PROSPECT BANK
217-465-4154

OUTLOOKS

April 2022

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Summary

Unlike some Central Banks, the Federal Reserve has a dual mandate – promoting maximum employment and price stability. To that end, there have been few points in history where the labor market has been as hot as it is today. Headline statistics reflect a 3.6% unemployment rate, and weekly initial jobless claims reached as low as 166k recently – both at or below the lowest levels in the past 50 years.

At the same time, inflation is at the highest levels in 40 years for reasons beyond having a tight labor market (e.g. supply chain disruptions, stimulus, Russia.) Yes, wages have been increasing but they are not the root cause. In fact, they are failing to keep up with the current pace of inflation which ultimately translates into less purchasing power for consumers. Fortunately, the booming labor market allows the Fed to be heavy handed, at least in the short term, in using its "tools" such as rate hikes and reducing its balance sheet (aka Quantitative Tightening, or QT) to fight stubborn inflation.

The Fed only officially started their rate hiking cycle in March. However, due to forward guidance and effective communication by Chairman Jay Powell and other Federal Reserve's Open Market Committee (FOMC) board members, many projected rate hikes have already been priced in to the market. This, in effect, has implemented those rate hikes in advance. Furthermore, since their most recent meeting, Fed members have upped the ante and started to prepare investors for 50 basis point (bp) hikes at the May and June meetings followed by 25 bp hikes in all remaining meetings during 2022. Add in QT starting in May and the Fed is seemingly doing all it can to reel in inflation.

These Fed "tools" work by slowing the money supply and liquidity in the economy. Higher interest rates promote saving and less spending/borrowing - for example, 30 year fixed mortgage rates are now approaching 5%. As people spend less, the overall level of economic activity/demand slows. Less demand generally translates to lower prices – but it typically comes at the cost of GDP growth.

Pre-Russia/Ukraine, we were already starting to see signs of slower economic consumption. Retail Sales for February came in below expectations, especially when removing automobiles. Monthly durable goods and factory orders were negative. ISM new orders declined sharply to its lowest levels since the pandemic. Given the complexities of the global economy, and recent geo-political tensions, the Fed is walking a wire to get control of inflation while providing a soft landing for the economy.

Positives

- The labor force is increasing at the same time unemployment is decreasing
- ISM Manufacturing and Services remain in expansionary territory
- Though still elevated, Core PCE came in slightly below expectations

Negatives

- 4Q21 GDP growth was revised lower by 0.1%
- Personal consumption for 4Q21 was revised lower by 0.6%
- ISM Prices Paid for March jumped 11.5 points

EQUITY OUTLOOK

Summary

Domestic equity markets rebounded in March after finishing the first two months of the year in negative territory. Large growth stocks, which had led the declines, also drove the recovery as represented by the Russell 1000 Growth Index's 3.9% climb in March. The Russell 1000 Value, by contrast, finished the month higher by 2.8%. The 3.7% rally in the S&P 500 Index was far stronger than the 0.7% bump in the developed international MSCI EAFE Index and the 2.3% decline of MSCI Emerging Markets Index.

Issues plaguing capital markets were little changed during the month of March. Russia has indicated their intention to shift strategy in Ukraine. That along with ongoing negotiations may reduce the risk of greater Western involvement to some degree but the potential for escalation remains. Inflation tensions remain elevated but there has been some hope the Federal Reserve may be able to engineer a soft landing. Supply chains remain congested but each passing month gets us closer to the end of this crisis.

All in all, the rebound off lows of early March seems a bit premature given the level of risk and uncertainty in the near term. Stocks are likely to remain volatile over the coming months and a retest of the recent market lows is quite likely. In April, the market's focus will also shift to corporate earnings. Earning results should be solid in aggregate but we are also likely to see greater dispersion of results as inflationary pressures and supply chain issues disproportionately impact certain companies and industries.

Positives

- Covid no longer impacting markets
- Equity fundamentals

Negatives

- Inflation and the Fed's increasingly hawkish tone
- Supply chain and labor shortages
- Yield curve inversion

PROSPECT BANK
217-465-4154

OUTLOOKS

April 2022

FIXED INCOME OUTLOOK

Summary

Beyond the human tragedy, the war in Ukraine continues to create vast uncertainties in the outlook for the economy, inflation and the financial markets. Usually when geopolitical tensions arise there is a flight to safety where investors soak up high quality U.S. Treasury bonds. This is especially true when there is concern that any sort of confrontation will slow global trade and economic growth. While we believed this would happen again, this playbook is being discarded as investors focus on the extraordinarily elevated level of inflation and the Fed's response, rather than the potential economic fallout.

Regardless of the conflict, the Federal Reserve's Open Market Committee remains steadfastly committed to the removal of the accommodative monetary policy put in place to combat the economic fallout from the pandemic. They took their first step toward this with a 25 basis point (bp) increase in the Fed Funds rate at their mid-March meeting. With the next meeting in early May, Fed officials have now been publically discussing the need to be more aggressive in an effort to combat inflation. These comments are then taken as policy with the market moving in advance and in effect doing the tightening work for the Fed. The next rate hike or two will now likely be in 50 bps increments and they will begin to reduce their balance sheet holdings by this summer.

Reflecting an abrupt repricing of monetary policy, the 2-year Treasury note increased an astonishing 90 bps during March to end at 2.34%. At this level, the market is pricing in 2% of additional rate hikes this year to go on top of the one seen so far. Recall that a mere six months ago the Fed was not expected to increase the overnight rate at all in 2022. The 3-year Treasury note increased by about the same amount and at 2.51% became the peak of the curve out to 10 years as that note only increased 51 bps to end at 2.34%. The 20-year bond became the absolute highest yield along the curve at 2.60%, which was 15 bps higher than the 30-year bond.

Similar to January and February, credit spreads moved sharply wider during the first half of March, but then rallied and ended tighter for the month. Even with better performance from investment-grade corporate bonds, the major fixed-income benchmarks had their second to worst monthly return in the past 30 years. For example, the Bloomberg Intermediate Government/Credit Index had a return of -2.45%, which brought the quarterly return to its absolute worst over that same period at -4.51%. Barring an extremely unlikely plunge in yields across the curve, fixed-income investors are likely to experience their first ever back-to-back negative return calendar years. The good news is that the pain should be mostly behind us and investors can now earn much higher yields on new funds or the reinvestment of cash flows and maturities. While we acknowledge that longer maturity yields can move somewhat higher due to the Fed and inflationary uncertainties, the inversion of the curve tells us that sharp increases like we have seen are unlikely to be repeated.

Positives

Demand for safety investments as global economic uncertainties increase

Short maturity yields already reflect multiple 50 bp Fed rate increases

Negatives

Russia's invasion will exacerbate inflationary pressures

Balance sheet reductions could pressure yields

Unknowns

Resolution of Russia's invasion of Ukraine

Foreign demand for U.S. debt

FCI ADVISORS

YIELD ANALYSIS

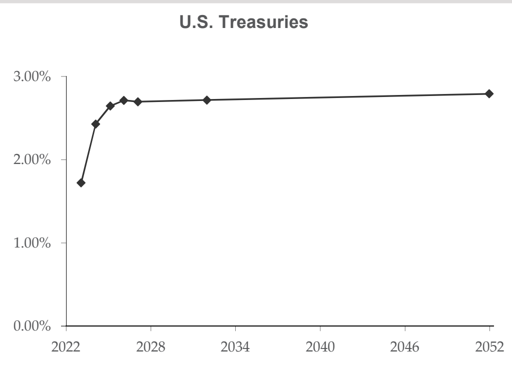
April 12, 2022

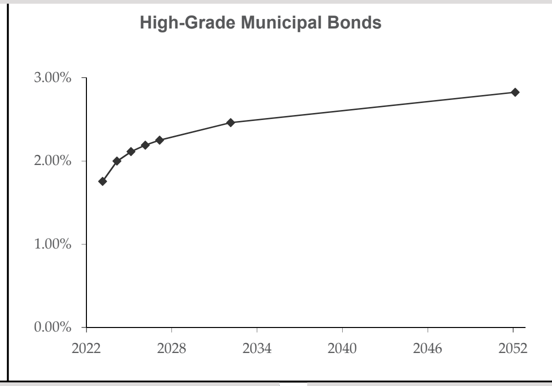
U.S. Treasury Yields		
Coupon	Maturity	YTM
0.000%	03/23/23	1.72%
2.250%	03/31/24	2.43%
2.625%	04/15/25	2.64%
0.750%	03/31/26	2.71%
2.500%	03/31/27	2.69%
1.875%	02/15/32	2.71%
2.250%	02/15/52	2.79%

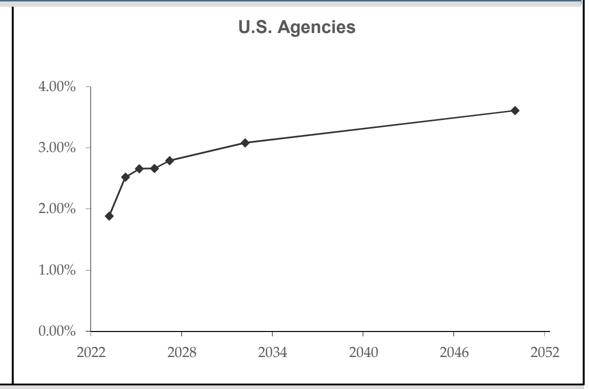
Municipal Bond Yields [1]		
Maturity	YTM	Tax-Equiv. [2]
04/11/23	1.76%	2.51%
04/11/24	2.00%	2.85%
04/11/25	2.11%	3.02%
04/11/26	2.19%	3.13%
04/11/27	2.25%	3.21%
04/11/32	2.46%	3.51%
04/11/52	2.83%	4.04%

U.S. Agency Yields - Active Bonds					
Agency	Coupon	Maturity	Price	YTM	To Muni (bp)
FAMCA	0.375%	04/20/23	$98.47	1.88%	-63
FFCB	3.100%	05/01/24	$101.09	2.52%	-33
FFCB	2.510%	04/01/25	$99.39	2.66%	-36
FNMA	2.125%	04/24/26	$97.90	2.66%	-46
FFCB	2.600%	04/05/27	$98.81	2.79%	-42
FHLB	3.250%	04/02/32	$101.30	3.08%	-43
FFCB	2.760%	02/03/50	$84.66	3.61%	-43

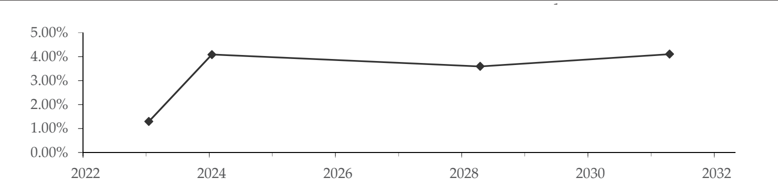
Current Yield Curves



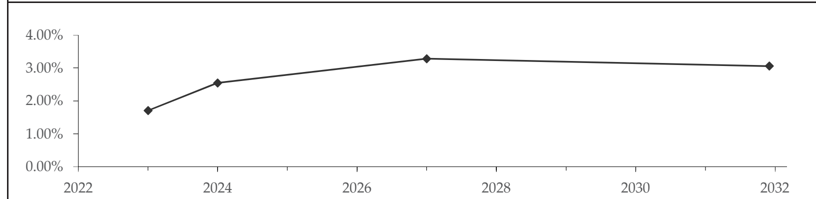




Corporate Bond Yields			
Description	Price	YTM	To Treasury (bp)
MS (A1/BBB+) 2.07% 3/28/2023	$100.76	1.29%	-114
C (A3/A) 3% 3/15/2024	$97.91	4.09%	+138
JPM (A2/A-) 2.18% 6/1/2028	$92.17	3.59%	+90
C (A3/BBB+) 2.57% 6/3/2031	$88.20	4.11%	+139



Bullet & Callable Agency Bond Yields [3]				
Description	Call Date	Price	YTM	YTW
FHLB 1.25% 3/21/2023	04/21/22	$99.57	1.71%	1.71%
FFCB 1.67% 3/8/2024	03/08/23	$98.39	2.55%	2.55%
FHLB 3% 3/25/2027	04/25/22	$98.72	3.28%	3.28%
FFCB 2.94% 2/23/2032	02/23/23	$98.99	3.06%	3.06%



(1) High-grade municipal bonds. (2) Based on a 30% marginal federal income tax bracket. (3) Graph displays yield to call.

Key: bp - basis points. One basis point is 1/100 of one percent. YTM - yield to maturity; YTC - yield to call.

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TELEGRAM

April 14, 2022

MARKET STATISTICS

INDEX RETURNS

EQUITIES (%)

	WTD	MTD	YTD
S&P 500	-2.13	-2.99	-7.45
DJIA	-0.78	-0.61	-4.68
Nasdaq	-2.63	-6.10	-14.49
Russell 1000	-1.93	-3.02	-7.99
Russell 2000	0.52	-3.12	-10.42
Russell 3000	-1.78	-3.02	-8.14

FOREIGN (%)

	WTD	MTD	YTD
MSCI ACWI	-0.89	-2.11	-7.26
MSCI ACWI xUSA	-1.01	-2.50	-7.71
MSCI EAFE	-1.20	-2.94	-8.54
MSCI EM	-0.76	-1.83	-8.69

FIXED INCOME (%)

	WTD	MTD	YTD
US Intermediate Gov/Cred	-0.08	-1.27	-5.72
U.S. Aggregate	-0.70	-2.77	-8.54
US Corp High Yield	-0.32	-1.80	-6.55
Municipal Bond	-0.54	-1.36	-7.51

OTHERS (%)

	WTD	MTD	YTD
DJ Eqty REIT TOT RE IDX	-1.04	0.63	-4.74
Alerian MLP Index	2.69	4.59	24.18
S&P GSCI Index Spot Indx	4.27	3.72	33.85
Dollar Index Spot	0.50	2.02	4.84

RUSSELL STYLE

RETURNS YTD (%)

	VALUE	CORE	GROWTH
Large Cap	-1.11	-7.99	-14.11
Mid Cap	-2.49	-7.35	-16.03
Small Cap	-4.50	-10.42	-16.29

ECONOMIC SCORECARD

SELECTED RELEASES

	ESTIMATE	ACTUAL	DIFFERENCE
CPI YoY	8.4%	8.5%	0.1%
PPI Final Demand YoY	10.6%	11.2%	0.6%
Retail Sales Advance MoM	0.6	0.5	-0.1
NFIB Small Business Optimism	95.0	93.2	-1.8
Initial Jobless Claims	170k	185k	15k
Continuing Claims	1500k	1475k	-25k

COMMODITY PRICES

ALTERNATIVES

	4/14/2022	3/31/2022	12/31/2021
Generic Crude Oil Future	$106.95	$100.28	$75.21
Generic Gold Future	$1,970.90	$1,949.20	$1,828.60
Dollar Index Spot	$100.30	$98.31	$95.67
Euro Spot	$1.08	$1.11	$1.14

S&P 500

SECTOR RETURNS (%)

	YTD
Discretionary	-12.53
Staples	3.15
Energy	45.17
Financials	-5.13
Health Care	-1.23
Industrials	-5.16
Info Tech	-15.52
Materials	-1.34
Real Estate	-5.42
Communication Services	-16.00
Utilities	7.09

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YIELD ANALYSIS

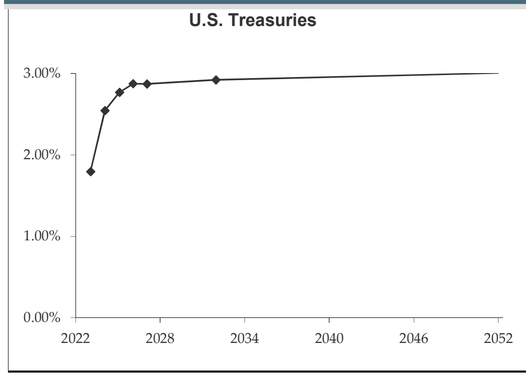
April 19, 2022

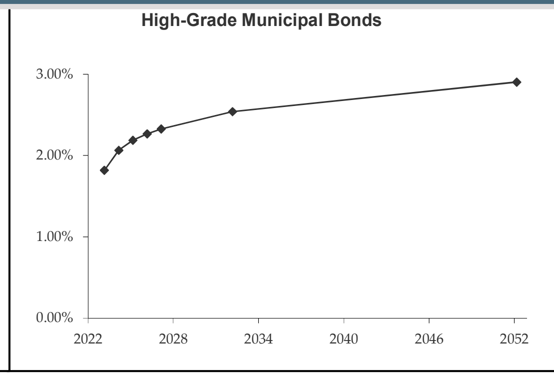
U.S. Treasury Yields		
Coupon	Maturity	YTM
0.000%	03/23/23	1.80%
2.250%	03/31/24	2.55%
2.625%	04/15/25	2.77%
0.750%	03/31/26	2.88%
2.500%	03/31/27	2.87%
1.875%	02/15/32	2.92%
2.250%	02/15/52	3.01%

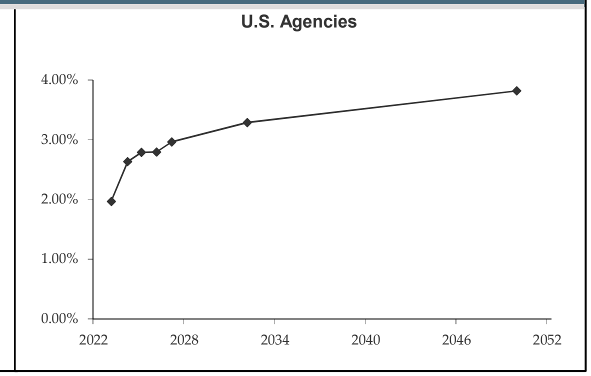
Municipal Bond Yields [1]		
Maturity	YTM	Tax-Equiv. [2]
04/18/23	1.82%	2.60%
04/18/24	2.07%	2.95%
04/18/25	2.19%	3.12%
04/18/26	2.27%	3.24%
04/18/27	2.33%	3.33%
04/18/32	2.54%	3.63%
04/18/52	2.90%	4.15%

U.S. Agency Yields - Active Bonds					
Agency	Coupon	Maturity	Price	YTM	To Muni (bp)
FAMCA	0.375%	04/20/23	$98.41	1.97%	-63
FFCB	3.100%	05/01/24	$100.86	2.63%	-32
FFCB	2.510%	04/01/25	$99.03	2.79%	-33
FNMA	2.125%	04/24/26	$97.42	2.80%	-44
FFCB	2.600%	04/05/27	$98.02	2.96%	-36
FHLB	3.250%	04/02/32	$99.54	3.29%	-34
FFCB	2.760%	02/03/50	$81.45	3.82%	-33

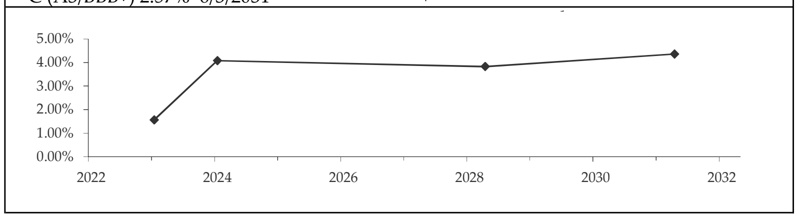
Current Yield Curves



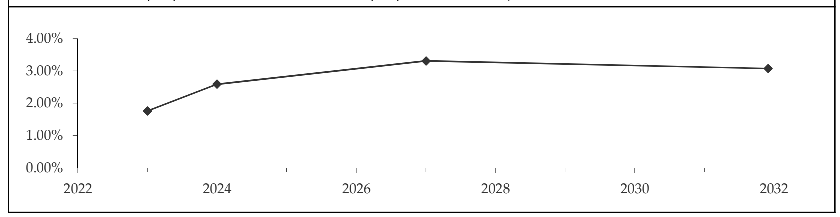




Corporate Bond Yields			
Description	Price	YTM	To Treasury (bp)
MS (A1/BBB+) 2.07% 3/28/2023	$100.54	1.56%	-98
C (A3/A) 3% 3/15/2024	$97.95	4.08%	+120
JPM (A2/A-) 2.18% 6/1/2028	$90.97	3.83%	+95
C (A3/BBB+) 2.57% 6/3/2031	$86.45	4.36%	+144



Bullet & Callable Agency Bond Yields [3]				
Description	Call Date	Price	YTM	YTW
FHLB 1.25% 3/21/2023	05/21/22	$99.54	1.76%	1.76%
FFCB 1.67% 3/8/2024	03/08/23	$98.34	2.59%	2.59%
FHLB 3% 3/25/2027	05/25/22	$98.61	3.31%	3.31%
FFCB 2.94% 2/23/2032	02/23/23	$98.88	3.07%	3.07%



(1) High-grade municipal bonds. (2) Based on a 30% marginal federal income tax bracket. (3) Graph displays yield to call.
Key: bp - basis points. One basis point is 1/100 of one percent. YTM - yield to maturity; YTC - yield to call.

FCI ADVISORS

TELEGRAM

April 22, 2022

MARKET STATISTICS

INDEX RETURNS

EQUITIES (%)

	WTD	MTD	YTD
S&P 500	-2.13	-2.99	-7.45
DJIA	-0.78	-0.61	-4.68
Nasdaq	-2.63	-6.10	-14.49
Russell 1000	-1.93	-3.02	-7.99
Russell 2000	0.52	-3.12	-10.42
Russell 3000	-1.78	-3.02	-8.14

FOREIGN (%)

	WTD	MTD	YTD
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MSCI ACWI xUSA	-1.01	-2.50	-7.71
MSCI EAFE	-1.20	-2.94	-8.54
MSCI EM	-0.76	-1.83	-8.69

FIXED INCOME (%)

	WTD	MTD	YTD
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US Corp High Yield	-0.32	-1.80	-6.55
Municipal Bond	-0.54	-1.36	-7.51

OTHERS (%)

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Alerian MLP Index	2.69	4.59	24.18
S&P GSCI Index Spot Indx	4.27	3.72	33.85
Dollar Index Spot	0.50	2.02	4.84

RUSSELL STYLE

RETURNS YTD (%)

	VALUE	CORE	GROWTH
Large Cap	-1.11	-7.99	-14.11
Mid Cap	-2.49	-7.35	-16.03
Small Cap	-4.50	-10.42	-16.29

ECONOMIC SCORECARD

SELECTED RELEASES

	ESTIMATE	ACTUAL	DIFFERENCE
S&P Global US Manuf. PMI	58.0	59.7	1.7
S&P Global US Services PMI	58.0	54.7	-3.3
Existing Home Sales MoM	-4.10%	-2.70%	1.40%
Housing Starts MoM	-1.60%	0.30%	1.90%
Initial Jobless Claims	180k	184k	4k
Continuing Claims	1459k	1417k	-42k

COMMODITY PRICES

ALTERNATIVES

	4/14/2022	3/31/2022	12/31/2021
Generic Crude Oil Future	$106.95	$100.28	$75.21
Generic Gold Future	$1,970.90	$1,949.20	$1,828.60
Dollar Index Spot	$100.30	$98.31	$95.67
Euro Spot	$1.08	$1.11	$1.14

S&P 500

SECTOR RETURNS (%)

	YTD
Discretionary	-12.53
Staples	3.15
Energy	45.17
Financials	-5.13
Health Care	-1.23
Industrials	-5.16
Info Tech	-15.52
Materials	-1.34
Real Estate	-5.42
Communication Services	-16.00
Utilities	7.09

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YIELD ANALYSIS

April 26, 2022

U.S. Treasury Yields		
Coupon	Maturity	YTM
0.000%	04/20/23	1.98%
2.250%	03/31/24	2.56%
2.625%	04/15/25	2.73%
0.750%	03/31/26	2.81%
2.500%	03/31/27	2.79%
1.875%	02/15/32	2.77%
2.250%	02/15/52	2.86%

Municipal Bond Yields [1]		
Maturity	YTM	Tax-Equiv. [2]
04/25/23	1.96%	2.79%
04/25/24	2.21%	3.15%
04/25/25	2.33%	3.33%
04/25/26	2.41%	3.44%
04/25/27	2.47%	3.53%
04/25/32	2.68%	3.83%
04/25/52	3.04%	4.34%

U.S. Agency Yields - Active Bonds					
Agency	Coupon	Maturity	Price	YTM	To Muni (bp)
FAMCA	0.375%	04/20/23	$98.37	2.04%	-75
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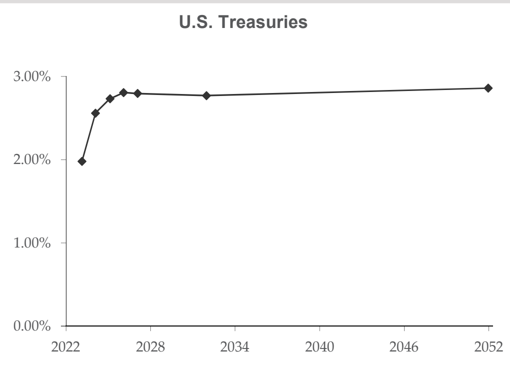
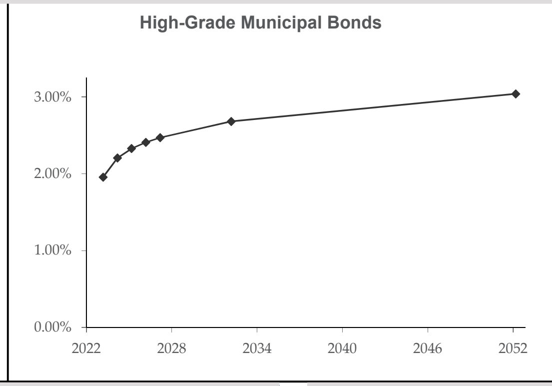
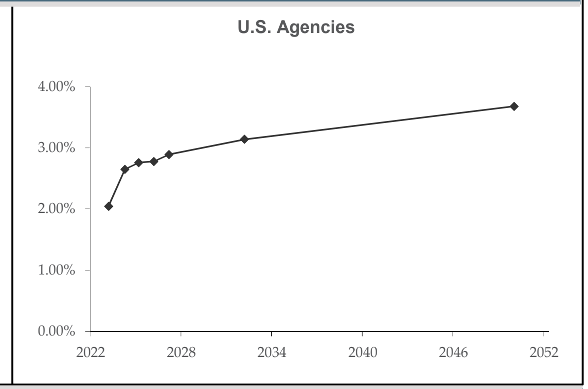
FFCB	2.510%	04/01/25	$99.13	2.76%	-57
FNMA	2.125%	04/24/26	$97.50	2.78%	-66
FFCB	2.600%	04/05/27	$98.38	2.89%	-64
FHLB	3.250%	04/02/32	$100.81	3.14%	-69
FFCB	2.760%	02/03/50	$83.60	3.68%	-66

Current Yield Curves







Corporate Bond Yields			
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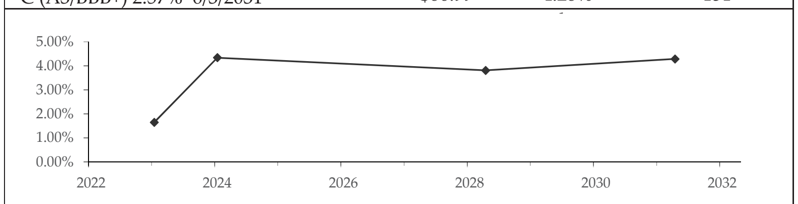
C (A3/BBB+) 2.57% 6/3/2031	$86.99	4.28%	+151



Bullet & Callable Agency Bond Yields [3]				
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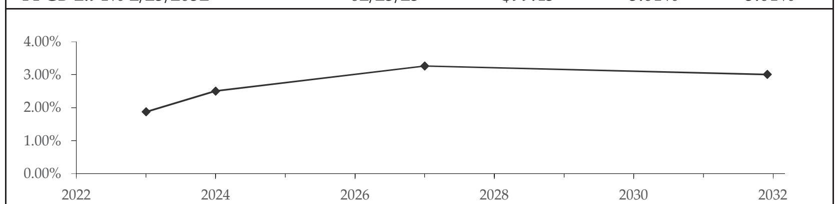
FFCB 1.67% 3/8/2024	03/08/23	$98.50	2.51%	2.51%
FHLB 3% 3/25/2027	05/25/22	$98.81	3.26%	3.26%
FFCB 2.94% 2/23/2032	02/23/23	$99.43	3.01%	3.01%



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FCI ADVISORS

TELEGRAM

April 29, 2022

MARKET STATISTICS

INDEX RETURNS

EQUITIES (%)

	WTD	MTD	YTD
S&P 500	-3.27	-8.72	-12.92
DJIA	-2.47	-4.82	-8.73
Nasdaq	-3.93	-13.24	-21.00
Russell 1000	-3.31	-8.91	-13.59
Russell 2000	-3.95	-9.91	-16.70
Russell 3000	-3.35	-8.97	-13.78

FOREIGN (%)

	WTD	MTD	YTD
MSCI ACWI	-0.87	-6.26	-11.19
MSCI ACWI xUSA	-2.79	-7.30	-12.24
MSCI EAFE	-3.33	-7.37	-12.70
MSCI EM	-2.03	-7.52	-13.95

FIXED INCOME (%)

	WTD	MTD	YTD
US Intermediate Gov/Cred	0.30	-1.69	-6.13
U.S. Aggregate	0.50	-3.30	-9.04
US Corp High Yield	-0.43	-3.09	-7.77
Municipal Bond	-0.15	-2.67	-8.73

OTHERS (%)

	WTD	MTD	YTD
DJ Eqty REIT TOT RE IDX	-5.43	-3.73	-8.87
Alerian MLP Index	-4.06	-0.16	18.54
S&P GSCI Index Spot Indx	1.62	4.54	34.90
Dollar Index Spot	1.94	4.95	7.85

RUSSELL STYLE

RETURNS YTD (%)

	VALUE	CORE	GROWTH
Large Cap	-6.34	-13.59	-20.03
Mid Cap	-7.66	-12.95	-22.42
Small Cap	-9.98	-16.70	-23.35

ECONOMIC SCORECARD

SELECTED RELEASES

	ESTIMATE	ACTUAL	DIFFERENCE
GDP Annualized QoQ	1.0%	-1.4%	-2.4%
Personal Consumption	3.5%	2.7%	-0.8%
Core PCE QoQ	5.5%	5.2%	-0.3%
Durable Goods Orders	1.0%	0.8%	-0.2%
Initial Jobless Claims	180k	180k	0k
Continuing Claims	1399k	1408k	9k

COMMODITY PRICES

ALTERNATIVES

	4/29/2022	3/31/2022	12/31/2021
Generic Crude Oil Future	$104.49	$100.28	$75.21
Generic Gold Future	$1,896.80	$1,949.20	$1,828.60
Dollar Index Spot	$103.18	$98.31	$95.67
Euro Spot	$1.06	$1.11	$1.14

S&P 500

SECTOR RETURNS (%)

	YTD
Discretionary	-20.85
Staples	1.53
Energy	36.85
Financials	-11.21
Health Care	-7.16
Industrials	-9.71
Info Tech	-18.70
Materials	-5.79
Real Estate	-9.66
Communication Services	-25.68
Utilities	0.32