

Monthly Commentary



November injected much needed relief into markets as volatility settled and major indices continued to move up their ascending channels for most of the month before meeting resistance at the very end.

The MSCI Europe Real Estate Index (price return 7.75%) outperformed the MSCI US REIT index (price return 5.76%) in USD terms by ~2%. The GPR 250 REIT World index produced a price return of 5.72%.

Data Center REITs were among the best performing sectors of the month on a real estate and equity basis—producing a 18.46% price return, while self-storage was the worst performing REIT sector coming in at -4.8%.

The month saw more jumbo rate hikes from major economies; the UK and US. The Fed raised the federal funds rate by 75 bps to 3.75%-4%, with the BOE following suit to a policy rate of 3%. US inflation data came in softer than expected: October m/m Core CPI increased by ~0.3%, translating into an annualized rate of 3.6%—well below the latest annual figure of 6.3%.

US midterm elections saw the Republicans take the house, but no cigar in the senate—ending with a tepid victory much closer to the margins than originally suggested by the polls.



Rent control measures returned to the public eye as midterm voters approved several rent control regulations in California, Maine, and Florida. Although those aimed at Florida are unlikely to come to fruition and with no indirect portfolio exposure to Maine, these regulatory risks are monitored actively.

US West Coast port negotiations continued to be drawn out – shifting cargo logistics to US East Coast markets. West Coast ports accounted for 38% of import shipments compared to 62% for the East Coast as of 31 October 2022, the largest portion of import shipments for the East Coast YTD. The development is far off from becoming a trend but is expected to continue over the short-term and should lift East Coast port industrial markets.

Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company announced that it will be adding a second factory to its project in Phoenix, Arizona with an expected foreign direct investment of \$12 billion. This came on the back of a \$100mn state funding announcement to enhance state infrastructure, human capital, and research – supplemented by Maricopa County Community College (the county in which Phoenix is situated) adding courses supportive to those who wish to work in the industry.

Arizona's ambition to becoming the preeminent force in the US semiconductor industry is expected to drive state market fundamentals across the industrial and office sectors for years to come. In other industrial news, Rexford Industrial (REXR) credit rating was upgraded from BBB to BBB+ by Fitch Ratings while Prologis (PLD) got ranked second in the US for on-site solar generation by the Solar Energy Industries Association.

The office sector continues to come under pressure – its latest bane driven by en masse US tech layoffs. According to the website Layoffs.fyi, more than 50,000 workers in the US tech sector lost their jobs in November.



Focus for office REITs continues to be on high quality, fully stabilized office properties with long-term credit leases. The biggest office transaction of November was a \$350 million acquisition of a 1330 sixth avenue New York office by a joint venture led by Empire Capital Holdings.

November was a tempestuous month for China with spiking Covid cases and social unrest dominating Chinese headlines. Protests broke out after the government pulled back its initial easing of Covid restrictions when daily cases shot through the roof to eclipse the wave that brought Shanghai to a standstill earlier this year.

The government yielded to the protests in the last week of November when it once again started pulling back restrictions. Chinese markets were volatile during this time but ended up ~10% higher than the start of the month.

REITs are expected to show a greater dispersion of intra asset class returns in 2023 than YTD. Hybrid companies, with offensive and defensive characteristics, are considered best for 2023 positioning in our global slowdown and shallow US recession base case.

The next shoe to drop is earnings curtailment which REITs are generally less vulnerable to than equities owing to the contractual nature of their revenue streams.



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