus.

	Year Ended December 31,					Nine Months Ended September 30,	
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2004	2005
(dollars in millions, except per share data)							
Consolidated Statement of Income Data:							
Interest income(1)	\$ 1,621.3	\$ 1,584.9	\$ 1,446.6	\$ 1,388.8	\$ 1,491.4	\$ 1,087.1	\$ 1,361.8
Interest expense	822.8	642.1	420.8	303.9	330.6	235.7	375.3
Net interest income	798.5	942.8	1,025.8	1,084.9	1,160.8	851.4	986.5
Provision for loan losses	31.8	73.2	71.9	69.9	44.1	30.9	32.9
Net interest income after provision for loan losses	766.7	869.6	953.9	1,015.0	1,116.7	820.5	953.6
Noninterest income(1)	197.5	419.2	386.1	500.7	431.6	332.6	320.8
Noninterest expense	721.3	836.1	858.9	893.9	923.3	685.1	730.5
Impairment loss on goodwill				75.6	0.6	0.6	
Income from continuing operations before income taxes and minority interest	242.9	452.7	481.1	546.2	624.4	467.4	543.9
Income taxes	79.7	161.9	167.7	213.8	220.1	167.5	194.3
Minority interest	1.5	(7.8)	(3.7)	(7.2)	(1.7)	(1.1)	(2.4)
Income from continuing operations	161.7	298.6	317.1	339.6	406.0	301.0	352.0
Loss on discontinued operations(2)		(8.4)	(28.4)	(1.8)			
Income before cumulative effect of change in accounting principle	161.7	290.2	288.7	337.8	406.0	301.0	352.0
Cumulative effect of change in accounting principle, net of tax(3)		(7.2)	(32.4)				
Net income	\$ 161.7	\$ 283.0	\$ 256.3	\$ 337.8	\$ 406.0	\$ 301.0	\$ 352.0
Net income per common share (diluted):							
Income from continuing operations	\$ 1.86	\$ 3.24	\$ 3.44	\$ 3.74	\$ 4.47	\$ 3.31	\$ 3.84
Loss on discontinued operations(2)		(0.09)	(0.31)	(0.02)			
Cumulative effect of change in accounting principle(3)		(0.08)	(0.35)				
Net income	\$ 1.86	\$ 3.07	\$ 2.78	\$ 3.72	\$ 4.47	\$ 3.31	\$ 3.84
Weighted-average common and common-equivalent shares outstanding during the period (in thousands)	87,120	92,174	92,079	90,734	90,882	90,820	91,606

Table of Contents

	Year Ended December 31,					Nine Months Ended September 30,	
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2004	2005
	(dollars in millions, except per share data)						
Consolidated Balance Sheet Data (at period end):							
Total assets	\$ 21,939	\$ 24,304	\$ 26,566	\$ 28,558	\$ 31,470	\$ 30,731	\$ 33,423
Loans and leases(4)	14,378	17,311	19,040	19,920	22,627	21,507	23,930
Deposits	15,070	17,842	20,132	20,897	23,292	23,165	25,400
Long-term borrowings	563	1,022	1,310	1,843	1,919	1,922	1,912
Shareholders' equity	1,779	2,281	2,374	2,540	2,790	2,724	2,999
Other Data:							
Return on average assets	0.74%	1.19%	0.97%	1.20%	1.31%	1.31%	1.45%
Return on average common equity	9.65%	13.28%	10.95%	13.69%	15.27%	15.32%	16.27%
Efficiency ratio	71.13%	61.60%	63.40%	55.65%	57.22%	57.09%	55.22%
Net interest margin(1)	4.25%	4.61%	4.52%	4.41%	4.27%	4.21%	4.57%
Nonperforming assets to net loans and leases and other real estate owned	0.49%	0.69%	0.61%	0.49%	0.37%	0.42%	0.35%
Ratio of allowance for loan losses to nonperforming loans	320.69%	236.65%	332.37%	338.31%	374.42%	350.42%	422.87%
Ratio of allowance for loan losses to net loans and leases	1.36%	1.50%	1.47%	1.35%	1.20%	1.25%	1.20%
Tier 1 leverage ratio	6.38%	6.56%	7.56%	8.06%	8.31%	8.07%	8.67%
Tier 1 risk-based capital ratio	8.53%	8.25%	9.26%	9.42%	9.35%	9.40%	9.49%
Total risk-based capital ratio	10.83%	12.20%	12.94%	13.52%	14.05%	14.27%	13.88%
Tangible common equity ratio	5.34%	5.98%	6.06%	6.53%	6.80%	6.74%	7.06%
Commercial banking offices	373	412	415	412	386	385	389

- (1) Certain amounts for the five years ended December 31, 2004 and the nine months ended September 30, 2004 have been reclassified from interest income to noninterest income. The net interest margin for these respective periods has also been adjusted. These reclassifications had no impact on net income.
- (2) Discontinued operations represent the losses from operations, impairment losses and loss on sale for certain e-commerce subsidiaries that met the held-for-sale and discontinued operations criteria of Statement of Financial Accounting Standards, or SFAS, No. 144.
- (3) For the year ended December 31, 2001, the cumulative effect adjustment relates to the adoption of SFAS No. 133, net of income tax benefit of \$4.5 million. For the year ended December 31, 2002, the cumulative effect adjustment relates to the impairment in carrying value of investments in certain e-commerce subsidiaries, net of income tax benefit of \$2.7 million, measured as of January 1, 2002 and associated with the adoption of SFAS No. 142.
- (4) Net of unearned income and fees, net of related costs.

Table of Contents**USE OF PROCEEDS**

The cash proceeds to us from the sale of the notes will be approximately \$ million (after deducting estimated discounts and commissions and offering expenses). We will use the net cash proceeds from this offering to finance, in part, the acquisition of Amegy and for general corporate purposes. Pending use of the net proceeds of this offering, we intend to invest the net proceeds in interest-bearing, investment grade securities.

CAPITALIZATION

The following table sets forth our consolidated capitalization as of September 30, 2005:

on an actual basis, and

as adjusted to give effect to the sale of the notes in this offering and the application of the net proceeds described above.

You should read this table in conjunction with the more detailed information, including our consolidated financial statements and related notes, incorporated by reference in the accompanying prospectus.

	As of September 30, 2005	
	Actual	As Adjusted
	(in thousands,	
	except share data)	
Federal Home Loan Bank advances and other borrowings over one year	\$ 226,482	\$ 226,482
Long-term debt:		
Subordinated notes offered hereby		600,000
Other long-term debt	1,685,683	1,685,683
Total	1,912,165	2,512,165
Shareholders' equity:		
Capital stock:		
Preferred stock, without par value; authorized 3,000,000 shares; issued and outstanding, none		
Common stock, without par value; authorized 350,000,000 shares; issued and outstanding 90,067,016 shares	971,002	971,002
Retained earnings	2,084,439	2,084,439
Accumulated other comprehensive loss	(52,088)	(52,088)
Cost of shares held in trust for deferred compensation and other	(4,180)	(4,180)
Total shareholders' equity	2,999,173	2,999,173
Total capitalization	\$ 4,911,338	\$ 5,511,338

Table of Contents**RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES**

The following table sets forth certain information regarding our consolidated ratios of earnings to fixed charges. Fixed charges represent interest expense, a portion of rent expense representative of interest, trust-preferred securities expense and amortization of debt issuance costs.

	Year Ended December 31,					Nine Months Ended	
	2000(1)	2001	2002	2003	2004	September 30, 2004	September 30, 2005
Consolidated Ratios of Earnings to Fixed Charges							
Excluding interest on deposits	1.84	3.34	4.22	5.15	4.93	5.10	4.61
Including interest on deposits	1.29	1.69	2.09	2.70	2.79	2.88	2.40

- (1) For the year ended December 31, 2000, earnings used in the calculation of the ratios includes the impairment loss on First Security Corporation common stock of \$96.9 million and merger-related expenses of \$41.5 million, mainly related to the terminated First Security Corporation merger.

For purposes of computing the consolidated ratios of earnings to fixed charges:

fixed charges, excluding interest on deposits, include interest expense (other than on deposits) and the proportion deemed representative of the interest factor of rent expense, net of income from subleases; and

fixed charges, including interest on deposits, include all interest expense and the proportion deemed representative of the interest factor of rent expense, net of income from subleases.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF NOTES

We will issue the notes under the indenture dated September 10, 2002 between Zions Bancorporation and J.P. Morgan Trust Company, National Association, as trustee. The indenture and the notes are governed by New York law. Because this section is a summary, it does not describe every aspect of the notes. This summary is subject to and qualified in its entirety by reference to all the provisions of the indenture. In this section, references to Zions, we, us and our refer solely to Zions Bancorporation and not its subsidiaries.

General

The notes will be our unsecured subordinated obligations. The fixed rate notes will initially be limited to \$ _____ aggregate principal amount and the floating rate notes will initially be limited to \$ _____ aggregate principal amount. However, the indenture allows us to reopen either series of notes and issue additional notes of either series with the same terms as the relevant notes being offered hereby (except for the issue date and public offering price) without your consent and without notifying you.

The notes will be structurally subordinated to all indebtedness and other liabilities, including trade payables and lease obligations, of our subsidiaries. This occurs because our right to receive any assets of our subsidiaries upon their liquidation or reorganization, and thus the right of the holders of the notes to participate in those assets, will be effectively subordinated to the claims of those subsidiaries' creditors, including trade creditors.

The notes will constitute part of our subordinated debt and will be subordinated and junior in right of payment to all of our senior indebtedness, as defined below under Subordination of the Notes. The notes are also effectively subordinated to all existing and future debt and all other liabilities of our subsidiaries and, upon the occurrence of certain events of insolvency, are subordinated to the prior payment in full of our general obligations owed to our creditors. See Subordination of the Notes.

We will not have the option to redeem the notes.

There are no sinking funds for the notes.

% Subordinated Notes due November _____, 2015

The fixed rate notes will initially be limited to \$ _____ aggregate principal amount, subject to reopening as described above. The fixed rate notes will mature on November _____, 2015.

The fixed rate notes will bear interest at the rate of _____ % per year from November _____, 2005. Interest on the fixed rate notes will be calculated on a pro rata basis using a 30-day month and a 360-day year.

Edgar Filing: ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/ - Form 424B5

We will pay interest on the fixed rate notes semi-annually on May and November of each year, beginning May , 2006, until the principal is paid or made available for payment. Interest on the fixed rate notes will be paid to the person in whose name the note is registered at the close of business on the preceding or , as the case may be.

In the event that an interest payment date for the fixed rate notes is not a business day, we will pay interest on the next day that is a business day, with the same force and effect as if made on the interest payment date, and without any interest or other payment with respect to the delay. If the date of maturity falls on a day that is not a business day, the payment of principal and interest, if any, will be made on the next succeeding business day and no interest will accrue for the period from and after such date of maturity. For purposes of the fixed rate notes, a business day is a day other than a Saturday, a Sunday or any other day on which banking institutions in Houston, Texas, New York City or Salt Lake City, Utah generally are authorized or required by law or executive order to close.

S-9

Table of Contents

Floating Rate Subordinated Notes due November , 2015

The floating rate notes will initially be limited to \$ aggregate principal amount, subject to reopening as described above. The floating rate notes will mature on November , 2015.

The floating rate notes will bear interest at the initial interest rate (as determined below) for the first interest period (as defined below) and, thereafter, at a rate equal to the then applicable U.S. dollar three-month LIBOR (as defined below) plus %. The initial interest rate will equal the applicable U.S. dollar three-month LIBOR plus % as determined by the calculation agent as described below. The interest rate per year for the floating rate notes will be reset quarterly on the first day of each interest period (as defined below) and will be equal to the then applicable U.S. dollar three-month LIBOR plus %, as determined by the calculation agent. J.P. Morgan Trust Company, National Association, will initially act as calculation agent. The amount of interest for each day the floating rate notes are outstanding, which we refer to as the daily interest amount, will be calculated by dividing the interest rate in effect for that day by 360 and multiplying the result by the principal amount of the floating rate notes. The amount of interest to be paid on the floating rate notes for each interest period will be calculated by adding the daily interest amounts for each day in the interest period.

We will pay interest on the floating rate notes quarterly on February , May , August and November of each year (each, an interest payment date), beginning February , 2006, until the principal is paid or made available for payment. Interest on the floating rate notes will be paid to the person in whose name the note is registered at the close of business on the preceding , , and , as the case may be.

Except as described below for the first interest period, on each interest payment date, we will pay interest for the period commencing on and including the immediately preceding interest payment date and ending on and including the next day preceding that interest payment date. We refer to this period as an interest period. The first interest period will begin on and include November , 2005 and end on and include February , 2006.

If any interest payment date, other than the maturity date, falls on a day that is not a business day, the interest payment will be postponed to the next day that is a business day, except if that business day is in the next succeeding calendar month, the interest payment date will be the immediately preceding business day. If the maturity of the floating rate notes falls on a day that is not a business day, the payment of interest and principal will be made on the next succeeding business day, and no interest on such payment will accrue for the period from and after the maturity date.

The interest rate on the floating rate notes will be reset quarterly. The interest reset dates will be February , May , August and November of each year, beginning February , 2006. If any interest reset date falls on a day that is not a business day, the interest reset date will be postponed to the next day that is a business day, except if that business day is in the next succeeding calendar month, the interest reset date will be the immediately preceding business day.

For purposes of the floating rate notes, a business day is a day other than a Saturday, a Sunday or any other day on which banking institutions in Houston, Texas, New York City, Salt Lake City, Utah or London, England generally are authorized or required by law or executive order to close.

Edgar Filing: ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/ - Form 424B5

The calculation agent will determine the initial interest rate and the interest rate for each succeeding interest period by reference to LIBOR on the determination date (as defined below).

LIBOR, with respect to an interest period for the floating rate notes, shall be the rate (expressed as a percentage per annum) for deposits in United States dollars for a three-month period beginning on the first day of such interest period that appears on Telerate Page 3750 (as defined below) as of 11:00 a.m., London time, on the determination date. If Telerate Page 3750 does not include this rate or is unavailable on the determination date, the calculation agent will request the principal London office of each of four major banks in the London interbank market, as selected by the

S-10

Table of Contents

calculation agent, to provide that bank's offered quotation (expressed as a percentage per annum) as of approximately 11:00 a.m., London time, on the determination date to prime banks in the London interbank market for deposits in a representative amount (as defined below) in United States dollars for a three-month period beginning on the first day of the applicable interest period. If at least two offered quotations are so provided, LIBOR for the interest period will be the arithmetic mean of those quotations. If fewer than two quotations are so provided, the calculation agent will request each of three major banks in New York City, as selected by the calculation agent, to provide that bank's rate (expressed as a percentage per annum), as of approximately 11:00 a.m., New York City time, on the determination date for loans in a representative amount in United States dollars to leading European banks for a three-month period beginning on the first day of the applicable interest period. If at least two rates are so provided, LIBOR for the interest period will be the arithmetic mean of those rates. If fewer than two rates are so provided, then LIBOR for the interest period will be LIBOR in effect with respect to the immediately preceding interest period.

Determination date with respect to an interest period for the floating rate notes will be the second London banking day preceding the first day of such interest period.

London banking day is any day in which dealings in the United States dollars are transacted or, with respect to any future date, are expected to be transacted in the London interbank market.

Representative amount means a principal amount that is representative for a single transaction in the relevant market at the relevant time.

Telerate Page 3750 means the display designated as Page 3750 on the Moneyline Telerate Service (or such other page as may replace Page 3750 on that service).

All percentages resulting from any of the above calculations will be rounded, if necessary, to the nearest one hundred-thousandth of a percentage point, with five one-millionths of a percentage point rounded upwards (e.g., 9.876545% (or .09876545) being rounded to 9.87655% (or .0987655)) and all dollar amounts used in or resulting from such calculations will be rounded to the nearest cent (with one-half cent being rounded upwards).

The interest rate on the floating rate notes will in no event be higher than the maximum rate permitted by New York law as the same may be modified by United States law of general application. Under present New York law, the maximum rate of interest is 25% per annum on a simple interest basis. This limit may not apply to notes in which \$2,500,000 or more has been invested.

The calculation agent will, upon the request of the holder of any floating rate note, provide the interest rate then in effect. All calculations of the calculation agent, in the absence of manifest error, shall be conclusive for all purposes and binding on us and holders of the floating rate notes. We may appoint a successor calculation agent with the written consent of the trustee, which consent shall not be unreasonably withheld.

We Are a Holding Company

Edgar Filing: ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/ - Form 424B5

Because we are a holding company and a legal entity separate and distinct from our subsidiaries, our right to participate in any distribution of assets of any subsidiary upon its liquidation, reorganization or otherwise, and the note holders' ability to benefit indirectly from such distribution, would be subject to prior creditors' claims, except to the extent that we ourselves may be a creditor of that subsidiary with recognized claims. Claims on our subsidiary banks by creditors other than us include long-term debt and substantial obligations with respect to deposit liabilities and federal funds purchased, securities sold under repurchase agreements, other short-term borrowings and various other financial obligations. The indenture does not contain any covenants designed to afford holders of notes protection in the event of a highly leveraged transaction involving us.

S-11

Table of Contents

Form, Denomination, Transfer, Exchange and Book-Entry Procedures

The notes will be issued:

only in fully registered form,

without interest coupons, and

in denominations of \$1,000 and integral multiples of \$1,000.

Each series of notes will be evidenced by a global note which will be deposited with the trustee as custodian for DTC and registered in the name of Cede & Co., or Cede, as nominee of DTC. Except as set forth below, record ownership of the global note may be transferred, in whole or in part, only to another nominee of DTC or to a successor of DTC or its nominee.

The global notes will not be registered in the name of any person, or exchanged for notes that are registered in the name of any person, other than DTC or its nominee, unless one of the following occurs:

DTC notifies us that it is unwilling or unable to continue acting as the depository for the global note, or DTC has ceased to be a clearing agency registered under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the Exchange Act), and in either case we fail to appoint a successor depository;

we order in our sole discretion that such note will be transferable, registrable and exchangeable; or

an event of default with respect to the notes represented by the global note has occurred and is continuing.

In those circumstances, DTC will determine in whose names any securities issued in exchange for the global note will be registered.

DTC or its nominee will be considered the sole owner and holder of the global note for all purposes, and as a result:

you cannot get notes registered in your name if they are represented by the global note;

you cannot receive certificated (physical) notes in exchange for your beneficial interest in the global note;

you will not be considered to be the owner or holder of the global note or any note it represents for any purpose; and

all payments on the global note will be made to DTC or its nominee.

The laws of some jurisdictions require that certain kinds of purchasers (for example, certain insurance companies) can only own securities in definitive (certificated) form. These laws may limit your ability to transfer your beneficial interests in the global note to these types of purchasers.

Only institutions (such as a securities broker or dealer) that have accounts with the DTC or its nominee (called participants) and persons that may hold beneficial interests through participants can own a beneficial interest in the global note. The only place where the ownership of beneficial interests in the global note will appear and the only way the transfer of those interests can be made will be on the records kept by DTC (for their participants interests) and the records kept by those participants (for interests of persons held by participants on their behalf).

Secondary trading in bonds and notes of corporate issuers is generally settled in clearing-house (that is, next-day) funds. In contrast, beneficial interests in a global note usually trade in DTC s same-day funds settlement system, and settle in immediately available funds. We make no representations as to the effect that settlement in immediately available funds will have on trading activity in those beneficial interests.

S-12

Table of Contents

We will make cash payments of interest on and principal of the global notes to Cede, the nominee for DTC, as the registered owner of the global note. We will make these payments by wire transfer of immediately available funds on each payment date.

We have been informed that, with respect to any cash payment of interest on or principal of the global note, DTC's practice is to credit participants' accounts on the payment date with payments in amounts proportionate to their respective beneficial interests in the notes represented by the applicable global note as shown on DTC's records, unless DTC has reason to believe that it will not receive payment on that payment date. Payments by participants to owners of beneficial interests in notes represented by the applicable global note held through participants will be the responsibility of those participants, as is now the case with securities held for the accounts of customers registered in street name.

We also understand that neither DTC nor Cede will consent or vote with respect to the notes. We have been advised that under its usual procedures, DTC will mail an omnibus proxy to us as soon as possible after the record date. The omnibus proxy assigns Cede's consenting or voting rights to those participants to whose accounts the notes are credited on the record date identified in a listing attached to the omnibus proxy.

Because DTC can only act on behalf of participants, who in turn act on behalf of indirect participants, the ability of a person having a beneficial interest in the principal amount represented by the global note to pledge the interest to persons or entities that do not participate in the DTC book-entry system, or otherwise take actions in respect of that interest, may be affected by the lack of a physical certificate evidencing its interest.

DTC has advised us that it will take any action permitted to be taken by a holder of notes (including the presentation of notes for exchange) only at the direction of one or more participants to whose account with DTC interests in the global note are credited and only in respect of such portion of the principal amount of the notes represented by the global note as to which such participant has, or participants have, given such direction.

DTC has also advised us as follows: DTC is a limited purpose trust company organized under the laws of the state of New York, a member of the Federal Reserve System, a clearing corporation within the meaning of the Uniform Commercial Code, as amended, and a clearing agency registered pursuant to the provisions of Section 17A of the Exchange Act. DTC was created to hold securities for its participants and facilitate the clearance and settlement of securities transactions between participants through electronic book-entry changes in accounts of its participants. Participants include securities brokers and dealers, banks, trust companies and clearing corporations and may include certain other organizations. Certain of such participants (or their representatives), together with other entities, own DTC. Indirect access to the DTC system is available to other entities such as banks, brokers, dealers and trust companies that clear through or maintain a custodial relationship with a participant, either directly or indirectly.

The policies and procedures of DTC, which may change periodically, will apply to payments, transfers, exchanges and other matters relating to beneficial interests in the global note. We and the trustee have no responsibility or liability for any aspect of DTC's or any participants' records relating to beneficial interests in the global note, including for payments made on the global note, and we and the trustee are not responsible for maintaining, supervising or reviewing any of those records.

Investors may elect to hold interests in the global notes held by the depository through Clearstream Banking, *société anonyme*, Clearstream, Luxembourg, or Euroclear Bank S.A./N.V. as operator of the Euroclear System, the Euroclear operator, if they are participants of such systems, or indirectly through organizations that are participants in such systems. Clearstream, Luxembourg and the Euroclear operator will hold interests on behalf of their participants through customers' securities accounts in Clearstream, Luxembourg's and the Euroclear operator's names on the

Edgar Filing: ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/ - Form 424B5

books of their respective depositaries, which in turn will hold such interests in customers' securities accounts in the depositaries' names on the books of the depositary. Citibank, N.A. will act as depositary for Clearstream, Luxembourg and JPMorgan Chase Bank will act as depositary for the Euroclear operator, in such capacities, the U.S. depositaries. Because holders will acquire, hold and transfer security entitlements with respect to the notes through accounts with

S-13

Table of Contents

DTC and its participants, including Clearstream, Luxembourg, the Euroclear operator and their participants, a beneficial holder's rights with respect to the notes will be subject to the laws (including Article 8 of the Uniform Commercial Code) and contractual provisions governing a holder's relationship with its securities intermediary and the relationship between its securities intermediary and each other securities intermediary between it and us, as the issuer. Except as set forth below, the global notes may be transferred, in whole and not in part, only to another nominee of the depositary or to a successor of the depositary or its nominee.

Clearstream, Luxembourg advises that it is incorporated under the laws of Luxembourg as a bank. Clearstream, Luxembourg holds securities for its customers, or Clearstream, Luxembourg customers, and facilitates the clearance and settlement of securities transactions between Clearstream, Luxembourg customers through electronic book-entry transfers between their accounts, thereby eliminating the need for physical movement of securities. Clearstream, Luxembourg provides to Clearstream, Luxembourg customers, among other things, services for safekeeping, administration, clearance and settlement of internationally traded securities and securities lending and borrowing. Clearstream, Luxembourg interfaces with domestic securities markets in over 30 countries through established depository and custodial relationships. As a bank, Clearstream, Luxembourg is subject to regulation by the Luxembourg Commission for the Supervision of the Financial Sector (*Commission de Surveillance du Secteur Financier*). Clearstream, Luxembourg customers are world-wide financial institutions, including underwriters, securities brokers and dealers, banks, trust companies and clearing corporations. Clearstream, Luxembourg's U.S. customers are limited to securities brokers and dealers and banks. Indirect access to Clearstream, Luxembourg is also available to other institutions such as banks, brokers, dealers and trust companies that clear through or maintain a custodial relationship with a Clearstream, Luxembourg customer. Clearstream, Luxembourg has established an electronic bridge with the Euroclear operator to facilitate settlement of trades between Clearstream, Luxembourg and the Euroclear operator.

Distributions with respect to the notes held through Clearstream, Luxembourg will be credited to cash accounts of Clearstream, Luxembourg customers in accordance with its rules and procedures, to the extent received by the U.S. depositary for Clearstream, Luxembourg.

The Euroclear operator advises that the Euroclear System was created in 1968 to hold securities for its participants, Euroclear participants, and to clear and settle transactions between Euroclear participants through simultaneous electronic book-entry delivery against payment, thereby eliminating the need for physical movement of certificates and any risk from lack of simultaneous transfers of securities and cash. The Euroclear System is owned by Euroclear Clearance System Public Limited Company and operated through a license agreement by the Euroclear operator, a bank incorporated under the laws of the Kingdom of Belgium. The Euroclear operator is regulated and examined by the Belgian Banking and Finance Commission and the National Bank of Belgium.

The Euroclear operator holds securities and book-entry interests in securities for participating organizations and facilitates the clearance and settlement of securities transactions between Euroclear participants and between Euroclear participants and participants of certain other securities intermediaries through electronic book-entry changes in accounts of such participants or other securities intermediaries.

The Euroclear operator provides Euroclear participants, among other things, with safekeeping, administration, clearance and settlement, securities lending and borrowing, and related services.

Non-participants of Euroclear may acquire, hold and transfer book-entry interests in securities through accounts with a direct participant of Euroclear or any other securities intermediary that holds a book-entry interest in the securities through one or more securities intermediaries standing between such other securities intermediary and the Euroclear operator.

Edgar Filing: ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/ - Form 424B5

Securities clearance accounts and cash accounts with the Euroclear operator are governed by the Terms and Conditions Governing use of Euroclear and the related Operating Procedures of the Euroclear System, and applicable Belgian law, which we refer to collectively as the terms and conditions. The terms and conditions govern transfers of securities and cash within the Euroclear System, withdrawals of securities and cash from the Euroclear System, and

S-14

Table of Contents

receipts of payments with respect to securities in the Euroclear System. All securities in the Euroclear System are held on a fungible basis without attribution of specific certificates to specific securities clearance accounts. The Euroclear operator acts under the terms and conditions only on behalf of Euroclear participants and has no record of or relationship with persons holding through Euroclear participants.

Distributions with respect to the notes held beneficially through the Euroclear System will be credited to the cash accounts of Euroclear participants in accordance with the terms and conditions, to the extent received by the U.S. depository for the Euroclear operator.

Although the Euroclear operator has agreed to the procedures provided below in order to facilitate transfers of notes among Euroclear participants and between Euroclear participants and participants of other intermediaries, it is under no obligation to perform or continue to perform in accordance with such procedures, and such procedures may be modified or discontinued at any time.

Investors electing to acquire notes through an account with the Euroclear operator or some other securities intermediary must follow the settlement procedures of such an intermediary with respect to the settlement of new issues of securities. Investors electing to acquire, hold or transfer notes through an account with the Euroclear operator or some other securities intermediary must follow the settlement procedures of such an intermediary with respect to the settlement of secondary market transactions of securities.

Investors who are Euroclear participants may acquire, hold or transfer interests in notes by book-entry to accounts with the Euroclear operator. Investors who are not Euroclear participants may acquire, hold or transfer interests in securities by book-entry to accounts with a securities intermediary who holds a book-entry interest in these securities through accounts with Euroclear.

The Euroclear operator further advises that investors that acquire, hold and transfer interests in the notes by book-entry through accounts with the Euroclear operator or any other securities intermediary are subject to the laws and contractual provisions governing their relationship with their intermediary, as well as the laws and contractual provisions governing the relationship between their intermediary and each other intermediary, if any, standing between themselves and the global notes.

The Euroclear operator further advises that, under Belgian law, investors that are credited with securities on the records of the Euroclear operator have a co-property right in the fungible pool of interests in securities on deposit with the Euroclear operator in an amount equal to the amount of interests in securities credited to their accounts. In the event of the insolvency of the Euroclear operator, Euroclear participants would have a right under Belgian law to the return of the amount and type of interests in securities credited to their accounts with the Euroclear operator. If the Euroclear operator does not have a sufficient amount of interests in securities on deposit of a particular type to cover the claims of all participants credited with interests in securities of that type on the Euroclear operator's records, all participants having an amount of interests in securities of that type credited to their accounts with the Euroclear operator will have the right under Belgian law to the return of their *pro rata* share of the amount of interests in securities actually on deposit.

Under Belgian law, the Euroclear operator is required to pass on the benefits of ownership in any interests in securities on deposit with it (such as dividends, voting rights and other entitlements) to any person credited with those interests in securities on its records.

Individual certificates in respect of the notes will not be issued in exchange for the registered global notes, except in very limited circumstances. If the depository notifies us that it is unwilling or unable to continue as a clearing system in connection with the registered global notes or ceases to be a clearing agency registered under the Exchange Act, and a successor clearing system is not appointed by us within 90 days after receiving

Edgar Filing: ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/ - Form 424B5

that notice from the depository or upon becoming aware that the depository is no longer so registered, we will issue or cause to be issued individual certificates in registered form on registration of transfer of, or in exchange for, book-entry interests in the notes represented by the registered global notes upon delivery of the registered global notes for cancellation.

S-15

Table of Contents

Title to book-entry interests in the notes will pass by book-entry registration of the transfer within the records of Clearstream, Luxembourg, the Euroclear operator or the depository, as the case may be, in accordance with their respective procedures. Book-entry interests in the notes may be transferred within Clearstream, Luxembourg and within the Euroclear System and between Clearstream, Luxembourg and the Euroclear System in accordance with procedures established for these purposes by Clearstream, Luxembourg and the Euroclear operator. Book-entry interests in the notes may be transferred within the depository in accordance with procedures established for this purpose by the depository. Transfers of book-entry interests in the notes among Clearstream, Luxembourg and the Euroclear operator and the depository may be effected in accordance with procedures established for this purpose by Clearstream, Luxembourg, the Euroclear operator and the depository.

Mergers and Sales of Assets by Zions

We are permitted to merge or consolidate with another corporation or other entity. We are also permitted to sell our assets substantially as an entirety to another corporation or other entity. However, we may not take any of these actions unless all of the following conditions are met:

if we are not the successor entity, the person formed by the consolidation or into or with which we merge or the person to which our properties and assets are conveyed, transferred or leased is a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the United States, any state or the District of Columbia and expressly assumes the due and punctual payment of the principal of and interest and any premium on the notes and the performance of our other covenants under the indenture;

immediately after giving effect to that transaction, no default or event of default, and no event which, after notice or lapse of time or both, would become a default or an event of default, has occurred and is continuing; and

an officer's certificate and legal opinion relating to these conditions are delivered to the trustee.

If the conditions described above are satisfied, we will not need to obtain the approval of the holders of notes in order to merge or consolidate or to sell our assets. Also, these conditions will apply only if we wish to merge or consolidate with another entity or sell our assets substantially as an entirety to another entity. We will not need to satisfy these conditions if we enter into other types of transactions, including any transaction in which we acquire the stock or assets of another entity, any transaction that involves a change of control of us but in which we do not merge or consolidate and any transaction in which we sell less than substantially all our assets.

Also, if we merge, consolidate or sell our assets substantially as an entirety and the successor is a non-U.S. entity, neither we nor any successor would have any obligation to compensate you for any resulting adverse tax consequences relating to your notes.

Events of Default and Defaults

Under the indenture, our filing for bankruptcy and the occurrence of certain other events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization relating to us or any major constituent bank (as defined below) are defined as events of default.

Under the indenture, the following are defined as defaults with respect to either series of notes:

failure to pay principal of or any premium on any note of the applicable series when due;

failure to pay any interest on any note of the applicable series when due and that default continues for 30 days;

failure to perform any other covenant in the indenture and that failure continues for 60 days after written notice to us by the trustee or the holders of at least 25% in aggregate principal amount of outstanding notes of the applicable series; and

any event of default.

S-16

Table of Contents

If an event of default occurs and is continuing, either the trustee or the holders of at least 25% in principal amount of the outstanding notes of the applicable series may accelerate the maturity of all notes of that series. After acceleration, but before a judgment or decree based on acceleration, the holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of outstanding notes of the applicable series may, under circumstances set forth in the indenture, rescind the acceleration if we have deposited monies on account of certain overdue amounts with the trustee.

If a default occurs that is not also an event of default, neither the trustee nor the holders may act to accelerate the maturity of the notes of either series. However, if a default occurs, the trustee may proceed to enforce any covenant and other rights of the holders of the notes of the applicable series. Furthermore, if the default relates to our failure to make any payment of interest due and payable and such default continues for 30 days or such default is made in the payment of the principal or any premium at its maturity, then the trustee may demand payment of the amounts then due and payable and may proceed to prosecute any failure on our part to make such payments.

A major constituent bank is defined in the indenture to mean any of our subsidiaries which is a bank and has total assets equal to 30% or more of our consolidated assets determined on the date of our most recent audited financial statements. At present, our major constituent banks are Zions First National Bank and California Bank & Trust.

Subject to the provisions of the indenture relating to the duties of the trustee, in case an event of default occurs and is continuing, the trustee will be under no obligation to exercise any of its rights or powers under the indenture at the request or direction of any of the holders, unless such holders have offered to the trustee reasonable indemnity. Subject to such provisions for the indemnification of the trustee, the holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding notes of the applicable series will have the right to direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for any remedy available to the trustee or exercising any trust or power conferred on the trustee.

Before you may take any action to institute any proceeding relating to the indenture, or to appoint a receiver or a trustee, or for any other remedy, each of the following must occur:

you must have given the trustee written notice of a continuing event of default or defaults;

the holders of at least 25% of the aggregate principal amount of all outstanding notes of the applicable series must make a written request of the trustee to take action because of the default and must have offered reasonable indemnification to the trustee against the cost, liabilities and expenses of taking such action;

the trustee must not have taken action for 60 days after receipt of such notice and offer of indemnification; and

no contrary notice must have been given to the trustee during such 60-day period by the holders of a majority in principal amount of the notes of the applicable series.

These limitations do not apply to a suit for the enforcement of payment of the principal of or any premium or interest on a note on or after the due dates for such payments.

We will furnish to the trustee annually a statement as to our performance of our obligations under the indenture and as to any default in performance.

Subordination of the Notes

The notes are subordinated in right of payment to the prior payment in full of all of our senior indebtedness. This means that, in certain circumstances where we may not be making payments on all of our debt obligations as they become due, the holders of all of our senior indebtedness will be entitled to receive payment in full of all amounts that are due or will become due on their debt securities before the holders of the notes will be entitled to receive any amounts under the notes. These circumstances include when we make a payment or distribute assets to creditors upon our liquidation, dissolution, winding up or reorganization.

These subordination provisions mean that if we are insolvent, a direct holder of our senior indebtedness may ultimately receive out of our assets more than a direct holder of the same amount of notes, and our creditor that is owed

Table of Contents

a specific amount may ultimately receive more than a direct holder of the same amount of notes. The indenture does not limit our ability to incur senior indebtedness or general obligations, including indebtedness ranking equally with the notes.

The indenture provides that, unless all principal of and any premium or interest on senior indebtedness has been paid in full, no payment or other distribution may be made in respect of any notes in the following circumstances:

in the event of any insolvency or bankruptcy proceedings, or any receivership, liquidation, reorganization, assignment for the benefit of creditors or other similar proceedings or events involving us or our assets;

(a) in the event and during the continuation of any default in the payment of principal of or premium or interest on any senior indebtedness beyond any applicable grace period or (b) in the event that any judicial proceeding is pending with respect to any such default; or

in the event that any notes have been declared due and payable before their stated maturity.

If the trustee or any holders of notes receive any payment or distribution that is prohibited under the subordination provisions, and if this fact is made known to the trustee or holders at or prior to the time of such payment or distribution, then the trustee or the holders will have to repay that money to us.

Further, in the event of any insolvency or bankruptcy proceedings, or any receivership, liquidation, reorganization, assignment for the benefit of creditors or other similar proceedings or events involving us or our assets, any creditors in respect of general obligations (as defined below) will be entitled to receive payment in full of all amounts due or to become due on or in respect of such general obligations after payment in full to the holders of senior indebtedness, before any amount is made available for payment or distribution to the holders of the notes. However, upon the occurrence of a termination event (as defined below), such subordination to the creditors in respect of general obligations will become null and void and have no further effect.

Even if the subordination provisions prevent us from making any payment when due on the notes, we will be in default on our obligations under the notes if we do not make the payment when due. This means that the trustee and the holders of notes can take action against us, but they will not receive any money until the claims of the holders of senior indebtedness have been fully satisfied.

The indenture allows the holders of senior indebtedness to obtain a court order requiring us and any holder of notes to comply with the subordination provisions.

The indenture defines senior indebtedness as:

the principal of, and any premium and interest on, all of our indebtedness for purchased or borrowed money, whether or not evidenced by securities, notes, debentures, bonds or other similar instruments issued by us;

Edgar Filing: ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/ - Form 424B5

all our capital lease obligations;

all our obligations issued or assumed as the deferred purchase price of property, all our conditional sale obligations and all our obligations under any conditional sale or title retention agreement, but excluding trade accounts payable in the ordinary course of business;

all our obligations in respect of any letters of credit, bankers acceptance, security purchase facilities and similar credit transactions;

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

all obligations of the type referred to in the bullets above of other persons for the payment of which we are responsible or liable as obligor, guarantor or otherwise;

S-18

Table of Contents

all obligations of the type referred to in the bullets above of other persons secured by any lien on any of our properties or assets whether or not we assume such obligation; and

any deferrals, renewals or extensions of any such senior indebtedness.

However, senior indebtedness does not include:

the notes;

any indebtedness that by its terms is subordinated to, or ranks on an equal basis with, the notes, including our Fixed/Floating Rate Subordinated Notes due October 15, 2011, Zions Financial Corp.'s Fixed/Floating Rate Guaranteed Notes due May 15, 2011, our 5.65% Subordinated Notes due May 15, 2014, our 6.00% Subordinated Notes due September 15, 2015, Zions Institutional Capital Trust A's 8.536% Capital Securities due December 15, 2026, GB Capital Trust's 10.25% Capital Securities due January 15, 2027, CSBI Capital Trust's 11.75% Capital Securities due June 6, 2027 and Zions Capital Trust B's 8.00% Capital Securities due September 1, 2032; and

any indebtedness between or among us and our affiliates, including all other debt securities and guarantees in respect of debt securities issued to any trust, or a trustee of such trust, partnership or other entity affiliated with us which is a financing vehicle of ours in connection with the issuance by such financing vehicle of capital securities or other securities guaranteed by us pursuant to an instrument that ranks on an equal basis with or junior in respect of payment to the notes.

As of September 30, 2005, the aggregate amount of our outstanding senior indebtedness and general obligations was approximately \$440 million and the aggregate amount of our outstanding subordinated debt, including debt issued by us to financing trust subsidiaries that have issued trust preferred securities and including our subordinated guarantee of a subsidiary's debt, was approximately \$1.5 billion. In addition, as of that date, the aggregate amount of all debt and other liabilities of our subsidiaries, other than the trust preferred securities and guaranteed debt referred to above, was approximately \$28.5 billion.

The indenture defines general obligations as all our obligations to make payment on account of claims of general creditors, other than:

obligations on account of senior indebtedness; and

obligations on account of the notes and indebtedness for money borrowed ranking on an equal basis with or junior to the notes.

However, if the Federal Reserve Board (or other federal banking supervisor that is at the time of determination our primary federal banking supervisor) promulgates any rule or issues any interpretation defining or describing the term general creditor or general creditors or senior indebtedness for purposes of its criteria for the inclusion of subordinated debt of a bank holding company in capital, or otherwise defining or describing the obligations to which subordinated debt of a bank holding company must be subordinated to be included in capital, to include any obligations not included in the definition of senior indebtedness as described above, the term general obligations will mean such obligations as defined or described in any such rule or interpretation, other than obligations described in the two bullet points above.

Edgar Filing: ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/ - Form 424B5

Termination event means the promulgation of any rule or regulation or the issuance of any interpretation of the Federal Reserve Board (or other federal banking supervisor that is at the time of determination our primary federal banking supervisor) that:

defines or describes the terms general creditor or general creditors or senior indebtedness for purposes of its criteria for the inclusion of subordinated debt of a bank holding company in capital, or otherwise defines or describes the obligations to which subordinated debt of a bank holding company must be subordinated for the debt to be included in capital, to include no obligations other than those covered by the definition of senior indebtedness without regard to any of our other obligations;

S-19

Table of Contents

permits us to include the notes in our capital if they were subordinated in right of payment to the senior indebtedness without regard to any of our other obligations;

otherwise eliminates the requirement that subordinated debt of a bank holding company and its subsidiaries must be subordinated in right of payment to the claims of its general creditors in order to be included in capital; or

causes the notes to be excluded from capital notwithstanding the provisions of the indenture.

Termination event also means any event that results in our not being subject to capital requirements under the rules, regulations or interpretations of the Federal Reserve Board (or other federal banking supervisor).

Modification and Waiver

Certain limited modifications of the indenture may be made without the necessity of obtaining the consent of the holders of the notes of the applicable series. Other modifications and amendments of the indenture may be made with the consent of the holders of 66²/₃% in principal amount of the outstanding notes of the applicable series. However, a modification or amendment requires the consent of the holder of each outstanding note affected if it would:

change the stated maturity of the principal or interest of a note;

reduce the principal amounts of, any premium or interest on, any note;

change the place or currency of payment on a note;

impair the right to institute suit for the enforcement of any payment on any note;

reduce the percentage of holders whose consent is needed to modify or amend the indenture;

reduce the percentage of holders whose consent is needed to waive compliance with certain provisions of the indenture or to waive certain defaults;

modify the provisions with respect to subordination of the notes in a manner adverse to the holders of the notes; or

modify the provisions dealing with modification and waiver of the indenture.

The holders of 66²/₃% in principal amount of the outstanding notes of the applicable series may, on behalf of the holders of all notes of that series, waive compliance by us with certain restrictive provisions of the indenture. The holders of a majority in principal amount of the

Edgar Filing: ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/ - Form 424B5

outstanding notes of the applicable series may, on behalf of the holders of all notes of that series, waive any past default, except a default in the payment of principal or interest, and defaults in respect of a covenant or provision which cannot be modified or amended without the consent of each holder of each outstanding note affected.

We will generally be entitled to set any day as a record date for the purpose of determining the holders of outstanding notes of the applicable series that are entitled to take any action under the indenture. In limited circumstances, the trustee will be entitled to set a record date for action by holders. If a record date is set for any action to be taken by holders, such action may be taken only by persons who are holders of outstanding notes on the record date and must be taken within 180 days following the record date or such other period as we may specify (or as the trustee may specify, if it set the record date). This period may be shortened or lengthened (but not beyond 180 days) from time to time.

Notices

We will give notice to holders of the notes by mail to the addresses of the holders as they appear in the security register. Notices will be deemed to have been given on the date of mailing.

S-20

Table of Contents

Replacement of Notes

We will replace, at the expense of the holders, notes that become mutilated, destroyed, stolen or lost upon delivery to the trustee of the mutilated notes or evidence of the loss, theft or destruction of the notes satisfactory to us and the trustee. In the case of a lost, stolen or destroyed note, indemnity satisfactory to the trustee and us may be required at the expense of the holder of the note before a replacement note will be issued.

The Trustee

The trustee for the holders of notes issued under the indenture will be J.P. Morgan Trust Company, National Association. If an event of default occurs, and is not cured, the trustee will be required to use the degree of care of a prudent person in the conduct of his or her own affairs in the exercise of its powers. Subject to these provisions, the trustee will be under no obligation to exercise any of its rights or powers under the indenture at the request of any holders of notes, unless they have offered to the trustee reasonable security or indemnity.

J.P. Morgan Trust Company, National Association, is the trustee under other indentures pursuant to which we issue debt. Pursuant to the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, if a default occurs with respect to the securities of any series, the trustee will be required to eliminate any conflicting interest as defined in the Trust Indenture Act or resign as trustee with respect to the securities of that series within 90 days of such default, unless such default is cured, duly waived or otherwise eliminated.

FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSEQUENCES TO UNITED STATES ALIEN HOLDERS

This section describes the United States Federal tax consequences to a United States alien holder. You are a United States alien holder if you are the beneficial owner of a note and are, for United States federal income tax purposes:

a nonresident alien individual,

a foreign corporation, or

an estate or trust that in either case is not subject to United States federal income tax on a net income basis on income or gain from a note.

If you are a United States holder, this section does not apply to you.

Under United States federal income and estate tax law, and subject to the discussion of backup withholding below, if you are a United States alien holder of a note:

Edgar Filing: ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/ - Form 424B5

we and other U.S. payors generally will not be required to deduct United States withholding tax from payments of principal, premium, if any, and interest, to you if, in the case of payments of interest:

1. you do not actually or constructively own 10% or more of the total combined voting power of all classes of our stock entitled to vote,
2. you are not a controlled foreign corporation that is related to us through stock ownership, and
3. the U.S. payor does not have actual knowledge or reason to know that you are a United States person and:
 - a. you have furnished to the U.S. payor an Internal Revenue Service Form W-8BEN or an acceptable substitute form upon which you certify, under penalties of perjury, that you are (or, in the case of a United States alien holder that is a partnership or an estate or trust, such forms certifying that each partner in the partnership or beneficiary of the estate or trust is) a non-United States person,

S-21

Table of Contents

- b. in the case of payments made outside the United States to you at an offshore account (generally, an account maintained by you at a bank or other financial institution at any location outside the United States), you have furnished to the U.S. payor documentation that establishes your identity and your status as the beneficial owner of the payment for United States federal income tax purposes and as a non-United States person,
- c. the U.S. payor has received a withholding certificate (furnished on an appropriate Internal Revenue Service Form W-8 or an acceptable substitute form) from a person claiming to be:
 - i. a withholding foreign partnership (generally a foreign partnership that has entered into an agreement with the Internal Revenue Service to assume primary withholding responsibility with respect to distributions and guaranteed payments it makes to its partners),
 - ii. a qualified intermediary (generally a non-United States financial institution or clearing organization or a non-United States branch or office of a United States financial institution or clearing organization that is a party to a withholding agreement with the Internal Revenue Service), or
 - iii. a U.S. branch of a non-United States bank or of a non-United States insurance company,

and the withholding foreign partnership, qualified intermediary or U.S. branch has received documentation upon which it may rely to treat the payment as made to a non-United States person that is, for United States federal income tax purposes, the beneficial owner of the payment on the notes in accordance with U.S. Treasury regulations (or, in the case of a qualified intermediary, in accordance with its agreement with the Internal Revenue Service),

- d. the U.S. payor receives a statement from a securities clearing organization, bank or other financial institution that holds customers' securities in the ordinary course of its trade or business,
 - i. certifying to the U.S. payor under penalties of perjury that an Internal Revenue Service Form W-8BEN or an acceptable substitute form has been received from you by it or by a similar financial institution between it and you, and
 - ii. to which is attached a copy of the Internal Revenue Service Form W-8BEN or acceptable substitute form, or
- e. the U.S. payor otherwise possesses documentation upon which it may rely to treat the payment as made to a non-United States person that is, for United States federal income tax purposes, the beneficial owner of the payments on the notes in accordance with U.S. Treasury regulations;

no deduction for any United States federal withholding tax will be made from any gain that you realize on the sale or exchange of your note.

Further, a note held by an individual who at death is not a citizen or resident of the United States will not be includible in the individual's gross estate for United States federal estate tax purposes if:

Edgar Filing: ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/ - Form 424B5

the decedent did not actually or constructively own 10% or more of the total combined voting power of all classes of our stock entitled to vote at the time of death and

the income on the note would not have been effectively connected with a United States trade or business of the decedent at the same time.

S-22

Table of Contents

Backup Withholding and Information Reporting

In general, if you are a United States alien holder, payments of principal, premium or interest made by us and other payors to you will not be subject to backup withholding and information reporting, provided that the certification requirements described above are satisfied or you otherwise establish an exemption. However, we and other payors are required to report payments of interest on your notes on Internal Revenue Service Form 1042-S even if the payments are not otherwise subject to information reporting requirements. In addition, payment of the proceeds from the sale of notes effected at a United States office of a broker will not be subject to backup withholding and information reporting provided that:

the broker does not have actual knowledge or reason to know that you are a United States person and you have furnished to the broker:

an appropriate Internal Revenue Service Form W-8 or an acceptable substitute form upon which you certify, under penalties of perjury, that you are not a United States person, or

other documentation upon which it may rely to treat the payment as made to a non-United States person in accordance with U.S. Treasury regulations, or

you otherwise establish an exemption.

If you fail to establish an exemption and the broker does not possess adequate documentation of your status as a non-United States person, the payments may be subject to information reporting and backup withholding. However, backup withholding will not apply with respect to payments made to an offshore account maintained by you unless the broker has actual knowledge that you are a United States person.

In general, payment of the proceeds from the sale of notes effected at a foreign office of a broker will not be subject to information reporting or backup withholding. However, a sale effected at a foreign office of a broker will be subject to information reporting and backup withholding if:

the proceeds are transferred to an account maintained by you in the United States,

the payment of proceeds or the confirmation of the sale is mailed to you at a United States address, or

the sale has some other specified connection with the United States as provided in U.S. Treasury regulations,

unless the broker does not have actual knowledge or reason to know that you are a United States person and the documentation requirements described above (relating to a sale of notes effected at a United States office of a broker) are met or you otherwise establish an exemption.

In addition, payment of the proceeds from the sale of notes effected at a foreign office of a broker will be subject to information reporting if the broker is:

a United States person,

a controlled foreign corporation for United States tax purposes,

a foreign person 50% or more of whose gross income is effectively connected with the conduct of a United States trade or business for a specified three-year period, or

a foreign partnership, if at any time during its tax year:

one or more of its partners are U.S. persons, as defined in U.S. Treasury regulations, who in the aggregate hold more than 50% of the income or capital interest in the partnership, or

such foreign partnership is engaged in the conduct of a United States trade or business,

unless the broker does not have actual knowledge or reason to know that you are a United States person and the documentation requirements described above (relating to a sale of notes effected at a United States office of a broker) are met or you otherwise establish an exemption. Backup withholding will apply if the sale is subject to information reporting and the broker has actual knowledge that you are a United States person.

S-23

Table of Contents**UNDERWRITING**

We have entered into an underwriting agreement and a pricing agreement (together, the *Underwriting Agreement*) with Lehman Brothers Inc. as representative (the *Representative*) of the several underwriters named below (the *Underwriters*). In the Underwriting Agreement, each Underwriter has severally agreed, subject to the terms and conditions set forth therein, to purchase all of the notes set opposite its name below if any of the notes are purchased.

Underwriters	Principal Amount of Fixed Rate Notes	Principal Amount of Floating Rate Notes
Lehman Brothers Inc.	\$	\$
Barclays Capital Inc.	\$	\$
FTN Financial Securities Corp.	\$	\$
Keefe, Bruyette & Woods, Inc.	\$	\$
Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith Incorporated	\$	\$
Sandler O'Neill & Partners, L.P.	\$	\$
Zions Investment Securities, Inc.	\$	\$
Total	\$	\$

The following table shows the per note and total underwriting discounts and commissions for each series of notes to be paid to the underwriters by us.

	Paid By Principal	
	Fixed Rate Notes	Floating Rate Notes
Per note	\$	\$
Total	\$	\$

The Underwriters propose to offer the notes directly to the public at the applicable public offering prices set forth on the cover page of this prospectus supplement and may offer them to certain securities dealers at such price less a concession not in excess of % of the initial public offering prices. The Underwriters may allow, and such dealers may reallow, a concession not in excess of % of the initial public offering prices to certain brokers and dealers. After the notes are released for sale to the public, the offering prices and other selling terms may from time to time be varied by the Underwriters.

Currently, there is no public market for the notes. The notes will not be listed on any national securities exchange. The Representative of the Underwriters has advised us that they intend to make a market in the notes. However, the Underwriters will have no obligation to make a market in the notes, and may cease market-making activities, if commenced, at any time.

Edgar Filing: ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/ - Form 424B5

We have agreed to indemnify the Underwriters against certain liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act or to contribute to payments that each Underwriter may be required to make in respect thereof.

Our expenses associated with this offer and sale of the notes are estimated to be \$.

Certain of the Underwriters will make the notes available for distribution on the Internet through a proprietary Web site and/or a third-party system operated by Market Axess Corporation, an Internet based communications technology provider. Market Axess Corporation is providing the system as a conduit for communications between such underwriters and their customers and is not a party to any transactions. Market Axess Corporation, a registered broker-dealer, will receive compensation from any Underwriter based on transactions such Underwriter conducts through the

S-24

Table of Contents

system. Certain of the Underwriters will make the notes available to their customers through the Internet distributions, whether made through a proprietary or third-party system, on the same terms as distributions made through other channels.

In order to facilitate the offering of the notes, the Underwriters may engage in transactions that stabilize, maintain or otherwise affect the price of the notes. Specifically, the Underwriters may over-allot in connection with the offering, creating short positions in the notes for their own account. In addition, to cover overallocments or to stabilize the price of the notes, the Underwriters may bid for, and purchase, notes in the open market.

The Underwriters may reclaim selling concessions allowed to an Underwriter or dealer for distributing notes in the offering, if the Underwriters repurchase previously distributed notes in transactions to cover short positions, in stabilization transactions or otherwise. Any of these activities may stabilize or maintain the market price of the notes above independent market levels. The Underwriters are not required to engage in these activities, and may end any of these activities at any time.

In general, purchases of a security for the purpose of stabilization or to reduce a short position could cause the price of the security to be higher than it might be in the absence of such purchases. The imposition of a penalty bid might also have an effect on the price of a security to the extent that it were to discourage resales of the security.

Neither we nor the Underwriters make any representation as to the direction or magnitude of any effect that the transactions described above may have on the price of the notes. In addition, neither we nor the Underwriters make any representation that the Underwriters will engage in such transactions or that such transactions, once commenced, will not be discontinued without notice.

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

(a) to legal entities which are authorized or regulated to operate in the financial markets or, if not so authorized or regulated, whose corporate purpose is solely to invest in securities;

(b) to any legal entity which has two or more of (1) an average of at least 250 employees during the last financial year; (2) a total balance sheet of more than 43,000,000 and (3) an annual net turnover of more than 50,000,000, as shown in its last annual or consolidated accounts;

(c) to investors with the minimum total consideration per investor of 50,000; or

(d) in any other circumstances which do not require the publication by the issuer of a prospectus pursuant to Article 3 of the Prospectus Directive.

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

S-25

Table of Contents

Each of the Underwriters has agreed that:

(a) it will only communicate or cause to be communicated an invitation or inducement to engage in investment activity (within the meaning of Section 21 of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000, or FSMA) received by it in connection with the issue or sale of the notes in circumstances in which Section 21(1) of the FSMA does not apply to the issuer; and

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

The notes may not be offered or sold, transferred or delivered, as part of their initial distribution or at any time thereafter, directly or indirectly, to any individual or legal entity in the Netherlands other than to individuals or legal entities who or which trade or invest in securities in the conduct of their profession or trade, which includes banks, securities intermediaries, insurance companies, pension funds, other institutional investors and commercial enterprises which, as an ancillary activity, regularly trade or invest in securities.

Certain of the Underwriters and their respective affiliates have, from time to time, performed, and may in the future perform, various financial advisory and investment banking services for us, for which they received or will receive customary fees and expenses. Lehman Brothers Inc. is our financial advisor in connection with our acquisition of Amegy. In addition, one of the Underwriters, Zions Investment Securities, Inc., is our indirect, wholly-owned subsidiary.

Rule 2720 of the Conduct Rules of the NASD imposes certain requirements when an NASD member such as Zions Investment Securities, Inc. distributes an affiliated company's securities. Zions Investment Securities, Inc. has advised Zions that each particular offering of debt securities will comply with the applicable requirements of Rule 2720.

VALIDITY OF NOTES

The validity of the notes offered by this prospectus supplement will be passed upon for us by Callister Nebeker & McCullough, a Professional Corporation, Salt Lake City, Utah, and for the underwriters by Sullivan & Cromwell LLP, Los Angeles, California. Sullivan & Cromwell LLP will rely upon the opinion of Callister Nebeker & McCullough as to matters of Utah law and Callister Nebeker & McCullough will rely upon the opinion of Sullivan & Cromwell LLP as to matters of New York law. Sullivan & Cromwell LLP regularly performs legal services for us.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements of Zions appearing in Zions' Annual Report (Form 10-K) for the year ended December 31, 2004, and Zions management's assessment of the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2004 included therein, have been audited by Ernst & Young LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, as set forth in their reports thereon, included therein, and are incorporated herein by reference. Such consolidated financial statements and management's assessment are incorporated herein by reference in reliance upon such reports given on the authority of such firm as experts in accounting and auditing.

INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

We specifically incorporate by reference into this prospectus supplement the section captioned "Risk Factors" in the proxy statement/prospectus on Form S-4 filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on August 17, 2005, as amended. See "Where You Can Find More Information" in the accompanying prospectus for more information on other documents we incorporate by reference into the accompanying prospectus.

S-26

Table of Contents

Subject to Completion. Dated December 30, 2004.

PROSPECTUS

Zions Bancorporation

Debt Securities

We may from time to time offer to sell debt securities. We may offer and sell these debt securities to or through one or more underwriters, dealers and/or agents on a continuous or delayed basis.

This prospectus describes some of the general terms that may apply to these debt securities and the general manner in which they may be offered. The specific terms of any debt securities to be offered, and the specific manner in which they may be offered, will be described in a supplement to this prospectus.

These debt securities will be unsecured obligations of ours and will not be savings accounts, deposits or other obligations of any bank or non-bank subsidiary of ours and are not insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or any other governmental agency.

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

This prospectus is dated December 30, 2004.

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.

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>About this prospectus</u>	1
<u>Where you can find more information</u>	2
<u>Disclosure regarding forward-looking statements</u>	2
<u>Zions Bancorporation</u>	4
<u>Selected historical consolidated financial data</u>	5
<u>Use of proceeds</u>	7
<u>Regulatory considerations</u>	8
<u>Ratio of earnings to fixed charges</u>	9
<u>Description of debt securities we may offer</u>	10
<u>Legal ownership and book-entry issuance</u>	30
<u>Securities issued in bearer form</u>	35
<u>Considerations relating to indexed securities</u>	39
<u>Plan of distribution</u>	41
<u>Employee Retirement Income Security Act</u>	43
<u>Validity of the debt securities</u>	44
<u>Experts</u>	44

Table of Contents

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This document is called a prospectus, and it provides you with a general description of the debt securities we may offer. Each time we sell debt securities, we will provide a prospectus supplement containing specific information about the terms of the debt securities being offered. That prospectus supplement may include a discussion of any risk factors or other special considerations that apply to those debt securities. The prospectus supplement may also add, update or change the information in this prospectus. If there is any inconsistency between the information in this prospectus and any prospectus supplements, you should rely on the information in that prospectus supplement. You should read both this prospectus and any prospectus supplement together with additional information described under the heading **Where You Can Find More Information**.

We have filed a registration statement with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or the SEC, using a shelf registration or continuous offering process. Under this shelf process, we may offer and sell any combination of the debt securities described in this prospectus, in one or more offerings, up to a total dollar amount of \$1,100,000,000, less than the dollar amount of any securities sold in connection with the offering of Zions Capital Trust C and Zions Capital Trust D Capital Securities, a prospectus for which has been filed under the same registration statement as this prospectus.

Our SEC registration statement containing this prospectus, including exhibits, provides additional information about us and the debt securities offered under this prospectus. The registration statement can be read at the SEC's web site or at the SEC's offices. The SEC's web site and street addresses are provided under the heading **Where You Can Find More Information**.

When acquiring debt securities, you should rely only on the information provided in this prospectus and in the related prospectus supplement, including any information incorporated by reference. No one is authorized to provide you with different information. We are not offering the debt securities in any state where the offer is prohibited. You should not assume that the information in this prospectus, any prospectus supplement or any document incorporated by reference is truthful or complete for any date other than the date indicated on the cover page of these documents.

We may sell debt securities to underwriters who will in turn sell the debt securities to the public on terms fixed at the time of sale. In addition, the debt securities may be sold by us directly or through dealers or agents designated from time to time, which agents may be our affiliates. If we, directly or through agents, solicit offers to purchase the debt securities, we reserve the sole right to accept and, together with our agents, to reject, in whole or in part, any of those offers.

A prospectus supplement will contain the names of the underwriters, dealers or agents, if any, together with the terms of the offering, the compensation of those underwriters and the net proceeds to us. Any underwriters, dealers or agents participating in the offering may be deemed underwriters within the meaning of the Securities Act of 1933.

After the debt securities are issued, one or more of our subsidiaries, including Zions Investment Securities, Inc., may buy and sell these debt securities as part of their business as a broker-dealer. Those subsidiaries may use this prospectus and the related prospectus supplement in those transactions. Any sale by a subsidiary will be made at the prevailing market price at the time of sale.

Edgar Filing: ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/ - Form 424B5

Unless otherwise mentioned or unless the context requires otherwise, all references in this prospectus to Zions, we, us, our or similar references mean Zions Bancorporation and its subsidiaries.

Unless otherwise stated, currency amounts in this prospectus and any prospectus supplement are stated in United States dollars.

-1-

Table of Contents

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. You may read and copy any document we file at the SEC's public reference room in Washington, D.C. at 450 Fifth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20549. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the public reference room. In addition, our SEC filings are available to the public at the SEC's web site at <http://www.sec.gov>. However, information on this website does not constitute a part of this prospectus. You can also inspect reports, proxy statements and other information about us at the offices of Nasdaq National Market, 1735 K Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006-1500.

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference into this prospectus the information in documents we file with it. This 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 the case of a conflict or inconsistency between information contained in this prospectus and 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 and any documents we file with the SEC in the future under Section 13(a), 13(c), 14, or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 until our offering is completed:

Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2003.

Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q for the periods ended March 31, 2004, June 30, 2004 and September 30, 2004.

Current Reports on Form 8-K filed on January 23, 2004, January 27, 2004, February 23, 2004, April 20, 2004, May 7, 2004 (two reports), May 17, 2004, June 14, 2004, July 21, 2004 (two reports) and October 22, 2004 (except, in each case, information furnished on Form 8-K and any related exhibits).

You may request a copy of these filings, other than an exhibit to a filing unless that exhibit is specifically incorporated by reference into that filing, at no cost, by writing to or telephoning us at the following address:

Investor Relations

Zions Bancorporation

One South Main Street, Suite 1134

Salt Lake City, Utah 84111

(801) 524-4787

DISCLOSURE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

Edgar Filing: ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/ - Form 424B5

This prospectus, including information incorporated by reference, contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. Forward-looking statements provide current expectations or forecasts of future events and include, among others:

Statements with respect to our beliefs, plans, objectives, goals, guidelines, expectations, anticipations, and future financial condition, results of operations and performance; and

Statements preceded by, followed by or that include the words may, could, should, would, believe, anticipate, estimate, expect, intend, plan, projects, or similar expressions.

These forward-looking statements are not guarantees of future performance, nor should they be relied upon as representing management's views as of any subsequent date. Forward-looking statements involve significant

-2-

Table of Contents

risks and uncertainties and actual results may differ materially from those presented, either expressed or implied, in this prospectus, including the information incorporated by reference. You should carefully consider those risks and uncertainties in reading this prospectus. Factors that might cause such differences include, but are not limited to:

our ability to successfully execute our business plans;

changes in political and economic conditions, including the economic effects of terrorist attacks against the United States and related events;

changes in financial market conditions, either nationally or locally in areas in which we conduct our operations, including without limitation, reduced rates of business formation and growth and commercial real estate development;

fluctuations in the equity and fixed-income markets;

changes in interest rates;

acquisitions and integrations of acquired businesses;

increases in the levels of losses, customer bankruptcies, claims and assessments;

monetary fluctuations;

continuing consolidation in the financial services industry;

new litigation or changes in existing litigation;

success in gaining regulatory approvals, when required;

changes in consumer spending and saving habits;

increased competitive product and pricing pressures among financial institutions;

inflation and deflation;

technological changes;

Edgar Filing: ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/ - Form 424B5

legislation or regulatory changes which adversely affect our operations or business; and

changes in accounting policies or procedures as may be required by the Financial Accounting Standards Board or regulatory agencies;

We specifically disclaim any obligation to update any factors or to publicly announce the result of revisions to any of the forward-looking statement included in this prospectus, including the information incorporated by reference, to reflect future events or developments.

Table of Contents

ZIONS BANCORPORATION

We are a multi-bank holding company organized under the laws of Utah in 1955 and registered as a bank holding company and a financial holding company under the Bank Holding Company Act of 1956. We are the 26th largest domestic bank holding company by deposits and own and operate six commercial banks with a total of approximately 385 branch offices. We provide a full range of banking and related services through our banking and other subsidiaries, primarily in Utah, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Nevada and Washington. On September 30, 2004, we had total consolidated assets of approximately \$30.7 billion, consolidated loans (net of unearned income and fees) of approximately \$21.5 billion, total consolidated deposits of approximately \$23.2 billion and shareholders' equity of approximately \$2.7 billion. Active full-time equivalent employees totaled 7,924 at September 30, 2004.

We focus on providing community-minded banking through the strength of our core business lines, including retail banking, small and medium-sized business lending, commercial real estate development lending and other financing, residential mortgage and investment activities. Our banks provide a wide variety of commercial and retail banking and mortgage-lending products and services. Commercial products and services include commercial loans, lease financing, cash management, lockbox, customized draft processing, and other special financial services for business and other commercial banking customers. Our wide range of personal banking services include bank card, student and other installment loans and home equity lines of credit, checking accounts, savings accounts, time certificates of various types and maturities, trust services, safe deposit facilities, direct deposit and 24-hour ATM access.

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

The following selected consolidated financial data for the five-year period ended December 31, 2003 and the nine-month periods ended September 30, 2004 and September 30, 2003 are derived from and qualified by reference to our consolidated financial statements. You should read this data in conjunction with the financial statements, related notes and other financial information included or incorporated by reference in this prospectus. See [Where You Can Find More Information](#) in this prospectus.

	Year Ended December 31,					Nine Months Ended September 30,	
	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2003	2004
<i>(dollars in millions, except per share data)</i>							
Consolidated Statement of Income Data:							
Interest income	\$ 1,359.3	\$ 1,626.2	\$ 1,591.9	\$ 1,455.9	\$ 1,399.4	\$ 1,052.3	\$ 1,096.9
Interest expense	617.8	822.8	642.1	420.8	303.9	235.0	235.7
Net interest income	741.5	803.4	949.8	1,035.1	1,095.5	817.3	861.2
Provision for loan losses	18.0	31.8	73.2	71.9	69.9	54.0	30.9
Net interest income after provision for loan losses	723.5	771.6	876.6	963.2	1,025.6	763.3	830.3
Noninterest income	266.8	192.6	412.2	376.8	490.1	387.3	322.8
Noninterest expense	681.8	721.3	836.1	858.9	893.9	675.9	685.1
Impairment loss on goodwill					75.6	75.6	0.6
Income from continuing operations before income taxes and minority interest							
Income taxes	308.5	242.9	452.7	481.1	546.2	399.1	467.4
Minority interest	109.5	79.7	161.9	167.7	213.8	161.8	167.5
Income from continuing operations	4.9	1.5	(7.8)	(3.7)	(7.2)	(6.7)	(1.1)
Loss on discontinued operations(1)	194.1	161.7	298.6	317.1	339.6	244.0	301.0
Income before cumulative effect of change in accounting principle			(8.4)	(28.4)	(1.8)	(1.8)	
Cumulative effect of change in accounting principle, net of tax(2)	194.1	161.7	290.2	288.7	337.8	242.2	301.0
Net income	\$ 194.1	\$ 161.7	\$ 283.0	\$ 256.3	\$ 337.8	\$ 242.2	\$ 301.0
Net income per common share (diluted):							
Income from continuing operations	\$ 2.26	\$ 1.86	\$ 3.24	\$ 3.44	\$ 3.74	\$ 2.69	\$ 3.31
Loss on discontinued operations(1)			(0.09)	(0.31)	(0.02)	(0.02)	
Cumulative effect of change in accounting principle(2)			(0.08)	(0.35)			
Net income	\$ 2.26	\$ 1.86	\$ 3.07	\$ 2.78	\$ 3.72	\$ 2.67	\$ 3.31
Weighted-average common and common-equivalent shares outstanding during the period (diluted) (in thousands)	85,695	87,120	92,174	92,079	90,734	90,621	90,820
Consolidated Balance Sheet Data (at period end):							
Total assets	\$ 20,281	\$ 21,939	\$ 24,304	\$ 26,566	\$ 28,558	\$ 27,604	\$ 30,731
Loans and leases(3)	12,791	14,378	17,311	19,040	19,920	19,434	21,507
Deposits	14,062	15,070	17,842	20,132	20,897	20,874	23,165
Long-term borrowings	566	563	1,022	1,310	1,843	1,765	1,922
Shareholders' equity	1,660	1,779	2,281	2,374	2,540	2,486	2,724
Other Data:							
Return on average assets	0.97%	0.74%	1.19%	0.97%	1.20%	1.16%	1.31%
Return on average common equity	12.42%	9.65%	13.28%	10.95%	13.69%	13.21%	15.32%
Efficiency ratio	66.55%	64.92%	61.60%	63.40%	55.65%	55.42%	57.09%
Net interest margin	4.31%	4.27%	4.64%	4.56%	4.45%	4.48%	4.26%
Nonperforming assets to net loans and leases and other real estate owned	0.58%	0.49%	0.69%	0.61%	0.49%	0.56%	0.42%
Ratio of allowance for loan losses to nonperforming loans	310.87%	320.69%	236.65%	332.37%	338.31%	342.47%	350.42%
Ratio of allowance for loan losses to net loans and leases	1.60%	1.36%	1.50%	1.47%	1.35%	1.45%	1.25%

Edgar Filing: ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/ - Form 424B5

Tier 1 leverage ratio	6.16%	6.38%	6.56%	7.56%	8.06%	7.81%	8.07%
Tier 1 risk-based capital ratio	8.64%	8.53%	8.25%	9.26%	9.42%	9.51%	9.40%
Total risk-based capital ratio	11.29%	10.83%	12.20%	12.94%	13.52%	13.80%	14.27%
Tangible common equity ratio	5.07%	5.34%	5.98%	6.06%	6.53%	6.55%	6.74%
Commercial banking offices	362	373	412	415	412	409	385

Table of Contents

- (1) Discontinued operations represent the losses from operations, impairment losses and loss on sale for certain e-commerce subsidiaries that met the held-for-sale and discontinued operations criteria of Statement of Financial Accounting Standards, or SFAS, No. 144.
- (2) For the year ended December 31, 2001, the cumulative effect adjustment relates to the adoption of SFAS No. 133, net of income tax benefit of \$4.5 million. For the year ended December 31, 2002, the cumulative effect adjustment relates to the impairment in carrying value of investments in certain e-commerce subsidiaries, net of income tax benefit of \$2.7 million, measured as of January 1, 2002 and associated with the adoption of SFAS No. 142.
- (3) Net of unearned income and fees, net of related costs.

Table of Contents

USE OF PROCEEDS

Unless otherwise specified in the applicable prospectus supplement for any offering of debt securities, the net proceeds we receive from the sale of these debt securities will be used for general corporate purposes, which may include:

funding investments in, or extensions of credit to, our subsidiaries;

funding investments in non-affiliates;

reducing or refinancing debt;

redeeming outstanding securities;

financing possible acquisitions; and

working capital.

Pending such use, we may temporarily invest net proceeds. We will disclose any proposal to use the net proceeds from any offering of debt securities in connection with an acquisition in the prospectus supplement relating to such offering.

Table of Contents

REGULATORY CONSIDERATIONS

As a financial holding company and a bank holding company under the Bank Holding Company Act, we are regulated, supervised and examined by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, or Federal Reserve Board. For a discussion of the material elements of the regulatory framework applicable to financial holding companies, bank holding companies and their subsidiaries and specific information relevant to us, please refer to our annual report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2003, which is incorporated by reference in this prospectus. This regulatory framework is intended primarily for the protection of depositors and the federal deposit insurance funds and not for the protection of security holders. As a result of this regulatory framework, our earnings are affected by actions of the Federal Reserve Board, the Office of Comptroller of the Currency, which regulates some of our banking subsidiaries, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, which regulates some of our banking subsidiaries and which insures the deposits of our banking subsidiaries within certain limits, certain state banking regulators and the SEC, which regulates the activities of certain subsidiaries engaged in the securities business.

In addition, there are numerous governmental requirements and regulations that affect our business activities. A change in applicable statutes, regulations or regulatory policy may have a material effect on our business.

Depository institutions, like our banking subsidiaries, are also affected by various federal laws, including those relating to consumer protection and similar matters. We also have other financial services subsidiaries regulated, supervised and examined by the Federal Reserve Board, as well as other relevant state and federal regulatory agencies and self-regulatory organizations. Our non-banking subsidiaries may be subject to other laws and regulations of the federal government or the various states in which they are authorized to do business.

We are a legal entity separate and distinct from our banking subsidiaries. However, our principal source of cash revenues is payments of interest and dividends from these banking subsidiaries. There are various legal and regulatory limitations on the extent to which these banking subsidiaries can finance or otherwise supply funds to us and our other affiliates.

For our national bank subsidiaries, the prior approval of the Comptroller of the Currency is required if the total of all dividends declared in any calendar year exceeds their net earnings for that year combined with their retained net earnings less dividends paid for the preceding two calendar years. Additionally, these banking subsidiaries may not declare dividends in excess of net profits on hand, after deducting the amount by which the principal amount of all loans on which interest is past due for a period of six months or more exceeds the reserve for credit losses. Under the first and currently more restrictive of the federal dividend limitations, our national bank subsidiaries, which include Zions First National Bank, National Bank of Arizona, Vectra Bank Colorado, and The Commerce Bank of Washington, had approximately \$179.5 million available for the payment of dividends as of September 30, 2004. The payment of dividends is also limited by minimum capital requirements imposed on banks. Our banking subsidiaries currently exceed these minimum requirements. The ability of a state chartered bank to pay dividends is subject to restrictions imposed by banking regulations under state law similar to the restrictions described above. Under their respective regulatory frameworks, our state chartered bank subsidiaries, Nevada State Bank and California Bank & Trust, had approximately \$61.1 million and \$56.2 million available, respectively, for the payment of dividends as of September 30, 2004 without the approval of their respective state regulatory bodies. Our banking subsidiaries declared dividends to us of approximately \$188.8 million in the first nine months of 2004, \$296.0 million in 2003, \$272.3 million in 2002 and \$254.4 million in 2001.

Table of Contents**RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES**

The following table sets forth certain information regarding our consolidated ratios of earnings to fixed charges. Fixed charges represent interest expense, a portion of rent expense representative of interest, trust-preferred securities expense and amortization of debt issuance costs.

	Year Ended December 31,					Nine Months Ended	
	1999	2000(1)	2001	2002	2003	September 30, 2003	September 30, 2004
Consolidated Ratios of Earnings to Fixed Charges							
Excluding interest on deposits	2.68	1.85	3.34	4.22	5.15	4.95	5.10
Including interest on deposits	1.49	1.29	1.69	2.09	2.70	2.60	2.88

- (1) For the year ended December 31, 2000, earnings used in the calculation of the ratios includes the impairment loss on First Security Corporation common stock of \$96.9 million and merger-related expenses of \$41.5 million, mainly related to the terminated First Security Corporation merger.

For purposes of computing the consolidated ratios of earnings to fixed charges:

fixed charges, excluding interest on deposits, include interest expense (other than on deposits) and the proportion deemed representative of the interest factor of rent expense, net of income from subleases; and

fixed charges, including interest on deposits, include all interest expense and the proportion deemed representative of the interest factor of rent expense, net of income from subleases.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES WE MAY OFFER

*Please note that in this section entitled *Description of Debt Securities We May Offer*, references to *Zions*, *we*, *our* and *us* refer only to *Zions Bancorporation* and not to its consolidated subsidiaries. Also, in this section, references to *holders* mean those who own debt securities registered in their own names, on the books that we or the trustee maintain for this purpose, and not those who own beneficial interests in debt securities registered in street name or in debt securities issued in book-entry form through one or more depositories. Owners of beneficial interests in the debt securities should also read the section entitled *Legal Ownership and Book-Entry Issuance*.*

The following description summarizes the material provisions of the senior indenture, the subordinated indenture and the debt securities to be issued under these indentures. This description is not complete and is subject to, and is qualified in its entirety by reference to, the indenture under which the debt securities are issued and the Trust Indenture Act. The specific terms of any series of debt securities will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement, and may differ from the general description of the terms presented below. The senior indenture and the subordinated indenture have been filed as exhibits to our SEC registration statement relating to this prospectus. Whenever particular defined terms of the senior indenture or the subordinated indenture, each as supplemented or amended from time to time, are referred to in this prospectus or a prospectus supplement, those defined terms are incorporated in this prospectus or such prospectus supplement by reference.

Debt Securities May Be Senior or Subordinated

We may issue senior or subordinated debt securities. Neither the senior debt securities nor the subordinated debt securities will be secured by any property or assets of ours or of our subsidiaries. Thus, by owning a debt security, you are one of our unsecured creditors.

The senior debt securities and, in the case of senior debt securities in bearer form, any coupons to these securities, will constitute part of our senior indebtedness, will be issued under the senior debt indenture and will rank on a parity with all of our other unsecured and unsubordinated debt.

The subordinated debt securities and, in the case of subordinated debt securities in bearer form, any coupons to these securities, will constitute part of our subordinated debt, will be issued under the subordinated debt indenture and will be contractually subordinate and junior in right of payment to all of our senior indebtedness, as defined below under Subordination Provisions. The subordinated debt securities are also Upon the occurrence of certain events of insolvency, subordinated to the prior payment in full of our general obligations, as defined under Subordination Provisions. The prospectus supplement for any series of subordinated debt securities or the information incorporated in this prospectus by reference will indicate the approximate amount of senior indebtedness outstanding as of the end of our most recent fiscal quarter. Neither indenture limits our ability to incur additional senior or subordinated indebtedness.

The senior debt securities and subordinated debt securities will be structurally subordinated to all indebtedness and other liabilities, including trade payables and lease obligations, of each of our subsidiaries, except to the extent we may be creditor of that subsidiary with recognized senior claims. This is because we are a holding company and a legal entity separate and distinct from our subsidiaries, and our right to participate in any distribution of assets of any subsidiary upon its liquidation, reorganization or otherwise, and the ability of holders of debt securities to benefit indirectly from such distribution, is subject to superior claims. Claims on our subsidiary banks by creditors other than us include long-term debt and substantial obligations with respect to deposit liabilities and federal funds purchased, securities sold under repurchase agreements, other short-term borrowings and various other financial obligations. If we are entitled to participate in any assets of any of our subsidiaries upon the liquidation or reorganization of the subsidiary, the rights of holders of the senior debt securities and subordinated debt securities with respect to those assets will be subject to the contractual subordination of the subordinated debt securities.

Table of Contents

When we use the terms **debt security** or **debt securities** in this description, we mean either the senior debt securities or the subordinated debt securities.

The Senior Debt Indenture and the Subordinated Debt Indenture

The senior debt securities and the subordinated debt securities are each governed by a document called an indenture—the senior debt indenture, in the case of the senior debt securities, and the subordinated debt indenture, in the case of the subordinated debt securities. Each indenture is a contract between us and J.P. Morgan Trust Company, National Association, which will initially act as trustee. The indentures are substantially identical, except for our covenants described under **Restriction on Sale or Issuance of Capital Stock of Major Constituent Banks**, which are included only in the senior debt indenture, the provisions relating to subordination, which are included only in the subordinated debt indenture, and the provisions relating to defaults and events of default.

The trustee under each indenture has two main roles:

first, the trustee can enforce your rights against us if we default. There are some limitations on the extent to which the trustee acts on your behalf, which we describe later under **Events of Default and Defaults**;

second, the trustee performs administrative duties for us, such as sending you interest payments and notices.

See **Our Relationship with the Trustee** below for more information about the trustee.

When we refer to the indenture or the trustee with respect to any debt securities, we mean the indenture under which those debt securities are issued and the trustee under that indenture.

We May Issue Many Series of Debt Securities

We may issue as many distinct series of debt securities under either indenture as we wish. This section summarizes terms of the securities that apply generally to all series. The provisions of each indenture allow us not only to issue debt securities with terms different from those of debt securities previously issued under that indenture, but also to **reopen** a previous issue of a series of debt securities and issue additional debt securities of that series. Most of the financial and other specific terms of your series, whether it be a series of the senior debt securities or subordinated debt securities, are described in the prospectus supplement to be attached to the front of this prospectus. Those terms may vary from the terms described here.

As you read this section, please remember that the specific terms of your debt security as described in your prospectus supplement will supplement and, if applicable, may modify or replace the general terms described in this section. The statements we make in this section may not apply to your debt security.

When we refer to a series of debt securities, we mean a series issued under the applicable indenture. When we refer to your prospectus supplement, we mean the prospectus supplement describing the specific terms of the debt security you purchase.

Amounts That We May Issue

Neither indenture limits the aggregate amount of debt securities that we may issue or the number of series or the aggregate amount of any particular series. We have authorized the issuance and sale of debt securities having aggregate gross offering proceeds (or face amount in the case of debt securities issued at a discount) of not more than \$1,100,000,000.

Table of Contents

We may issue debt securities, as well as increase the total authorized amount, at any time without your consent and without notifying you. Any debt securities owned by us or any of our affiliates are not deemed to be outstanding.

In addition, we have issued and have outstanding, and may in the future issue, junior subordinated debentures to certain financing trust affiliates, which will issue capital securities guaranteed by us on the same subordinated basis as the junior subordinated debentures. The junior subordinated debentures and related guarantees generally rank junior to the subordinated debt securities. The terms debt securities, senior debt securities and subordinated debt securities do not include the junior subordinated debentures or related guarantees.

The indentures and the debt securities do not limit our ability to incur other indebtedness or to issue other securities. Also, we are not subject to financial or similar restrictions by the terms of the debt securities, except as described under **Restriction on Sale or Issuance of Capital Stock of Major Constituent Banks** below. The indentures do not contain any covenants designed to afford holders of debt securities protection in the event of a highly leveraged transaction involving us.

Principal Amount, Stated Maturity and Maturity

The principal amount of a debt security means the principal amount payable at its stated maturity, unless that amount is not determinable, in which case the principal amount of a debt security is its face amount.

The term **stated maturity** with respect to any debt security means the day on which the principal amount of your debt security is scheduled to become due. The principal may become due sooner, by reason of redemption or acceleration after an event of default or otherwise in accordance with the terms of the debt security. The day on which the principal actually becomes due, whether at the stated maturity or earlier, is called the maturity of the principal.

We also use the terms **stated maturity** and **maturity** to refer to the days when other payments become due. For example, we may refer to a regular interest payment date when an installment of interest is scheduled to become due as the **stated maturity** of that installment. When we refer to the **stated maturity** or the **maturity** of a debt security without specifying a particular payment, we mean the stated maturity or maturity, as the case may be, of the principal.

Governing Law

The indentures and the debt securities are governed by New York law.

Currency of Debt Securities

Amounts that become due and payable on your debt security will be payable in U.S. dollars. You will have to pay for your debt securities by delivering the requisite amount for the principal to Zions Investment Securities, Inc. or another underwriter or dealer that we name in your prospectus supplement, unless other arrangements have been made between you and us or you and that dealer.

Types of Debt Securities

We may issue any of the following three types of senior debt securities or subordinated debt securities:

Fixed Rate Debt Securities

A debt security of this type will bear interest at a fixed rate described in the applicable prospectus supplement. This type includes zero coupon debt securities, which bear no interest and are instead issued at a price lower than the principal amount.

Table of Contents

Each fixed rate debt security, except any zero coupon debt security, will bear interest from its original issue date or from the most recent date to which interest on the debt security has been paid or made available for payment. Interest will accrue on the principal of a fixed rate debt security at the fixed yearly rate stated in the applicable prospectus supplement, until the principal is paid or made available for payment. Each payment of interest due on an interest payment date or the date of maturity will include interest accrued from and including the last date to which interest has been paid, or made available for payment, or from the issue date if none has been paid, or made available for payment, to but excluding the interest payment date or the date of maturity. We will compute interest on fixed rate debt securities on the basis of a 360-day year of twelve 30-day months. We will pay interest on each interest payment date and at maturity as described below under Payment Mechanics for Debt Securities in Registered Form.

Floating Rate Debt Securities

A debt security of this type will bear interest at rates that are determined by reference to an interest rate formula. In some cases, the rates may also be adjusted by adding or subtracting a spread or multiplying by a spread multiplier and may be subject to a minimum rate or a maximum rate. If your debt security is a floating rate debt security, the formula and any adjustments that apply to the interest rate will be specified in your prospectus supplement.

Each floating rate debt security will bear interest from its original issue date or from the most recent date to which interest on the debt security has been paid or made available for payment. Interest will accrue on the principal of a floating rate debt security at the yearly rate determined according to the interest rate formula stated in the applicable prospectus supplement, until the principal is paid or made available for payment. We will pay interest on each interest payment date and at maturity as described below under Payment Mechanics for Debt Securities in Registered Form.

Calculation of Interest. Calculations relating to floating rate debt securities will be made by the calculation agent, an institution that we appoint as our agent for this purpose. That institution may include any affiliate of ours, such as Zions Investment Securities, Inc. The prospectus supplement for a particular floating rate debt security will name the institution that we have appointed to act as the calculation agent for that debt security as of its original issue date. We may appoint a different institution to serve as calculation agent from time to time after the original issue date of the debt security without your consent and without notifying you of the change.

For each floating rate debt security, the calculation agent will determine, on the corresponding interest calculation or determination date, as described in the applicable prospectus supplement, the interest rate that takes effect on each interest reset date. In addition, the calculation agent will calculate the amount of interest that has accrued during each interest period i.e., the period from and including the original issue date, or the last date to which interest has been paid or made available for payment, to but excluding the payment date. For each interest period, the calculation agent will calculate the amount of accrued interest by multiplying the face amount of the floating rate debt security by an accrued interest factor for the interest period. This factor will equal the sum of the interest factors calculated for each day during the interest period. The interest factor for each day will be expressed as a decimal and will be calculated by dividing the interest rate, also expressed as a decimal, applicable to that day by 360 or by the actual number of days in the year, as specified in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Upon the request of the holder of any floating rate debt security, the calculation agent will provide for that debt security the interest rate then in effect and, if determined, the interest rate that will become effective on the next interest reset date. The calculation agent's determination of any interest rate, and its calculation of the amount of interest for any interest period, will be final and binding in the absence of manifest error.

Edgar Filing: ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/ - Form 424B5

All percentages resulting from any calculation relating to a debt security will be rounded upward or downward, as appropriate, to the next higher or lower one hundred-thousandth of a percentage point, e.g., 9.876541% (or .09876541) being rounded down to 9.87654% (or .0987654) and 9.876545% (or .09876545) being rounded up to 9.87655% (or .0987655). All amounts used in or resulting from any calculation relating to a floating rate debt security will be rounded upward or downward, as appropriate, to the nearest cent, with one-half cent or one-half of a corresponding hundredth of a unit or more being rounded upward.

-13-

Table of Contents

In determining the base rate that applies to a floating rate debt security during a particular interest period, the calculation agent may obtain rate quotes from various banks or dealers active in the relevant market, as described in the applicable prospectus supplement. Those reference banks and dealers may include the calculation agent itself and its affiliates, as well as any underwriter, dealer or agent participating in the distribution of the relevant floating rate debt securities and its affiliates, and they may include our affiliates.

Indexed Debt Securities

A debt security of this type provides that the principal amount payable at its maturity, and/or the amount of interest payable on an interest payment date, will be determined by reference to

securities of one or more issuers;

one or more currencies;

one or more commodities;

any other financial, economic or other measure or instrument, including the occurrence or non-occurrence of any event or circumstance; and/or

one or more indices or baskets of the items described above.

If you are a holder of an indexed debt security, you may receive a principal amount at maturity that is greater than or less than the face amount of your debt security depending upon the value of the applicable index at maturity. The value of the applicable index will fluctuate over time.

An indexed debt security may provide either for cash settlement or for physical settlement by delivery of the underlying property or another property of the type listed above. An indexed debt security may also provide that the form of settlement may be determined at our option or at the holder's option. Some indexed debt securities may be exchangeable, at our option or the holder's option, for securities of an issuer other than us.

If you purchase an indexed debt security, your prospectus supplement will include information about the relevant index, about how amounts that are to become payable will be determined by reference to the price or value of that index and about the terms on which the security may be settled physically or in cash. The prospectus supplement will also identify the calculation agent that will calculate the amounts payable with respect to the indexed debt security and may exercise significant discretion in doing so. The calculation agent may be Zions Investment Securities, Inc. or another of our affiliates. See *Considerations Relating to Indexed Securities* for more information about risks of investing in debt securities of this type.

Original Issue Discount Debt Securities

A fixed rate debt security, a floating rate debt security or an indexed debt security may be an original issue discount debt security. A debt security of this type is issued at a price lower than its principal amount and provides that, upon redemption or acceleration of its maturity, an amount less than its principal amount will be payable. A debt security issued at a discount to its principal may, for U.S. federal income tax purposes, be considered an original issue discount debt security, regardless of the amount payable upon redemption or acceleration of maturity. A description of the U.S. federal income tax consequences of owning an original issue discount debt security will be set forth in any applicable prospectus supplement.

Table of Contents

Form of Debt Securities

We will issue each debt security in global (i.e., book-entry) form only, unless we specify otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement. Debt securities in book-entry form will be represented by a global security registered in the name of a depository, which will be the holder of all the debt securities represented by the global security. Those who own beneficial interests in a global debt security will do so through participants in the depository's system, and the rights of these indirect owners will be governed solely by the applicable procedures of the depository and its participants. We describe book-entry securities under "Legal Ownership and Book-Entry Issuance."

In addition, we will issue each debt security in registered form, without coupons, unless the conditions for issuance of bearer securities described under "Securities Issued in Bearer Form" are met and we choose to issue the debt security in bearer form. We describe bearer securities under "Securities Issued in Bearer Form." As we note in that section, some of the features that we describe in this section entitled "Description of Debt Securities We May Offer" may not apply to bearer securities.

Information in the Prospectus Supplement

Your prospectus supplement will describe the specific terms of your debt security, which will include some or all of the following:

whether it is a senior debt security or a subordinated debt security;

any limit on the total principal amount of the debt securities of the same series;

the stated maturity;

the price at which we originally issue your debt security, expressed as a percentage of the principal amount, and the original issue date;

whether your debt security is a fixed rate debt security, a floating rate debt security or an indexed debt security and also whether it is an original issue discount debt security;

if your debt security is a fixed rate debt security, the yearly rate at which your debt security will bear interest, if any, and the interest payment dates;

if your debt security is a floating rate debt security, the interest rate basis; any applicable index currency or maturity, spread or spread multiplier or initial, maximum or minimum rate; the interest reset, determination, calculation and payment dates; and the calculation agent;

if your debt security is an original issue discount debt security, the yield to maturity;

Edgar Filing: ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/ - Form 424B5

if your debt security is an indexed debt security, the principal amount, if any, we will pay you at maturity, the amount of interest, if any, we will pay you on an interest payment date or the formula we will use to calculate these amounts, if any, and the terms on which your debt security will be exchangeable for or payable in cash, securities or other property;

whether your debt security may be redeemed at our option or repaid at the holder's option before the stated maturity and, if so, other relevant terms such as the redemption commencement date, repayment date(s), redemption price(s) and redemption period(s);

the authorized denominations, if other than \$1,000 and integral multiples of \$1,000;

whether we will issue or make available your debt security in non-book-entry form;

whether and under what circumstances we will pay additional amounts on any debt securities held by a person who is not a United States person for tax purposes and whether we can redeem the debt securities if we have to pay additional amounts;

Table of Contents

whether the debt securities will be issued in fully registered form or bearer form, in definitive or global form or in any combination of these forms;

the names and duties of any co-trustees, depositories, authenticating agents, paying agents, transfer agents or registrars for the series of debt securities; and

any other terms of your debt security that are consistent with the provisions of the applicable indenture, which other terms could be different from those described in this prospectus.

Your prospectus supplement will summarize specific financial and other terms of your debt security, while this prospectus describes terms that apply generally to all the debt securities. Consequently, the terms described in your prospectus supplement will supplement those described in this prospectus and, if the terms described there are inconsistent with those described here, the terms described there will be controlling. The terms used in your prospectus supplement have the meanings described in this prospectus, unless otherwise specified.

Market-Making Transactions. If you purchase your debt security in a market-making transaction, you will receive information about the price you pay and your trade and settlement dates in a separate confirmation of sale. A market-making transaction is one in which Zions Investment Securities, Inc. or another of our affiliates resells a debt security that it has previously acquired from another holder. A market-making transaction in a particular debt security occurs after the original issuance and sale of the debt security.

Redemption and Repayment

Unless otherwise indicated in your prospectus supplement, your debt security will not be entitled to the benefit of any sinking fund that is, we will not deposit money on a regular basis into any separate custodial account to repay your debt securities. In addition, we will not be entitled to redeem your debt security before its stated maturity unless your prospectus supplement specifies a redemption commencement date. You will not be entitled to require us to buy your debt security from you, before its stated maturity, unless your prospectus supplement specifies one or more repayment dates.

If your prospectus supplement specifies a redemption commencement date or a repayment date, it will also specify one or more redemption prices or repayment prices, which may be expressed as a percentage of the principal amount of your debt security. It may also specify one or more redemption periods during which the redemption prices relating to a redemption of debt securities during those periods will apply.

If your prospectus supplement specifies a redemption commencement date, your debt security will be redeemable at our option at any time on or after that date. If we redeem your debt security, we will do so at the specified redemption price, together with interest accrued to the redemption date. If different prices are specified for different redemption periods, the price we pay will be the price that applies to the redemption period during which your debt security is redeemed.

If your prospectus supplement specifies a repayment date, your debt security will be repayable at your option on the specified repayment date at the specified repayment price, together with interest accrued to the repayment date.

Edgar Filing: ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/ - Form 424B5

If we exercise an option to redeem any debt security, we will give to the trustee and the holder written notice of the principal amount of the debt security to be redeemed, not less than 30 days nor more than 60 days before the applicable redemption date. We will give the notice in the manner described below in Notices.

If a debt security represented by a global debt security is subject to repayment at the holder's option, the depositary or its nominee, as the holder, will be the only person that can exercise the right to repayment. Any indirect owners who own beneficial interests in the global debt security and wish to exercise a repayment right must give proper and timely instructions to their banks or brokers through which they hold their interests, requesting that they notify the

Table of Contents

depository to exercise the repayment right on their behalf. Different firms have different deadlines for accepting instructions from their customers, and you should take care to act promptly enough to ensure that your request is given effect by the depository before the applicable deadline for exercise.

Street name and other indirect owners should contact their banks or brokers for information about how to exercise a repayment right in a timely manner.

We or our affiliates may purchase debt securities from investors who are willing to sell from time to time, either in the open market at prevailing prices or in private transactions at negotiated prices. Debt securities that we or they purchase may, at our discretion, be held, resold or canceled.

Mergers and Similar Transactions

We are generally permitted to merge or consolidate with another corporation or other entity. We are also permitted to sell our assets substantially as an entirety to another corporation or other entity or to have another entity sell its assets substantially as an entirety to us. With regard to any series of debt securities, however, we may not take any of these actions unless all of the following conditions are met:

if we are not the successor entity, the person formed by the consolidation or into or with which we merge or the person to which our properties and assets are conveyed, transferred or leased must be an entity organized and existing under the laws of the United States, any state or the District of Columbia and must expressly assume the due and punctual payment of the principal of, any premium, and interest on the debt securities of that series and the performance of our other covenants under the relevant indenture;

immediately after giving effect to that transaction, no default or event of default under the debt securities of that series, and no event which, after notice or lapse of time or both, would become a default or an event of default under the debt securities of that series, has occurred and is continuing; and

an officer's certificate and legal opinion relating to these conditions must be delivered to the trustee.

If the conditions described above are satisfied with respect to the debt securities of any series, we will not need to obtain the approval of the holders of those debt securities in order to merge or consolidate or to sell our assets. Also, these conditions will apply only if we wish to merge or consolidate with another entity or sell our assets substantially as an entirety to another entity or to acquire the assets of another entity substantially as an entirety. We will not need to satisfy these conditions if we enter into other types of transactions, including any transaction in which we acquire the stock or assets of another entity, any merger of another entity with one of our subsidiaries, any transaction that involves a change of control of us but in which we do not merge or consolidate and any transaction in which we sell less than substantially all our assets.

Also, if we merge, consolidate or sell our assets substantially as an entirety and the successor is a non-U.S. entity, neither we nor any successor would have any obligation to compensate you for any resulting adverse tax consequences relating to your debt securities.

Subordination Provisions

The subordinated debt securities are subordinated in right of payment to the prior payment in full of all of our senior indebtedness and, under specified circumstances, to our general obligations. This means that, in certain circumstances where we may not be making payments on all of our debt obligations as they become due, the holders of all of our senior indebtedness and general obligations will be entitled to receive payment in full of all amounts due or to become due to them before the holders of the subordinated debt securities will be entitled to receive any amounts under the subordinated debt securities. These circumstances include when we make a payment or distribute assets to creditors upon our liquidation, dissolution, winding up or reorganization.

Table of Contents

These subordination provisions mean that if we are insolvent, a direct holder of our senior indebtedness may ultimately receive out of our assets more than a holder of the same amount of subordinated debt securities, and a senior creditor of ours that is owed a specific amount may ultimately receive more than a holder of the same amount of subordinated debt securities. The subordinated debt indenture does not limit our ability to incur senior or subordinated indebtedness or general obligations, including indebtedness ranking on an equal basis with the subordinated debt securities.

The subordinated debt indenture provides that, unless all principal of and any premium or interest on senior indebtedness has been paid in full, no payment or other distribution may be made in respect of any subordinated debt securities in the following circumstances:

in the event of any insolvency or bankruptcy proceedings, or any receivership, liquidation, reorganization, assignment for the benefit of creditors or other similar proceedings or events involving us or our assets;

(a) in the event and during the continuation of any default in the payment of principal, premium or interest on any senior indebtedness beyond any applicable grace period or (b) in the event that any judicial proceeding is pending with respect to any such default; or

in the event that any subordinated debt securities have been declared due and payable before their stated maturity.

If the trustee under the subordinated debt indenture or any holders of the subordinated debt securities receive any payment or distribution that is prohibited under the subordination provisions, and if this fact is made known to the trustee or holders at or prior to the time of such payment or distribution, then the trustee or the holders will have to repay that money to us.

Further, in the event of any insolvency or bankruptcy proceedings, or any receivership, liquidation, reorganization, assignment for the benefit of creditors or other similar proceedings or events involving us or our assets, any creditors in respect of general obligations, which we define below, will be entitled to receive payment in full of all amounts due or to become due on or in respect of such general obligations after payment in full to the holders of senior indebtedness, before any amount is made available for payment or distribution to the holders of any subordinated debt security. However, upon the occurrence of a termination event, which we define below, such subordination to the creditors in respect of general obligations will become null and void and have no further effect.

Even if the subordination provisions prevent us from making any payment when due on the subordinated debt securities of any series, we will be in default on our obligations under that series if we do not make the payment when due. This means that the trustee under the subordinated debt indenture and the holders of that series can take action against us, but they will not receive any money until the claims of the holders of senior indebtedness have been fully satisfied.

The subordinated debt indenture allows the holders of senior indebtedness to obtain a court order requiring us and any holder of subordinated debt securities to comply with the subordination provisions.

As of September 30, 2004, the aggregate amount of our outstanding senior indebtedness and general obligations was approximately \$581 million and the aggregate amount of our outstanding subordinated debt, including debt issued by us to financing trust affiliates that have issued trust preferred securities and including our subordinated guarantees of debt, was approximately \$1,179 million. In addition, as of that date, the aggregate amount of all debt and other liabilities of our subsidiaries (not including the trust preferred securities and guaranteed debt referred to

above) was approximately \$24.2 billion.

Table of Contents

The subordinated debt indenture defines senior indebtedness as:

the principal of, and premium, if any, and interest in respect of our indebtedness for purchased or borrowed money, whether or not evidenced by securities, notes, debentures, bonds or other similar instruments issued by us;

all our capital lease obligations;

all our obligations issued or assumed as the deferred purchase price of property, all our conditional sale obligations and all our obligations under any conditional sale or title retention agreement, but excluding trade accounts payable in the ordinary course of business;

all our obligations in respect of any letters of credit, bankers acceptance, security purchase facilities and similar credit transactions;

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

all obligations of other persons of the type referred to in the bullets above the payment of which we are responsible or liable for as obligor, guarantor or otherwise;

all obligations of the type referred to in the bullets above of other persons secured by any lien on any of our properties or assets whether or not we assume such obligation; and

any deferrals, renewals or extensions of any such senior indebtedness.

However, senior indebtedness does not include:

the subordinated debt securities;

any indebtedness that by its terms is subordinated to, or ranks on an equal basis with, the subordinated debt securities, including our 5.65% Subordinated Notes due May 15, 2014, our 6.0% Subordinated Notes due September 15, 2015, our Fixed/Floating Rate Subordinated Notes due October 15, 2011, Zions Financial Corp.'s Fixed/Floating Rate Guaranteed Notes due May 15, 2011, Zions Institutional Capital Trust A's 8.536% Capital Securities due December 15, 2026, GB Capital Trust's 10.25% Capital Securities due January 15, 2027, Zions Capital Trust B's 8% Capital Securities due September 1, 2032 and CSBI Capital Trust's 11.75% Capital Securities due June 6, 2027; and

any indebtedness between or among us and our affiliates, including all other debt securities and guarantees in respect of debt securities issued to any trust, or a trustee of such trust, partnership or other entity affiliated with us which is a financing vehicle of ours in connection with the issuance by such financing vehicle of capital securities or other securities guaranteed by us pursuant to an instrument that ranks on an equal basis with or junior in respect of payment to the subordinated debt securities.

Edgar Filing: ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/ - Form 424B5

The subordinated debt indenture defines general obligations as all our obligations to make payments on account of claims of general creditors, other than:

obligations on account of senior indebtedness; and

obligations on account of the subordinated debt securities and indebtedness for money borrowed ranking on an equal basis with or junior to the subordinated debt securities.

However, if the Federal Reserve Board (or other federal banking supervisor that is at the time of determination our primary federal banking supervisor) promulgates any rule or issues any interpretation defining or describing the term general creditor or general creditors or senior indebtedness for purposes of its criteria for the inclusion of subordinated debt of a bank holding company in capital, or otherwise defining or describing the obligations to which subordinated debt of a bank holding company must be subordinated to be included in capital, to include any obligations

Table of Contents

not included in the definition of senior indebtedness as described above, then the term general obligations will mean such obligations as defined or described in the first such rule or interpretation, other than obligations as described immediately above in bullet points.

Termination event means the promulgation of any rule or regulation or the issuance of any interpretation of the Federal Reserve Board (or other federal banking supervisor that is at the time of determination our primary federal banking supervisor) that:

defines or describes the terms general creditor or general creditors or senior indebtedness for purposes of its criteria for the inclusion of subordinated debt of a bank holding company in capital, or otherwise defines or describes the obligations to which subordinated debt of a bank holding company must be subordinated for the debt to be included in capital, to include no obligations other than those covered by the definition of senior indebtedness without regard to any of our other obligations;

permits us to include the subordinated debt securities in our capital if they were subordinated in right of payment to the senior indebtedness without regard to any of our other obligations;

otherwise eliminates the requirement that subordinated debt of a bank holding company and its subsidiaries must be subordinated in right of payment to the claims of its general creditors in order to be included in capital; or

causes the subordinated debt securities to be excluded from capital notwithstanding the provisions of the subordinated debt indenture.

Termination event also means any event that results in our not being subject to capital requirements under the rules, regulations or interpretations of the Federal Reserve Board (or other federal banking supervisor).

Restriction on Sale or Issuance of Capital Stock of Major Constituent Banks

With respect to the senior debt securities, we have agreed that we will not, and will not permit any subsidiary to, sell, assign, pledge, transfer, or otherwise dispose of, any shares of capital stock, or any securities convertible into shares of capital stock, of any major constituent bank, which we define below, or any subsidiary owning, directly or indirectly, any shares of capital stock of any major constituent bank. In addition, with respect to the senior debt securities, we have agreed that we will not permit any major constituent bank or any subsidiary owning, directly or indirectly, any shares of capital stock of a major constituent bank to issue any shares of its capital stock or any securities convertible into shares of its capital stock. Notwithstanding the foregoing, we are permitted to make sales, assignments, transfers or other dispositions which:

are for the purpose of qualifying a person to serve as a director; or

are for fair market value, as determined by our board, and, after giving effect to those dispositions and to any potential dilution, we will own not less than 80% of the shares of capital stock of the major constituent bank in question or any subsidiary owning any shares of capital stock of the major constituent bank in question; or

are made

Edgar Filing: ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/ - Form 424B5

in compliance with court or regulatory authority order; or

in compliance with a condition imposed by any court or regulatory authority permitting our acquisition of any other bank or entity; or

in compliance with an undertaking made to any regulatory authority in connection with such an acquisition described in the immediately preceding bullet; or

to us or any wholly-owned subsidiary;

-20-

Table of Contents

provided, in the case of the bullet-points relating to acquisitions, the assets of the bank or entity being acquired and its consolidated subsidiaries equal or exceed 75% of the assets of the major constituent bank in question or the subsidiary owning, directly or indirectly, any shares of capital stock of a major constituent bank and its respective consolidated subsidiaries on the date of acquisition.

Despite the above requirements, any major constituent bank may be merged into or consolidated with, or may lease, sell or transfer all or substantially all of its assets to, another entity if, after giving effect to that merger, consolidation, sale or transfer, we or any of our wholly-owned subsidiaries owns at least 80% of the capital stock of the other entity, or if such merger, consolidation, sale or transfer is made:

in compliance with court or regulatory authority order; or

in compliance with a condition imposed by any court or regulatory authority permitting our acquisition of any other bank or entity; or

in compliance with an undertaking made to any regulatory authority in connection with such an acquisition described in the immediately preceding bullet;

provided, in the case of the bullet-points relating to acquisitions, the assets of the bank or entity being acquired and its consolidated subsidiaries equal or exceed 75% of the assets of the major constituent bank in question or the subsidiary owning, directly or indirectly, any shares of capital stock of a major constituent bank and its respective consolidated subsidiaries on the date of acquisition.

A major constituent bank is defined in the senior debt indenture to mean any subsidiary which is a bank and has total assets equal to 30% or more of our consolidated assets determined on the date of our most recent audited financial statements. At present, the major constituent banks are Zions First National Bank and California Bank & Trust.

The above covenants are not covenants for the benefit of any series of subordinated debt securities.

Defeasance and Covenant Defeasance

Unless we say otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement, the provisions for full defeasance and covenant defeasance described below apply to each senior and subordinated debt security as indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement. In general, we expect these provisions to apply to each debt security that is not a floating rate or indexed debt security.

Full Defeasance. If there is a change in U.S. federal tax law, as described below, we can legally release ourselves from all payment and other obligations on any debt securities. This is called full defeasance. For us to do so, each of the following must occur:

Edgar Filing: ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/ - Form 424B5

we must deposit in trust for the benefit of all holders of those debt securities a combination of money and U.S. government or U.S. government agency notes or bonds that, in the opinion of a nationally recognized firm of independent public accountants expressed in a written certification thereof delivered to the trustee, will generate enough cash to make interest, principal and any other payments on those debt securities on their various due dates;

there must be a change in current U.S. federal tax law or an Internal Revenue Service ruling that lets us make the above deposit without causing the holders to recognize gain or loss for federal income tax purposes as a result of such deposit and full defeasance to be effected with respect to such securities or be taxed on those debt securities any differently than if such deposit and full defeasance were not to occur;

we must deliver to the trustee a legal opinion of our counsel confirming the tax law change described above;

Table of Contents

we must confirm that neither the debt securities nor any securities of the same series, if listed on any securities exchange, will be delisted as a result of depositing such amount in trust;

no default or event of default, as defined below and as applicable under the relevant indenture for such series of securities, shall have occurred and be continuing at the time of such deposit or, with regard to an event of default relating to certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency, reorganization or the appointment of a receiver by us or any major constituent bank, on the date of the deposit referred to above or during the 90 days after that date;

such defeasance will not cause the trustee to have a conflicting interest within the meaning of the Trust Indenture Act, assuming all securities are in default within the meaning of the Trust Indenture Act;

such defeasance will not result in a breach or violation of, or constitute a default under, any other agreement or instrument by which we are bound;

such defeasance will not result in the trust arising from such deposit constituting an investment company within the meaning of the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended, unless such trust shall be registered or exempt from registration thereunder;

in the case of the subordinated debt securities, no event or condition may exist that, under the provisions described under Subordination Provisions above, would prevent us from making payments of interest, principal and any other payments on those subordinated debt securities on the date of the deposit referred to above or during the 90 days after that date; and

we must deliver to the trustee an officers certificate and a legal opinion of our counsel confirming that all conditions precedent with respect to such defeasance described above have been complied with.

If we ever fully defease your debt security, you will need to rely solely on the trust deposit for payments on your debt security. You could not look to us for payment in the event of any shortfall.

Covenant Defeasance. Under current U.S. federal tax law, we can make the same type of deposit described above and be released from the covenants described under Restriction on Sale or Issuance of Capital Stock of Major Constituent Banks above and certain other covenants relating to your debt security as provided for in the relevant indenture or described in your prospectus supplement. This is called covenant defeasance. In that event, you would lose the protection of those covenants. In the case of subordinated debt securities, you would be released from the subordination provisions on your subordinated debt security described under Subordination Provisions above. In order to achieve covenant defeasance for any debt securities, we must satisfy substantially the same conditions specified above for full defeasance, except with regard to the second bullet point above, which for covenant defeasance requires only a legal opinion of our counsel delivered to the trustee confirming that the holders of such securities will not recognize gain or loss for federal income tax purposes as a result of such deposit and covenant defeasance to be effected with respect to such securities or be taxed on those debt securities any differently than if such deposit and covenant defeasance were not to occur.

If we accomplish covenant defeasance with regard to your debt security, the following provisions, among others, of the applicable indenture and your debt security would no longer apply:

if your debt security is a senior debt security, our promise not to take certain actions with respect to our major constituent banks as described above under Restriction on Sale or Issuance of Capital Stock of Major Constituent Banks;

any covenants that your prospectus supplement may state are applicable to your debt security;

the events of default resulting from a breach of covenants, described below under Events of Default and Defaults; and

with respect to subordinated debt securities, the subordination provisions described under Subordination Provisions above.

Table of Contents

If we accomplish covenant defeasance on your debt security, you can still look to us for repayment of your debt security in the event of any shortfall in the trust deposit. You should note, however, that if one of the remaining events of default occurred, such as our bankruptcy, and your debt security became immediately due and payable, there may be a shortfall. Depending on the event causing the default, you may not be able to obtain payment of the shortfall.

Events of Default and Defaults

You will have special rights if an event of default with respect to your debt security occurs and is not cured, as described in this subsection.

Events of Default under the Senior Debt Indenture

When we refer to an event of default with respect to any series of senior debt securities, we mean any of the following:

failure to pay principal of or any premium on any senior debt security of that series when due;

failure to pay any interest on any senior debt security of that series when due and that default continues for 30 days;

failure to deposit any sinking fund payment, when and as due by the terms of any senior debt security of that series;

failure to perform any other covenant in the senior debt indenture and that failure continues for 60 days after written notice to us by the trustee or the holders of at least 25% in aggregate principal amount of the relevant outstanding senior debt securities;

our filing for bankruptcy or the occurrence of certain other events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization relating to us or any major constituent bank;

failure to pay any portion of the principal when due of any indebtedness of ours or any major constituent bank in excess of \$25,000,000, or acceleration of the maturity of any such indebtedness exceeding that amount if acceleration results from a default under the instrument giving rise to that indebtedness and is not annulled within 60 days after due notice (provided that any such failure or acceleration shall not be deemed to be an event of default if and for so long as we or the applicable major constituent bank contests the validity of the failure or acceleration in good faith by appropriate proceedings); and

any other event of default provided with respect to senior debt securities of that series which will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement for that series.

Events of Default and Defaults under the Subordinated Debt Indenture

When we refer to an event of default with respect to any series of subordinated debt securities, we mean:

our filing for bankruptcy or the occurrence of certain other events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization relating to us or any major constituent bank.

When we refer to a default with respect to any series of subordinated debt securities, we mean:

failure to pay principal of or any premium on any subordinated debt security of that series when due;

failure to pay any interest on any subordinated debt security of that series when due and that default continues for 30 days;

Table of Contents

failure to deposit any sinking fund payment, when and as due by the terms of any subordinated debt security of that series;

failure to perform any other covenant in the subordinated debt indenture and that failure continues for 60 days after written notice to us by the trustee or the holders of at least 25% in aggregate principal amount of the relevant outstanding subordinated debt securities;

any event of default; and

any other default provided with respect to subordinated debt securities of that series which will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement for that series.

Remedies upon an Event of Default or Default

If an event of default occurs and is continuing, either the trustee or the holders of at least 25% in principal amount of the relevant outstanding debt securities may accelerate the maturity of such debt securities. Additionally, the senior debt indenture provides that in the event of the filing for bankruptcy by us or any major constituent bank or the occurrence of certain other events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization relating to us or any major constituent bank, the maturity of the outstanding senior debt securities will accelerate automatically. After acceleration, but before a judgment or decree based on acceleration, the holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of the relevant outstanding debt securities may, under circumstances set forth in the relevant indenture, rescind the acceleration if we have deposited monies on account of certain overdue amounts with the trustee.

With respect to subordinated debt securities, if a default occurs that is not also an event of default with respect to the subordinated debt securities, neither the trustee nor the holders of subordinated debt securities may act to accelerate the maturity of the subordinated debt securities. However, if a default occurs, the trustee may proceed to enforce any covenant and other rights of the holders of the subordinated debt securities, and if the default relates to our failure to make any payment of interest when due and payable and such default continues for a period of 30 days or such default is made in the payment of the principal or any premium at its maturity, then the trustee may demand payment of the amounts then due and payable and may proceed to prosecute any failure on our part to make such payments.

Subject to the provisions of the relevant indenture relating to the duties of the trustee in case an event of default shall occur and be continuing, the trustee will be under no obligation to exercise any of its rights or powers under the relevant indenture at the request or direction of any of the holders of the debt securities issued thereunder, unless the holders of such debt securities shall have offered to the trustee reasonable indemnity. Subject to such provisions for the indemnification of the trustee, the holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of the relevant outstanding debt securities will have the right to direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for any remedy available to the trustee or exercising any trust or power conferred on the trustee.

Before you may take any action to institute any proceeding relating to the indenture, or to appoint a receiver or a trustee, or for any other remedy, each of the following must occur:

you must have given the trustee written notice of a continuing event of default or defaults;

Edgar Filing: ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/ - Form 424B5

the holders of at least 25% of the aggregate principal amount of all relevant outstanding debt securities of your series must make a written request of the trustee to take action because of the event of default or default, as the case may be, and must have offered reasonable indemnification to the trustee against the cost, liabilities and expenses of taking such action;

the trustee must not have taken action for 60 days after receipt of such notice and offer of indemnification; and

no contrary notice shall have been given to the trustee during such 60-day period by the holders of a majority in principal amount of the securities of your series.

Table of Contents

These limitations do not apply to a suit for the enforcement of payment of the principal of or any premium or interest on a security on or after the due dates for such payments.

We will furnish to the trustee annually a statement as to our performance of our obligations under the indentures and as to any default in performance.

Book-entry and other indirect owners should consult their banks or brokers for information on how to give notice or direction to or make a request of the trustee and how to declare or cancel an acceleration of the maturity. Book-entry and other indirect owners are described under Legal Ownership and Book-Entry Issuance below.

Modification of the Indentures and Waiver of Covenants

Certain limited modifications of the indentures may be made without the necessity of obtaining the consent of the holders of the relevant debt securities. Other modifications and amendments of the indentures may be made with the consent of the holders of 66²/₃% in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of each series affected by those modifications and amendments. However, a modification or amendment affecting securities issued under the senior debt indenture or the subordinated debt indenture requires the consent of the holder of each outstanding debt security under the relevant indenture affected if it would:

change the stated maturity of the principal or interest of any security;

reduce the principal amounts of, any premium or interest on, any security or change the currency in which any such amounts are payable;

change the place of payment on a security;

impair the right to institute suit for the enforcement of any payment on any security on or after its stated maturity or redemption date;

reduce the percentage of holders whose consent is needed to modify or amend the indenture;

reduce the percentage of holders whose consent is needed to waive compliance with certain provisions of the indenture or to waive certain defaults;

modify the provisions with respect to subordination of the subordinated debt securities in a manner adverse to the holders of those securities; or

modify the provisions dealing with modification and waiver of the indenture.

Edgar Filing: ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/ - Form 424B5

In addition, no modification or amendment to the subordinated debt indenture that affects the superior position of the holders of senior indebtedness shall be effective against any holder of senior indebtedness unless the holder shall have consented to the modification or amendment.

The holders of 66 ²/₃% in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series may, on behalf of the holders of all securities of that series, waive compliance by us with certain restrictive provisions of the indenture. The holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series may, on behalf of the holders of all securities of that series, waive any past default, except a default in the payment of principal or interest, and defaults in respect of a covenant or provision which cannot be modified or amended without the consent of each holder of each outstanding debt security affected.

We will generally be entitled to set any day as a record date for the purpose of determining the holders of relevant outstanding debt securities that are entitled to take any action under the relevant indenture. In limited circumstances, the trustee will be entitled to set a record date for action by holders of the relevant debt securities. If a record date is set for any action to be taken by holders of debt securities, such action may be taken only by persons who are holders of relevant outstanding debt securities on the record date and must be taken within 180 days following the record date or

Table of Contents

such other period as we may specify (or as the trustee may specify, if it set the record date). This period may be shortened or lengthened (but not beyond 180 days) from time to time.

Book-entry and other indirect owners should consult their banks or brokers for information on how approval may be granted or denied if we seek to change an indenture or any debt securities or request a waiver.

Special Rules for Action by Holders

When holders take any action under either indenture, such as giving a notice of default, declaring an acceleration, approving any change or waiver or giving the trustee an instruction, we will apply the following rules.

Only Outstanding Debt Securities Are Eligible

Only holders of outstanding debt securities of the applicable series will be eligible to participate in any action by holders of debt securities of that series. Also, we will count only outstanding debt securities in determining whether the various percentage requirements for taking action have been met. For these purposes, a debt security will not be outstanding:

if it has been surrendered for cancellation;

if we have deposited or set aside, in trust for its holder, money for its payment or redemption;

if we have fully defeased it as described above under Defeasance and Covenant Defeasance Full Defeasance; or

if we or one of our affiliates, such as Zions Investment Securities, Inc., is the beneficial owner.

Eligible Principal Amount of Some Debt Securities

In some situations, we may follow special rules in calculating the principal amount of a debt security that is to be treated as outstanding for the purposes described above. This may happen, for example, if the principal amount increases over time or is not to be fixed until maturity.

For any debt security of the kind described below, we will decide how much principal amount to attribute to the debt security as follows:

Edgar Filing: ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/ - Form 424B5

for an original issue discount debt security, we will use the principal amount that would be due and payable on the action date if the maturity of the debt security were accelerated to that date because of a default; or

for a debt security whose principal amount is not known, we will use any amount that we indicate in the prospectus supplement for that debt security. The principal amount of a debt security may not be known, for example, because it is based on an index that changes from time to time and the principal amount is not to be determined until a later date.

Form, Exchange and Transfer of Debt Securities in Registered Form

If any debt securities cease to be issued in registered global form, they will be issued as follows unless we indicate otherwise in your prospectus supplement:

only in fully registered form;

without interest coupons; and

in denominations of \$1,000 and integral multiples of \$1,000.

Table of Contents

Holders may exchange their debt securities for debt securities of smaller denominations or combined into fewer debt securities of larger denominations, as long as the total principal amount is not changed.

Holders may exchange or transfer their debt securities at the office of the trustee. They may also replace lost, stolen, destroyed or mutilated debt securities at that office. We have appointed the trustee to act as our agent for registering debt securities in the names of holders and transferring and replacing debt securities. We may appoint another entity to perform these functions or perform them ourselves.

Holders will not be required to pay a service charge to transfer or exchange their debt securities, but they may be required to pay for any tax or other governmental charge associated with the exchange or transfer. The transfer or exchange, and any replacement, will be made only if our transfer agent is satisfied with the holder's proof of legal ownership. The transfer agent may require an indemnity before replacing any debt securities.

If we have designated additional transfer agents for your debt security, they will be named in your prospectus supplement. We may appoint additional transfer agents or cancel the appointment of any particular transfer agent. We may also approve a change in the office through which any transfer agent acts.

If the debt securities of any series are redeemable and we redeem less than all those debt securities, we may block the transfer or exchange of those debt securities during the period beginning 15 days before the day we mail the notice of redemption and ending on the day of that mailing, in order to freeze the list of holders to prepare the mailing. We may also refuse to register transfers of or exchange any debt security selected for redemption, except that we will continue to permit transfers and exchanges of the unredeemed portion of any debt security being partially redeemed.

If a debt security is issued as a registered global debt security, only the depository, Euroclear and Clearstream, Luxembourg, as applicable, will be entitled to transfer and exchange the debt security as described in this subsection, since it or they will be the sole holder of the debt security.

The rules for exchange described above apply to exchange of debt securities for other debt securities of the same series and kind. If a debt security is exchangeable for a different kind of security, such as one that we have not issued, the rules governing that type of exchange will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Payment Mechanics for Debt Securities in Registered Form

Who Receives Payment?

If interest is due on a debt security on an interest payment date, we will pay the interest to the person in whose name the debt security is registered at the close of business on the regular record date relating to the interest payment date as described under **Payment and Record Dates for Interest** below. If interest is due at maturity but on a day that is not an interest payment date, we will pay the interest to the person entitled to receive the principal of the debt security. If principal or another amount besides interest is due on a debt security at maturity, we will pay the

amount to the holder of the debt security against surrender of the debt security at a proper place of payment or, in the case of a global debt security, in accordance with the applicable policies of the depositary, Euroclear and Clearstream, Luxembourg, as applicable.

Payment and Record Dates for Interest

Unless we specify otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement, interest on any fixed rate debt security will be payable semiannually each February 15 and August 15 and at maturity, and the regular record date relating to an interest payment date for any fixed rate debt security will be the February 1 or August 1 next preceding that interest payment date. The regular record date relating to an interest payment date for any floating rate debt security will be the 15th calendar day before that interest payment date. These record dates will apply regardless of whether a particular record date is a business day, as defined below. For the purpose of determining the holder at the close of business on a regular record date when business is not being conducted, the close of business will mean 5:00 P.M., New York City time, on that day.

Table of Contents

Business Day. The term *business day* means, for any debt security, a day that meets all the following applicable requirements:

for all debt securities, is a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday or Friday that is not a day on which banking institutions in Salt Lake City, Utah, San Francisco, California or New York City generally are authorized or required by law or executive order to close;

if the debt security is a floating rate debt security whose interest rate is based on the London interbank offered rate, or LIBOR, is also a day on which dealings in the relevant index currency specified in the applicable prospectus supplement are transacted in the London interbank market;

if the debt security either is a floating rate debt security whose interest rate is based on the euro interbank offered rate, or EURIBOR, or a floating rate debt security whose interest rate is based on LIBOR and for which the index currency is euros, is also a day on which the Trans-European Automated Real-Time Gross Settlement Express Transfer (TARGET) System, or any successor system, is open for business;

if the debt security is held through Euroclear, is also not a day on which banking institutions in Brussels, Belgium are generally authorized or obligated by law, regulation or executive order to close; and

if the debt security is held through Clearstream, Luxembourg, is also not a day on which banking institutions in Luxembourg are generally authorized or obligated by law, regulation or executive order to close.

How We Will Make Payments Due

We will follow the practice described in this subsection when paying amounts due on the debt securities. All amounts due will be paid in U.S. dollars.

Payments on Global Debt Securities. We will make payments on a global debt security in accordance with the applicable policies of the depository as in effect from time to time. Under those policies, we will pay directly to the depository, or its nominee, and not to any indirect owners who own beneficial interests in the global debt security. An indirect owner's right to receive those payments will be governed by the rules and practices of the depository and its participants, as described in the section entitled *Legal Ownership and Book-Entry Issuance* *What Is a Global Security?* .

Payments on Non-Global Debt Securities. We will make payments on a debt security in non-global, registered form as follows. We will pay interest that is due on an interest payment date by check mailed on the interest payment date to the holder at his or her address shown on the trustee's records as of the close of business on the regular record date. We will make all other payments by check at the paying agent described below, against surrender of the debt security. All payments by check will be made in next-day funds i.e., funds that become available on the day after the check is cashed.

Alternatively, if a non-global debt security has a face amount of at least \$1,000,000 and the holder asks us to do so, we will pay any amount that becomes due on the debt security by wire transfer of immediately available funds to an account at a bank in New York City, on the due date. To request wire payment, the holder must give the paying agent appropriate wire transfer instructions at least five business days before the

Edgar Filing: ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/ - Form 424B5

requested wire payment is due. In the case of any interest payment due on an interest payment date, the instructions must be given by the person or entity who is the holder on the relevant regular record date. In the case of any other payment, payment will be made only after the debt security is surrendered to the paying agent. Any wire instructions, once properly given, will remain in effect unless and until new instructions are given in the manner described above.

Book-entry and other indirect owners should consult their banks or brokers for information on how they will receive payments on their debt securities.

Table of Contents

Payment When Offices Are Closed

If any payment is due on a debt security on a day that is not a business day, we will make the payment on the next day that is a business day. Payments postponed to the next business day in this situation will be treated under the applicable indenture as if they were made on the original due date. Postponement of this kind will not result in a default under any debt security or the applicable indenture, and no interest will accrue on the postponed amount from the original due date to the next day that is a business day. The term business day has a special meaning, which we describe above under *Payment and Record Dates for Interest*.

Paying Agent

We may appoint one or more financial institutions to act as our paying agents, at whose designated offices debt securities in non-global entry form may be surrendered for payment at their maturity. We call each of those offices a paying agent. We may add, replace or terminate paying agents from time to time. We may also choose to act as our own paying agent. Initially, we have appointed Zions First National Bank, at its principal office in Salt Lake City, Utah, as the paying agent for the debt securities. We must notify you of changes in the paying agents.

Unclaimed Payments

Regardless of who acts as paying agent, all money paid by us to a paying agent that remains unclaimed at the end of two years after the amount is due to a holder will be repaid to us. After that two-year period, the holder may look only to us for payment and not to the trustee, any other paying agent or anyone else.

Notices

Notices to be given to holders of a global debt security will be given only to the depositary, in accordance with its applicable policies as in effect from time to time. Notices to be given to holders of debt securities not in global form will be sent by mail to the respective addresses of the holders as they appear in the trustee's records, and will be deemed given when mailed. Neither the failure to give any notice to a particular holder, nor any defect in a notice given to a particular holder, will affect the sufficiency of any notice given to another holder.

Book-entry and other indirect owners should consult their banks or brokers for information on how they will receive notices.

Our Relationship with the Trustee

J.P. Morgan Trust Company, National Association, is initially serving as the trustee for both the senior debt securities and the subordinated debt securities. Consequently, if an actual or potential event of default occurs with respect to any debt securities, the trustee may be considered to have a conflicting interest for purposes of the Trust Indenture Act of 1939. In that case, the trustee may be required to resign under one of the

indentures, and we would be required to appoint a successor trustee. For this purpose, a potential event of default means an event that would be an event of default if the requirements for giving us default notice or for the default having to exist for a specific period of time were disregarded.

Table of Contents

LEGAL OWNERSHIP AND BOOK-ENTRY ISSUANCE

In this section, we describe special considerations that will apply to registered securities issued in global i.e., book-entry form. First we describe the difference between legal ownership and indirect ownership of registered securities. Then we describe special provisions that apply to global securities.

Who is the Legal Owner of a Registered Security?

Each debt security in registered form will be represented either by a certificate issued in definitive form to a particular investor or by one or more global securities representing the entire issuance of securities. We refer to those who have securities registered in their own names, on the books that we or the trustee maintain for this purpose, as the holders of those securities. These persons are the legal holders of the securities. We refer to those who, indirectly through others, own beneficial interests in securities that are not registered in their own names as indirect owners of those securities. As we discuss below, indirect owners are not legal holders, and investors in securities issued in book-entry form or in street name will be indirect owners.

Book-Entry Owners

We will issue each security in book-entry form only, unless we specify otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement. This means securities will be represented by one or more global securities registered in the name of a financial institution that holds them as depositary on behalf of other financial institutions that participate in the depositary's book-entry system. These participating institutions, in turn, hold beneficial interests in the securities on behalf of themselves or their customers.

Under each indenture, only the person in whose name a security is registered is recognized as the holder of that security. Consequently, for securities issued in global form, we will recognize only the depositary as the holder of the securities and we will make all payments on the securities, including deliveries of any property other than cash, to the depositary. The depositary passes along the payments it receives to its participants, which in turn pass the payments along to their customers who are the beneficial owners. The depositary and its participants do so under agreements they have made with one another or with their customers; they are not obligated to do so under the terms of the securities.

As a result, investors will not own securities directly. Instead, they will own beneficial interests in a global security, through a bank, broker or other financial institution that participates in the depositary's book-entry system or holds an interest through a participant. As long as the securities are issued in global form, investors will be indirect owners, and not holders, of the securities.

Street Name Owners

In the future we may terminate a global security or issue securities initially in non-global form. In these cases, investors may choose to hold their securities in their own names or in street name. Securities held by an investor in street name would be registered in the name of a bank, broker or other financial institution that the investor chooses, and the investor would hold only a beneficial interest in those securities through an account

he or she maintains at that institution.

For securities held in street name, we will recognize only the intermediary banks, brokers and other financial institutions in whose names the securities are registered as the holders of those securities and we will make all payments on those securities, including deliveries of any property other than cash, to them. These institutions pass along the payments they receive to their customers who are the beneficial owners, but only because they agree to do so in their customer agreements or because they are legally required to do so. Investors who hold securities in street name will be indirect owners, not holders, of those securities.

Table of Contents

Legal Holders

Our obligations, as well as the obligations of the trustee and any other third parties employed by us, the trustee or any of those agents, run only to the holders of the securities. We do not have obligations to investors who hold beneficial interests in global securities, in street name or by any other indirect means. This will be the case whether an investor chooses to be an indirect holder of a security or has no choice because we are issuing the securities only in global form.

For example, once we make a payment or give a notice to the holder, we have no further responsibility for that payment or notice even if that holder is required, under agreements with depositary participants or customers or by law, to pass it along to the indirect owners but does not do so. Similarly, if we want to obtain the approval of the holders for any purpose e.g., to amend an indenture for a series of debt securities or to relieve us of the consequences of a default or of our obligation to comply with a particular provision of an indenture we would seek the approval only from the holders, and not the indirect owners, of the relevant securities. Whether and how the holders contact the indirect owners is up to the holders.

When we refer to *you* in this prospectus, we mean those who invest in the securities being offered by this prospectus, whether they are the holders or only indirect owners of those securities. When we refer to *your securities* in this prospectus, we mean the securities in which you will hold a direct or indirect interest.

Special Considerations for Indirect Owners

If you hold securities through a bank, broker or other financial institution, either in book-entry form or in street name, you should check with your own institution to find out:

how it handles securities payments and notices;

whether it imposes fees or charges;

how it would handle a request for the holders' consent, if ever required;

whether and how you can instruct it to send you securities registered in your own name so you can be a holder, if that is permitted in the future;

how it would exercise rights under the securities if there were a default or other event triggering the need for holders to act to protect their interests; and

if the securities are in book-entry form, how the depositary's rules and procedures will affect these matters.

What Is a Global Security?

We will issue each security in book-entry form only, unless we specify otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement. Each security issued in book-entry form will be represented by a global security that we deposit with and register in the name of one or more financial institutions or their nominees, which we select. A financial institution that we select for any security for this purpose is called the depository for that security. A security will usually have only one depository but it may have more.

Each series of securities will have one or more of the following as the depositaries:

The Depository Trust Company, New York, New York, which is known as DTC;

a financial institution holding the securities on behalf of Euroclear Bank S.A./N.V., as operator of the Euroclear system, which is known as Euroclear;

a financial institution holding the securities on behalf of Clearstream Banking, société anonyme, Luxembourg, which is known as Clearstream, Luxembourg; and

Table of Contents

any other clearing system or financial institution named in the applicable prospectus supplement.

The depositaries named above may also be participants in one another's systems. Thus, for example, if DTC is the depositary for a global security, investors may hold beneficial interests in that security through Euroclear or Clearstream, Luxembourg, as DTC participants. The depositary or depositaries for your securities will be named in your prospectus supplement; if none is named, the depositary will be DTC.

A global security may represent one or any other number of individual securities. Generally, all securities represented by the same global security will have the same terms. We may, however, issue a global security that represents multiple securities of the same kind, such as debt securities, that have different terms and are issued at different times. We call this kind of global security a master global security. Your prospectus supplement will not indicate whether your securities are represented by a master global security.

A global security may not be transferred to or registered in the name of anyone other than the depositary or its nominee, unless special termination situations arise. We describe those situations below under *Holder's Option to Obtain a Non-Global Security; Special Situations When a Global Security Will Be Terminated*. As a result of these arrangements, the depositary, or its nominee, will be the sole registered owner and holder of all securities represented by a global security, and investors will be permitted to own only beneficial interests in a global security. Beneficial interests must be held by means of an account with a broker, bank or other financial institution that in turn has an account with the depositary or with another institution that does. Thus, an investor whose security is represented by a global security will not be a holder of the security, but only an indirect owner of a beneficial interest in the global security.

If the prospectus supplement for a particular security indicates that the security will be issued in global form only, then the security will be represented by a global security at all times unless and until the global security is terminated. We describe the situations in which this can occur below under *Holder's Option to Obtain a Non-Global Security; Special Situations When a Global Security Will Be Terminated*. If termination occurs, we may issue the securities through another book-entry clearing system or decide that the securities may no longer be held through any book-entry clearing system.

Special Considerations for Global Securities

As an indirect owner, an investor's rights relating to a global security will be governed by the account rules of the depositary, those of the investor's financial institution (e.g., Euroclear and Clearstream, Luxembourg, if applicable), as well as general laws relating to securities transfers. We do not recognize this type of investor or any intermediary as a holder of securities and instead deal only with the depositary that holds the global security.

If securities are issued only in the form of a global security, an investor should be aware of the following:

an investor cannot cause the securities to be registered in his or her own name, and cannot obtain non-global certificates for his or her interest in the securities, except in the special situations we describe below;

an investor will be an indirect holder and must look to his or her own bank or broker for payments on the securities and protection of his or her legal rights relating to the securities, as we describe under *Who is the Legal Owner of a Registered Security Legal Holders* above;

an investor may not be able to sell interests in the securities to some insurance companies and other institutions that are required by law to own their securities in non-book-entry form;

an investor may not be able to pledge his or her interest in a global security in circumstances where certificates representing the securities must be delivered to the lender or other beneficiary of the pledge in order for the pledge to be effective;

Table of Contents

the depositary's policies and those of any participant in the depositary's system or other intermediary (e.g., Euroclear or Clearstream, Luxembourg if DTC is the depositary) through which that institution holds security interests, which may change from time to time, will govern payments, transfers, exchanges and other matters relating to an investor's interest in a global security. We and the trustee will have no responsibility for any aspect of the depositary's policies or actions or records of ownership interests in a global security. We and the trustee also do not supervise the depositary in any way;

the depositary will require that those who purchase and sell interests in a global security within its book-entry system use immediately available funds and your broker or bank may require you to do so as well; and

financial institutions that participate in the depositary's book-entry system and through which an investor holds its interest in the global securities (including Euroclear and Clearstream, Luxembourg, if you hold through them when the depositary is DTC) may also have their own policies affecting payments, notices and other matters relating to the securities. For example, if you hold an interest in a global security through Euroclear or Clearstream, Luxembourg, when DTC is the depositary, Euroclear or Clearstream, Luxembourg, as applicable, will require those who purchase and sell interests in that security through them to use immediately available funds and comply with other policies and procedures, including deadlines for giving instructions as to transactions that are to be effected on a particular day. There may be more than one financial intermediary in the chain of ownership for an investor. We do not monitor and are not responsible for the policies or actions of any of those intermediaries.

Holder's Option to Obtain a Non-Global Security; Special Situations When a Global Security Will Be Terminated

If we issue any series of securities in book-entry form but we choose to give the beneficial owners of that series the right to obtain non-global securities, any beneficial owner entitled to obtain non-global securities may do so by following the applicable procedures of the depositary, any transfer agent or registrar for that series and that owner's bank, broker or other financial institution through which that owner holds its beneficial interest in the securities.

In addition, in a few special situations described below, a global security will be terminated and interests in it will be exchanged for certificates in non-global form representing the securities it represented. After that exchange, the choice of whether to hold the securities directly or in street name will be up to the investor. Investors must consult their own banks or brokers to find out how to have their interests in a global security transferred on termination to their own names, so that they will be holders. We have described the rights of holders and street name investors above under [Who is the Legal Owner of a Registered Security](#).

The special situations for termination of a global security are as follows:

DTC notifies us that it is unwilling or unable to continue acting as the depositary for that global security, or DTC has ceased to be a clearing agency registered under the Exchange Act, and in either case we fail to appoint a successor depositary;

we order in our sole discretion that such global security will be transferable, registrable, and exchangeable; or

an event of default has occurred with regard to that global security and is continuing.

If a global security is terminated, only the depositary, and neither we nor the trustee, is responsible for deciding the names of the institutions in whose names the securities represented by the global security will be registered and, therefore, who will be the holders of those securities.

Table of Contents

Considerations Relating to Euroclear and Clearstream, Luxembourg

Euroclear and Clearstream, Luxembourg are securities clearance systems in Europe. Both systems clear and settle securities transactions between their participants through electronic, book-entry delivery of securities against payment.

As long as any global security is held by Euroclear or Clearstream, Luxembourg, you may hold an interest in the global security only through an organization that participates, directly or indirectly, in Euroclear or Clearstream, Luxembourg. If you are a participant in either of those systems, you may hold your interest directly in that system. If you are not a participant, you may hold your interest indirectly through organizations that are participants in that system.

If Euroclear or Clearstream, Luxembourg is the depositary for a global security and there is no depositary in the United States, you will not be able to hold interests in that global security through any securities clearance system in the United States.

If Euroclear or Clearstream, Luxembourg is the depositary for a global security, or if DTC is the depositary for a global security and Euroclear and Clearstream, Luxembourg hold interests in the global security as participants in DTC, then Euroclear and Clearstream, Luxembourg will hold interests in the global security on behalf of the participants in their systems.

Payments, notices and other communications or deliveries relating to the securities made through Euroclear or Clearstream, Luxembourg must comply with the rules and procedures of those systems. Those systems could change their rules and procedures at any time. We have no control over those systems or their participants and we take no responsibility for their activities. Transactions between participants in Euroclear or Clearstream, Luxembourg, on one hand, and participants in DTC, on the other hand, when DTC is the depositary, would also be subject to DTC's rules and procedures.

Special Timing Considerations for Transactions in Euroclear and Clearstream, Luxembourg

Investors will be able to make and receive through Euroclear and Clearstream, Luxembourg payments, notices and other communications and deliveries involving any securities held through those systems only on days when those systems are open for business. Those systems may not be open for business on days when banks, brokers and other institutions are open for business in the United States.

In addition, because of time-zone differences, U.S. investors who hold their interests in the securities through these systems, and wish to transfer their interests, or to receive or make a payment or delivery with respect to their interests, on a particular day may find that the transaction will not be effected until the next business day in Luxembourg or Brussels, as applicable. Investors who hold their interests through both DTC and Euroclear or Clearstream, Luxembourg may need to make special arrangements to finance any purchases or sales of their interests between the U.S. and European clearing systems, and those transactions may settle later than would be the case for transactions within one clearing system.

Table of Contents

SECURITIES ISSUED IN BEARER FORM

We may issue debt securities in bearer, rather than registered, form. If we do, those debt securities will be subject to special provisions described in this section. To the extent the provisions described in this section are inconsistent with those described elsewhere in this prospectus, they supersede those described elsewhere with regard to any bearer securities. Otherwise, the relevant provisions described elsewhere in this prospectus will apply to bearer securities.

Temporary and Permanent Bearer Global Securities

If we issue debt securities in bearer form, all debt securities of the same series and kind will initially be represented by a temporary bearer global security, which we will deposit with a common depository for Euroclear and Clearstream, Luxembourg. Euroclear and Clearstream, Luxembourg will credit the account of each of their subscribers with the amount of debt securities the subscriber purchases. We will promise to exchange the temporary bearer global security for a permanent bearer global security, which we will deliver to the common depository upon the later of the following two dates:

the date that is 40 days after the later of (a) the completion of the distribution of the debt securities as determined by the underwriter, dealer or agent and (b) the closing date for the sale of the debt securities by us; we may extend this date as described below under Extensions for Further Issuances; and

the date on which Euroclear and Clearstream, Luxembourg provide us or our agent with the necessary tax certificates described below under U.S. Tax Certificate Required.

Owners of beneficial interests in a permanent bearer global security will be able to exchange those interests at their option, in whole but not in part, for:

non-global debt securities in bearer form with interest coupons attached, if applicable; or

non-global debt securities in registered form without coupons attached.

A beneficial owner will be able to make this exchange by giving us or our designated agent 60 days prior written notice in accordance with the terms of the debt securities.

Extensions for Further Issuances

Without the consent of the trustee, any holders or any other person, we may issue additional debt securities identical to a prior issue from time to time. If we issue additional debt securities before the date on which we would otherwise be required to exchange the temporary bearer global security representing the prior issue for a permanent bearer global security as described above, that date will be extended until the 40th day after

the completion of the distribution and the closing, whichever is later, for the additional debt securities. Extensions of this kind may be repeated if we sell additional identical debt securities. As a result of these extensions, those who own beneficial interests in the global bearer debt securities may be unable to resell their interests into the United States or to or for the account or benefit of a U.S. person until the 40th day after the additional debt securities have been distributed and sold.

U.S. Tax Certificate Required

We will not pay or deliver interest or other amounts in respect of any portion of a temporary bearer global security unless and until Euroclear or Clearstream, Luxembourg delivers to us or our agent a tax certificate with regard to the owners of the beneficial interests in that portion of the global security. Also, we will not exchange any portion of a temporary global bearer security for a permanent bearer global security unless and until we receive from Euroclear or

Table of Contents

Clearstream, Luxembourg a tax certificate with regard to the owners of the beneficial interests in that portion to be exchanged. In each case, this tax certificate must state that each of the relevant owners:

is not a United States person, as defined below under Limitations on Issuance of Bearer Securities ;

is a foreign branch of a United States financial institution, as defined in applicable U.S. Treasury Regulations, purchasing for its own account or for resale, or is a United States person who acquired the security through a financial institution of this kind and who holds the security through that financial institution on the date of certification, provided in either case that the financial institution provides a certificate to us or the distributor selling the security to it stating that it agrees to comply with the requirements of Section 165(j)(3)(A), (B) or (C) of the Internal Revenue Code and the U.S. Treasury Regulations under that Section; or

is a financial institution holding for purposes of resale during the restricted period, as defined in U.S. Treasury Regulations Section 1.163-5(c)(2)(i)(D)(7). A financial institution of this kind, whether or not it is also described in either of the two preceding bullet points, must certify that it has not acquired the security for purposes of resale directly or indirectly to a United States person or to a person within the United States or its possessions.

The tax certificate must be signed by an authorized person satisfactory to us.

No one who owns an interest in a temporary bearer global security will receive payment or delivery of any amount or property in respect of its interest, and will not be permitted to exchange its interest for an interest in a permanent bearer global security or a security in any other form, unless and until we or our agent have received the required tax certificate on its behalf.

Legal Ownership of Bearer Securities

Securities in bearer form will not be registered in any name. Whoever is the bearer of the certificate representing a security in bearer form is the legal owner of that security. Legal title and ownership of bearer debt securities will pass by delivery of the certificates representing the debt securities. Thus, when we use the term holder in this prospectus with regard to bearer securities, we mean the bearer of those securities.

The common depositary for Euroclear and Clearstream, Luxembourg will be the bearer, and thus the holder and legal owner, of both the temporary and permanent bearer global debt securities described above. Investors in those debt securities will own beneficial interests in the debt securities represented by those global debt securities; they will be only indirect owners, not holders or legal owners, of the debt securities.

As long as the common depositary is the bearer of any bearer security in global form, the common depositary will be considered the sole legal owner and holder of the debt securities represented by the bearer security in global form. Ownership of beneficial interests in any bearer security in global form will be shown on records maintained by Euroclear or Clearstream, Luxembourg, as applicable, by the common depositary on their behalf and by the direct and indirect participants in their systems, and ownership interests can be held and transferred only through those records. We will pay any amounts owing with respect to a bearer global security only to the common depositary.

Edgar Filing: ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/ - Form 424B5

Neither we, the trustee nor any agent will recognize any owner of beneficial interests as a holder. Nor will we, the trustee or any agent have any responsibility for the ownership records or practices of Euroclear or Clearstream, Luxembourg, the common depositary or any direct or indirect participants in those systems or for any payments, transfers, deliveries, communications or other transactions within those systems, all of which will be subject to the rules and procedures of those systems and participants. If you own a beneficial interest in a global bearer security, you must look only to Euroclear or Clearstream, Luxembourg, and to their direct and indirect participants through which you hold your interest, for your ownership rights. You should read the section entitled *Legal Ownership and Book-Entry Issuance* for more information about holding interests through Euroclear and Clearstream, Luxembourg.

-36-

Table of Contents

Special requirements and restrictions imposed by United States federal tax laws and regulations will apply to bearer securities. We describe these below under Limitations on Issuance of Bearer Securities.

Payment and Exchange of Non-Global Bearer Securities

Payments and deliveries owing on non-global bearer debt securities will be made, in the case of interest payments, only to the holder of the relevant coupon after the coupon is surrendered to the paying agent. In all other cases, payments will be made only to the holder of the certificate representing the relevant security after the certificate is surrendered to the paying agent.

Non-global bearer debt securities, with all unmatured coupons relating to the debt securities, if any, may be exchanged for a like aggregate amount of non-global bearer or registered debt securities of like kind. Non-global registered debt securities may be exchanged for a like aggregate amount of non-global registered debt securities of like kind, as described above in the sections on the different types of debt securities we may offer. However, we will not issue bearer debt securities in exchange for any registered debt securities.

Replacement certificates and coupons for non-global bearer debt securities will not be issued in lieu of any lost, stolen or destroyed certificates and coupons unless we and our transfer agent receive evidence of the loss, theft or destruction, and an indemnity against liabilities, satisfactory to us and our agent. Upon redemption or any other settlement before the stated maturity or expiration, as well as upon any exchange, of a non-global bearer security, the holder will be required to surrender all unmatured coupons to us or our designated agent. If any unmatured coupons are not surrendered, we or our agent may deduct the amount of interest relating to those coupons from the amount otherwise payable or we or our agent may demand an indemnity against liabilities satisfactory to us and our agent.

Notices

If any bearer debt securities are listed on the Luxembourg Stock Exchange and that Exchange's rules require, then as long as those debt securities are listed on that Exchange, we will give notices to holders of bearer debt securities by publication in a daily newspaper of general circulation in Luxembourg. We expect that newspaper to be, but it need not be, the *Luxemburger Wort*. If publication in Luxembourg is not so required or is not practical, the publication will be made elsewhere in Western Europe. The term daily newspaper means a newspaper that is published on each day, other than a Saturday, Sunday or holiday, in Luxembourg or, when applicable, elsewhere in Western Europe. A notice will be presumed to have been received on the date it is first published. If we cannot give notice as described in this paragraph because the publication of any newspaper is suspended or it is otherwise impractical to publish the notice, then we will give notice in another form. That alternate form of notice will be sufficient notice to each holder. Neither the failure to give notice to a particular holder, nor any defect in a notice given to a particular holder, will affect the sufficiency of any notice given to another holder.

Limitations on Issuance of Bearer Securities

In compliance with United States federal income tax laws and regulations, bearer debt securities, including bearer debt securities in global form, will not be offered, sold, resold or delivered, directly or indirectly, in the United States or its possessions or to United States persons, as defined below, except as otherwise permitted by U.S. Treasury Regulations Section 1.163-5(c)(2)(i)(D). Any underwriters, dealers or agents participating in the offerings of bearer debt securities, directly or indirectly, must agree that they will not, in connection with the original issuance of any bearer debt securities or during the restricted period, offer, sell, resell or deliver, directly or indirectly, any bearer debt securities

Edgar Filing: ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/ - Form 424B5

in the United States or its possessions or to United States persons, other than as permitted by the applicable Treasury Regulations described above.

In addition, any underwriters, dealers or agents must have procedures reasonably designed to ensure that their employees or agents who are directly engaged in selling bearer debt securities are aware of the above restrictions on the offering, sale, resale or delivery of bearer debt securities.

-37-

Table of Contents

We will not issue bearer debt securities under which the holder has a right to purchase bearer debt securities in non-global form. Upon the holder's purchase of any underlying bearer debt securities, those bearer debt securities will be issued in temporary global bearer form and will be subject to the provisions described above relating to bearer global debt securities.

We will make payments on bearer debt securities only outside the United States and its possessions except as permitted by the above regulations.

Bearer debt securities and any coupons will bear the following legend:

Any United States person who holds this obligation will be subject to limitations under the United States income tax laws, including the limitations provided in sections 165(j) and 1287(a) of the Internal Revenue Code.

The sections referred to in this legend provide that, with exceptions, a United States person will not be permitted to deduct any loss, and will not be eligible for capital gain treatment with respect to any gain, realized on the sale, exchange or redemption of that bearer security or coupon.

As used in this section entitled "Securities Issued in Bearer Form," "United States person" means:

a citizen or resident of the United States for United States federal income tax purposes;

a corporation or partnership, including an entity treated as a corporation or partnership for United States federal income tax purposes, created or organized in or under the laws of the United States, any state of the United States or the District of Columbia;

an estate the income of which is subject to United States federal income taxation regardless of its source; or

a trust if a court within the United States is able to exercise primary supervision of the administration of the trust and one or more United States persons have the authority to control all substantial decisions of the trust.

In addition, some trusts treated as United States persons before August 20, 1996 may elect to continue to be so treated to the extent provided in the Treasury Regulations.

Table of Contents

CONSIDERATIONS RELATING TO INDEXED SECURITIES

We use the term *indexed securities* to mean debt securities whose value is linked to an underlying asset or index. Indexed securities may present a high level of risk, and investors in certain indexed securities may lose their entire investment. In addition, the treatment of indexed securities for U.S. federal income tax purposes is often unclear due to the absence of any authority specifically addressing the issues presented by any particular indexed security. Thus, if you propose to invest in indexed securities, you should independently evaluate the federal income tax consequences of purchasing an indexed security that apply in your particular circumstances. You should also read any applicable prospectus supplement carefully for a discussion of relevant U.S. tax matters.

Investors in Indexed Securities Could Lose Principal or Interest

The principal amount of an indexed debt security payable at maturity, and/or the amount of interest payable on an indexed security on an interest payment date will be determined by reference to the price or value of one or more securities of one or more issuers, currencies, commodities, any other financial, economic or other measure or instrument, including the occurrence or non-occurrence of any event or circumstance, and/or one or more indices or baskets of any of these items. We refer to each of these as an *index*. The direction and magnitude of the change in the value of the relevant index will determine the principal amount of an indexed debt security payable at maturity, and/or the amount of interest payable on an indexed security on an interest payment date. The terms of a particular indexed debt security may or may not include a guaranteed return of a percentage of the face amount at maturity or a minimum interest rate. Thus, if you purchase an indexed security, you may lose all or a portion of the principal you invest and may receive no interest on your investment.

The Company That Issues an Index Security or the Government That Issues an Index Currency Could Take Actions That May Adversely Affect an Indexed Security

The issuer of a security that serves as an index or part of an index for an indexed security will have no involvement in the offer and sale of the indexed security and no obligations to the holder of the indexed security. The issuer may take actions, such as a merger or sale of assets, without regard to the interests of the holder. Any of these actions could adversely affect the value of a security indexed to that security or to an index of which that security is a component.

An Indexed Security May Be Linked to a Volatile Index, Which Could Hurt Your Investment

Some indices are highly volatile, which means that their value may change significantly, up or down, over a short period of time. The amount of principal or interest that can be expected to become payable on an indexed security may vary substantially from time to time. Because the amounts payable with respect to an indexed security are generally calculated based on the value of the relevant index on a specified date or over a limited period of time, volatility in the index increases the risk that the return on the indexed security may be adversely affected by a fluctuation in the level of the relevant index.

The volatility of an index may be affected by political or economic events, including governmental actions, or by the activities of participants in the relevant markets. Any of these events or activities could adversely affect the value of an indexed security.

An Index to Which a Security Is Linked Could Be Changed or Become Unavailable

Some indices compiled by us or our affiliates or third parties may consist of or refer to several or many different securities, commodities or currencies or other instruments or measures. The compiler of such an index typically reserves the right to alter the composition of the index and the manner in which the value of the index is calculated. An alteration may result in a decrease in the value of or return on an indexed security that is linked to the index. The indices for our indexed securities may include published indices of this kind or customized indices developed by us or our affiliates in connection with particular issues of indexed securities.

Table of Contents

A published index may become unavailable, or a customized index may become impossible to calculate in the normal manner, due to events such as war, natural disasters, cessation of publication of the index or a suspension or disruption of trading in one or more securities, commodities or currencies or other instruments or measures on which the index is based. If an index becomes unavailable or impossible to calculate in the normal manner, the terms of a particular indexed security may allow us to delay determining the amount payable as principal or interest on an indexed debt security, or we may use an alternative method to determine the value of the unavailable index. Alternative methods of valuation are generally intended to produce a value similar to the value resulting from reference to the relevant index. However, it is unlikely that any alternative method of valuation we use will produce a value identical to the value that the actual index would produce. If we use an alternative method of valuation for a security linked to an index of this kind, the value of the security, or the rate of return on it, may be lower than it otherwise would be.

Some indexed securities are linked to indices that are not commonly used or that have been developed only recently. The lack of a trading history may make it difficult to anticipate the volatility or other risks associated with an indexed security of this kind. In addition, trading in these indices or their underlying stocks, commodities or currencies or other instruments or measures, or options or futures contracts on these stocks, commodities or currencies or other instruments or measures, may be limited, which could increase their volatility and decrease the value of the related indexed securities or the rates of return on them.

We May Engage in Hedging Activities that Could Adversely Affect an Indexed Security

In order to hedge an exposure on a particular indexed security, we may, directly or through our affiliates, enter into transactions involving the stocks, commodities or currencies or other instruments or measures that underlie the index for that security, or derivative instruments, such as options or futures, on those stocks, commodities or currencies or other instruments or measures. By engaging in transactions of this kind, we could adversely affect the value of an indexed security. It is possible that we could achieve substantial returns from our hedging transactions while the value of the indexed security may decline.

Information About Indices May Not Be Indicative of Future Performance

If we issue an indexed security, we may include historical information about the relevant index in the applicable prospectus supplement. Any information about indices that we may provide will be furnished as a matter of information only, and you should not regard the information as indicative of the range of, or trends in, fluctuations in the relevant index that may occur in the future.

We May Have Conflicts of Interest Regarding an Indexed Security

Zions Investment Securities, Inc. and our other affiliates may have conflicts of interest with respect to some indexed securities. Zions Investment Securities, Inc. and our other affiliates may engage in trading, including trading for hedging purposes, for their proprietary accounts or for other accounts under their management, in indexed securities and in the securities, commodities or currencies or other instruments or measures on which the index is based or in other derivative instruments underlying or related to the index. These trading activities could adversely affect the value of indexed securities. We and our affiliates may also issue or underwrite securities or derivative instruments that are linked to the same index as one or more indexed securities. By introducing competing products into the marketplace in this manner, we could adversely affect the value of an indexed security.

Edgar Filing: ZIONS BANCORPORATION /UT/ - Form 424B5

In addition to being the calculation agent, to the extent that Zions Investment Securities, Inc. or another of our affiliates calculates or compiles a particular index, it may have considerable discretion in performing the calculation or compilation. Exercising discretion in this manner could adversely affect the value of an indexed security based on the index or the rate of return on the security.

-40-

Table of Contents

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

Initial Offering and Sale of Securities

We may offer and sell the debt securities from time to time as follows:

through agents;

to or through dealers or underwriters;

directly to other purchasers; or

through a combination of any of these methods of sale.

In addition, the debt securities may be issued as a dividend or distribution or in a subscription rights offering to existing holders of debt securities. In some cases, we may also repurchase debt securities and reoffer them to the public by one or more of the methods described above.

The debt securities we distribute by any of these methods may be sold to the public, in one or more transactions, either:

at a fixed price or prices, which may be changed;

at market prices prevailing at the time of sale;

at prices related to prevailing market prices; or

at negotiated prices.

We may solicit offers to purchase debt securities directly from the public from time to time. We may also designate agents from time to time to solicit offers to purchase debt securities from the public on our behalf. The prospectus supplement relating to any particular offering of debt securities will name any agents designated to solicit offers, and will include information about any commissions we may pay the agents, in that offering. Agents may be deemed to be underwriters as that term is defined in the Securities Act.

From time to time, we may sell debt securities to one or more dealers as principals. The dealers, who may be deemed to be underwriters as that term is defined in the Securities Act, may then resell those debt securities to the public.

We may sell debt securities from time to time to one or more underwriters, who would purchase the debt securities as principal for resale to the public, either on a firm-commitment or best-efforts basis. If we sell debt securities to underwriters, we will execute an underwriting agreement with them at the time of sale and will name them in the applicable prospectus supplement. In connection with those sales, underwriters may be deemed to have received compensation from us in the form of underwriting discounts or commissions and may also receive commissions from purchasers of the debt securities for whom they may act as agents. Underwriters may resell the debt securities to or through dealers, and those dealers may receive compensation in the form of discounts, concessions or commissions from the underwriters and/or commissions from purchasers for whom they may act as agents. The applicable prospectus supplement will include information about any underwriting compensation we pay to underwriters, and any discounts, concessions or commissions underwriters allow to participating dealers, in connection with an offering of debt securities.

If we offer debt securities in a subscription rights offering to our existing security holders, we may enter into a standby underwriting agreement with dealers, acting as standby underwriters. We may pay the standby underwriters a commitment fee for the debt securities they commit to purchase on a standby basis. Additionally, before the expiration date for the subscription rights, the standby underwriters may offer the debt securities, including debt securities they may acquire through the purchase and exercise of subscription rights, on a when-issued basis at prices set from time to time by them. After the expiration date, the standby underwriters may offer the debt securities, whether acquired

Table of Contents

under the standby underwriting agreement, on exercise of subscription rights or by purchase in the market, to the public at prices to be determined by them. Thus, standby underwriters may realize profits or losses independent of the underwriting discounts or commissions we may pay them. If we do not enter into a standby underwriting arrangement, we may retain a dealer-manager to manage a subscription rights offering for us. Any dealer-manager we retain may acquire debt securities by purchasing and exercising the subscription rights and resell the debt securities to the public at prices it determines. As a result, a dealer manager may realize profits or losses independent of any dealer-manager fee paid by us.

We may authorize underwriters, dealers and agents to solicit from third parties offers to purchase debt securities under contracts providing for payment and delivery on future dates. The third parties with whom we may enter into contracts of this kind may include banks, insurance companies, pension funds, investment companies, educational and charitable institutions and others. The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the material terms of these contracts, including any conditions to the purchasers' obligations and will include information about any commissions we may pay for soliciting these contracts.

Underwriters, dealers, agents and other persons may be entitled, under agreements that they may enter into with us, to indemnification by us against civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act.

Underwriters may engage in stabilizing and syndicate covering transactions in accordance with Rule 104 under the Exchange Act. Rule 104 permits stabilizing bids to purchase the debt securities being offered as long as the stabilizing bids do not exceed a specified maximum. Underwriters may over-allot the offered debt securities in connection with the offering, thus creating a short position in their account. Syndicate covering transactions involve purchases of the offered debt securities by underwriters in the open market after the distribution has been completed in order to cover syndicate short positions. Stabilizing and syndicate covering transactions may cause the price of the offered debt securities to be higher than it would otherwise be in the absence of these transactions. These transactions, if commenced, may be discontinued at any time.

The underwriters, dealers and agents, as well as their associates, may be customers of or lenders to, and may engage in transactions with and perform services for, Zions and its subsidiaries in the ordinary course of business. In addition, we expect to offer the debt securities to or through our affiliates, as underwriters, dealers or agents. Among our affiliates, Zions Investment Securities, Inc. may offer the debt securities for sale in the United States. Our affiliates may also offer the debt securities in other markets through one or more selling agents, including one another.

In compliance with guidelines of the National Association of Securities Dealers, Inc., or NASD, the maximum commission or discount to be received by any NASD member or independent broker dealer may not exceed 8% of the aggregate principal amount of the securities offered pursuant to this prospectus. It is anticipated that the maximum commission or discount to be received in any particular offering of securities will be significantly less than this amount.

Zions Investment Securities, Inc. is an indirect wholly-owned subsidiary of Zions. Rule 2720 of the Conduct Rules of the NASD imposes certain requirements when an NASD member such as Zions Investment Securities, Inc. distributes an affiliated company's securities. Zions Investment Securities, Inc. has advised Zions that each particular offering of debt securities will comply with the applicable requirements of Rule 2720.

Zions Investment Securities, Inc. will not confirm initial sales to accounts over which it exercises discretionary authority without the prior written approval of the customer.

Market-Making Resales by Affiliates

This prospectus may be used by Zions Investment Securities, Inc. in connection with offers and sales of the debt securities in market-making transactions. In a market-making transaction, Zions Investment Securities, Inc. may resell a debt security it acquires from other holders, after the original offering and sale of the security. Resales of this kind may

Table of Contents

occur in the open market or may be privately negotiated, at prices related to prevailing market prices at the time of resale or at negotiated prices. In these transactions, Zions Investment Securities, Inc. may act as principal or agent, including as agent for the counterparty in a transaction in which Zions Investment Securities, Inc. acts as principal or as agent for both counterparties in a transaction in which Zions Investment Securities, Inc. does not act as principal. Zions Investment Securities, Inc. may receive compensation in the form of discounts and commissions, including from both counterparties in some cases. Other affiliates of Zions may also engage in transactions of this kind and may use this prospectus for this purpose. These other affiliates may include Roth Capital.

The aggregate initial offering price specified on the cover of this prospectus relates to the initial offering of the debt securities. This amount does not include debt securities sold in market-making transactions.

Zions does not expect to receive any proceeds from market-making transactions. Zions does not expect that Zions Investment Securities, Inc. or any other affiliate that engages in these transactions will pay any proceeds from its market-making resales to Zions.

A market-making transaction will have a settlement date later than the original issue date of the security. Information about the trade and settlement dates, as well as the purchase price, for a market-making transaction will be provided to the purchaser in a separate confirmation of sale.

Unless you are informed in your confirmation of sale that your security is being purchased in its original offering and sale, you may assume that you are purchasing your security in a market-making transaction.

Matters Relating to Initial Offering and Market-Making Resales

Each series of debt securities will be a new issue, and there will be no established trading market for any debt security prior to this original issue date. We may not choose to list any particular series of debt securities on a securities exchange or quotation system. We have been advised by Zions Investment Securities, Inc. that it intends to make a market in the debt securities, and any underwriters to whom we sell debt securities for public offering may make a market in those debt securities. However, neither Zions Investment Securities, Inc. nor any underwriter that makes a market is obligated to do so and any of them may stop doing so at any time without notice. No assurance can be given as to the liquidity or trading market for any of the debt securities.

Unless otherwise indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement or confirmation of sale, the purchase price of the debt securities will be required to be paid in immediately available funds in New York City.

In this prospectus, the terms *this offering* means the initial offering of the debt securities made in connection with their original issuance. This term does not refer to any subsequent resales of such debt securities in market-making transactions.

EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT INCOME SECURITY ACT

This section is relevant to you if you are the fiduciary of a pension plan or another employee benefit plan proposing to invest in the securities.

A fiduciary of a pension, profit-sharing or other employee benefit plan subject to Title I of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, as amended (ERISA), should consider the fiduciary standards of ERISA in the context of the plan s particular circumstances before authorizing an investment in the debt securities. Among other factors, the fiduciary should consider whether the investment would satisfy the prudence and diversification requirements of ERISA and would be consistent with the documents and instruments governing the plan.

Table of Contents

Section 406 of ERISA and Section 4975 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the Code), prohibit an employee benefit plan, as well as individual retirement accounts, Keogh plans and other pension and profit sharing plans subject to Section 4975 of the Code, from engaging in certain transactions involving plan assets with persons who are parties in interest under ERISA or disqualified persons under the Code with respect to the plan. A violation of these prohibited transaction rules may result in excise tax or other liabilities under ERISA and Section 4975 of the Code for such persons, unless exemptive relief is available under an applicable statutory or administrative exemption. Therefore, a fiduciary of an employee benefit plan should also consider whether an investment in the debt securities might constitute or give rise to a prohibited transaction under ERISA and the Code. Employee benefit plans which are governmental plans (as defined in Section 3(32) of ERISA), certain church plans (as defined in Section 3(33) of ERISA), and foreign plans (as described in Section 4(b)(4) of ERISA) generally are not subject to the requirements of ERISA or Section 4975 of the Code.

We and certain of our affiliates may each be considered a party in interest or disqualified person with respect to employee benefit plans. This could be the case, for example, if one of these companies is a service provider to a plan. Special caution should be exercised, therefore, before the debt securities are purchased an employee benefit plan. In particular, the fiduciary of the plan should consider whether exemptive relief is available under an applicable administrative exemption. The Department of Labor has issued five prohibited transaction class exemptions that could apply to exempt the purchase, sale and holding of the debt securities from the prohibited transaction provisions of ERISA and the Code. Those class exemptions are Prohibited Transaction Exemption 96-23 (for transactions determined by in-house asset managers), Prohibited Transaction Exemption 95-60 (for certain transactions involving insurance company general accounts), Prohibited Transaction Exemption 91-38 (for certain transactions involving bank investment funds), Prohibited Transaction Exemption 90-1 (for certain transactions involving insurance company separate accounts), and Prohibited Transaction Exemption 84-14 (for certain transactions determined by independent qualified professional asset managers).

Due to the complexity of these rules and the penalties that may be imposed upon persons involved in non-exempt prohibited transactions, it is particularly important that fiduciaries or other persons considering the purchase of the debt securities on behalf of or with plan assets of any employee benefit plan consult with their counsel regarding the consequences under ERISA and the Code of the acquisition of the capital securities and the availability of exemptive relief under Prohibited Transaction Exemption 96-23, 95-60, 91-38, 90-1 or 84-14.

VALIDITY OF THE DEBT SECURITIES

The validity of the debt securities offered by this prospectus will be passed upon for us by Callister, Nebeker & McCullough, a Professional Corporation, Salt Lake City, Utah, and for the agents and/or underwriters by Sullivan & Cromwell LLP, Los Angeles, California. Sullivan & Cromwell LLP will rely upon the opinion of Callister, Nebeker & McCullough as to matters of Utah law and Callister, Nebeker & McCullough will rely upon the opinion of Sullivan & Cromwell LLP as to matters of New York law. The opinions of Callister, Nebeker & McCullough and Sullivan & Cromwell LLP will be conditioned upon, and subject to certain assumptions regarding, future action to be taken by Zions and its board of directors in connection with the issuance and sale of any particular series of debt securities, the specific terms of the debt securities and other matters which may affect the validity of debt securities but which cannot be ascertained on the date of such opinions. Sullivan & Cromwell LLP regularly performs legal services for Zions.

EXPERTS

Ernst & Young LLP, independent registered accounting firm, have audited our consolidated financial statements included in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2003, as set forth in their report, which is incorporated in this prospectus by reference. Such consolidated financial statements are incorporated by reference in reliance on their report given on their authority as experts in accounting and auditing.

Table of Contents

\$600,000,000

ZIONS BANCORPORATION

% SUBORDINATED NOTES

DUE NOVEMBER , 2015

FLOATING RATE SUBORDINATED NOTES

DUE NOVEMBER , 2015

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

November , 2005

(Including Prospectus Dated December 30, 2004)

LEHMAN BROTHERS

BARCLAYS CAPITAL

FTN FINANCIAL SECURITIES CORP.

KEEFE, BRUYETTE & WOODS

MERRILL LYNCH & Co.

SANDLER O NEILL & PARTNERS, L.P.

ZIONS INVESTMENT SECURITIES, INC.