

through a network of company-owned and independent bottlers/distributors, wholesalers, and retailers. Leading company/licensed brands include Coca-Cola, Diet Coke, Sprite, Fanta, Fresca, Dasani, glaceau vitaminwater, Powerade, and Minute Maid.

Directors and officers own 1.3% of stock; Berkshire Hathaway, 9.4%; Vanguard, 7.0%; BlackRock, 5.9% (3/19 Proxy). Chairman & CEO: James Quincey. Inc.: DE. Address: One Coca-Cola Plaza, Atlanta, GA 30313. Tel.: 404-676-2121. Web: www.coca-cola.com

ANNUAL RATES Past Est'd '16-'18 Past 10 Yrs. 3.5% 4.0% 4.0% 5 Yrs. of change (per sh) to '22-'24 Sales "Cash Flow" -1.5% 6.5% 6.5% Earnings Dividends Book Value 8.0% 7.5% -9.5% 5.0% 2.5%

36545

16503

27194

2288

8403

30634

18191

8534

29223

2498

23117

11464

13636

25100

N/A

**Current Assets** 

Accts Payable Debt Due

Current Liab.

Cal- endar			SALES (\$ r Sep.Per	nill.) Dec.Per	Full Year
2016	10282	11539	10633	9409	41863
2017	9118	9702	9078	7512	35410
2018	7626	8927	8245	7058	31856
2019	8694	9997	9507	8802	37000
2020	9000	10400	9900	9200	38500
Cal-	EARNINGS PER SHARE A				Full
endar	Mar.Per	Jun.Per	Sep.Per	Dec.Per	
2016	.45	.60	.49	.37	1.91
2017	.43	.59	.50	.39	1.91
2018	.46	.61	.58	.43	2.08
2019	.48	.63	.56	.43	2.10
2020	.50	.64	.62	.49	2.25
Cal-	QUARTERLY DIVIDENDS PAID B =				Full
endar	Mar.31	Jun.30	Sep.30	Dec.31	Year
2016		.35	.35	.70	1.40
2017		.37	.37	.74	1.48
2018		.39	.39	.78	1.56
2019		.40	.40	.80	1.60
2020	1				

Top-line trends at The Coca-Cola Company have been generally encouraging. Revenues likely advanced about 15% in 2019, with contributions from Coca-Cola Beverages Africa, which had previously been accounted for as a discontinued operation, and Costa Coffee, which was acquired last January, helping to drive the gains. More importantly, organic revenues have continued climb at a good clip, including 5% growth in the September quarter. In particular, the flag-ship *Coca-Cola* brand has been a bright spot, led by strong gains in the U.S. for Coca-Cola Zero Sugar and for smaller package products, such as 7.5 ounce cans.

The company will look to get earnings on the upswing in 2020. For the recently concluded year, share net probably finished roughly flat with 2018. (Results will likely be released in mid-February.) Comparable currency neutral operating income increased 11% during the first nine months of 2019, and stronger gains were likely registered in the December quarter. Foreign currency headwinds and a slightly higher tax rate, though, figure to largely offset this progress on the bottom line. For

the current year, we look for continued solid growth in organic revenues to lift the top line at a mid-single-digit clip. In particular, we'll be monitoring the progress of recent additions to the sparkling beverage portfolio, Coke Plus Coffee and Coke Energy, the latter of which will debut in the U.S. this year. And share net should climb at a slightly faster pace (6%-8%), given the prospect of modest margin expansion (a key focus for management) and diminishing drag from unfavorable change rates.

The stock has dropped two notches in Timeliness since our October report. It is now just an Average (3) selection for relative price performance in the six to 12 months ahead. This issue, though, will continue to have considerable appeal with conservative investors, given its Safety rank of 1 (Highest) and top score (100) for Price Stability. And the yield here remains comfortably above the Value Line median, though increases in the payout will likely lag behind earnings growth in the near term, as the beverage company looks to increase its dividend coverage. Robert M. Greene January 17, 2020

(A) Based on diluted shares. Next earnings (18¢); '14, (44¢); '15, (33¢ report due mid-February. Excludes nonrecuring gain/(losses): '03, (9¢); '04, (3¢); '05, (7¢); about the first April, July, '06, (11¢); '08, (27¢); '10, 79¢; '11, (8¢); '13, reinvestment plan available.

(18¢); '14, (44¢); '15, (33¢); '16, (42¢); '17, (C) Includes intangibles. In '18: \$17.3 bill., (\$1.64); '18, (51¢). (B) Div'ds historically paid \$4.05/sh. about the first April, July, Oct., Dec. ■ Div'd (D) In millions, adjusted for stock split.

Company's Financial Strength Stock's Price Stability A++ 100 Price Growth Persistence **Earnings Predictability** 100