



AvalonBay Communities Inc. (AVB)

Updated February 16th, 2021 by Samuel Smith

Key Metrics

Current Price:	\$180	5 Year CAGR Estimate:	4.3%	Market Cap:	\$24.9B
Fair Value Price:	\$149	5 Year Growth Estimate:	4.9%	Ex-Dividend Date:	03/30/21
% Fair Value:	121%	5 Year Valuation Multiple Estimate:	-3.6%	Dividend Payment Date:	04/15/21
Dividend Yield:	3.5%	5 Year Price Target	\$189	Years Of Dividend Growth:	10
Dividend Risk Score:	C	Retirement Suitability Score:	C	Last Dividend Increase:	4.6%

Overview & Current Events

AvalonBay Communities (AVB) is a \$24.9 billion multifamily REIT that owns a portfolio of 270 apartment communities with over 73,500 units and is developing 18 additional properties with over 7,200 units. The trust's strategy consists of owning top-tier properties in the major metropolitan areas of New England, New York/New Jersey, Washington D.C., California, and the Pacific Northwest. It was formed by the 1998 merger of Avalon Properties with Bay Apartment Communities and has raised its dividend for nine consecutive years.

AvalonBay reported Q4 results on 02/03/21. FFO per share was \$2.02, falling short of the consensus estimate of \$2.09 and also down from \$2.43 in the year-ago quarter. The trust also experienced a decline of 8.7% year-over-year in rental revenue for established communities. Meanwhile, Q4 residential revenue collection was strong at 97.1%, up from 95.2% at quarter-end. Nevertheless, NOI for established communities in Q4 fell 14% to \$54.7 million year-over-year.

Growth on a Per-Share Basis

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2026
FFO	\$4.64	\$5.43	\$6.23	\$6.78	\$7.55	\$8.19	\$8.62	\$9.00	\$9.34	\$8.80	\$8.27	\$10.50
DPS	\$3.57	\$3.88	\$4.28	\$4.64	\$5.00	\$5.40	\$5.68	\$5.88	\$6.08	\$6.36	\$6.36	\$7.00
Shares¹	91	98	127	131	135	137	138	138	138	138	138	140

Over the past decade, AvalonBay generated very impressive annualized Core FFO/share growth thanks to its growing scale and strong rental rate growth. However, this growth rate has slowed dramatically in recent years, coming in at 5.5% in 2017, 4.4% in 2018, and just 3.8% in 2019 before declining in 2020 due to COVID-19. This year growth will continue to suffer from COVID-19 headwinds.

Potential headwinds for AvalonBay are the threat of future rent control legislation in its West Coast markets (this has already been on the ballot in recent elections) as well as the uncertain economic climate. Furthermore, its denser markets will likely see less growth in the years to come as people become increasingly wary of moving to big cities due to social unrest and the lingering fears from the COVID-19 outbreak. However, they are also operating from a lower base after 2020 FFO per share declined from 2019. As a result, we are projecting a 4.9% growth rate over the next five years.

Valuation Analysis

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Now	2026
Avg. P/FFO	28.9	25.3	18.2	19.0	24.2	21.8	20.7	19.2	23.3	19.0	21.6	18.0
Avg. Yld.	2.2%	2.8%	3.6%	2.8%	2.7%	3.0%	3.2%	3.4%	2.8%	3.8%	3.6%	3.7%

The recent valuation multiple has hovered at or above 20x Core FFO/share, and the dividend yield has ranged between 2.7% and 3.4%. However, the abundant new supply reaching markets combined with increasing inflationary pressures on margins - not to mention a challenging acquisition climate due to compressed cap rates - will lead to continued

¹ In millions

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slowing growth. Therefore, the stock will warrant a lower valuation multiple and a higher dividend yield. As a result, we think the stock is slightly overvalued at present.

Safety, Quality, Competitive Advantage, & Recession Resiliency

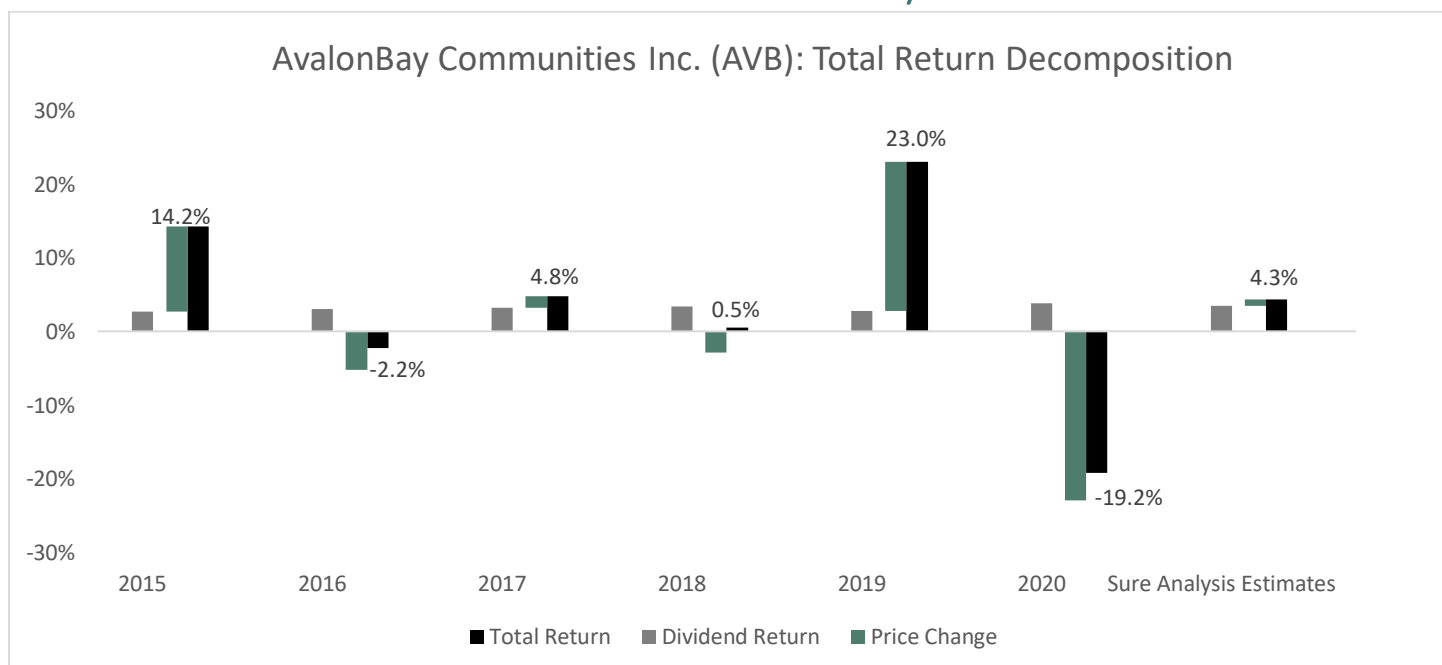
Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2026
Payout	91.8%	89.7%	76.9%	71.5%	68.7%	68.4%	66.2%	65.9%	65.9%	65.3%	76.9%	66.7%

AvalonBay significantly outperformed the S&P 500 during the Great Recession due to the defensive nature of the multifamily sector. However, it still experienced a sizable decline in FFO/share (from \$4.61 in 2007 down to a low of \$3.89 in 2009). Additionally, multifamily apartments lack a strong competitive advantage due to the ease of creating new supply, as well as the alternative sources of affordable housing in large metropolitan areas in which AvalonBay operates. Given that, AvalonBay's investments are essentially plays on the economic strength of its core markets. Furthermore, the fact that most of its assets are high-quality "A" apartment units makes it even more levered to the state of the economy, as these apartments are in high demand during strong economic conditions, but are less affordable during a recession. AVB does have considerable economies of scale, low cost of capital, operational and marketing expertise, and a brand name advantage, which enable it to compete effectively against competitors. The trust's balance sheet is also very strong, as its sector-leading A- credit rating makes clear. AvalonBay has plenty of resources to invest in its development projects and sustain the dividend during a downturn, while also reacting opportunistically to opportunities that may become available.

Final Thoughts & Recommendation

AvalonBay has an excellent track record and a stellar balance sheet. After a sharp pullback in the share price and fairly strong fundamental performance, AvalonBay appears slightly overvalued at this time and likely to deliver mediocre risk-adjusted 4.3% annualized returns moving forward (average annualized total returns over the next five years). As a result, we rate it a hold. If growth prospects pick back up or the stock declines meaningfully, shares will likely warrant buying but until then AvalonBay remains a solid hold for conservative income investors.

Total Return Breakdown by Year



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Income Statement Metrics

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Revenue	900	1,001	1,463	1,685	1,856	2,045	2,159	2,285	2,325	2,301
Gross Profit	564	644	952	1,096	1,214	1,362	1,436	1,518	1,557	1,478
Gross Margin	62.7%	64.3%	65.1%	65.0%	65.4%	66.6%	66.5%	66.4%	67.0%	64.2%
SG&A Exp.	29	34	40	41	43	46	54	60	58	60
D&A Exp.	227	244	560	443	478	531	584	631	662	
Operating Profit	308	366	352	612	693	785	798	826	837	710
Operating Margin	34.2%	36.6%	24.1%	36.3%	37.3%	38.4%	37.0%	36.2%	36.0%	30.9%
Net Profit	442	424	353	684	742	1,034	877	975	786	828
Net Margin	49.1%	42.4%	24.1%	40.6%	40.0%	50.6%	40.6%	42.7%	33.8%	36.0%
Free Cash Flow	379	514	698	834	1,019	1,087	1,182	1,214	1,181	

Balance Sheet Metrics

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total Assets	8,482	11,160	15,328	16,141	16,931	17,867	18,415	18,380	19,121	19,199
Cash & Equivalents	617	2,734	281	509	401	215	67	92	40	217
Total Liabilities	4,080	4,319	6,728	7,094	7,091	7,696	8,027	7,748	8,131	8,447
Accounts Payable	37	53	95	102	99	101	85	97	92	
Long-Term Debt	3,599	3,851	6,134	6,490	6,457	7,031	7,329	7,040	7,296	7,564
Shareholder's Equity	4,395	6,837	8,596	9,046	9,841	10,171	10,388	10,633	10,990	10,752
D/E Ratio	0.82	0.56	0.71	0.72	0.66	0.69	0.71	0.66	0.66	0.70

Profitability & Per Share Metrics

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Return on Assets	5.4%	4.3%	2.7%	4.3%	4.5%	5.9%	4.8%	5.3%	4.2%	4.3%
Return on Equity	11.5%	7.5%	4.6%	7.7%	7.9%	10.3%	8.5%	9.3%	7.3%	7.6%
ROIC	5.8%	4.5%	2.8%	4.5%	4.7%	6.2%	5.0%	5.5%	4.4%	4.5%
Shares Out.	91	98	127	131	135	137	138	138	138	138
Revenue/Share	9.92	10.21	11.50	12.84	13.79	14.88	15.63	16.52	16.66	16.39
FCF/Share	4.18	5.25	5.48	6.35	7.57	7.91	8.56	8.78	8.46	

Note: All figures in millions of U.S. Dollars unless per share or indicated otherwise.

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