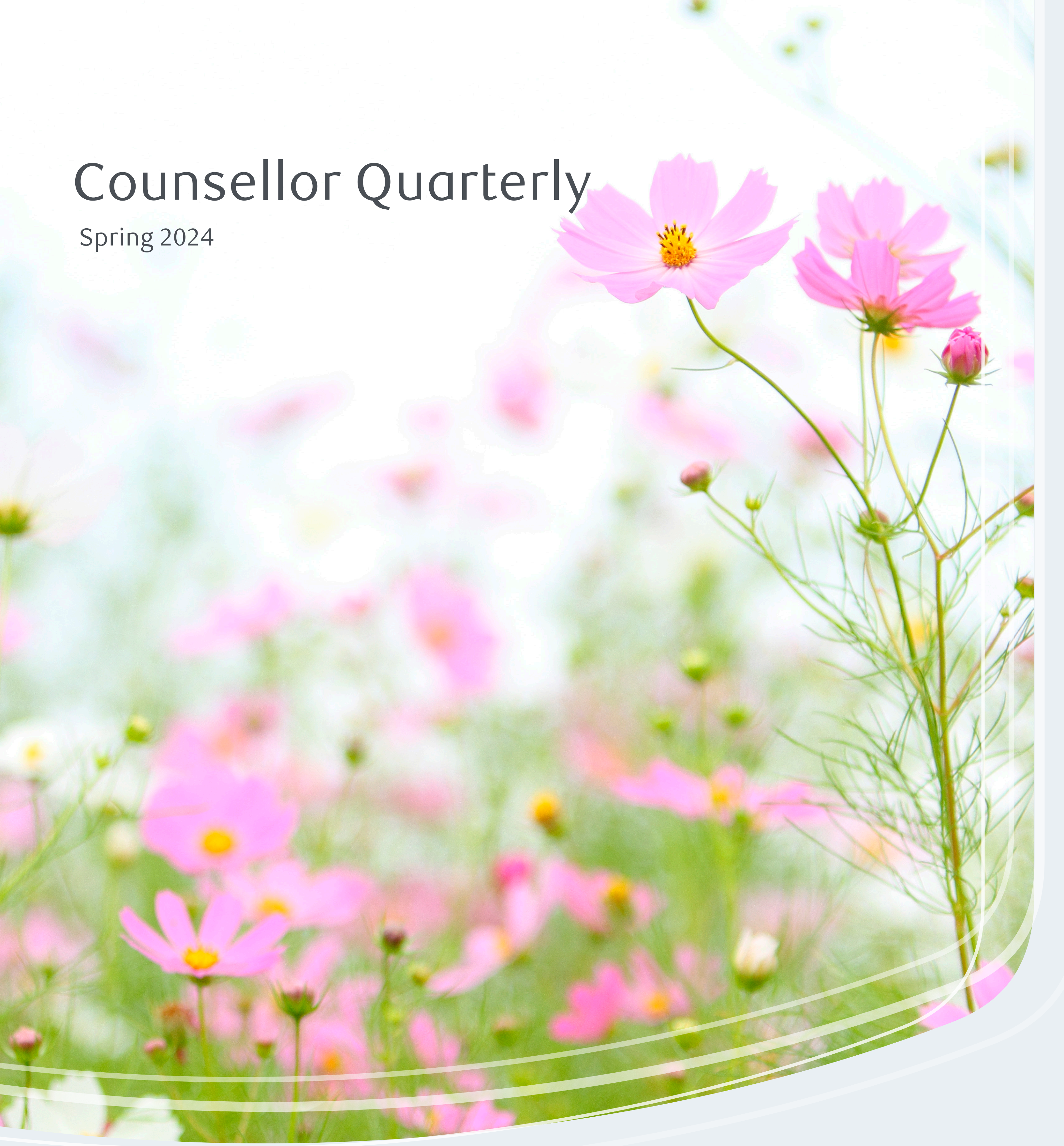
Counsellor Quarterly

Spring 2024



Wealth Management
PH&N Investment Counsel

President's message

The economy has been resilient, recession risks have diminished, and inflation has cooled sufficiently for central banks to consider cutting interest rates at some point this year. In this environment, government bonds are appealing, and while stocks have surged as investors embraced the improved odds of an economic "soft landing", high valuations in U.S. large-cap stocks may limit upside potential.

The period of aggressive central-bank rate hikes ended last year, with a small but growing number of central banks, all of them in emerging markets, starting to ease monetary conditions. Major developed-world central banks are now able to do so for several reasons. Inflation has dropped significantly, and most major economies have recorded uncomfortably slow growth over the past year. We forecast five 0.25% rate cuts in the U.S. over the next year, although we recognize that the timing and pace of monetary-policy adjustments will ultimately be guided by the path of the economy and inflation.

The global economy continues to transition from the extraordinary economic, market and social circumstances brought on by the pandemic, and its evolution continues to present new challenges and opportunities. A driving principle at RBC PH&N Investment Counsel is to embrace these opportunities, both as the trusted stewards of your wealth, and as a wealth management business – all so we can continue to best serve your and your family's financial and life goals.

That's why we are excited to welcome our new clients from former HSBC Bank Canada, along with their Investment Counsellor teams, into our "RBC PH&N Investment Counsel family". We look forward to earning your trust by delivering to you the benefits of our principles-based and holistic approach to wealth management.

And thank you to our existing clients for the opportunity to continue to help you achieve your life goals and what matters to you.

Regards,

Vijay Parmar, CPA, CA
President
RBC PH&N Investment Counsel

Economic and capital markets forecast

Around the world in 80 seconds

Canada

The economy continues to show clear signs of weakening. Negative per capita GDP growth for the last six quarters suggests the country is straining under the weight of significantly higher immigration-driven population growth and a sluggish global economy. Sharply higher interest rates and funding costs have had their desired effect, bringing down the raging inflation of 2022 and the first part of 2023 closer to the Bank of Canada's (BoC) target rate of 2%, but also working to cool the economy. While we anticipate a decreasing chance of a recession in the U.S. in 2024, demand from Canada's major trading partner is likely to keep the economy above water for the rest of the year. Plus, BoC rate cuts should help boost economic growth and Canadian investment assets in the months ahead.

United States

Growth in the world's largest economy continues to defy expectations, although it has recently begun to show signs of fatigue, as job growth slows, and interest rates continue to take a bite out of companies' profitability and hurt business investment. The U.S. Federal Reserve has indicated an increasing willingness to cut rates in light of falling if still "sticky" inflation, and that three cuts are likely during the latter half of the year. With a presidential election looming, market volatility is expected to rise over the coming months, but to-date investment markets have soared in 2024, driven by optimism over the impact to companies' bottom lines from AI-driven efficiencies, and especially boosting technology shares.

Europe

Europe continues to struggle with sluggish growth, despite the ongoing post-pandemic travel boon to the region. Germany, France and Italy are all mired in recessions (or close). While the European Central Bank is expected to cut interest rates in the months ahead (and Switzerland's central bank surprised markets with a cut to its rates in March), in the meantime, high interest rates remain in place to be sure that inflation is truly quelled. This further hurts spending and business investment. Despite the negatives, Europe's macroeconomic signals appear to have stabilized, setting the stage for an upswing in the economy in the second half of the year. The region's stocks are relatively attractive based on valuations and earnings expectations are reasonable.

Emerging Markets

While growth in India, Latin America and several smaller Asian nations has dampened the fall, aggregate emerging markets (EM) economic growth has been dragged lower by China's sluggish economy. India is poised to become the world's third-largest economy by 2026 and is seeing a strong rise in affluence as the country's economic benefits spread to more and more of the country's massive population. Asian equities rose in the latest quarter given a solid global economic backdrop and as inflation continued to decline from uncomfortably high levels. Last year was a historic period for emerging-market fixed income: interest rates set by central banks were for the first time on a par with those in developed markets.

Counsel Views – Women and Wealth: The future is female

“Ok ladies, now let’s get in formation!” – Beyoncé

2023 brought the female economy squarely into focus. Throughout the year, women were consistently credited with boosting sales of struggling businesses, driving traffic and profitability back to theatres, and underpinning a global economic multiplier effect. To wit:

- **“Come on Barbie, let’s go party!”:** Stewarded by director Greta Gerwig, and starring an almost all-female cast, the Barbie movie broke a number of box-office records, is the highest-grossing film by a female director, and is Warner Bros’ highest-grossing film in the U.S.– ever. Following its much-anticipated release in July, the movie has grossed a staggering $1.4 billion globally, and spent a record-breaking 12-week stretch in the U.S. top-10. In short, a movie made by a woman, starring women, saved a dying box office.
- **Queen Bey:** Beyonce’s Renaissance World Tour was a smashing success, earning close to $600 million globally, and 2.7 million fans attending 56 concerts in 39 cities. Much has been reported on the singer’s economic “halo” effect (if you know you know), or the “Beyonce Bump” as coined by Yelp’s Economic Coverage. The economic multiplier effect was felt early during her tour dates in Stockholm, during which Swedish economists blamed her for artificially inflating consumer prices. In the U.S., members of the “Beyhive” swarmed the cities in which she toured and provided a boost to local businesses. According to a Fortune magazine report[1], Yelp searches for nail technicians jumped three times as much as the previous year – that’s in addition to searches for local lounges and eateries near the shows’ stadium, which were up 160% per the outlet. By the time the tour came to an end, it generated an estimated $4.5 billion for the American economy – nearly as much as the 2008 Olympics did for Beijing, according to the New York Times.[2]
- **T-Swift/Swizzle:** Taylor Swift’s 53-concert sold-out Eras Tour generated an eye watering $1.04 billion in gross ticket sales – the first tour to ever hit the billion-dollar milestone – according to the livemusic trade Pollstar. The starlet’s earnings from the tour in 2023 are expected to be north of $4 billion – the most any artist has ever made from a single tour in history. In total, the Eras Tour is estimated to have created a $5.7 billion boost to the U.S. economy – enough to hand out $20 to every person in the country. In addition, the Eras Tour movie that opened in theatres last October has grossed more than $250 million, while T. Swizzle was reportedly paid $75 million by Disney for the streaming rights to the concert film.

These are but a few examples that underscore the rising economic power of women, and how they are increasingly influential contributors to economic growth. Globally, over 80% of purchase decisions are made by women, and they contribute close to 40% of global Gross Domestic Product.

Women are taking a deeper stride into their economic power

All of this is occurring against the backdrop of the “Great Wealth Transfer” – a seismic change in wealth ownership from men to women. A McKinsey & Company study released in 2020 (https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/financial-services/our-insights/women-as-the-next-wave-of-growth-in-us-wealth-management) found women in the U.S. are set to control an unprecedented US$30 trillion in assets by the end of the decade, calling it a “potential wealth transfer of such magnitude that it approaches the annual GDP of the United States.” In Canada, by 2028 it is estimated that women will control $4 trillion in assets – almost doubling the $2.2 trillion they control today, according to a CIBC Capital Markets report from 2019.

This super current of wealth to women is driven predominantly by demographics: as male baby boomers pass, they tend to bequeath their assets to their wives, who are usually younger, and on average live longer (six years longer on average, according to research recently published in JAMA Internal Medicine). However, this phenomenon is compounded by trends that women themselves are generating more wealth through greater participation in the workforce and entrepreneurship. Female representation in the workforce continues to rise. According to Pew Research Center analysis of government data, in the U.S. women accounted for more than half of the college-educated labour force by late 2019.[3]

The ramifications of women ultimately taking a deeper stride into their economic power are profound and far reaching. While the lives of women will undoubtedly be reshaped, it also has the potential to reshape society as we know it. Since women exercise their spending power in different ways versus their male counterparts, a shift of this magnitude has the potential to influence discretionary spending (e.g., retail, travel), healthcare systems and services (which are only beginning to scratch the surface on the distinct and nuanced nature of women's healthcare) and – lest we forget – the world of investing.

"For women, financial independence is a matter of necessity."

~Carrie Schwab-Pomerantz, board chair and president of the Charles Schwab Foundation

That the transfer of unprecedented levels of wealth to women represents a meaningful opportunity to financial advisors is an understatement. However, the way in which this opportunity is approached matters. This will require much more than a mere retrofit of financial plans and portfolios that were built around the financial goals of men.

The recognition that the financial realities for women (at least for now) are different from men is foundational to the make-up of women's portfolios. Apart from outliving men, women sadly still contend with the gender pay gap. Forbes magazine indicates that globally women still only earn 77 cents on average for every dollar earned by men (89 cents in Canada and 82 cents in the US).[4] The stakes are further raised with women assuming caregiving roles for children or elders that leads to breaks in their careers (read: loss of income and savings). In 2022, more than 50% of women over age 15 provided some form of care to children or adults, and they were significantly more likely than men to provide care (Statistics Canada, 2022).

Women historically have not invested in the market at the same pace as men. The reasons for this investment gender gap are many and include a general lack of confidence due to a perceived shortcoming in investment acumen amongst women. A study by BNY Mellon Investment Management in 2022 found that only one in 10 women globally felt they fully understood investing. The same study found that under 30% of women felt confident about investing their money. This gap is compounded by the fact that women often cede financial decision making to their male partners.

To compensate for such inequities, women's money must work harder and last longer.

The good news is that trends are shifting in the right direction. For example, according to a study by Fidelity in 2021, 67% of women are now investing outside their retirement accounts, versus just 44% in 2018. Ironically, the study revealed that it was the pandemic that contributed to this jump, with just over 50% of women indicating that they began investing since the pandemic began. More good news: According to the BNY Mellon study, in a scenario in which women were to invest at the same rate as men, there would be at least an additional $3.2 trillion in assets under management from private individuals.

The long and short of it is that the great wealth transfer coupled with growing economic power of women is going to have a profound impact on the distribution of wealth in the medium to long term. This strongly suggests that a deeper understanding of women's goals is required, as is extending the span of advice to beyond merely the financial. A more holistic approach encompassing health, wellness, impact, and legacy, is mission critical to creating a compelling value proposition for this growing client segment.

Sources
[1] "Yelp coins the 'Beyonce bump' for the economic halo created by the pop star's Renaissance Tour" – Fortune Magazine, July 19,2023.
[2] "Beyonce's Silvery, Shimmering Renaissance" – New York Times, September 27, 2023.
[3] "Women now outnumber men in the U.S. college-educated labor force" – Pew Research Centre, September 26. 2022.
[4] "Gender Pay Gap Statistics in 2023" – Forbes Advisor, February 7, 2023.

Market Update: How to stick a "soft" landing

"There is no risk-free path for monetary policy."

– Jerome Powell, Chair of the Federal Reserve of the United States

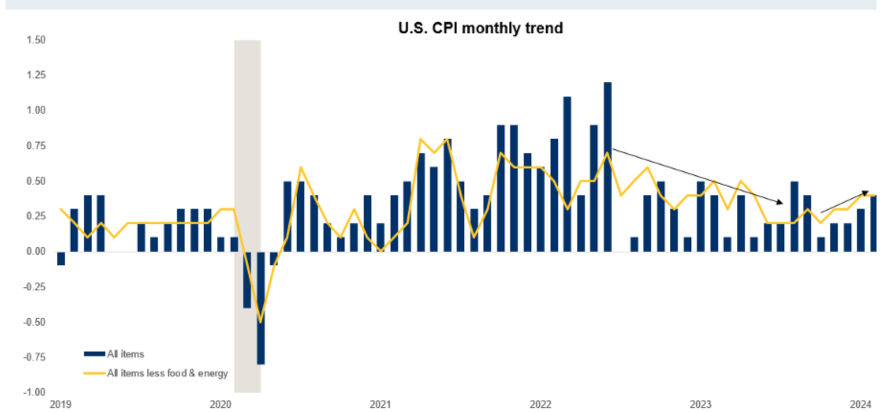
What a difference a year makes

Cast your mind back to early 2023. The cacophonous consensus call from economists and market strategists was for a recession (i.e., two or more consecutive quarters of negative GDP growth) in the second half to end of last year. And with good reason considering the compelling economic data – specifically leading indicators such as an inverted yield curve (i.e., short-term bond yields are higher than longer-term bond yields) and a negative Conference Board Leading Economic Index. One year on, the resilience of the U.S. economy and markets continue to surprise to the upside. So much so that the original consensus call for a recession in 2023 and into 2024 has increasingly given way to that of a "soft landing" (i.e., the economy shifting to slow-growth mode rather than a full-blown recession). Our very own RBC Global Asset Management Chief Economist, Eric Lascelles, recently raised his estimated probability the U.S. economy will experience a soft landing and avoid a recession to 60% from 40%.

The supporting evidence is compelling. The U.S. economy grew at a lively pace of just over 3% in the fourth quarter of 2023. While this marked a notable deceleration from the previous quarter of just under 5%, it marked the sixth straight quarter in which GDP grew at an annual pace of 2% or more and underscored the sturdiness of the world's largest economy. Current consensus estimates are penciling in a similar pace of around 2% for 2024. The Consumer Price Index (or CPI, a broad measure of goods and services costs), increased 0.4% for the month of February and 3.2% from a year ago, slightly higher than expected for the second straight month. Similarly, the Producer Price Index (or PPI, which measures businesses' costs for raw, intermediate, and finished goods), grew at a faster rate than expected. Remarkably, roughly two-thirds of the rise in the headline PPI came from a surge in finished goods prices.

The corporate "earnings season" of the fourth quarter of 2023 delivered better-than-expected results largely across the board, while analysts' consensus expectations for annual earnings growth in 2024 continue to hover in the low double digits. Wall Street seems to be in step with Main Street, as the S&P 500 Index has rallied in the high single digits year to date to new one-year highs – extending strength from the more than 20% rally in 2023. While that rally was predominantly driven by the Magnificent 7 (i.e., Amazon, Alphabet, Apple, Meta, Microsoft, Nvidia and Tesla), the breadth of the rally seems to be widening to include the rest of the market – a sign of market health. Valuation of the S&P 500 currently sits above its long-term average, again largely because of the higher valuations of the Magnificent 7. Yet richer-than-average valuations are not a precondition for a market downturn.

Monthly inflation trend has gone in the wrong direction recently



As of February 2024. Shaded area represents recession. Source: Bloomberg.

Valuations above average in the U.S.

P/E ratio vs. long-term average

Source: RBC GAM, Bloomberg. S&P 500 price-to-earnings ratio as of Jan 1991 to Feb 29, 2024.

Rate cuts: More a question of when rather than if

As the barrage of healthy economic data has fed the soft-landing narrative, analysts' consensus expectations for the timing of the first rate cut by the U.S. Federal Reserve (the Fed) have shifted considerably since the beginning of the year. In just December of last year, markets anticipated close to seven rate cuts to bring rates from 5.25% to just under 4% by the end of 2024. As the market digests the continued buoyancy of the U.S. economy, rate cut expectations have been recalibrated lower to a relatively modest four cuts this year to bring rates to ~4.5%. Despite the repricing of central bank rate expectations, inflationary pressures continue to diminish, making the path to the Fed's 2% inflation target unlikely to be a straight line. Consensus is currently building around June for the first Fed rate cut. This is not unreasonable in our view, though based on recent history, we are inclined to believe that the timing, number, and magnitude of rate cuts are all moving targets that could change with the ebb and flow economic data releases over the next few months. For example, there are still three more CPI releases before the Fed's rate-setting meeting in June.

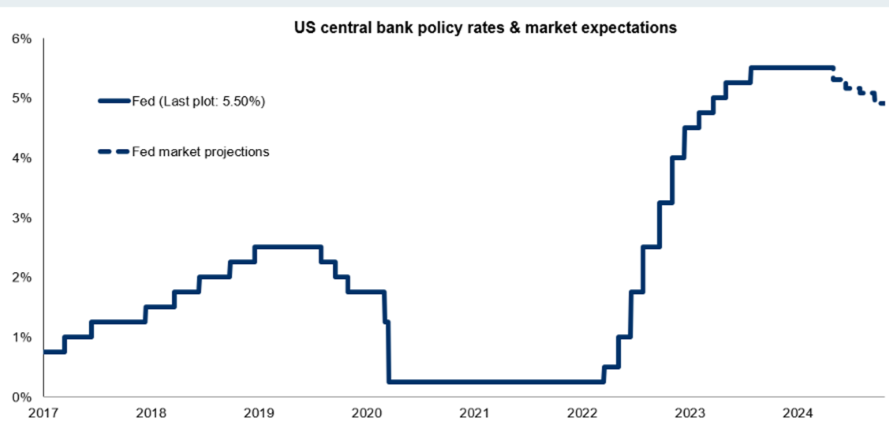
A fine balance

While the Fed should be credited with reining in inflation meaningfully in the absence of a contemporaneous recession, there is still work to do. Recent comments from Fed officials indicate they remain resolved in driving rates lower this year, notwithstanding the recent "stickiness" in inflation. We expect the Fed to remain hyper focused on evidence that would suggest inflation is not just moving towards its 2% target but doing so in a sustainable fashion. Yet to affect a soft landing (which has proven rare based on past rate-hike cycle precedents), the Fed is tasked with striking a fine balance: cutting rates too quickly could lead to a reignition of inflation and potentially kick-start another rate hike cycle; cutting rates too late runs the risk of leaving them at restrictive levels for too long, and likely increases the probability of a recession.

That said, the recent softening of the labour market backdrop in the U.S. could further buttress expectations for the first Fed rate cut in June. The latest unemployment reading for the month of February clocked in at 3.9% compared to 3.7% last month and 3.6% last year. Over the next few months, should the rate of unemployment increase by a modest amount but on a sustainable basis above 4%, this could provide sufficient ammunition for the Fed to decrease rates sooner rather than later.

Central bank policy rates and expectations

The market is expecting rate cuts in 2024



Source: Bloomberg, RBC GAM. As of April 2, 2024.

Cautious optimism is in order

It's important to acknowledge that while consensus estimates are increasingly tipping towards a soft-landing scenario, this is hardly a foregone conclusion. Even by Lascelles' estimates there is still a 40% probability that the U.S. economy will be in a recession in the latter part of this year. The soft-landing narrative runs counter to the argument that historically periods of prolonged tight (i.e., high-interest rate) financial conditions have typically translated into recessions. Based on RBC Global Asset Management's historical analysis, recessions arrive on average within 27 months of the central bank's first rate hike. This suggests that we are overdue for an economic downturn, and yet a "late" recession by historic standards is hardly precluded, particularly when one considers the low sensitivity of the U.S. economy to rate hikes and their lagged transmission effects (which take typically 12-18 months to impact the economy). Nor does historical data support the supposition that recessions are unlikely following several quarters of positive GDP growth, as has been the case in the U.S.

While there are grounds for optimism around a soft-landing scenario for the U.S. economy, investors should be prepared for an elevated level of volatility in the months ahead, particularly given the imminent presidential election in the U.S., elevated geopolitical conflict, and the downside risk to above-average consensus earnings estimates. We continue to advocate for a healthy level of tactical defensive posturing within portfolios and view fixed income (specifically government bonds) alongside high-quality dividend-paying equities as attractively valued at this juncture. TSX, and are attractive in our view relative to their U.S. counterparts. However, patience is likely required as valuations struggle to break out from their lows against a narrative of economic weakness. We continue to view this market as a rich source of value and income-oriented stocks for investors with long-term investment horizons. To the extent that portfolios have benefited from the rally in U.S. equities, we would advocate for management of valuation and concentration risk.

That said, investors seeking to maintain well-diversified North American portfolios with high quality multi-national companies that have a proven track record of compounding earnings over time will be hard pressed to ignore the broad sector representation of the S&P 500 in areas such as Technology, Healthcare and Consumer Discretionary.

Bringing it into focus

Overall, as we enter a period of heightened uncertainty, we are focused on maintaining and enhancing the quality and recession resilience of our equities holding as a means of protecting downside risk. This is prudent in our view as the economic cycle continues to age and financial conditions tighten.

Note: All figures and statistics above are sourced and provided by RBC PH&N Investment Counsel Inc, except where otherwise noted.

Dividends and your portfolio: A sweet "Double Double" deal for Canadian investors

Dividends paid by publicly listed companies have proven to be an important component to investors' success in growing their wealth over time. Investors can benefit from dividends' steady income, their portfolio-stabilizing affects in volatile times, and their tax efficiency when held in a non-registered portfolio – all of which make dividend-paying stocks a nice "cup" of benefits for investors.

From disappointment to optimism – markets begin their recovery from the ravages of the bear market

Since their post-pandemic surges petered out in early 2022, global equity markets have tested the patience of investors with their high levels of volatility and almost two years of disappointing returns.

But with mere weeks to go in 2023, markets surged, as investors' spirits were lifted on hopes that, not only did it appear that interest rates were not going any higher, but that they would in fact be cut through 2024. Central banks in Canada, the U.S., the U.K. and across Europe all seemed to share the view that inflation was receding enough to bring down rates in the coming months – and that key global economic engines like the U.S. would likely skirt a serious economic slowdown or, more importantly, a full-out recession.

"When in disgrace with Fortune and [investors'] eyes" – Dividend-paying stocks look for redemption

High interest rates and bond yields, coupled with worries over a slowing economy, took a heavy toll on dividend-paying stocks over the last few years. As interest rates and bond yields rose through 2022 and 2023, dividend-paying stocks lost out on a comparative value basis with investors when sized up against bonds and even GICs. As the latter two's yields and rates rose, investors bet that a bond or GIC was less risky than a dividend-paying stock but suddenly yielded as much if not more.

As well, from a risk perspective, many dividend-paying stocks are in capital-intensive industries like infrastructure and utilities. As rates rose, so did financing and debt costs for these companies, risking a reduction in their ability to increase or, in some cases, even pay dividends. The same is true on the debt side, as companies such as Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) with typically high debt levels suddenly looked riskier in light of sharply higher financing costs.

Fast forward to today, and the situation is quickly improving for dividend-payers. As bond yields have come down significantly from their most recent highs and interest rates look set to follow as central banks begin to cut their trend-setting rates in the months ahead, this naturally reverses many of the things that have turned investors away from dividend-paying stocks. As well, an improving outlook for the North American economy sets up this type of investment for better days ahead.

The first "Double": key portfolio management benefits of dividend-paying stocks

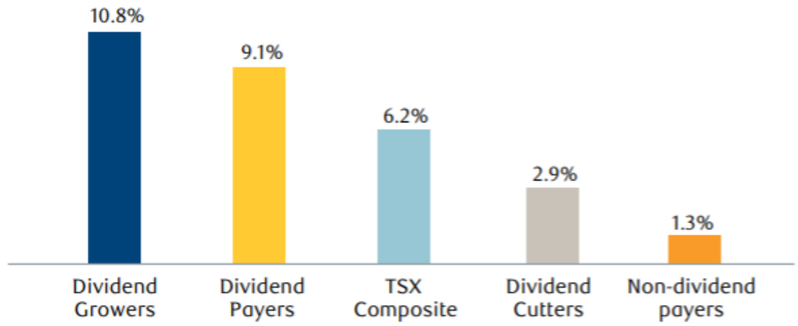
If it makes sense based on your portfolio goals and your risk profile, dividend-paying stocks – and, importantly, companies that increase their dividend payments to shareholders consistently over time – can offer some excellent benefits:

1) Dividend-payers have outperformed the market over time: Dividend-paying stocks – and especially dividend growers – have historically offered better returns than the broader market, as companies that are able to pay dividends to their shareholders are usually financially strong and successful businesses with healthy earnings and cashflows.

2) Dividend-payers have experienced less volatility over time: Dividend payouts can help make their stocks less susceptible to sharp price changes, as the chart below shows. This is primarily for two reasons: one, less of the return of a stock is dependent on price appreciation, as the regular

Dividend-paying stocks have outperformed*

Compound annual total returns (1986 - 2023)



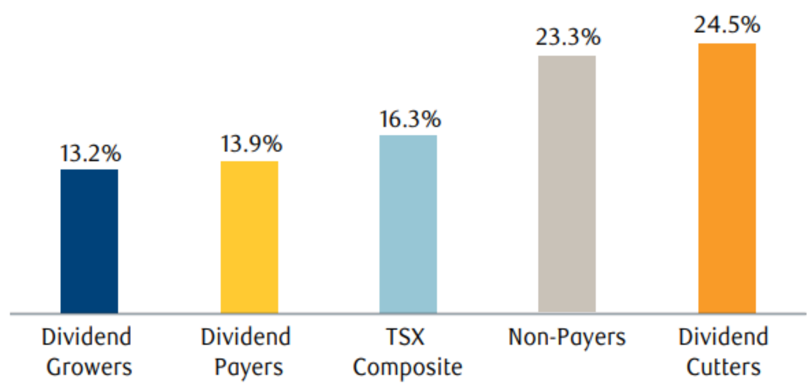
*Dividend Growers, Payers, Cutters and Non-Payers are determined annually from stocks listed on the S&P/TSX Composite Index. Growers had a positive 12 month change in dividends paid; Payers paid dividends; Cutters had a negative 12 month change in dividends paid; Nonpayers did not pay a dividend.

Performance from October 1986 – December 2023. Equal Weighted Equity Only Total Return Indexes. Source: RBC Capital Markets Quantitative Research, RBC GAM. An investment cannot be made directly into an index. The graph does not reflect transaction costs, investment management fees or taxes. If such costs and fees were reflected, returns would be lower. Past performance is not a guarantee of future results.

flow of income (usually) on a quarterly basis provides a good portion of the total return of the stock. And second, companies that can afford to pay out dividends are usually ones that are cash rich and creating more in profits than the company can reasonable reinvest back into the company. This "signals" to investors that these companies are stable and in a strong financial position. Of note, over the last 50 years, dividends have represented fully one-third of the S&P/TSX Composite Index's return.

Dividend-paying stocks have displayed lower volatility*

Annualized volatility (1986 - 2023)



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Performance from October 1986 – December 2023. Equal Weighted Equity Only Total Return Indexes. Source: RBC Capital Markets Quantitative Research, RBC GAM. An investment cannot be made directly into an index. The graph does not reflect transaction costs, investment management fees or taxes. If such costs and fees were reflected, returns would be lower. Past performance is not a guarantee of future results. Standard deviation is a commonly used measure of risk and is applied to the annual rate of return of an investment to measure the investment's volatility. Standard deviation shows how much the return on an investment is deviating from expected normal returns. A higher standard deviation indicates a greater variability in investment performance.

The second "Double": Tax benefits of dividend-paying stocks

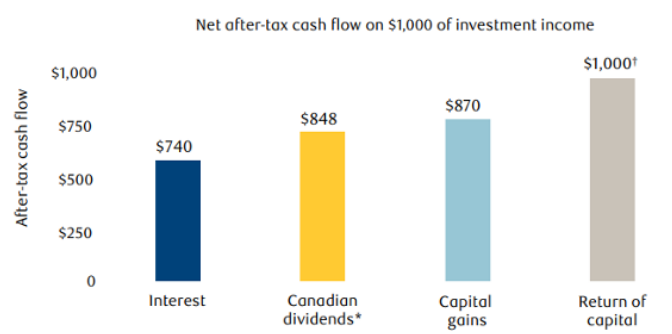
Beyond their notable investment and portfolio management benefits, dividends also have tax benefits for investors who may be holding stocks outside of a tax-sheltered plan such as a Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP) or a Tax-Free Savings Account (TFSA):

1) Tax-effective investing: Individuals who receive eligible dividends from Canadian companies can claim the Dividend Tax Credit (DTC), a federal tax credit (a provincial dividend tax credit may also apply) to reflect the fact that the company paying the dividend has already paid Canadian tax on its profits. The DTC can significantly reduce the taxable amount of dividend income, a real boon for those seeking income and who are in higher tax brackets.

2) "Less tax? I'm in!": Because of the tax benefits associated with dividend-paying stocks, they are even further in demand by investors who require tax-effective income, especially retirees looking to create cashflow in their golden years. The benefit to this is that it tends to further contribute to stable stock performance over time, as investors seek the regular flow of dividends from their issuers and not just capital gains as provided by non-dividend payers, reducing the need to sell their positions to generate gains or to minimize losses – especially when volatility hits.

Enjoying the sweet "Double Double" benefits of dividends

At RBC PH&N Investment Counsel, we consider the full universe of investment options that will generate the greatest benefits for our investors, whether in the areas of growth, income generation, or portfolio protection. Your Investment Counsellor can incorporate the many benefits of dividend-producing stocks and the tax-effective income they create into your portfolio, as appropriate given your risk profile, to help you reach your investment goals. If interested in learning more about how dividend-paying stocks are working within your portfolio to generate wealth for you, please speak with your Investment Counsellor.



or the purposes of this example, a marginal federal tax rate of 26% is used. Please note that rates are unique to the tax circumstances of each individual and re provided herein for illustrative purposes only. In addition to the federal taxes noted in the example, provincial taxes are required to be paid. The amount of rovincial taxes will vary according to province (provincial dividend tax credits also apply). When combined, the total of the federal and provincial taxes equals he taxes owing on taxable income. All figures are rounded to the nearest whole number. Tax rates are subject to change.

Represents eligible Canadian dividends with a federal tax credit of 15.02%.

ROC distributions are not generally taxable in the year they are received, but do lower your ACB, which could lead to a higher capital gain or a smaller capital loss when the investment is eventually sold.

The Last Word: It takes a team

In an ever-more complex world, it takes experienced-based expertise and principles-based advice to maximize one's wealth and to help ensure the journey to achieving your goals is as smooth as possible. To do so, you need a team – and we are thrilled that ours just got bigger.

"It is the long history of humankind (and animal kind, too) that those who learned to collaborate and improvise most effectively have prevailed." – Charles Darwin

As humans, we often think of our success in life as brought about by our own individual efforts, skills, and abilities. But when we consider the path of humanity over thousands of years, we have evolved as highly socialized creatures who depend heavily on our "tribe" or "team" to survive and succeed – at first in the wild, and then over time in ever-increasingly larger bodies of people that are bound together under common cause. Together humans have done the truly remarkable, not only surviving but rising beyond any other animal or threat to become dominant in our world.

Today, we see the power of this successful socialization, bound as we often are by common causes, principles, moral codes, cultures, religions, and languages. And we see this inherent social behaviour manifest in business, government, organizations, and sport, all of which demonstrate the effectiveness and power of working together to achieve goals. So, while we can certainly succeed to some degree on our own, we are never truly able to maximize our impact and achieve meaningful outcomes when we go it alone. Pooling our expertise and contributions is what has and does make humanity successful. Collaboration, cooperation, and partnership between humans has raised us up, and is likely to continue to be how we develop and attain even greater heights of achievement.

Elite advice and service for elite clients

At RBC PH&N Investment Counsel, we are bound together through our shared goals and principles. But what unites us in common cause and drives everything we do as a collection of individuals, is putting our clients and their success first.

Your Investment Counsellor is the steward of your wealth, bringing their unique expertise, knowledge, and experience to bear to serve, support and help guide you through your life and wealth journey. They have invested their time to build knowledge through graduate-level learning and achievements, such as the Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) and Certified Financial Planning (CFP) designations, while committing to meaningful ethical codes and continuing education requirements. But it is their focus on and commitment to your success that makes them, in turn, truly successful – all through what we hope you agree is best-in-class advice.

It takes a Family...Office

But what makes RBC PH&N Investment Counsel true industry leaders is our collective team – or what we like to call the "RBC PH&N Investment Counsel family". Supporting your Investment Counsellor is an entire organization completely focused on you and your family's successful wealth building journey. This is most evident in our Family Office Services team of over 250 financial, legal, estate, taxation, and business owner planning specialists, who are there to support you. This team is an extension of your Investment Counsellor, who acts as your "navigator" and can connect with the expertise, knowledge, and abilities that you need, when and how you need them, to best ensure you achieve your goals.

The RBC PH&N Investment Counsel Family just got bigger – and even better

We are excited to expand our team by welcoming our new clients and their Investment Counsellor teams, along with highly qualified Family Office Services experts, from former HSBC Bank Canada into our RBC PH&N Investment Counsel Family. We know that our new colleagues come from a client-focused culture committed to the success and wellbeing of their clients and therefore will integrate seamlessly into our team.

We are also excited that our new clients will benefit from the same advice and service as our existing clients. Together, driven by the shared values, principles, and our commitment to excellence, we will continue to collectively deliver the experience and journey you and your family deserve, depend on and expect.

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Wealth Management
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