

2024 Capital Market Assumptions

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Sellwood
CONSULTING LLC

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INTRODUCTION

Sellwood Consulting updates its capital markets assumptions annually. Our 2024 assumptions reflect information as of December 31, 2023, unless otherwise noted.

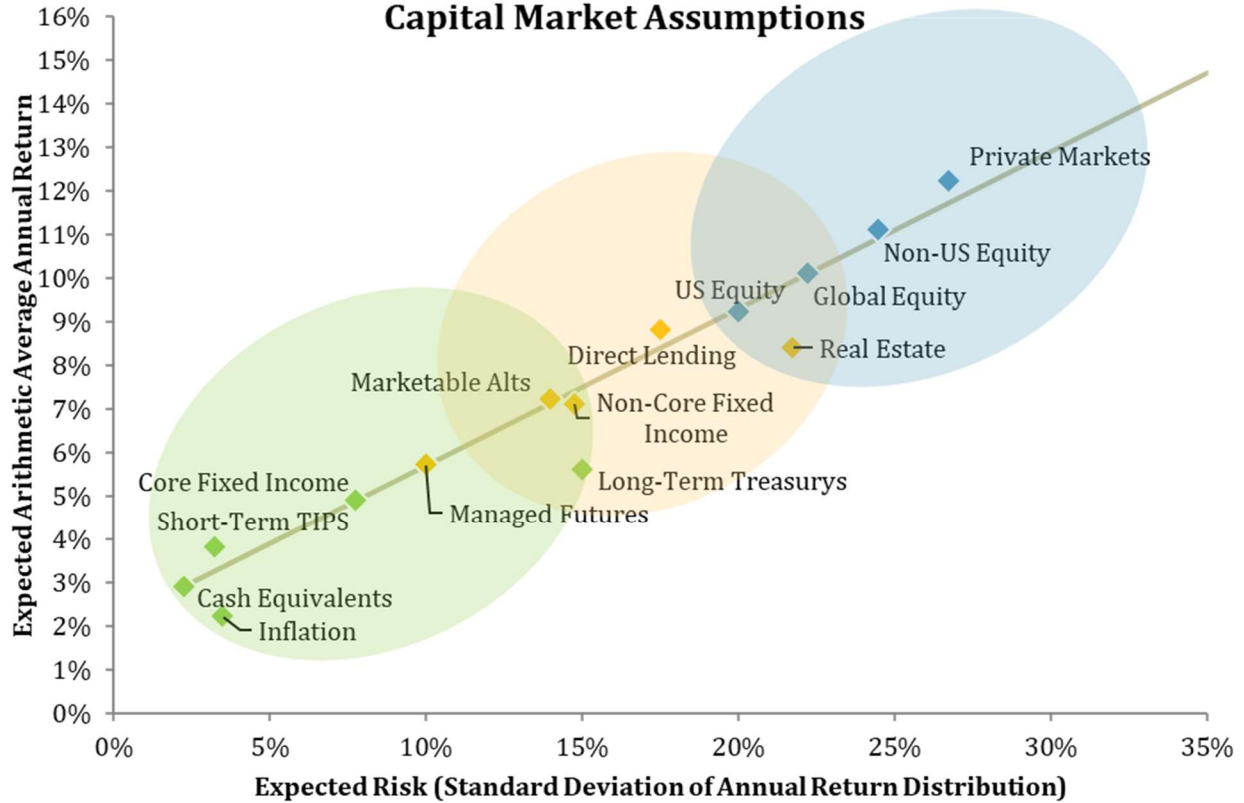
This report documents our process for creating these capital markets assumptions, and we provide detailed methodology for each. Several over-arching principles, however, inform all of our analysis:

1. We believe that forward-looking capital market assumptions are an important, but far from the only important, input for properly constructing portfolios. Great care should be taken not to rely only on mean-variance analysis when constructing portfolios. An analysis that relies only on mean-variance analysis will over-allocate to assets with infinitesimally superior risk/return estimates, and assets that are less liquid or less frequently priced, resulting in inferior diversification and the assumption of unintended risks.
2. Our assumptions are forward-looking in nature and reflect a ten-year horizon. They are most appropriate for analysis of portfolios with long-term (10 years or longer) horizons. For portfolios with shorter horizons, different methods of analysis should be employed.
3. We deliberately use different methods to separately estimate return and risk. The first part of this paper explains the different methods we employ to estimate the future return of each individual asset class. Later in the paper, we explain a more standardized approach to estimating future risk of the same asset classes.
4. Our return assumptions utilize a build-up approach based on the current values of the individual drivers of expected return that are unique to each asset class.
5. For asset classes where the market provides a current view of forward-looking returns, our assumptions reflect the market view. We don't believe that additional complexity would be add to the analysis.
6. Where possible, all of our return assumptions incorporate current valuations.
7. Our assumed returns are average one-year returns, and the standard deviation of returns is the standard deviation of one-year returns.
8. Our assumptions are presented in nominal terms. Where appropriate, we transform inputs into to real, after-inflation components in order to strip out the influence of historical inflation. At the end of the build-up process, where appropriate, we add the market's current measure of forward-looking inflation back to the assumptions to create forward-looking nominal return assumptions.
9. We calculate compound average annual returns. After calculating a compound return and a risk assumption, we combine the two mathematically to calculate an arithmetic average expected return, which is a necessary input for mean-variance analysis.
10. Our assumptions are passive in nature and assume no active management.

11. Our approach to modeling the expected risk of each asset category is multi-faceted and reflects the fact that risky assets exhibit “fat tails” that are not present in normal distributions. First, we examine the historical standard deviation of the returns for a proxy index for the asset category (both the full history and most recent 10 years). Next, we examine the historical worst-case annual return experience (or in the case of asset categories that are not priced to market, the worst two years) for the asset class. If necessary, we adjust our risk estimates upward to ensure that the actual worst-case experience had at least a 1% probability of occurring (once every 100 years) under our assumed return and risk distribution parameters. Finally, for asset classes where our confidence in the data available for examination is limited, we qualitatively adjust our risk assumption to reflect this uncertainty (i.e., for asset classes with a shorter history, we adjust the risk assumption so that the actual historical worst-case scenario had a 2% probability of occurring).
12. Our correlation coefficient assumptions are derived from history. We seek a proxy for each asset category we have modeled with as long a history as possible, and then calculate our correlation assumptions accordingly.
13. We round our return assumptions to the nearest 10 basis points, and our risk assumptions to the nearest 25 basis points.
14. Our assumptions are applicable to US-based, non-taxable investors. For taxable clients located in the United States, we maintain a separate methodology that considers the effects of the client’s specific taxes on expected risk and returns.
15. We purposefully design a limited set of mostly non-overlapping assumptions for major asset categories. By focusing on major asset classes, with the most data available for examination, we can develop the most robust assumptions. Asset allocation analysis is a blunt tool, and we believe that input assumptions should not be more granular than the methodology can support. Using a more limited set of assumptions reduces the risk of false precision when implementing them.
16. We strive to construct a set of assumptions that is straightforward, explainable, fully documented, and replicable by other researchers. Our assumptions are as complex as necessary but no more complex than necessary. They have no hidden constraints. We could make them more complicated, but we do not believe that doing so would make them better.

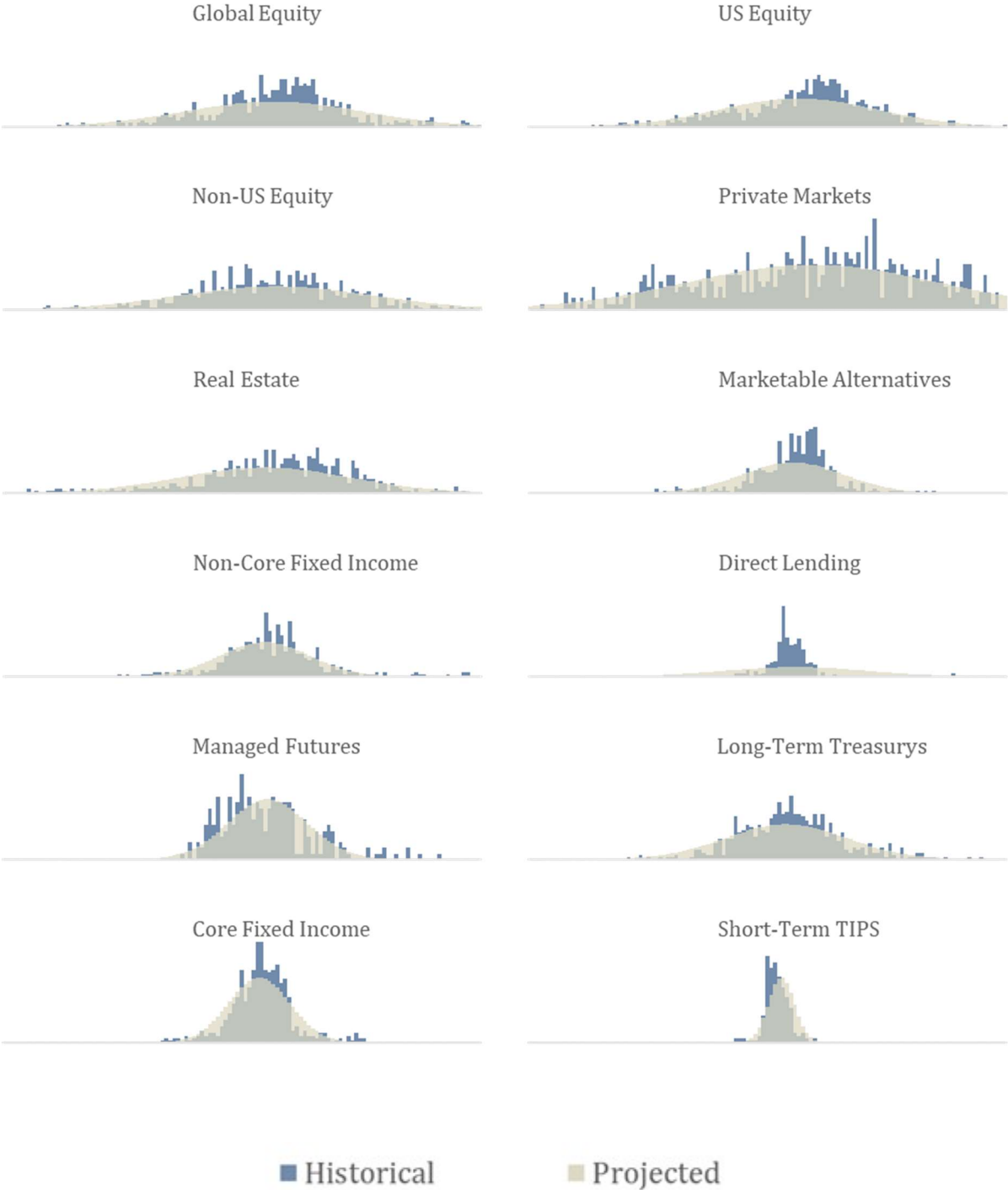
In summary form, our 2024 capital market assumptions follow on the next page.

2024 Sellwood Consulting Capital Market Assumptions



	Nominal Compound Return	Nominal Risk	Nominal Arithmetic Return	Sharpe Ratio
Inflation	2.16%	3.50%	2.20%	---
Global Equity	7.86%	22.25%	10.10%	0.22
US Equity	7.45%	20.00%	9.20%	0.23
Non-US Equity	8.51%	24.50%	11.10%	0.23
Private Markets	9.10%	26.75%	12.20%	0.23
Real Estate	6.26%	21.75%	8.40%	0.15
Marketable Alternatives	6.34%	14.00%	7.20%	0.25
Non-Core Fixed Income	6.06%	14.75%	7.10%	0.22
Direct Lending	7.43%	17.50%	8.80%	0.26
Managed Futures	5.26%	10.00%	5.70%	0.24
Long-Term Treasurys	4.60%	15.00%	5.60%	0.11
Core Fixed Income	4.58%	7.75%	4.90%	0.22
Short-Term TIPS	3.73%	3.25%	3.80%	0.26
Cash Equivalents	2.89%	2.25%	2.90%	---

Historical one-year return distributions (historical real returns, plus assumed future inflation) are depicted below in blue, and our forward-looking assumed return distributions are shown in tan. We have adopted a philosophy of assuming wide enough normal distributions to capture markets' historical fat tails.



INFLATION

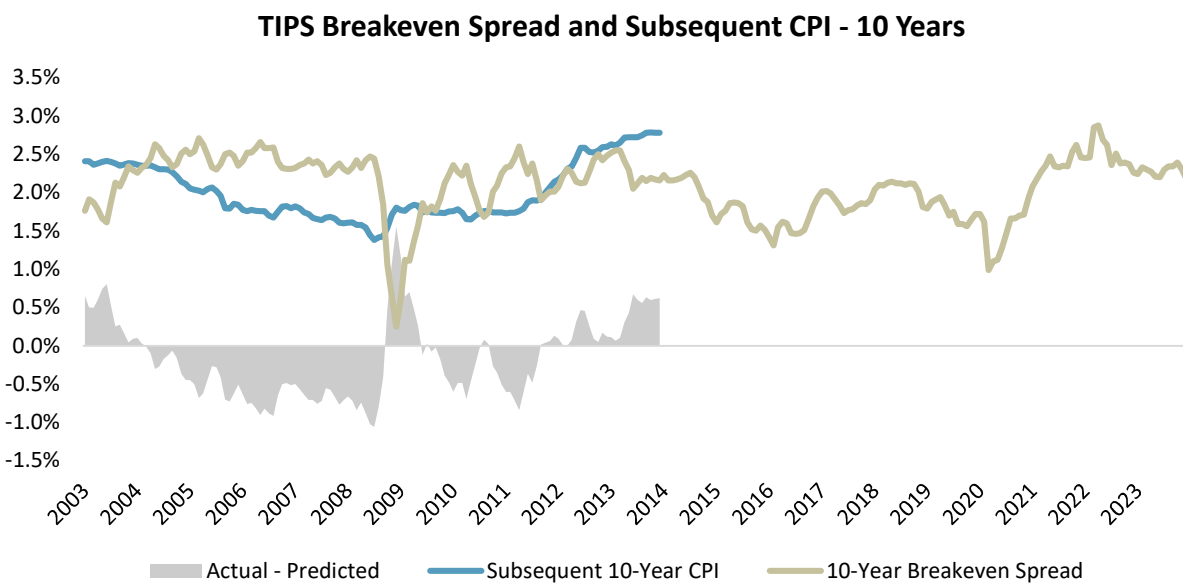
Modeled: US CPI-U Inflation
Compound Return: 2.16%
Arithmetic Average Return: 2.20%
Risk: 3.50%

The market tells us its expectation for forward-looking ten-year inflation, and our assumption reflects that market assumption.

On December 31, 2023, the market's yield for a 10-Year US Treasury Bond was 3.88%, and the real yield for a 10-Year TIPS security was 1.72%. The difference between the two approximates the market's inflation expectation over the next ten years: 2.16%.

The Federal Reserve has published this inflation approximation – the so-called “TIPS breakeven spread” – since 2003. The following chart depicts the full history of this measure (in tan), laid against the actual subsequent inflation (as measured by the Consumer Price Index, “CPI,”) that occurred over the following ten years (in blue). With the exception of especially illiquid market periods, which distort the measure because of liquidity differences between TIPS and nominal Treasury Bonds, the measure has done a fair job of predicting subsequent inflation and does not appear to be biased positively or negatively.

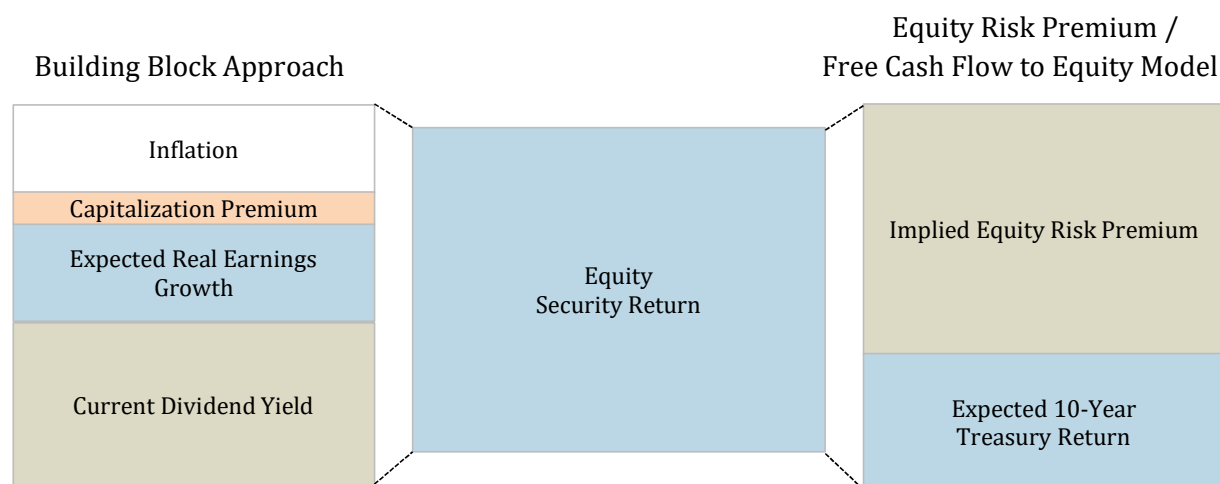
At the same time, it is clear that the market doesn't always get it right, which is why we assume a range of possible outcomes for inflation, defined by the risk assumption.



GROWTH INVESTMENTS

Growth investments primarily consist of equity investments in private and public companies. To derive our equity return assumptions, we use two methodologies:

- (i) a building-block approach using the Shiller price-to-earnings (P/E) measure; and
- (ii) an equity risk premium estimate that averages the current implied equity risk premium based on a free cash flow to equity model and the historical average equity risk premium.



Our building blocks approach employs “Shiller earnings,” which represent a ten-year average of them, adjusted for inflation. We prefer this method because it incorporates a fuller market cycle, aligns with our ten-year forecast period, and has shown a better empirical track record of predicting future return than other approaches. Research shows that of all the varied ways to calculate a P/E ratio, the Shiller P/E measure (Cyclically Adjusted Price to Earnings or “CAPE”) has historically shown the highest predictive power over future 10-year returns.¹

Our building block approach is consistent across equity categories:

- Assumed (Expected) US Inflation
- + Current Dividend Yield
- + Expected Real Earnings Growth

¹ Vanguard. Forecasting stock returns: What signals matter, and what do they say now?

US Equity

Modeled: US Equities, All Capitalizations

Compound Return: 7.45%

Arithmetic Average Return: 9.20%

Risk: 20.00%

We create a return assumption for the entire US market by calculating return estimates for large- and small-cap equity and applying those returns to the current market capitalization weights. The current weights, 92% large, and 8% small², yield a US Equity assumption of 7.45% in compound terms:

$$(92\% \times 7.40\%) + (8\% \times 8.12\%) = 7.45\%.$$

Our calculation methodologies of the US large- and small-cap assumptions are explained below.

US Large-Cap Equity

Our return assumption for the US large-cap equity portion of the US Equity assumption is the average of two separate approaches:

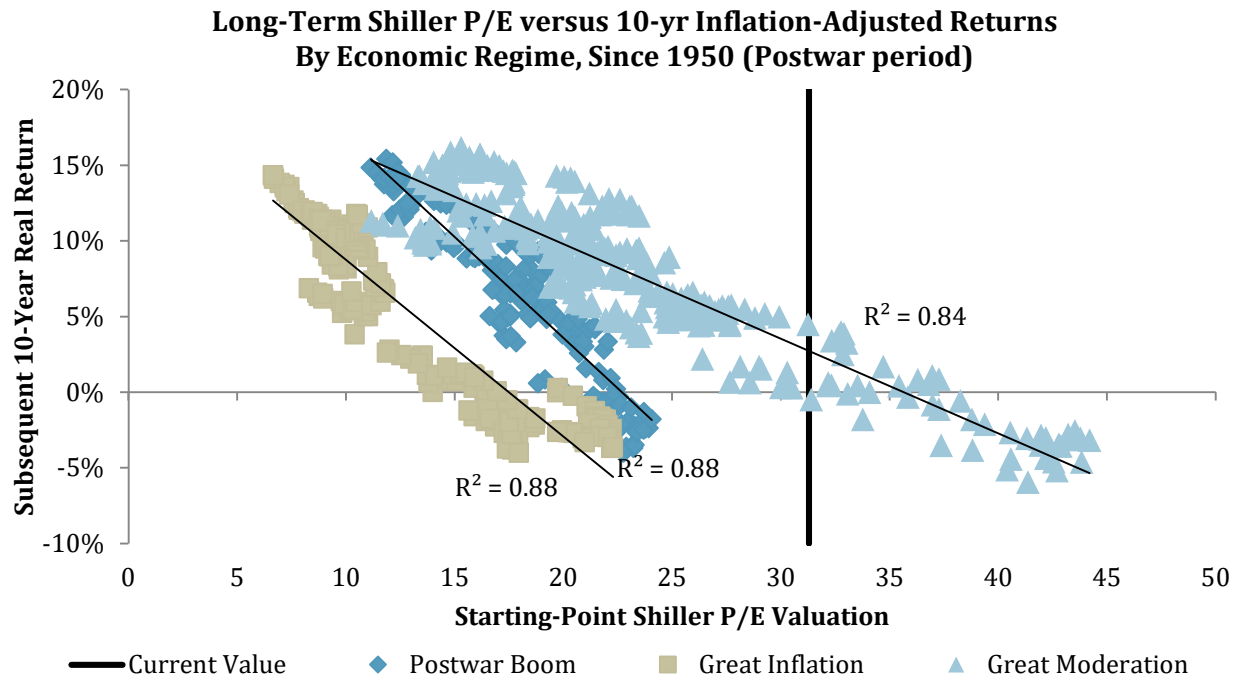
- (i) a valuation-sensitive building-block approach, and
- (ii) a free cash flow to equity model.

Building Block Approach

Our building block approach considers current valuations and corporate earnings to develop an estimate of future return. Because our return forecasts are long-term in nature, and because we believe in excluding the effects of historical inflation when building a forecast, we prefer to use so-called Shiller earnings as the basis for earnings analysis. Shiller corporate earnings represent the after-inflation US corporate earnings over the last decade.

Valuation methods based on Shiller earnings have demonstrated predictive power over future long-term returns. The following chart depicts the Shiller price-to-earnings (P/E) metric for the US stock market, since 1950 (the post-WWII period). The Shiller P/E at a given point in time is depicted on the horizontal axis, and the subsequent 10-year inflation-adjusted return is depicted on the vertical axis. We have decomposed the data array into three economic regimes – the post-war boom (in blue; 1951-1965); the great inflationary period (in tan; 1966-1984); and the great moderation (in grey; 1985-present). Examining the data this way yields useful insights and, importantly, high predictive power for the Shiller P/E metric over subsequent real return. The S&P 500's current position on the chart is indicated by the vertical line.

² FTSE/Russell.



For the valuation-based building block component of the US large-cap return, we create our building blocks from the S&P 500 Index:

- 2.16% Inflation
- 1.96% Dividend Yield
- 2.04% Long-Term Compound Average Real Earnings Growth (Since 1950)

The dividend yield is how current valuations enter our methodology. Because we are forecasting a full market cycle, we prefer to use a more stable input than the market's current dividend yield, which can change at any time. Instead, our approach builds up an assumed dividend yield using Shiller (past 10-year real) earnings as the primary input. We take the inverse of the current Shiller P/E ratio (price / average past 10-year real earnings) to determine the current Shiller earnings yield. As the current Shiller earnings yield is the average earnings yield over the past decade and represents the earning power of the S&P from five years ago, on average, we bring the earnings forward to current by growing them at the real earnings growth rate since 1950. We then multiply that adjusted earnings yield by the long-term dividend payout ratio of 0.5, which gives us the current dividend yield used above.

Equity Risk Premium / Discounted Free Cash Flow Model

For the implied equity risk premium, we reference and modify a discounted free cash flow model created by Professor Aswath Damodaran of the Stern School of Business that uses a free cash flow to equity approach to account for dividends as well as stock buybacks.³

³ <http://pages.stern.nyu.edu/~adamodar/>

Our modified free-cash-flow-to-equity model employs several input variables and uses I/B/E/S earnings projections for the next two years. The earnings growth rate is then assumed to linearly revert to the long-term risk-free rate in years three to five. We assume the risk-free rate to be our assumed 10-year US Treasury bond return.

Beginning (current) S&P 500 level =	\$4,769.83
Base year free cash flow to equity, S&P 500 =	\$164.25 ⁴
Expected S&P 500 earnings growth over next 5 years ⁵ =	11.1% in year 1 12.5% in year 2 10.4% in year 3 8.3% in year 4 6.2% in year 5
Expected S&P 500 earnings growth past year 5=	4.1% ⁶

We apply a standard discounted cash flow methodology to these variables and solve for the rate of growth that makes the discounted forecasted value of the S&P 500 identical to today's value.

$$4,769.83 = \frac{179.96}{(1+r)^1} + \frac{199.47}{(1+r)^2} + \frac{217.48}{(1+r)^3} + \frac{233.16}{(1+r)^4} + \frac{245.74}{(1+r)^5} + \frac{245.74(1.0414)}{(r-0.414)(1+r)^5}$$

Solving for r yields the expected nominal average annual return for the S&P 500 over the next 10 years, under these assumptions. That rate of return is 8.47%. Subtracting our assumed US Treasury bond return of 4.14% results in an expected equity risk premium of 4.43%.

This implied equity risk premium is modestly lower than what history has delivered. To moderate this, we average the current implied forward-looking equity risk premium (4.43%) and the long-term historical geometric average realized equity risk premium (5.06%) to derive an equity risk premium estimate of 4.70% for US large-cap equity. Substituting this assumed equity risk premium into the model results in a return estimate of 8.83% for this approach.

Combining the Two Approaches

Averaging the expected returns generated by the building-blocks approach and the discounted free cash flow model yields an expected compound return of 7.40% for US large-cap equity.

⁴ 2023 S&P 500 Dividends = \$69.69 + buybacks = \$94.56

⁵ Historically, the I/B/E/S consensus analyst forecast has overstated subsequent actual earnings growth by 15.6%. We reduce our assumption for earnings growth by 13.5% (1-(1/1.156)) accordingly.

⁶ Our 10-year forecasted return for the Treasury Bonds, as a proxy for the ten-year risk-free rate.

US-Small Cap Equity

Our return assumption for the US small-cap equity portion of the US Equity assumption uses a similar approach as our approach for US large-cap. Because data is much more limited for small-cap equities than for large-cap equities, we evaluate small-cap equities relative to large-cap equities rather than relative to their own history. For US small-cap equity, we compare the Shiller earnings yield for the Russell 2000 Index and S&P 500 Index over the longest common time period for the two indexes (1979-present). The Shiller-based method is only half of our US large-cap equity assumed return, so we divide the premium in half and add or subtract it from our final US large-cap equity return.

While our assumption models the full universe of small-cap stocks, the data we use excludes companies with negative earnings. As compared to using the data from the full universe of small-cap stocks, using the dataset that excludes negative earners has yielded higher predictive power over future returns of the full index, which includes the negative earners. We compare the small-cap ex negative earners Shiller earnings yield relative to US large-cap equity over the longest common time period (1988-present) for which we have reliable data:

	Long-Term	
	<u>Average</u>	<u>Current</u>
US Large-Cap Earnings Yield	3.80%	3.20%
US Small-Cap Earnings Yield	<u>4.39%</u>	<u>4.73%</u>
Small-Cap Premium	0.59%	1.54%

We are interested in the current valuation relative to this baseline, so we take the difference between the model's current predicted premium (1.54%) and the long-term average predicted premium (0.59%) and apply only the differential ($1.54\% - 0.59\% = 0.95\%$). Then, we add only half of that differential to our assumption for US large-cap equities, because the building-blocks calculation itself represented only half of our calculation of US large-cap equity return.

US Large-Cap Assumed Return:	7.40%
Assumed Small Cap Premium:	0.25%
½ Calculated Small-Cap Premium:	<u>+0.47%</u>
Return Assumption:	8.12%

Non-US Equity

Modeled: Non-US Equities, All Regions & Capitalizations

Compound Return: 8.51%

Arithmetic Average Return: 11.10%

Risk: 24.50%

Our return assumption for Non-US Equity is intended to model the entire non-US equity market. It assumes the current weighting of large-cap and small-cap equities in the international equity market – 87% large-cap and 13% small-cap⁷. These weights are applied to underlying non-US large-cap equity and non-US small-cap equity assumptions. This weighting yields a compound return assumption of 8.51%:

$$(87\% \times 8.42\%) + (13\% \times 9.14\%) = \mathbf{8.51\%}.$$

The calculation methodologies of Non-US large- and small-capitalization equities are explained below.

Non-US Large Cap Equity

We build separate assumptions for developed and emerging non-US markets, and then weigh them according to current market weights to construct our non-US large-cap equity assumption, which is intended to model equities of both developed and emerging markets. Similarly to our modeling approach for US equity, we combine a Shiller-based building block approach with an equity risk premium estimate.

Building Block Approach

Over the longest common period for which we have both US (S&P 500 Index) and non-US developed markets (MSCI EAFE Index – “EAFE”) earnings data (since 1977), non-US developed market earnings have grown at only 1.78% versus the rate of 2.17% for US large-capitalization stocks, a difference of 0.39%, in real terms. Given the short time frame for EAFE earnings data, we cut that difference in half for conservatism and subtract that number from the US large-capitalization equity real earnings growth rate (2.04%), to yield an assumed non-US developed markets real earnings growth rate of 1.85%.

Over the longest common period for which we have both US (S&P 500 Index) and emerging (MSCI EM Index – “EM”) markets earnings (1995), real emerging market earnings have grown at 4.48% versus the rate of 2.65% for US large-capitalization stocks, a difference 1.83%. Given the short time frame for EM earnings data, we limit the excess earnings growth rate to 0.50% above the US large-capitalization stock growth rate (2.04%) to yield an assumed emerging markets real earnings growth rate of 2.54%.

For developed and emerging markets, our assumed building blocks are as follows:

⁷ MSCI, Morningstar Direct

	<u>EAFE</u>	<u>EM</u>
Inflation	2.16%	2.16%
Current Dividend Yield	3.34%	4.77%
Assumed Compound Average Real Earnings Growth	1.85%	2.54%

This approach yields an expected compound return of 7.34% for developed-markets Non-US Large-Capitalization Equities and 9.47% for Emerging Market Equities using the build-up methodology.

Equity Risk Premium / Discounted Free Cash Flow Model

Our modified free-cash-flow-to-equity model employs several input variables:

	<u>EAFE</u>	<u>EM</u>
Beginning (current) level =	\$2,236.16	\$1,023.74
Base year free cash flow to equity=	\$97.11	\$34.93
Expected earnings growth over next 5 years ⁸ =		
Year 1	4.9%	15.2%
Year 2	7.6%	12.7%
Year 3	6.6%	10.4%
Year 4	5.6%	8.1%
Year 5	4.6%	5.9%
Expected earnings growth past year 5=	4.1%	4.1%

Just as before, we solve for the average annual rate of growth to find the equity risk premium. That rate of return is 4.73% for Developed Markets and 4.69% for Emerging Markets. As above, we subtract the ten-year Treasury rate and average with the long-term historical geometric average realized equity risk premium (5.06%).

The result is an estimated equity risk premium of 4.88% for Developed Markets and 4.87% for Emerging Markets using the discounted free cash flow model.

Combining the Two Approaches

	<u>EAFE</u>	<u>EM</u>
<i>Building Block Approach</i>	7.34%	9.47%
<i>Equity Risk Premium</i>	<u>9.11%</u>	<u>9.01%</u>
Average	8.22%	9.24%

Developed markets currently comprise 81%, and emerging markets 19%, of the non-US total equity market. Applying those weights to our developed and emerging markets assumptions yields a non-US large-capitalization compound return assumption of 8.42%.

⁸ Historically, the I/B/E/S consensus analyst forecast has overstated subsequent actual earnings growth by 15.6%. We reduce our assumption for earnings growth by 13.5% (1-(1/1.156)) accordingly.

Non-US Small Cap Equity

Due to lack of data availability in the non-us small-cap equity space, we assume the same small-cap premium for non-US small cap-equity as our assumption for US small-cap equity. We calculated a US small-cap equity premium of 0.72%, which yields a compound assumption of 9.14%, using the same methodology.

Global Equity

Modeled: World Equities, All Capitalizations

Compound Return: 7.86%

Arithmetic Average Return: 10.10%

Risk: 22.25%

We create a return assumption for the global equity market by applying the total world market capitalization weights to our US and Non-US Equity return estimates. The current weights, 61% US and 39% Non-US, yielding a Global Equity assumption of 7.86% in compound terms:

$$(61\% \times 7.45\%) + (39\% \times 8.51\%) = \mathbf{7.86\%}$$

Private Markets

Modeled: Buyouts, Venture Capital, & Distressed Investments, in Lockup Vehicles

Compound Return: 9.10%

Arithmetic Average Return: 12.20%

Risk: 26.25%

We assume a diversified private markets portfolio will tend to approximate the market exposure of US-Small Cap Equity over time, with a multiplication factor to account for the additional leverage, illiquidity, and risk premium:

$$(\text{US-Small Cap Equity Arithmetic Average}) \times (1.2 \text{ Illiquidity/Leverage/Risk Premium})$$

Weighting those assumptions accordingly results in a compound return assumption of 9.10%.

Given that our assumption set is intended to be passive in nature and not reflect active management, we are assuming an industry-average active manager or collection of active managers.

DIVERSIFYING INVESTMENTS

Diversifying investments are harder to model with public-market index proxies than traditional equity and fixed income. If the underlying sources of return for each asset class can be identified, we employ a build-up approach to model future projected returns. If a build-up approach is not appropriate, we use historical returns as the basis for our forward projected returns.

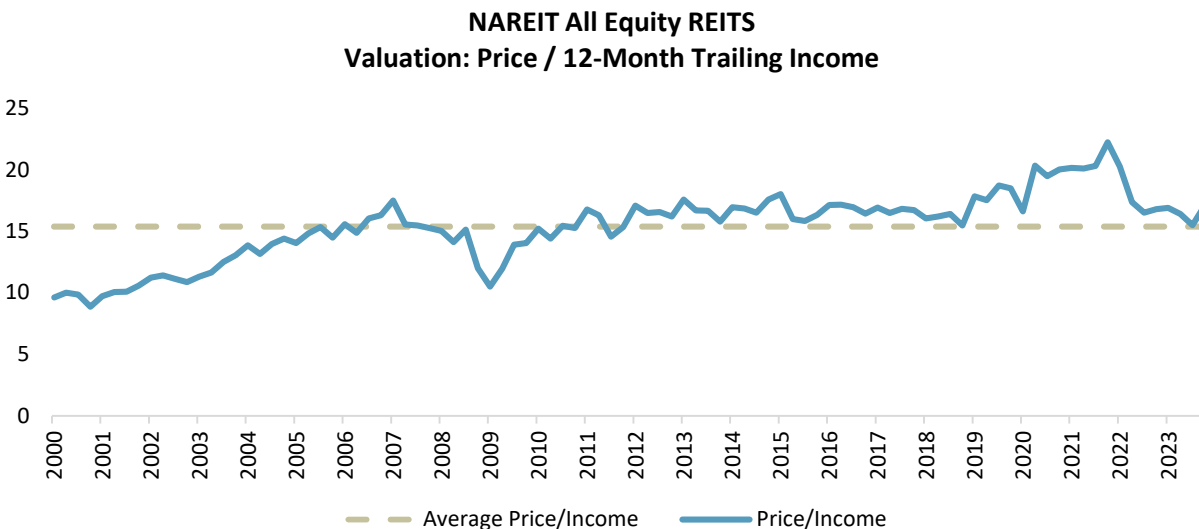
Real Estate

Modeled: Public (US Equity REITs)
Compound Return: 6.26%
Arithmetic Average Return: 8.40%
Risk: 21.75%

Our expected real estate return mirrors our equity process with a few key adjustments. For the build-up portion of the assumption, going-in cap rates replace the earnings and dividend calculations. And for the discounted free cash flow model, future earnings are based on breakeven inflation instead of analyst-derived earnings estimates.

For public equity REITs, we calculate the current cap rate, defined as income divided by price, of the FTSE NAREIT All Equity REITS Index: 5.85%.

The following chart depicts the inverse of the cap rate for the equity REIT benchmark: its historical price-to-income ratio.



Our modified free-cash-flow-to-equity model employs several input variables:

	<u>REITs</u>
Beginning (current) level =	\$218.64
Base year free cash flow to equity=	\$9.36
Expected earnings growth over next 5 years =	
Year 1	2.2%
Year 2	2.2%
Year 3	2.2%
Year 4	2.2%
Year 5	2.2%
Expected earnings growth past year 5=	2.2%

We assume that income from real estate will grow with the rate of expected inflation (2.2%). Just as before, we solve for the average annual rate of growth to find the equity risk premium. That rate of return is 2.40%. As above, we subtract the projected US Treasury return and average with the long-term historical geometric average realized real estate equity risk premium (2.66%). The result is an estimated equity risk premium of 2.53% for Real Estate.

Combining the Two Approaches

	<u>REITs</u>
<i>Building Block Approach</i>	5.85%
<i>Equity Risk Premium Approach</i>	<u>6.66%</u>
Average	6.26%

Marketable Alternatives

Modeled: Hedge Funds of Funds, Global GTAA, & Multi-Asset Alternative Strategies
Compound Return: 6.34%
Arithmetic Average Return: 7.20%
Risk: 14.00%

We assume a diversified portfolio that will tend to approximate the following market exposures over time:

- 40% Global Equity
- 30% Intermediate Fixed Income
- 30% Non-Core Fixed Income

Weighting those assumptions accordingly results in a compound return assumption of 6.34%.

Non-Core Fixed Income

Modeled: US and Non-US Below-Investment-Grade Fixed Income

Compound Return: 6.06%

Arithmetic Average Return: 7.10%

Risk: 14.75%

Direct Lending

Modeled: US Middle Market Direct Lending

Compound Return: 7.43%

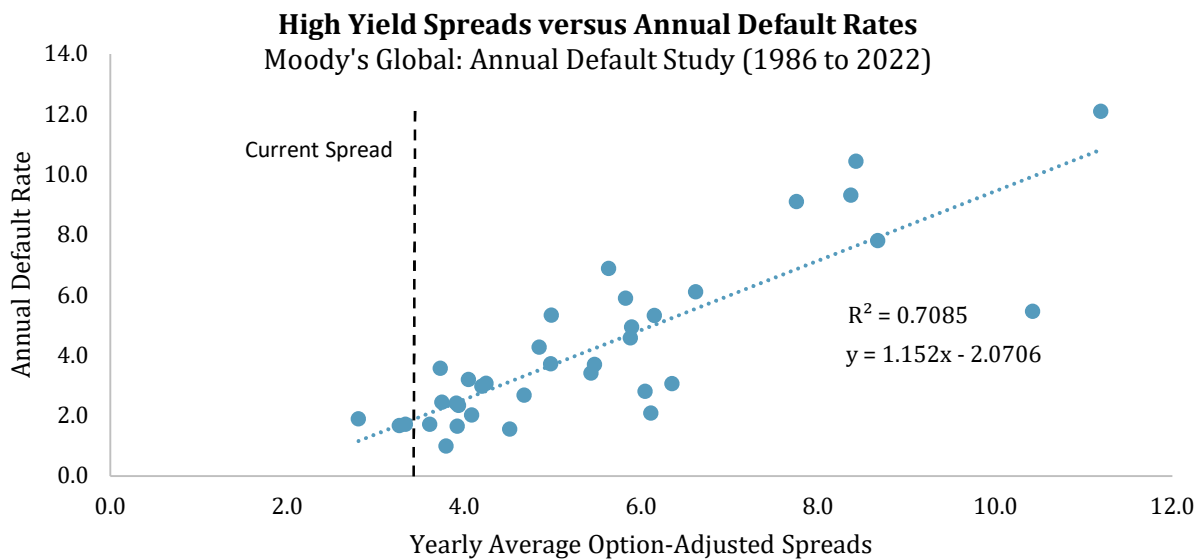
Arithmetic Average Return: 8.80%

Risk: 17.50%

We utilize the same methodology for Non-Core Fixed Income and Direct Lending. Our Non-Core Fixed Income assumption models global high-yield public debt market while our Direct Lending Assumption models US middle-market direct lending.

Our assumption methodology starts with the duration-matched treasury yield, adds the current yield spread, and subtracts an estimate for unrecovered defaults. Higher yielding debt offers a higher yield, or “yield spread” relative to investment-grade bonds to offer compensation for the risk of default. Our process considers that current spread and adjusts it downward to account for default probability.

As shown below, higher-than-average yield spreads relative to investment-grade bonds have historically corresponded to higher-than-average default rates.



Current option-adjusted spread:	3.4%
<i>Projected Default Rate:</i>	<i>1.8%</i>
<i>Historical Default Rate:</i>	<u><i>4.2%</i></u>
Assumed Default Rate:	3.0%

Given current spreads, the predicted model default rate for high-yield default is 3.5%. We average that predicted number with the long-term average high-yield default rate since 1983, which is 4.3%, to come up with the combined default assumption of 3.9%.

	<u>High Yield</u>	<u>Direct Lending</u>
Starting Treasury Yield:	3.79%	3.76%
Starting Yield Spread:	4.14%	5.54%
<i>Expected Default Rate:</i>	3.0%	3.0%
<i>Expected Default Recovery Rate:</i>	<u>38%</u>	<u>38%</u>
Default Effect:	<u>(1.87%)</u>	<u>(1.87%)</u>
Return Assumption:	6.06%	7.43%

Managed Futures

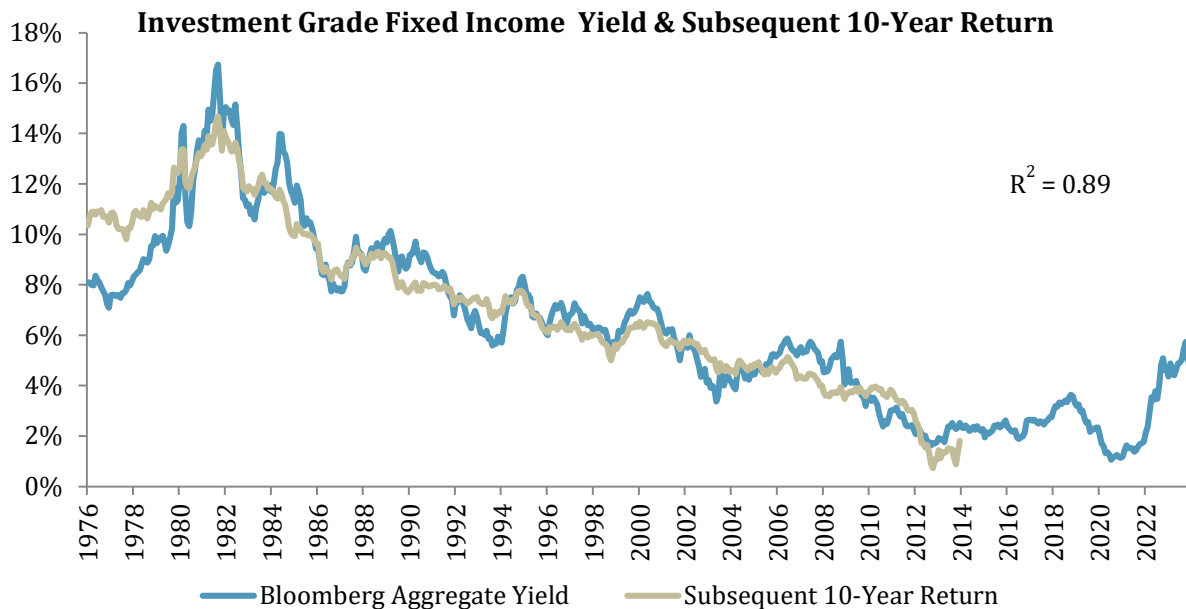
Modeled: Managed Futures Strategies Targeting 10% Volatility
Compound Return: 5.26%
Arithmetic Average Return: 5.70%
Risk: 10.00%

Using the SG Trend Index, an index of actual, “live,” in-sample managed futures strategies, we calculate the excess return to cash that managed futures strategies have returned since January 1, 2000 (the index’s inception date). We scale that premium based on a targeted 10% volatility level and arrive at a historical annualized arithmetic annual average premium over cash of 2.37%. We add back our Cash Equivalent return assumption of 2.89% to come up with a 5.26% return assumption for Managed Futures.

$$2.37\% + 2.89\% = \mathbf{5.26\%}$$

RISK MITIGATION / FIXED INCOME INVESTMENTS

Risk mitigation assets primarily consist of high-quality fixed income of various durations. Fixed income returns are highly dependent on entry yields. For the investment grade fixed income, since 1976, simple yields have explained 89% of subsequent 10-year returns:



Given the high degree of certainty of future returns stemming from the entry yield for investment-grade bonds, our fixed income process lets the market be our guide. One reason why current yields do not predict 100% of future returns is that some of the bonds in the index default. Our assumption reflects this reality.

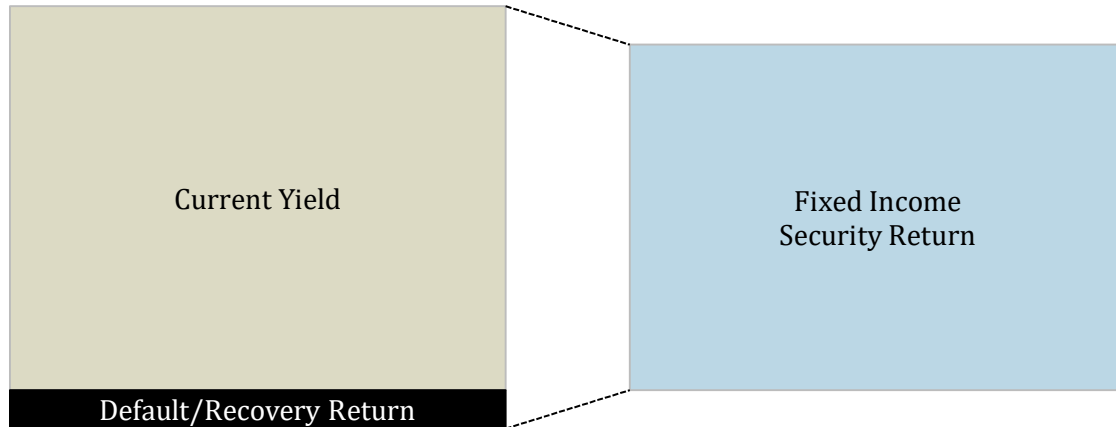
Core Fixed Income

Modeled: US Investment-Grade Aggregate and Hedged Non-US Aggregate Fixed Income

Compound Return: 4.58%

Arithmetic Average Return: 4.90%

Risk: 7.75%



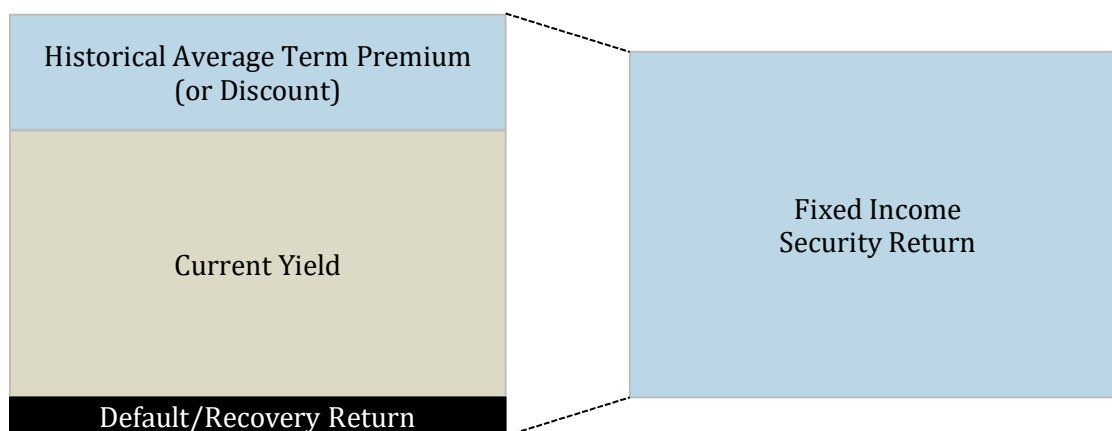
For our Core Fixed Income assumption, we model the full maturity curve of US investment grade fixed income, which currently has an aggregate duration of 6.1 years and are comprised of 51% US Government Bonds, 27% corporate bonds, and 22% securitized bonds. We adjust the current yield with expected default rate and recovery rates for non-Treasury securities using historical averages.

Starting Yield:	4.59%
<i>Expected Default Rate:</i>	<i>0.08%</i>
<i>Expected Default Recovery Rate:</i>	<u><i>43%</i></u>
Default Effect (50% Corp & Securitized):	(0.01%)
Return Assumption:	4.58%

We believe that this approach works equally well for US aggregate fixed income and for Non-US aggregate fixed income where the currency exposure is hedged back to the US dollar. By stripping out currency exposure, the non-US fixed income investor is left with a portfolio of fixed income securities expecting similar underlying characteristics to the US fixed income portfolio.

For fixed income securities with different durations from Core or Aggregate fixed income, we start with the expected return for the Core fixed income portfolio (for portfolios including government and non-government bonds) or the expected return for the average Treasury bond (for US Treasury bond portfolios), and then add or subtract a historically observed term premium to that expected return. Historically, investors have experienced lower returns by investing in shorter-duration bonds, and higher returns from longer-duration bonds, as compared to a “Core” or Aggregate bond portfolio.

For the fixed income categories beyond Core Fixed Income, we introduce a new building block, the historical average term spread:



Long-Term Treasury Bonds

Modeled: US Long-Term Treasury Bonds
Compound Return: 4.60%
Arithmetic Average Return: 5.60%
Risk: 15.00%

For the Long-Term Treasury assumption, we model US Treasuries with a duration of greater than 10 years. We utilize the current yield from the full US Treasury curve and add the historical average term premium for holding longer-term Treasuries.

Starting Treasury Yield (Full Curve):	4.14%
Average Historical Term Premium:	+0.46%
Return Assumption:	4.60%

Short-Term US Treasury Inflation Protected Securities (TIPS)

Modeled: Short-Term US TIPS
Compound Return: 3.73%
Arithmetic Average Return: 3.80%
Risk: 3.25%

For the Short-Term TIPS assumption, we model US Treasuries with a duration up to 5 years.

Starting Treasury Yield (Full Curve):	4.14%
Average Historical Term Premium:	-0.41%
Return Assumption:	3.73%

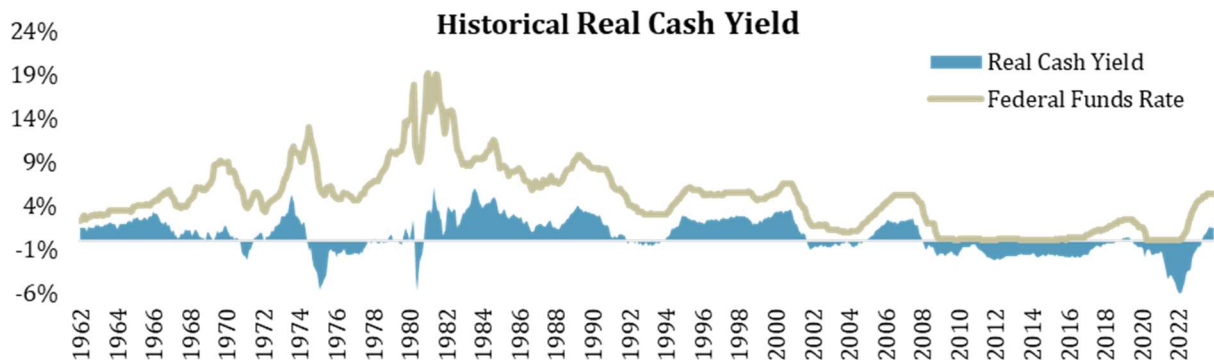
Cash Equivalents

Modeled: 91-Day T-Bills
Compound Return: 2.89%
Arithmetic Average Return: 2.90%
Risk: 2.25%

We use 91-Day T-Bills for the basis of our Cash Equivalents assumption.

Starting Treasury Yield (Full Curve):	4.14%
Average Historical Term Premium:	-1.25%
Return Assumption:	2.89%

We caution that there is an inherent problem with forecasting a 10-year return for an asset that matures every 91 days. Nominal cash returns are highly sensitive to nominal short-term interest rates, which we expect to be as variable over the next decade as they have been historically. As illustrated in the chart below, while investors typically demand a positive real yield from cash, periods of negative real return to cash have existed for considerable periods of time – including most of the time from 2008 to 2022. Our risk assumption reflects an appropriate range of uncertainty around our return projection for cash equivalents.



RISK

Our risk assumptions are mostly derived from history, but we have enhanced historical metrics with qualitative overlays in several asset categories.

For each asset category, we began by examining the following historical annual returns:

Inflation	US CPI-U
Global Equity	MSCI ACWI IMI back to 1994; MSCI ACWI before 1994
US Equity	Russell 3000 back to 1979; S&P 500 before 1979
Non-US Equity	MSCI ACWI ex US IMI back to 1994; MSCI EAFE before 1994
Private Markets	1.2x Russell 2000 back to 1970
Real Estate	FTSE NAREIT
Marketable Alternatives	40% our Global Equity series, 30% our Intermediate Fixed Income series, and 30% our Non-Core Fixed Income series
Non-Core Fixed Income	ICE BofA High Yield Master
Direct Lending	Morningstar LSTA US Leveraged Loan 100 Index
Managed Futures	SG Trend Index
Cash Equivalents	91-Day T-Bills
Short-Term TIPS	ICE BofA US 1-5 Year TIPS
Intermediate Fixed Income	ICE BofA Broad Market
Long-Duration Treasurys	ICE BofA 10+ Year US Treasurys

In each case, we calculated the longest-term standard deviation of returns possible for the category. Then, we calculated the standard deviation of annual returns over the last ten years. The average of these two figures represents our base-case risk assumption.

Next, we examined the worst annual return for each proxy index, going back as far as possible into history. We assumed this return as the worst-case scenario. In some cases, the normal return distribution implied by our return and risk assumptions suggested that the actual worst-case scenario had less than a 1% probability (1 in 100 years) of occurring. Because we are uncomfortable assuming that what has actually happened in the real world is extremely unlikely to happen again in the future, we adjusted our risk assumption upward until the actual, real-world worst-case scenario had at least a 1% probability of occurring under our assumed normal return distribution.

Finally, based on this analysis and our qualitative assessment of the quality and longevity of our return data, we made several qualitative adjustments, where noted. The results of this risk analysis follow.

The following table depicts actual standard deviations of annual return, measured in the long term (as far back as history will allow), for the last ten years, and the average of those two figures.

Adding or subtracting our qualitative adjustment results in the Risk Assumption at the far right.

	<u>Standard Deviation of Returns</u>			Qualitative Adjustment	Risk Assumption
	10 Years	Longest-Term	Average		(Rounded)
Global Equity	15.30%	17.81%	16.56%	5.75%	22.25%
US Equity	16.00%	17.29%	16.64%	3.25%	20.00%
Non-US Equity	14.86%	22.00%	18.43%	6.00%	24.50%
Private Markets	18.46%	25.18%	21.82%	5.00%	26.75%
Real Estate	19.01%	20.42%	19.72%	2.00%	21.75%
Marketable Alternatives	10.10%	11.17%	10.63%	3.35%	14.00%
Non-Core Fixed Income	9.09%	15.28%	12.19%	2.50%	14.75%
Direct Lending	5.30%	12.24%	8.77%	8.75%	17.50%
Managed Futures	11.35%	10.23%	10.79%	-0.79%	10.00%
Long-Term Treasurys	14.96%	12.95%	13.96%	1.00%	15.00%
Core Fixed Income	6.24%	7.20%	6.72%	1.00%	7.75%
Short-Term TIPS	2.90%	3.55%	3.23%		3.25%
Cash Equivalents	1.52%	3.15%	2.33%		2.25%

Our qualitative adjustments to Risk were as follows:

Global Equity (+5.75%), US Equity (+3.25%), Non-US Equity (+6.00%), Real Estate (+2.00%), Non-Core Fixed Income (+2.50%), Direct Lending (+8.75%), Long-Term Treasurys (+1.00%), Core Fixed Income (+1.00%):

These categories were adjusted upward to make their actual worst-case experience greater than a 1% probability of occurring under the assumed return distribution.

Private Markets (+5.00%):

Private markets have a shorter history than other asset classes and was adjusted upward to make the worst-case experience greater than a 2.5% probability of occurring under the assumed return distribution.

Marketable Alternatives (+3.35%):

We apply the same adjustments from above at the target underlying asset class weights.

Managed Futures (-0.79%):

This adjustment adds or subtracts to achieve a 10.00% target volatility target.

The following table examines the probability of the actual experienced worst case occurring under our assumed normal distribution of returns, as implied by our expected return and standard deviation of returns, after accounting for qualitative adjustments to risk.

We measure the actual worst-case scenario in “sigmas,” or standard deviations from our assumed mean return. Measuring this way, we ask, “How likely was the actual experienced worst case, according to the distribution parameters we have assumed?” We have qualitatively adjusted several asset classes to ensure that the probability of the actually experienced worst case is always greater than 1%, meaning we assume that the experienced worst case has at least a one-in-a-hundred-year chance of happening under our assumptions. For asset classes that rely on a build-up of underlying assumptions, we apply the same qualitative adjustment from the underlying asset class to the top-level asset class.

	Worst Year		Actual Worst Case, in Sigmas from Assumption	Implied Probability of Actual Worst Case Occurring
Global Equity	-42.0%	2008	2.34	1.0%
US Equity	-37.3%	2008	2.34	1.0%
Non-US Equity	-46.0%	2008	2.34	1.0%
Private Markets	-40.5%	2008	1.97	2.5%
Real Estate	-42.2%	1974	2.33	1.0%
Marketable Alternatives	-23.3%	2008	2.18	1.5%
Non-Core Fixed Income	-26.9%	2008	2.31	1.0%
Direct Lending	-32.0%	2008	2.33	1.0%
Managed Futures	-8.1%	2018	1.33	9.2%
Long-Term Treasurys	-29.3%	2022	2.33	1.0%
Core Fixed Income	-13.0%	2022	2.32	1.0%
Short-Term TIPS	-2.7%	2022	2.03	2.1%
Cash Equivalents	0.0%	1938	1.25	10.6%

CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS

Our forward-looking correlation assumptions are mostly derived from long-term history. The indexes used for each asset class match what has been used above for our risk analysis.

Our assumed return correlation matrix follows:

Sellwood Consulting 2024 Correlation Coefficient Assumptions

	Inflation	Global Equity	US Equity	Non-US Equity	Private Markets	Real Estate	Marketable Alternatives	Non-Core Fixed Income	Direct Lending	Managed Futures	Long-Term Treasurys	Core Fixed Income	Short-Term TIPS	Cash Equivalents
Inflation	1.00	-0.08	-0.08	-0.06	-0.06	-0.06	-0.05	-0.01	0.21	-0.06	-0.19	-0.13	0.19	0.41
Global Equity	-0.08	1.00	0.90	0.92	0.78	0.62	0.93	0.70	0.52	-0.09	0.06	0.22	0.33	-0.03
US Equity	-0.08	0.90	1.00	0.68	0.86	0.65	0.85	0.67	0.49	-0.12	0.08	0.23	0.26	-0.02
Non-US Equity	-0.06	0.92	0.68	1.00	0.60	0.51	0.87	0.66	0.50	-0.05	0.02	0.19	0.36	-0.02
Private Markets	-0.06	0.78	0.86	0.60	1.00	0.69	0.77	0.66	0.48	-0.09	0.00	0.15	0.21	-0.02
Real Estate	-0.06	0.62	0.65	0.51	0.69	1.00	0.66	0.63	0.50	-0.01	0.17	0.31	0.35	-0.04
Marketable Alternatives	-0.05	0.93	0.85	0.87	0.77	0.66	1.00	0.86	0.60	-0.13	0.11	0.34	0.45	0.01
Non-Core Fixed Income	-0.01	0.70	0.67	0.66	0.66	0.63	0.86	1.00	0.69	-0.15	0.05	0.31	0.53	-0.02
Direct Lending	0.21	0.52	0.49	0.50	0.48	0.50	0.60	0.69	1.00	-0.13	-0.21	0.04	0.41	-0.02
Managed Futures	-0.06	-0.09	-0.12	-0.05	-0.09	-0.01	-0.13	-0.15	-0.13	1.00	0.09	0.03	0.05	0.01
Long-Term Treasurys	-0.19	0.06	0.08	0.02	0.00	0.17	0.11	0.05	-0.21	0.09	1.00	0.87	0.30	0.05
Core Fixed Income	-0.13	0.22	0.23	0.19	0.15	0.31	0.34	0.31	0.04	0.03	0.87	1.00	0.55	0.14
Short-Term TIPS	0.19	0.33	0.26	0.36	0.21	0.35	0.45	0.53	0.41	0.05	0.30	0.55	1.00	0.06
Cash Equivalents	0.41	-0.03	-0.02	-0.02	-0.02	-0.04	0.01	-0.02	-0.02	0.01	0.05	0.14	0.06	1.00

APPENDIX: SOURCES

We are grateful to several data sources for our analysis. They were:

FRED, The St. Louis Fed Federal Reserve Economic Data

<https://fred.stlouisfed.org/>

FTSE NAREIT

<https://www.reit.com/data-research/reit-indexes/ftse-nareit-us-real-estate-index-historical-values-returns>
<http://www.ftse.com/products/indices/russell-us>

Professor Aswath Damodaran, Stern School of Business

http://pages.stern.nyu.edu/~adamodar/New_Home_Page/datafile/implpr.html
http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2581517

Research Affiliates

<http://www.researchaffiliates.com>

Blackrock

<http://www.blackrock.com>

Standard & Poors

<http://www.standardandpoors.com>

Morgan Stanley Capital International

<http://www.msci.com/>

Moodys

https://www.moodys.com/researchdocumentcontentpage.aspx?docid=PBC_151031
https://www.moodys.com/researchdocumentcontentpage.aspx?docid=PBC_154805

Professor Robert Shiller

<http://www.econ.yale.edu/~shiller/data.htm>



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