



# Westamerica Bancorp (WABC)

Updated October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024 by Nathan Parsh

## Key Metrics

<b>Current Price:</b>	\$52	<b>5 Year CAGR Estimate:</b>	9.8%	<b>Market Cap:</b>	\$1.4 B
<b>Fair Value Price:</b>	\$67	<b>5 Year Growth Estimate:</b>	2.0%	<b>Ex-Dividend Date:</b>	11/06/24
<b>% Fair Value:</b>	78%	<b>5 Year Valuation Multiple Estimate:</b>	5.1%	<b>Dividend Payment Date:</b>	11/18/24 <sup>1</sup>
<b>Dividend Yield:</b>	3.4%	<b>5 Year Price Target</b>	\$73	<b>Years Of Dividend Growth:</b>	30
<b>Dividend Risk Score:</b>	A	<b>Retirement Suitability Score:</b>	A	<b>Rating:</b>	Hold

## Overview & Current Events

Westamerica Bancorporation is the holding company for Westamerica Bank. Westamerica Bancorporation is a regional community bank with 79 branches in Northern and Central California. The company can trace its origins back to 1884. Westamerica Bancorporation offers clients access to savings, checking and money market accounts. The company's loan portfolio consists of both commercial and residential real estate loans, as well as construction loans. Westamerica Bancorporation is the seventh largest bank headquartered in California. It has annual revenues of about \$325 million.

On October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Westamerica Bancorporation reported third quarter results for the period ending September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024. For the quarter, revenue decreased 10.8% to \$74.4 million, but this was \$3.6 million more than expected. GAAP earnings-per-share of \$1.31 compared unfavorably to \$1.33 in the prior year, but this was \$0.07 above estimates.

Total loans fell 8% to \$831.4 million million as commercial loans were lower by 10.1% and consumer loans fell 22.1%. Commercial real estate loans, which make up more than half of the total loan portfolio, were unchanged. As of the end of the quarter, nonperforming loans decreased 25.8% to \$919,000 year-over-year. As with the second quarter, this period had no provisions for credit losses, compared to \$400,000 in the third quarter of 2024. Net interest income was \$62.5 million, which compares to \$64.1 million for the second quarter of 2024 and \$72.1 million in the third quarter of 2023. Net interest margin of 4.08% compared to 4.15% in the second quarter of 2024 and 4.43% in the third quarter of 2023. Average total deposits declined 11% to \$5.1 billion.

Analysts expect that the company will earn \$5.12 in 2024, down from \$5.21 and \$5.32 previously.

## Growth on a Per-Share Basis

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2029
<b>EPS</b>	\$2.32	\$2.30	\$2.29	\$2.32	\$2.67	\$2.98	\$2.98	\$3.22	\$4.54	\$6.06	<b>\$5.12</b>	<b>\$5.65</b>
<b>DPS</b>	\$1.52	\$1.53	\$1.56	\$1.57	\$1.60	\$1.63	\$1.64	\$1.65	\$1.68	\$1.72	<b>\$1.76</b>	<b>\$1.94</b>
<b>Shares<sup>2</sup></b>	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	27	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>

Earnings-per-share for Westamerica Bancorporation more than doubled from 2008 to 2009, an accomplishment that few banks can claim. Earnings-per-share had declined in what is essentially a straight line until 2018, which was just the second year since 2009 that earnings increased year-over-year. The company had seen flat or higher earnings-per-share each year since before returning to growth in 2022 and 2023. It should be noted that the company is expected to see an earnings decline in 2024. We anticipate an annual earnings-per-share growth rate of 2% through 2029.

Westamerica Bancorporation has increased its dividend for the past 30 years. The company most recently increased its dividend by 4.8% for the August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023 payment date. The dividend has compounded at a rate of 1.4% annually over the last decade. Note that the company also tends to raise its dividend every other year, but typically does so in the fourth quarter to keep its dividend growth streak alive.

<sup>1</sup> Estimated dividend payment date

<sup>2</sup> In millions of shares

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	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Now	2029
Avg. P/E	21.5	19.9	21.7	25.7	24.3	22.7	18.6	17.9	13.0	8.3	<b>10.2</b>	<b>13.0</b>
Avg. Yld.	3.0%	3.3%	3.1%	2.6%	2.8%	2.4%	3.0%	2.9%	2.8%	3.0%	<b>3.4%</b>	<b>2.6%</b>

Westamerica Bancorporation's stock has declined \$3, or 5.5%, since our July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024 update. Using the expected earnings-per-share for the year, the price-to-earnings ratio (P/E) is 10.2. The stock has seen its average P/E multiple vary dramatically over the past decade. Eliminating the years where the average P/E was above 24 (2017, 2018), shares of Westamerica Bancorporation have averaged a multiple of more than 19. We reaffirm our target valuation of 13 times earnings as we believe this is a better representation of the company today. If shares were to revert to our target P/E, valuation would add 5.1% to annual returns through 2029.

Westamerica Bancorporation trades with a forward yield of 3.4%, which is higher than both the average yield of the S&P 500 and the stock's long-term historical average 2.9%.

## Safety, Quality, Competitive Advantage, & Recession Resiliency

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2029
Payout	66%	67%	68%	68%	60%	55%	55%	51%	37%	28%	<b>34%</b>	<b>34%</b>

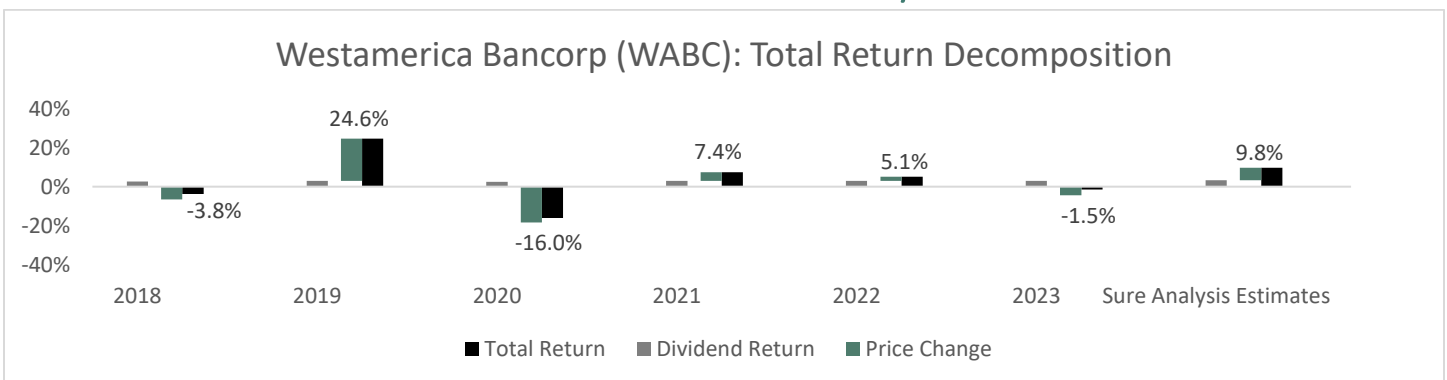
While earnings-per-share increased significantly during the last recession, this does not make Westamerica Bancorporation recession proof, or even an attractive investment. The company has proven that it cannot be a reliable source of earnings growth. Despite this, the company's dividend payout ratio has been relatively stable.

Westamerica Bancorporation's key competitive advantage is its ability to see an improvement in net interest income as interest rates were increased. The Federal Reserve has begun to cut interest rates, but they will likely remain elevated compared to where they were following the 2007 to 2009 financial crisis. The reduction in interest rates will make servicing deposits less expensive while loans with higher interest rates remain on the books, which should lead to NIM improvements.

## Final Thoughts & Recommendation

Following third quarter results, Westamerica Bancorporation is projected to return 9.8% annually through 2029, up from our previous estimate of 8.9%. Our projected returns stem from a 2% earnings growth rate, a 3.4% dividend yield, and a mid-single-digit contribution from multiple expansion. Loan and deposit growth remain weak and net interest income fell once again. The cutting of rates could see higher NIM, however. Once again, the bank had no provision for credit losses during the quarter, which speaks its overall strength. We now rate shares of Westamerica Bancorporation as a buy due to projected returns.

## Total Return Breakdown by Year



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## Income Statement Metrics

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>Revenue</b>	189	182	180	192	198	204	206	215	265	324
<b>SG&amp;A Exp.</b>	55	52	52	52	53	51	51	48	46	48
<b>D&amp;A Exp.</b>	16	16	20	26	24	21	23	17	17	12
<b>Net Profit</b>	61	59	59	50	72	80	80	87	122	162
<b>Net Margin</b>	32.2%	32.3%	32.6%	26.0%	36.2%	39.4%	39.0%	40.3%	46.1%	50.0%
<b>Free Cash Flow</b>	79	66	76	78	94	77	106	87	113	157
<b>Income Tax</b>	18	18	21	37	19	25	26	31	44	60

## Balance Sheet Metrics

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>Total Assets</b>	5,036	5,169	5,366	5,513	5,569	5,620	6,748	7,461	6,950	6,365
<b>Cash &amp; Equivalents</b>	381	433	462	575	420	373	621	1,132	294	190
<b>Accounts Receivable</b>	19	20	21	24	26	29	33	36	54	55
<b>Goodwill &amp; Int. Ass.</b>	136	132	129	126	124	123	123	123	122	122
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	4,509	4,637	4,805	4,923	4,953	4,888	5,903	6,634	6,348	5,592
<b>Long-Term Debt</b>	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Shareholder's Equity</b>	527	532	561	590	616	731	845	827	602	773
<b>LTD/E Ratio</b>	0.04	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

## Profitability & Per Share Metrics

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>Return on Assets</b>	1.2%	1.2%	1.1%	0.9%	1.3%	1.4%	1.3%	1.2%	1.7%	2.4%
<b>Return on Equity</b>	11.3%	11.1%	10.8%	8.7%	11.9%	11.9%	10.2%	10.3%	17.1%	23.5%
<b>ROIC</b>	10.9%	10.9%	10.8%	8.7%	11.9%	11.9%	10.2%	10.3%	17.1%	23.5%
<b>Shares Out.</b>	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	27
<b>Revenue/Share</b>	7.21	7.11	7.02	7.28	7.40	7.56	7.65	8.00	9.85	12.12
<b>FCF/Share</b>	3.00	2.58	2.95	2.95	3.49	2.84	3.91	3.25	4.20	5.88

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

## Disclaimer

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