



Oak Valley Bancorp (OVLY)

Updated October 19th, 2024 by Nikolaos Sismanis

Key Metrics

Current Price:	\$27	5 Year CAGR Estimate:	10.5%	Market Cap:	\$224.4 M
Fair Value Price:	\$28	5 Year Growth Estimate:	8.0%	Ex-Dividend Date:	01/24/2025 ¹
% Fair Value:	95%	5 Year Valuation Multiple Estimate:	1.0%	Dividend Payment Date:	02/10/2025
Dividend Yield:	1.7%	5 Year Price Target	\$41	Years Of Dividend Growth:	11
Dividend Risk Score:	C	Retirement Suitability Score:	D	Rating:	Buy

Overview & Current Events

Oak Valley Bancorp is a regional banking holding company based in Oakdale, California, operating through its subsidiary, Oak Valley Community Bank. It provides a range of financial services including commercial and consumer loans, deposit accounts, and investment services. Recently, Oak Valley Bancorp has been active in expanding its market presence; it completed the acquisition of Sonora Bank in early 2024, enhancing its footprint in the Central Valley region and broadening its customer base. The company generated \$75.8 million in net interest income last year.

On October 18th, 2024, Oak Valley posted its Q3 results for the period ending September 30th, 2024. For the period, net interest income came in at \$17.7 million, compared to \$17.3 million in the previous quarter and \$18.9 million last year.

The increase in net interest income over the prior quarter can be attributed to earning asset growth and an increase of three basis points in the average earning asset yield. The decline from last year as due to an increase in deposit interest expense, as the average cost of funds rose to 0.83% bps in Q3, compared to 0.33% for the comparable period of 2023. The higher interest expense was partially offset by loan growth of \$103.9 million over the same period.

The net interest margin for the quarter was 4.04%, down from 4.11% in Q2-2024 and 4.34% in Q3-2023. Still it remains quite high. For the quarter, earnings per share (EPS) came in at \$0.89, down one cent compared to last year. For FY2024, we expect EPS of about \$2.82.

Growth on a Per-Share Basis

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2029
EPS	\$0.90	\$0.61	\$0.95	\$1.13	\$1.43	\$1.54	\$1.68	\$2.01	\$2.80	\$3.76	\$2.82	\$4.14
DPS	\$0.17	\$0.23	\$0.25	\$0.26	\$0.27	\$0.28	\$0.29	\$0.30	\$0.31	\$0.39	\$0.45	\$0.66
Shares ²	7	8	8	8.1	8.1	8.1	8.1	8.1	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.3

Over the past decade, Oak Valley Bancorp has demonstrated rather impressive growth, reflected in its 17.2% CAGR in EPS. Key milestones that have contributed to its growth include several acquisitions and other expansion efforts.

For instance, in 2014, the acquisition of FNB Bancorp notably expanded its presence into Modesto, enhancing its branch network and customer base. This move was followed by the 2017 acquisition of National Bank of the Redwoods, which enabled Oak Valley to enter the North Bay market and diversify its geographic footprint. Also, by opening new branches in 2021, such as those in Turlock and Tracy, Oak Valley has tapped into emerging markets and strengthened its footprint.

Besides acquisitions, the company has focused on growing organically as well. For instance in 2018, Oak Valley invested in upgrading its loan origination systems, which improved the efficiency of its lending processes and contributed to a steady increase in loan volumes. This investment seems to have paid off as net interest income has grown consistently.

Looking ahead, Oak Valley will likely maintain its dual growth strategy, pursuing strategic acquisitions to expand its geographic and service footprint while also focusing on organic growth through branch reinvestment and efficiency improvements. Therefore, we've applied an 8% expected growth rate in our EPS estimates through 2029.

¹ Estimated dates based on past dividend dates – Oak Valley pays in February and August.

² Share count is in millions.

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Regarding the dividend, Oak Valley has grown it for 11 consecutive years. The dividend was reinstated in early 2024, following the dividend cut that took place during the Great Financial Crisis, when most banks, including regional ones like Oak Valley similarly paused or reduced their payouts. The company pays its dividends semi-annually.

Valuation Analysis

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Now	2029
Avg. P/E	10.1	16.3	10.5	11.8	13.5	12.1	9.4	8.3	6.5	6.2	9.5	10.0
Avg. Yld.	1.9%	2.3%	2.5%	2.0%	1.4%	1.5%	1.8%	1.8%	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%	1.6%

Oak Valley Bancorp’s stock valuation over the years has been influenced by various factors, such as its earnings growth, net interest margin, and asset quality. All these core elements have proven robust over the past decade. For this reason, we believe that the stock is modestly undervalued at 9.5 times this year’s expected EPS. We have set our fair multiple at 10.0 times, which better reflects the company’s earnings growth prospects and overall ability to compound its equity. In the meantime, while the dividend doesn’t provide a meaningful yield, payouts are likely to keep growing rapidly.

Safety, Quality, Competitive Advantage, & Recession Resiliency

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2029
Payout	19%	38%	26%	23%	19%	18%	17%	15%	11%	10%	16%	16%

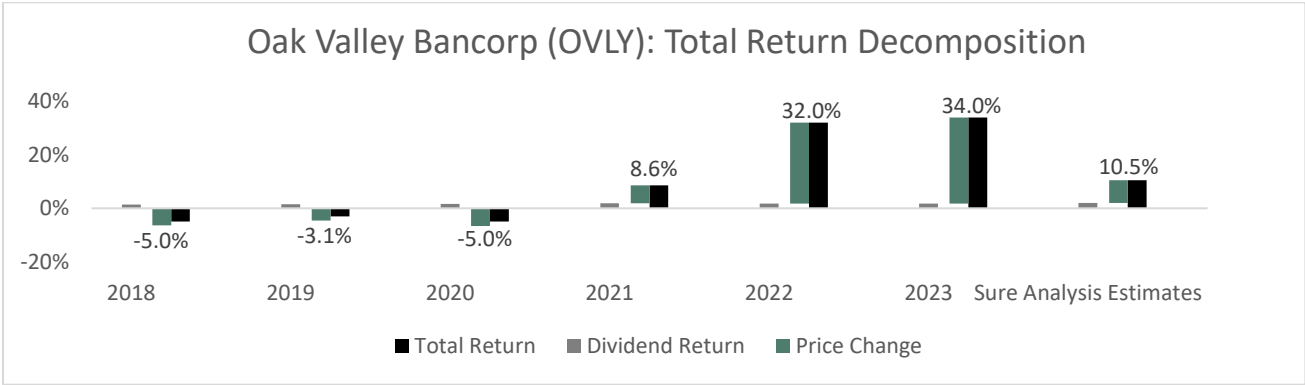
Oak Valley Bancorp stands out for its notable regional presence and consistent earnings growth, supported by accretive acquisitions like those of FNB Bancorp and National Bank of the Redwoods, which have expanded its market reach. The bank’s strengths are evident in its strong net interest margin, which has hovered between 3.5% and 4.0%. In turn, this has been driven by prudent lending practices and effective reinvestment strategies.

However, as a regional bank, Oak Valley faces inherent competitive pressures from larger players in the space and other regional banks with similar offerings. Generally, its performance can be impacted by local economic fluctuations and credit risks, making it less insulated from future recessions compared to larger, more diversified banks. In any case, we believe the company’s dividend remains well covered, and is unlikely to be cut unless catastrophic events take place. Note that the stock is highly illiquid, with roughly 15K shares traded, on average, on a daily basis.

Final Thoughts & Recommendation

Oak Valley Bancorp has delivered substantial returns lately. The company maintained high net interest income margins during the rising-rates environment of past few years, which resulted in notable earnings growth. While we believe that the company lacks any notable competitive advantages and its risk profile is increased as a regional bank, we believe the stock can achieve an annualized total return of 10.5% over the medium-term. This is to be powered by strong earnings growth prospects, the dividend, and the possibility of a valuation tailwind. Consequently, shares earn a buy rating.

Total Return Breakdown by Year



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Income Statement Metrics

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Revenue	29	30	36	40	43	46	50	54	66	82
SG&A Exp.	11	12	14	14	16	17	18	20	23	26
D&A	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Net Profit	7	5	8	9	12	12	14	16	23	31
Net Margin	24.5%	16.6%	21.3%	22.6%	26.7%	27.1%	27.5%	30.1%	34.9%	37.4%
Free Cash Flow	6	3	9	7	13	16	18	10	22	31
Income Tax	4	2	3	6	4	4	4	5	7	9

Balance Sheet Metrics

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total Assets	750	897	1,002	1,035	1,095	1,148	1,511	1,964	1,968	1,842
Cash & Equivalents	132	175	179	143	116	134	194	735	416	180
Acct. Recv.	1	1	2	2	2	2	4	2	2	3
Goodwill	-	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3
Total Liabilities	675	819	920	944	996	1,035	1,382	1,822	1,842	1,676
Long-Term Debt	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Shareholder's Equity	75	78	82	91	99	113	130	143	127	166
LTD/E Ratio	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Profitability & Per Share Metrics

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Return on Assets	1.0%	0.6%	0.8%	0.9%	1.1%	1.1%	1.0%	0.9%	1.2%	1.6%
Return on Equity	10.2%	6.4%	9.5%	10.5%	12.2%	11.8%	11.3%	12.0%	17.0%	21.1%
ROIC	10.2%	6.4%	9.5%	10.5%	12.2%	11.8%	11.3%	12.0%	17.0%	21.1%
Shares Out.	7	8	8	8.1	8.1	8.1	8.1	8.1	8.2	8.2
Revenue/Share	3.63	3.67	4.45	4.97	5.34	5.68	6.12	6.63	8.00	10.02
FCF/Share	0.73	0.36	1.14	0.89	1.58	1.95	2.15	1.25	2.63	3.79

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

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