

# **SPECIALTY FINANCE**

MARKET UPDATE | SPRING 2023



## **Houlihan Lokey Specialty Finance Market Update**

Dear Clients and Friends,

We are pleased to present our Specialty Finance Market Update for the spring of 2023.

Q1 2023 was a unique and historic quarter in many ways—most notably the dislocation across the bank sector and its impact on the broader financial services industry. With Q1 earnings on the horizon, the market appears to have stabilized relative to early March.

This challenging macroeconomic environment creates many headwinds as well as opportunities for companies across the specialty finance sector. We remain busy with engagements across both commercial and consumer finance where differentiated platforms continue to garner interest in the capital markets and among strategic and financial buyers.

As in prior newsletters, we have included industry insights to help you stay ahead in our dynamic and constantly evolving sector, a public markets update, and selected transaction announcements. We hope you find this quarterly update to be informative and that it serves as a valuable resource to you. We look forward to staying in touch and hopefully getting together soon for a drink, coffee, or lunch.

Best regards,



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## **Specialty Finance Subverticals Covered**

ABL/FACTORING AUTO FINANCE CREDIT CARDS

DEBT BUYING/COLLECTION FINANCE HEALTHCARE FINANCE

INSTALLMENT LOANS LEASE-TO-OWN LITIGATION FINANCE

PAYDAY LENDING/PAWN POINT-OF-SALE FINANCE PREMIUM FINANCE

**SMALL BUSINESS LOANS** 



SOLAR/HIP









STUDENT LENDING



Houlihan Lokey is the trusted advisor to more top decision-makers than any other independent global investment bank.

#### No. 1 Advisor to Specialty Finance Companies

2017–2022 M&A Advisory Rankings All U.S. Specialty Finance Transactions							
	Advisor	Deals					
1	Houlihan Lokey	42					
2	Hovde Group, LLC	25					
3	Piper Sandler & Co.	23					
4	Stifel Financial Corp.	21					
5	Morgan Stanley	16					
5	Credit Suisse (USA), Inc.	16					
5	Wells Fargo Securities, LLC	16					
8	J.P. Morgan Securities LLC	14					
9	Barclays Capital Inc.	12					
10	Citigroup Global Markets Inc.	11					
Source: S&P Global Market Intelligence.							

	3–2022 M&A Advisory Rankings J.S. Specialty Finance Transactions	
	Advisor	Deals
1	Houlihan Lokey	81
2	J.P. Morgan Securities LLC	42
3	Piper Sandler & Co.	38
4	Credit Suisse (USA), Inc.	32
5	Stifel Financial Corp.	30
6	BofA Securities, Inc.	28
7	Barclays Capital Inc.	27
8	Citigroup Global Markets Inc.	26
8	Hovde Group, LLC	26
10	Wells Fargo Securities, LLC	24
Source:	: S&P Global Market Intelligence.	

## **Exceptional Qualifications in Specialty Finance (Select Transactions)**

# **MED**SHIFT







2019/2020







































## **Recent Developments**

Houlihan Lokey's Brent Ferrin was recently featured in *Monitordaily*, where he discussed M&A activity in the equipment leasing industry



### **Slow Motion**

- The slowdown in M&A activity is largely a symptom of a less than deal-friendly economic environment
- Of the myriad economic headwinds dragging M&A activity down, rising interest rates have been particularly damaging



Brent Ferrin Managing Director

In 2022, the Federal Reserve raised interest rates seven times, and it did so yet again in early February, boosting the target range to between 4.5% and 4.75%. In announcing its rate hike in February, the Fed did say "inflation has eased somewhat," but it also noted that it "anticipates that ongoing increases in the target range will be appropriate." During a livestream presentation for Monitor in early March, Elliot Eisenberg, PhD, an economist and public speaker, said he expects there to be at least three rate increases before the end of June.

## **Planning Ahead**

■ For companies looking to buy or sell, patience will be the key. Fortunately, many businesses are already taking such an approach, which could lead to higher yields and improved performance in the long haul, even if it may be dampening M&A activity in early 2023

"While actual deals aren't closing right now, many companies are actively planning for 12 to 18 months down the line, examining what their alternatives will be at that point, whether that means pursuing a merger, acquisition or even a capital raise"

## Closing the Gap

With a "catastrophic" recession seeming less and less likely, the gap will close between companies that couldn't find a compromise for a sale last year, while newer buyers and sellers will better understand where their losses will be through the recessionary cycle, giving them more confidence when going to market



I think most of the deals that close this year will more than likely be some of the deals that had stalled or were put on hold last year.

We're in sort of this warm spot in the market now where people are getting a little bit optimistic about the overall rate environment.

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## **Specialty Finance Market Update**

#### **Key Themes Across the Sector**

- Public specialty finance company trading performance has been mixed
- Imminent recession and higher unemployment levels
- Inflation remains at elevated levels, but pace of rate hikes has slowed
- Cautious outlook for originations and earnings
- Ability of the Fed to achieve a "soft landing" through interest rate hikes
- 6 Concerns around potential credit deterioration across select asset classes



#### Performance vs. S&P 500 (Apr. 2021 – Apr. 2023)



## **Update on U.S. Bank Sector Dislocation**

#### 2023 Bank Dislocation

- The failures of Silicon Valley Bank, Signature Bank, and First Republic Bank, along with the unwinding of the crypto-focused Silvergate Bank, have created significant uncertainty across the banking sector.
- The fire sale of Credit Suisse to UBS at a significant discount to Credit Suisse's market price further shines a light on the distress across global banking institutions.
- Despite efforts from regulators to assuage concerns around the strength of U.S. banks, investors remain skeptical.
- YTD, the KBW Bank index has traded down +20% while the S&P is up 9%.
- The crisis of confidence centers around a few key areas:
  - Deposit outflows
  - Quality of depositor base (% uninsured/ concentration risk)
  - Balance sheet growth and diversification
- Level of fair value losses
- Increase in wholesale borrowings (non-deposit funding)
- Liquidity and capital position
- While challenges remain in the U.S. banking sector, opportunities will arise for institutions that find themselves in a strong financial position.

#### Three of the Four Largest Bank Failures in History Happened in 2023 March 20, 2023 March 27, 2023 May 1, 2023 **TARGET TARGET** BUYER **BUYER TARGET BUYER** Flagstar svb) J.P.Morgan Citizens FIRST REPUBLIC 🟏 Bancorp, Inc.

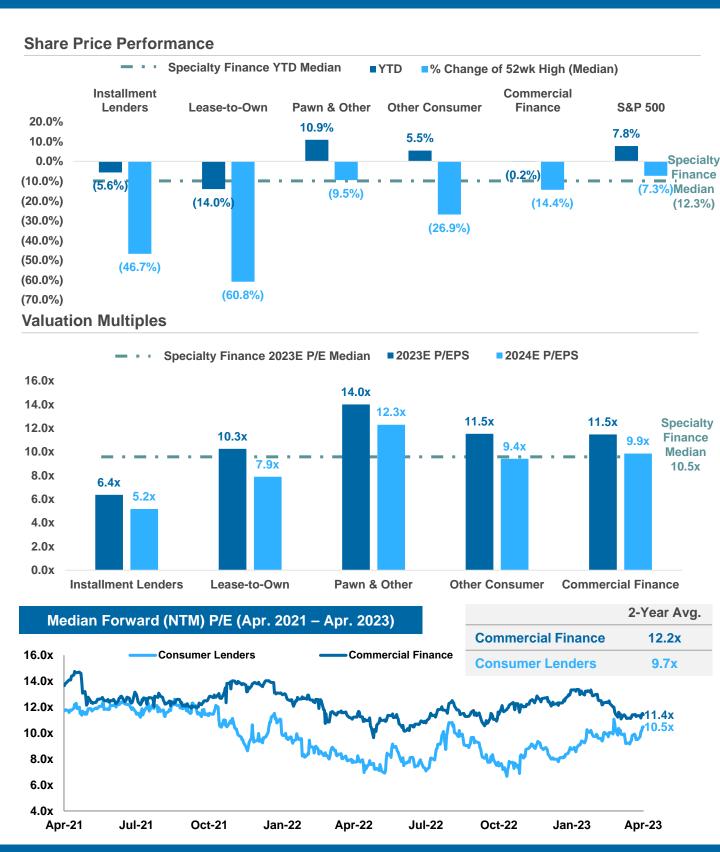
#### Increased Scrutiny on the Fair Value of Held to Maturity Securities

- Held-to-maturity (HTM) assets on a bank's balance sheet are subject to limited fair value (FV) disclosure.
- However, as Silicon Valley Bank learned the hard way, having elevated levels of unrealized FV losses can be fatal if a bank finds itself in a liquidity crunch that requires selling assets and realizing losses.
- The total FV losses on Silicon Valley Bank's securities portfolio took many investors by surprise and contributed to the accelerated failure of the bank.
- HTM unrealized FV losses remain elevated across the U.S. banking sector (+\$300 billion at the end of 2022).

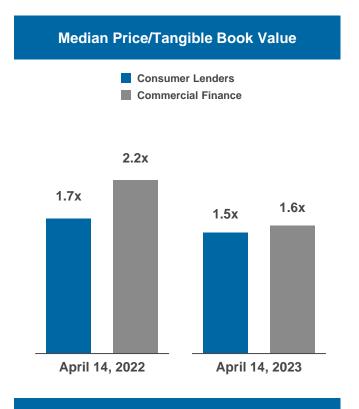


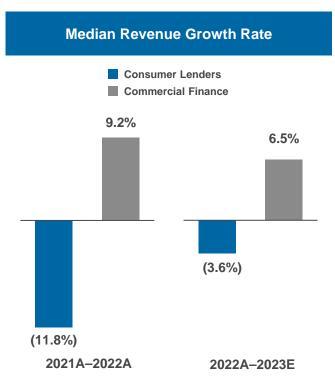
We are therefore expecting to see increased scrutiny of the footnote disclosure of the fair value of HTM securities by both investors and regulators.

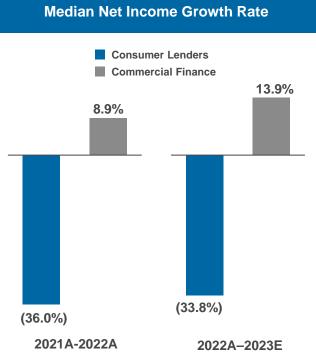
## **Public Company Market Update**

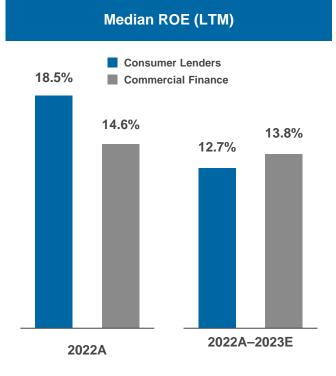


## **Public Company Valuation**



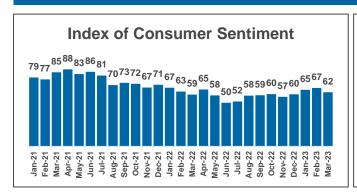


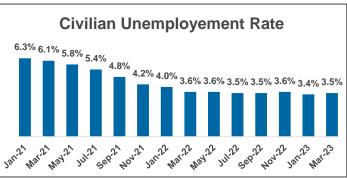




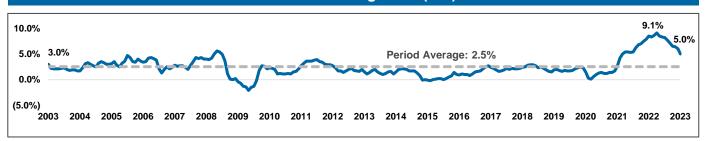
## **U.S. Consumer Market Update**

#### **Current State of the Consumer**

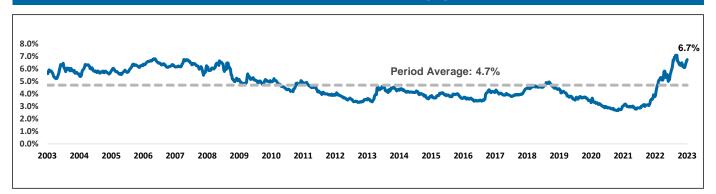




### **Consumer Pricing Index (CPI)**

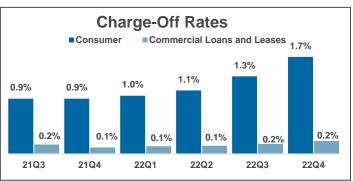


#### 30-Year Fixed Rate Mortgage



## **Consumer Credit Appetite and Performance**

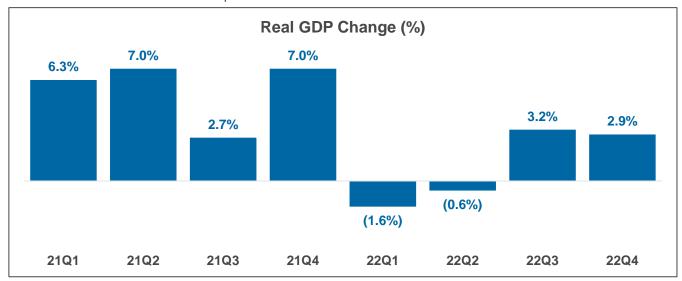




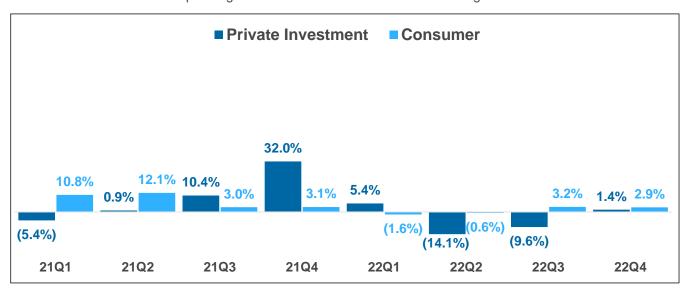
## **GDP Shows an Increase**

#### GDP Increased at an Annual Rate in Q4

- Real GDP increased at an annual rate of 2.9% in Q4 2022 according to the "advance" estimate released by the Bureau of Economic Analysis.
  - In the third quarter, real GDP increased 3.2%.
- The increase in real GDP reflected increases in private inventory investment and consumer spending, along with federal and state government spending.
- Nonresidential fixed investment spending also showed an increase that was partly offset by decreases in residential fixed investment and exports.



- The increase in private inventory investment was led by manufacturing (mainly petroleum and coal products as well as chemicals) in addition to mining, utilities, and construction industries (led by utilities).
- The increase in consumer spending reflected increases in both services and goods.



# **Public Company Trading Comps**

												perating M		2022E
		Price as of	Industry	Market	% of 52-	P/E	PS	Pr	ice		LTM	Pre-Tax	Revenue	-2023E Pre-Tax
	Ticker	4/14/2023	Focus	Сар	Week High		2024E	BV	TBV	ROA	ROE	Margin	Growth	Growth
Installment Lenders OneMain Holdings,	OME	<b>#07.70</b>	In atallar and	<b>#4.550.0</b>	74.00/	5.0	4.0	4.5	0.4:	0.00/	07.00/	44.00/	50.00/	(40.70()
Inc. Enova International,	OMF	\$37.73	Installment	\$4,558.2	74.3%	5.8x	4.9x	1.5x	3.4x	3.9%	37.6%	41.6%	52.2%	(13.7%)
Inc.	ENVA	\$45.93	Online Lender	1,444.6	82.7	6.0x	5.4x	1.2	1.8	6.3	22.4%	27.2	100.0	NM
goeasy Ltd.	GSY	\$71.47	POS/Installment	1,181.5	66.3	6.8x	5.7x	1.8	2.9	4.8	24.4%	30.7	94.9	NM
LendingClub Corp.	LC	\$7.19	Online Lender	772.7	41.1	20.8x	8.5x	0.7	0.8	1.7	13.1%	12.1	(20.4)	(56.0)
World Acceptance Corp.	WRLD	\$82.43	Installment	475.5	39.3	NM	11.6x	1.3	1.4	3.1	13.9%	2.6	0.9	(97.1)
Regional	RM	\$26.51	Installment	254.1	53.3	5.6x	4.1x	0.8	0.9	3.9	30.9%	13.2	10.6	(1.2)
Management Corp.  OppFi Inc.	OPFI	\$2.07	Online Lender	226.9 <sup>(1)</sup>	54.8	7.3x	5.2x	NM	NM	0.6	37.1%	1.7	NM	NM
Oportun Financial														
Corp.	OPRT	\$3.84	Online Lender	128.3	27.5	NM	2.3x	0.2	0.3	NM	NM	NM	15.7	NM
CURO Group Holdings Corp.	CURO	\$1.80	Online/Installment	73.5	13.9	NM	2.3x	NM	NM	NM	NM	NM	108.2	30.3
Median Mean					53.3% 50.3%	6.4x 8.7x	5.2x 5.6x	1.2x 1.1x	1.4x 1.6x	3.9% 3.5%	24.4% 25.6%	13.2% 18.4%	33.9% 45.3%	(13.7%) (27.6%)
Lease-to-Own					30.3%	0.7 X	J.0X	1.18	1.0x	3.3%	23.0%	10.4%	45.5%	(27.0%)
Upbound Group, Inc.	UPBD	\$23.94	Retail Leasing	1,334.2	75.0	8.6	7.1	2.5	NM	4.0	13.9	1.4	(8.3)	120.3
PROG Holdings, Inc.	PRG	\$24.69	Retail Leasing	1,168.4	83.6	10.3	8.9	2.1	8.2	16.0	22.9	5.7	(7.8)	(55.5)
The Aaron's Company	,		•										. ,	, ,
Inc.	AAN	\$10.59	Retail Leasing	337.1	47.2	11.5	7.9	0.5	0.7	6.4	NM	NM	0.3	(76.9)
Conn's, Inc.	CONN	\$5.26	Retail Leasing	127.0	31.2	NM	NM	0.3	0.3	NM	NM	NM	(15.8)	NM
Katapult Holdings, Inc.	KPLT	\$0.47	Retail Leasing	46.3	22.0	NM	NM	6.4	8.7	NM	NM	NM	10.1	(42.0)
FlexShopper, Inc.	FPAY	\$0.77	Retail Leasing	16.8	24.3	NM	NM	NM	NM	1.3	6.9	NM	NM	NM
Median					39.2%	10.3x	7.9x	2.1x	4.4x	5.2%	13.9%	3.6%	(7.8%)	(48.8%)
Mean Pawn					47.2%	10.1x	8.0x	2.4x	4.5x	6.9%	14.6%	3.6%	(4.3%)	(13.6%)
FirstCash Holdings,	FCFS	\$96.06	Pawn/LTO	4,446.9	96.1	16.5	14.4	2.4	NM	4.6	7.8	11.9	9.9	53.9
EZCORP, Inc.	EZPW	\$9.07	Pawn	504.8	85.0	11.6	10.2	0.7	1.4	3.9	4.4	7.6	13.8	NM
Median		Ψ0.07	1 uwii	004.0	90.5%	14.0x	12.3x	1.5x	1.4x	4.2%	6.1%	9.7%	11.9%	53.9%
Mean					90.5%	14.0x	12.3x	1.5x	1.4x	4.2%	6.1%	9.7%	11.9%	53.9%
Other Consumer														
Credit Acceptance Corp.	CACC	\$478.45	Auto Financing	6,140.1	73.7	10.7	9.8	3.8	3.8	7.7	48.5	60.1	58.2	(3.1)
Nelnet, Inc.	NNI	\$91.01	Student Loan Servicing	3,379.4	91.5	16.3	14.7	1.1	1.1	1.9	15.4	33.6	(10.8)	(49.1)
Navient Corp.	NAVI	\$16.19	Student Loan Servicing	2,054.3	83.7	5.1	5.3	0.7	0.9	0.9	21.6	49.9	(46.6)	(41.5)
PRA Group, Inc.	PRAA	\$38.68	NPLs	1,507.8	85.3	19.4	14.1	1.2	1.9	4.2	12.2	16.0	(6.8)	(30.4)
Encore Capital Group,	ECPG	\$52.76	NPLs	1,230.5	72.5	9.3	7.1	1.0	3.7	6.3	34.2	22.2	(3.6)	(41.5)
Inc.				,									, ,	NM
ECN Capital Corp.  America's Car-Mart,	ECN	\$2.29	Diversified	561.4	42.0	11.5	9.0	4.4	NM	0.5	2.3	11.3	76.8	
Inc.	CRMT	\$86.00	BHPH	547.8	67.7	23.1	17.2	1.1	1.1	4.4	27.5	4.0	14.9	(73.8)
Sunlight Financial Holdings Inc.	SUNL	\$0.32	Solar/MIP	26.0	6.5	NM	2.3	0.1	NM	NM	NM	NM	NM	NM
Median Mean					73.1% 65.4%	11.5x 13.6x	9.4x 9.9x	1.1x 1.7x	1.5x 2.1x	4.2% 3.7%	21.6% 23.1%	22.2% 28.2%	(3.6%) 11.7%	(41.5%) (39.9%)
Total Consumer Med	dian				66.3%	10.5x	7.5x	1.7x	1.4x	4.0%	21.6%	12.6%	10.0%	(41.5%)
Total Consumer Mea					57.6%	11.5x	8.1x	1.6x	2.4x	4.3%	20.9%	19.6%	20.3%	(23.6%)

## **Public Company Trading Comps (cont.)**

											0	perating M	etrics	
											LTM		2022A	-2023E
		Price as of	Industry	Market	% of 52-	P/E	PS	P	rice			Pre-Tax	Revenue	Pre-Tax
Company	Ticker	4/14/2023	Focus	Сар	Week High	2023E	2024E	BV	TBV	ROA	ROE	Margin	Growth	Growth
Commercial Finance	е													
Element Fleet Management Corp.	EFN	13.17	Fleet Mgmt.	5,170.0	87.2	15.1	13.0	2.1	6.1	3.0	11.5	32.7	(29.0)	15.8
Air Lease Corp.	AL	39.53	Aircraft Leasing	4,388.4	84.1	7.8	6.2	0.7	0.7	NM	NM	NM	14.8	21.1%
GATX Corp.	GATX	112.29	Rail	3,967.3	91.8	16.7	16.5	2.0	2.1	2.1	7.7	16.6	4.7	112.6
McGrath RentCorp	MGRC	90.72	Heavy Equipment	2,212.9	81.2	19.1	17.7	2.8	3.5	6.3	15.0	20.4	8.4	5.3
Textainer Group Holdings Ltd.	TGH	36.56	Equipment Finance	1,595.3	97.4	7.3	6.7	0.9	0.9	4.0	16.4	34.7	(12.3)	(24.4)
Chesswood Group Ltd.	TSX:CHW	6.56	Equipment Finance	117.0	60.4	5.8	4.2	0.7	1.2	1.5	14.6	27.8	127.8	31.5
Median Mean					85.6% 83.7%	11.5x 12.0x	9.9x 10.7x	1.4x 1.5x	1.6x 2.4x	3.0% 3.4%	14.6% 13.0%	27.8% 26.4%	6.5% 19.1%	18.4% 27.0%
Total Specialty Finance Median Total Specialty Finance Mean					72.5% 62.7%	10.5x 11.6x	7.5x 8.7x	1.2x 1.6x	1.4x 2.4x	3.9% 4.1%	15.2% 19.3%	16.6% 21.1%	9.2% 20.0%	(19.1%) (9.8%)

## **Recent Transactions**

## **Consumer Finance: Select Transactions**

millions)					Price	
Date	Target	Buyer	Deal Value	LTM Earnings	BV	TBV
Dec 2022	Stilt Digital Lending Business	JG WENTWORTH.	NA	NA	NA	NA
Nov 2022 <sup>(1)</sup>	E/evate	PARK CITIES ASSET MANAGEMENT	\$67	NA	0.4x	0.4x
Sep 2022	CIGFINANCIAL CAPITAL INCENTIVE GROUP	AutoNation	\$85	NA	NA	NA
May 2022	1st Heritage	<b>C</b> CURO	\$140	5.4x <sup>(2)</sup>	NA	NA
May 2022	CURO US SP Business	CommunityChoice FINANCIAL	\$345	4.6x <sup>(3)</sup>	NA	NA
Feb 2022 <sup>(1)</sup>	Financeit**	Wafra	NA	NA	NA	NA
Jan 2022	DIVIDEND	FIFTH THIRD BANK	NA	NA	NA	NA
Jan 2022	bayequity	REDFIN	\$135	NA	2.2x	NA
Nov 2021	AquA Finance, Inc.	**ATHENE	\$1,000	NA	NA	NA
Nov 2021	HEIGHTS FINANCE	<b>C</b> CURO	\$360	8.8x	NA	NA
Oct 2021	FAIR SQUARE	ally	\$750	NA	NA	NA
Oct 2021	AMERICAN FIRST	<b>FirstCash</b> *	\$1,297	16.4x	NA	NA
Apr 2021	<b>■</b> LendCare	goeasy	\$255	13.0x <sup>(4)</sup>	NA	NA
Mar 2021	flexiti	<b>CURO</b>	\$121	NA	NA	NA
Dec 2020	QCÎMQ Leasing		\$1,653	9.9x	NA	NA

## **Recent Transactions** (cont.)

### **Commercial Finance: Select Transactions**

(\$ ii	n millions)			_	Pr	ice
	Date	Target	Buyer	Deal Value	BV	TBV
	Nov 2022 <sup>(1)</sup>	Luther Burbank Corporation	WaFd Bank	\$654	7.3x	1.0x
	Sep 2022	Lossing & Fenence	CIVISTA* BANK	\$39	NA	NA
	Sep 2022	BankDirect	<b>AFCO</b> <sup>r</sup>	\$3,400	NA	NA
	Feb 2022	Vantage Financial	Peoples O.	\$75	NA	NA
	Feb 2022	SAFE HARBOR FINANCIAL	NORTHERN LIGHTS ACQUISHION CORPORATION	\$327	NA	NA
	Dec 2021	Summit Granding Group	<b>f1RST</b> first financial bancorp	\$121	NA	NA
	Oct 2021	K2 CAPITAL	<b>POPULAR</b>	\$188	2.2x	NA
	Sept 2021	NORTH AVENUE C A P   T A L	VERITEX*	\$58	NA	NA
	Apr 2021	<b>**</b> marlin business services corp.™	HPS	\$299	1.5x	1.5x
	Apr 2021	<u>GeneralFINANCE</u>	United Rentals	\$996	3.9x	NA
	Mar 2021	SOUTHWEST RAIL INDUSTRIES No.	Sojitz Corporation	NA	NA	NA
	Nov 2020	·#·DONLEN	ATHENE	\$875	2.3x	2.5x
	Nov 2020	KINGSBRIDGE HOLDINGS	S SLR CAPITAL PARTNERS	\$216	NA	NA
	Oct 2020	CíT.	First Citizens Bank	\$2,158	0.4x	0.4x

## **About Houlihan Lokey**

Houlihan Lokey (NYSE:HLI) is a global investment bank with expertise in mergers and acquisitions, capital markets, financial restructuring, and financial and valuation advisory. The firm serves corporations, institutions, and governments worldwide with offices in the Americas, Europe, the Middle East, and the Asia-Pacific region. Independent advice and intellectual rigor are hallmarks of the firm's commitment to client success across its advisory services. Houlihan Lokey is the No. 1 investment bank for global M&A transactions under \$1 billion, the No. 1 M&A advisor for the past eight consecutive years in the U.S., the No. 1 global restructuring advisor for the past nine consecutive years, and the No. 1 global M&A fairness opinion advisor over the past 25 years, all based on number of transactions and according to data provided by Refinitiv.

#### Locations



## **Product and Industry Expertise**

Product Expertise	Dedicated Industry Groups	Financial Sponsors			
Mergers and Acquisitions	Business Services	Active Dialogue With a			
Capital Markets	Consumer, Food, and Retail	Diverse Group of 1,000+ Sponsors			
Financial Restructuring	Energy				
Financial and Valuation Advisory	Financial Services	Private Equity Firms			
	FinTech	Hedge Funds			
	Healthcare	Capital Alliances			
	Industrials				
	Real Estate, Lodging, and Leisure				
	Technology				

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