



Republic Services Inc. (RSG)

Updated March 3rd, 2021 by Nikolaos Sismanis

Key Metrics

Current Price:	\$92	5 Year CAGR Estimate:	10.5%	Market Cap:	\$29.2B
Fair Value Price:	\$96	5 Year Growth Estimate:	8.0%	Ex-Dividend Date:	03/31/2021
% Fair Value:	95%	5 Year Valuation Multiple Estimate:	0.9%	Dividend Payment Date:	04/15/2021
Dividend Yield:	1.9%	5 Year Price Target	\$141	Years Of Dividend Growth:	17
Dividend Risk Score:	B	Retirement Suitability Score:	C	Last Dividend Increase:	5%

Overview & Current Events

Republic Services, Inc. is an industry leader and national provider of recycling and non-hazardous solid waste disposal, operating in 41 states. The company holds around 20% market share of the landfill volume in the United States and is only behind Waste Management, which holds around 26%. Moreover, by operating in an industry with increasing consolidation, its position should improve further. The trash-collection industry benefits from predictable cash flows because of its non-cyclical business model. As a result, Republic Services has been able to return capital to its shareholders consistently. The dividend has been growing for the past 17 years, as the company has never cut its distribution since its first one in 2004. The company generates around \$10 billion in annual revenues and is based in Phoenix, Arizona.

On February 22nd, 2021, Republic Services reported its Q4 results for the period ending December 31st, 2020. For the quarter, EPS was \$0.74, 18.6% lower than Q4 2019, while revenues declined by around 0.4% Y-o-Y to \$2.57 billion. As a result of the company's essential public-service operations, revenues remained robust despite the ongoing pandemic. Lower EPS was the result of a one-off loss on extinguishment of debt. On an adjusted basis, Q4 EPS was \$1.00, 8% higher YoY. During the past year, the company managed to expand its adjusted EBITDA margin, by 130 basis points (1.3%), to 29.4%. Additionally, the company converted more of its customers' contracts (now 35%) to be tied to a waste-related index or a fixed-rate increase of 3% or more, locking in contractually-locked rate increases. As a result of increased margins, rate charges, and a gradual resumption towards normality, management raised FY2021's EPS guidance to \$3.65 to \$3.73 and its free cash flow guidance to \$1.30-\$1.35 billion.

Growth on a Per-Share Basis

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2026
EPS	\$1.57	\$1.56	\$1.63	\$1.54	\$2.14	\$1.79	\$3.79	\$3.17	\$3.34	\$3.56	\$3.69	\$5.42
DPS	\$0.84	\$0.91	\$0.99	\$1.08	\$1.16	\$1.24	\$1.33	\$1.44	\$1.56	\$1.66	\$1.74	\$2.22
Shares¹	376	367	362	357	350	343	337	327	321	319	317	270

Republic Services' EPS CAGR has been around 9.5% over the past decade, while DPS CAGR has been about 8% over the same period. We retain our EPS growth estimate to 8%, sustained by the company's organic growth, contractually-secured payment increases, and stock buybacks. The company bought back \$621 worth of its stock during 2020, or around 2.1% of its outstanding shares.

The company's current repurchase program stands at \$2 billion and is to be completed through 2023. It represents around 6.8% of Republic's current market cap. Hence EPS is likely to grow by ~3% annually at the current stock's price levels, from share repurchases alone. For context, since 2010, the company has retired around 18% of the outstanding shares. With margins expanding, more contracts switching to annual rate increases, and Republic constantly beating and raising its own estimates, EPS growth is likely to be faster in the medium-term, though we remain prudent. We retain our DPS growth estimates at 5%, in line with the company's latest dividend increase.

¹ Share count is in millions.

Disclosure: This analyst has no position in the security discussed in this research report, and no plans to initiate one in the next 72 hours.



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Valuation Analysis

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Now	2026
Avg. P/E	17.6	15.2	22.5	18.1	21.16	25.0	27.14	16.57	26.8	30.2	24.8	26.0
Avg. Yld.	2.8%	3.3%	2.9%	2.7%	2.8%	3.0%	2.0%	2.0%	1.8%	1.8%	1.9%	1.6%

Over the past decade, investors must have been increasing their appreciation of Republic's stable and reliable cash flows, causing the stock to undergo a prolonged valuation expansion. Due to the company's robust guidance, the stock's forward P/E is currently hovering at a relatively reasonable P/E of around 24.8, but still quite higher than its historical average. With rates set to remain near 0% and the company possessing truly high-quality traits, we can see the valuation continuing to expand at a P/E of around 26 in the medium term. The company features healthy financials and consistent dividend growth. Hence the stock should attract further investor interest going forward. Republic is currently offering a moderate yield of just 1.9%, which is on the lower end of its historical range due to the stock's valuation expansion. We expect the yield to remain relatively soft and even decline further amid a higher potential P/E in the future.

Safety, Quality, Competitive Advantage, & Recession Resiliency

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2026
Payout	54%	58%	61%	70%	54%	69%	35%	45%	47%	47%	47%	41%

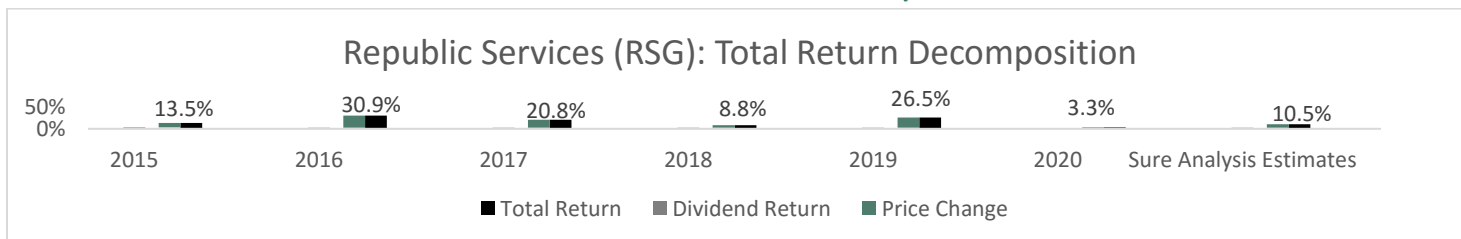
The company's large market share is clear evidence of its competitive advantage. With the three largest operators having captured more than 75% of the industry and continuous consolidation, entry into the market by new competitors is almost impossible. The long-term contracts tied to annual rate increases, as well as Republic Services' robust customer base (which includes municipalities), allow it to operate in an extremely low volatility environment. During the quarter, the company increased its long-term debt position by ~\$168 million, to \$8.68 billion. However, ongoing interest expenses declined during FY2020 from \$392 million to \$355 million, while interest outflows are also covered by around 5.1 times the company's operating cash flows. Further, the dividend remains very well-covered, under 50% of Republic's EPS, despite the latest DPS increase.

In FY2008, during the Great Financial Crisis, the company increased its revenues and also merged with Allied Waste Services to strengthen its market position. If another recession occurs, the company has enough cash to repeat such strategic acquisitions, continue its distributions, and even buy back more shares. In Q4, liquidity remained robust at over \$2 billion, suggesting heavy firepower is available to be deployed amid potential opportunities.

Final Thoughts & Recommendation

Republic Services is a safe investment option considering its stability, robust cash flows, and consistent return of capital to shareholders. In times of uncertainty and wild market swings, the company should shine, featuring its quality, low-volatility characteristics. We now expect annualized returns of around 10.5% in the medium-term as a result of Republic's resilient EPS growth, fine dividend increases, and potential for its valuation to continue expanding further. We rate shares a Buy.

Total Return Breakdown by Year



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Income Statement Metrics

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Revenue	\$8,193	\$8,118	\$8,417	\$8,803	\$9,115	\$9,388	\$10,042	\$10,041	\$10,299	\$10,150
Gross Profit	\$3,328	\$3,113	\$3,183	\$3,160	\$3,596	\$3,624	\$3,827	\$3,891	\$4,001	\$4,053
Gross Margin	40.6%	38.3%	37.8%	35.9%	39.5%	38.6%	38.1%	38.8%	38.8%	39.9%
SG&A Exp.	\$804	\$827	\$995	\$898	\$965	\$955	\$1,059	\$1,013	\$1,042	\$1,060
Operating Profit	\$1,531	\$1,283	\$1,176	\$1,217	\$1,519	\$1,578	\$1,652	\$1,729	\$1,803	\$1,807
Operating Margin	18.7%	15.8%	14.0%	13.8%	16.7%	16.8%	16.5%	17.2%	17.5%	17.8%
Net Profit	\$589	\$572	\$589	\$548	\$750	\$613	\$1,278	\$1,037	\$1,073	\$967
Net Margin	7.2%	7.0%	7.0%	6.2%	8.2%	6.5%	12.7%	10.3%	10.4%	9.5%
Free Cash Flow	\$830	\$610	\$667	\$667	\$734	\$920	\$921	\$1,171	\$1,145	\$1,277
Income Tax	\$317	\$252	\$262	\$337	\$446	\$353	\$3	\$283	\$222	\$173

Balance Sheet Metrics

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total Assets	19552	19617	19949	20094	20536	20630	21147	21617	22684	23430
Cash & Equivalents	\$66	\$68	\$213	\$75	\$32	\$68	\$83	\$71	\$47	\$38
Accounts Receivable	\$826	\$837	\$891	\$930	\$963	\$995	\$1,106	\$1,103	\$1,126	\$1,091
Inventories	\$35	\$35	\$38	\$36	\$39	\$44	\$51	\$53	\$57	\$59
Goodwill & Int. Ass.	11057	11049	11040	11130	11392	11346	11457	11507	11767	12220
Total Liabilities	11868	11911	12043	12346	12759	12936	13186	13688	14563	14950
Accounts Payable	\$564	\$475	\$511	\$527	\$577	\$554	\$598	\$762	\$778	\$779
Long-Term Debt	\$6,922	\$7,071	\$7,018	\$7,061	\$7,533	\$7,659	\$8,187	\$8,338	\$8,689	\$8,934
Shareholder's Equity	\$7,681	\$7,703	\$7,904	\$7,745	\$7,774	\$7,691	\$7,959	\$7,927	\$8,118	\$8,484
D/E Ratio	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.1

Profitability & Per Share Metrics

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Return on Assets	3.0%	2.9%	3.0%	2.7%	3.7%	3.0%	6.1%	4.8%	4.8%	4.2%
Return on Equity	7.6%	7.4%	7.5%	7.0%	9.7%	7.9%	16.3%	13.1%	13.4%	11.7%
ROIC	4.0%	3.9%	4.0%	3.7%	5.0%	4.0%	8.1%	6.4%	6.5%	5.7%
Shares Out.	378	368	363	358	351	344	339	328	322	320
Revenue/Share	\$21.70	\$22.06	\$23.16	\$24.58	\$25.94	\$27.26	\$29.62	\$30.58	\$31.99	\$31.75
FCF/Share	\$2.20	\$1.66	\$1.84	\$1.86	\$2.09	\$2.67	\$2.72	\$3.57	\$3.56	\$3.99

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

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