



Mid Valley Financial

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Powell Puts a Lid on The Rate Debate, But Where's The Bottom?

Every year, the Federal Reserve (aka "the Fed") gathers in Jackson Hole, WY with a bevy of other central bankers and academics to discuss and comment on monetary policy in a setting that's slightly less formal than normal. Despite the scenic backdrop, Jackson Hole speeches by the Fed Chair have a somewhat reliable history of relevance to financial markets--especially those that dictate interest rate movement.

In this year's case, the symposium was almost perfectly timed to give Chair Powell an opportunity to append his last major appearance in the press conference that followed the Fed meeting just over 3 weeks ago. Rates liked what he had to say back then as well, but in Friday's speech, he said it a bit more forcefully.

In not so many words, Powell made it clear that the default game plan is to cut rates at the September meeting just under 4 weeks from now. In fact, as far as financial markets are concerned, the only uncertainty is whether the rate cut will be the minimum 0.25% or double that amount.

To be fair and clear, that's about where the market ended up after the last speech, but that was followed by several big ticket market movers that temporarily convinced traders the Fed would be cutting by AT LEAST 0.50% a few short days later. For a few moments, the market was actually closer to a 0.75% cut!

National Average Mortgage Rates



	Rate	Change	Points
Mortgage News Daily			
30 Yr. Fixed	6.44%	-0.04	0.00
15 Yr. Fixed	5.97%	-0.03	0.00
30 Yr. FHA	5.90%	-0.04	0.00
30 Yr. Jumbo	6.66%	-0.02	0.00
5/1 ARM	6.32%	-0.06	0.00

Freddie Mac

30 Yr. Fixed	6.46%	-0.40	0.00
15 Yr. Fixed	5.62%	-0.54	0.00

Rates as of: 8/23

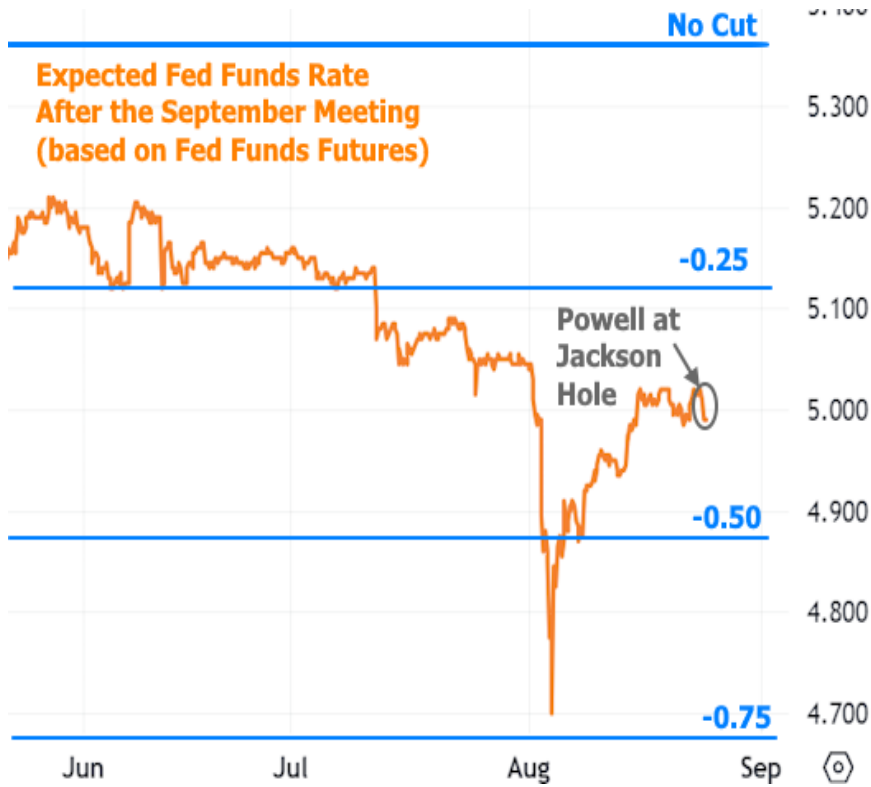
Market Data

	Price / Yield	Change
MBS UMBS 5.5	100.93	+0.26
MBS GNMA 5.5	100.83	+0.22
10 YR Treasury	3.7999	-0.0531
30 YR Treasury	4.0908	-0.0309

Pricing as of: 8/23 5:59PM EST

Recent Housing Data

		Value	Change
Mortgage Apps	Aug 14	251.3	+16.83%
Building Permits	Mar	1.46M	-3.95%
Housing Starts	Mar	1.32M	-13.15%
New Home Sales	Mar	693K	+4.68%
Pending Home Sales	Feb	75.6	+1.75%
Existing Home Sales	Feb	3.97M	-0.75%
Builder Confidence	Mar	51	+6.25%



Over the 2 weeks that followed, several economic reports forced a rethink of those assumptions, thus putting Powell in a position to put a ceiling on near term rate expectations (rather than comment on how quickly rates might move lower). His speech certainly delivered said ceiling and also stayed clear of signaling any low rate exuberance. As can be seen in the chart above, it was ultimately small potatoes compared to recent volatility.

For their part, [mortgage rates](#) had a "nice" day, making a modest move down to the lowest levels in just over 2 weeks. For those who prefer their milestones a bit more grandiose, that also makes today the 3rd best day in well over a year.

30yr Fixed Mortgage Rate Index
(MND.News)

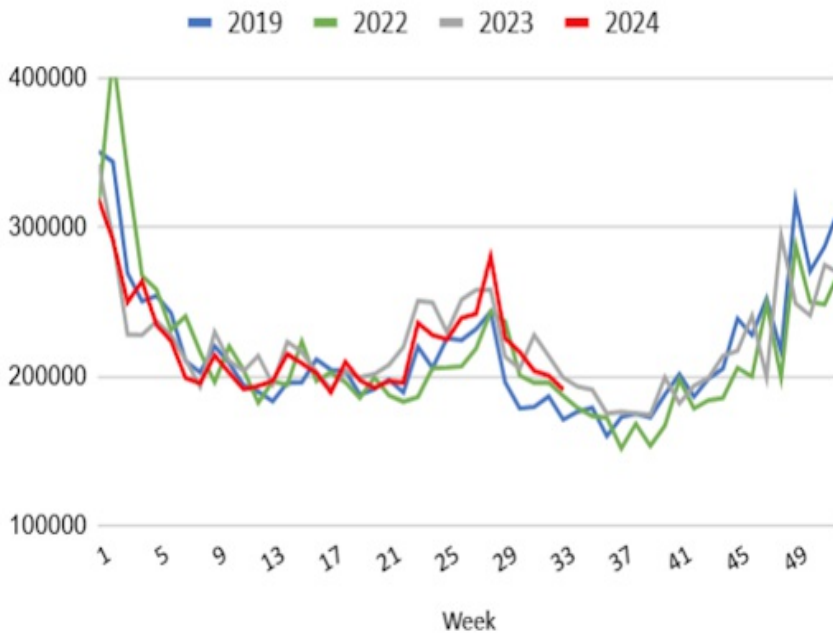


Despite the apparent clarity at the moment, it's good to keep the recent dichotomy in the data in mind. On the one hand, we had weak economic data in early August that helped drive rate expectations as low as they were. On the other hand, the economic reports in the following weeks helped push rates quickly back in the other direction. Since then, we've been consolidating in a narrower, relatively calmer range as seen in the chart of 10yr Treasury yields below.

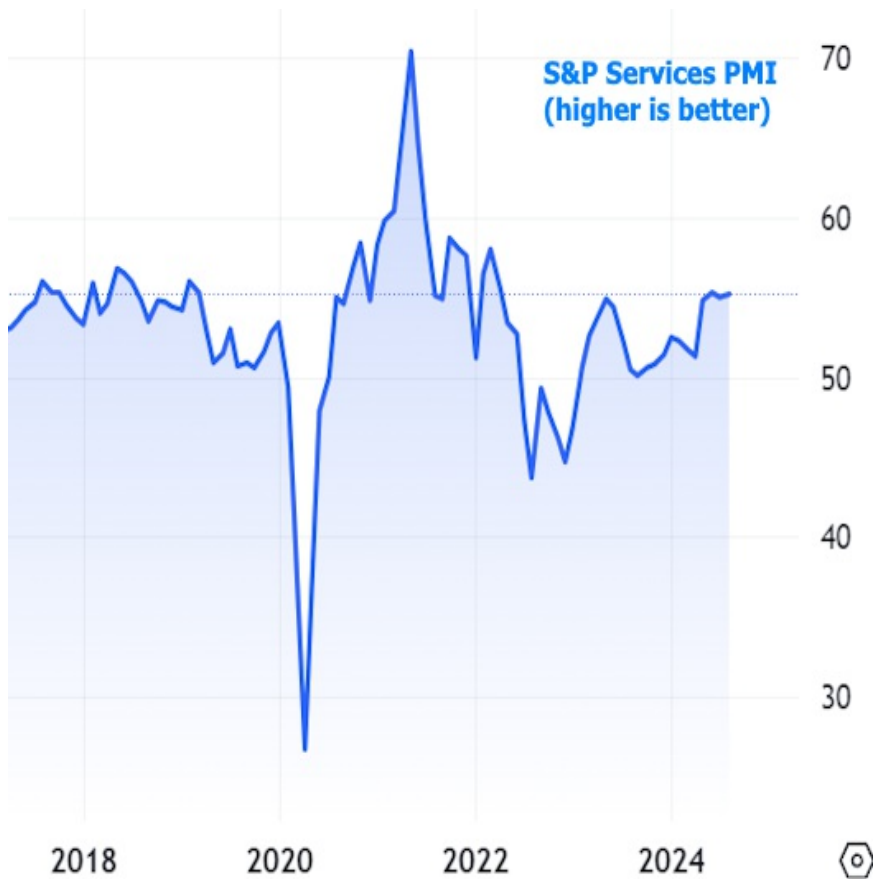


Even in the present week, economic data is far from signaling any sort of contraction or turmoil. The Jobless Claims report--the most timely major labor market indicator--continues falling in line with the last 2 years. This red line would need to be breaking up and away from the others in order for the more aggressive rate cut scenarios to pan out.

Jobless Claims, Week by Week, Not Seasonally Adjusted



The only other major report this week was the Services Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) from S&P Global. A PMI measures economic output with a reading over 50 generally indicating expansion. This month's came out at 55.2 which was just a hair higher than last month's and near the top of the recent range.



In the coming weeks (and especially in the first two weeks of September), we'll get even more economic data with the power to refine rate cut prospects. Just keep in mind that the Fed's rate cut would merely be the confirmation of what the rest of the rate market is already doing. In other words, mortgage rates and Treasuries have already priced in a rate cut. Now the data needs to avoid saying anything too glorious about the economy if the presently low rates are to stick around.

Additional improvements in rate would have to come from deterioration in the economic outlook, but there too, that's something that mortgage rates could price in well before the Fed meeting.

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Recent Economic Data

Date	Event	Actual	Forecast	Prior
Wednesday, Aug 21				
7:00AM	Aug/16 MBA Refi Index	754.4		889.3
7:00AM	Aug/16 MBA Purchase Index	130.6		137.7
10:00AM	Mar Non Farm Payrolls Annual Revision (%)	-818K		-187K
2:00PM	FOMC Minutes			
Thursday, Aug 22				

Event Importance:

- No Stars = Insignificant
- ☆ Low
- ★ Moderate
- ★★ Important
- ★★★ Very Important

Date	Event	Actual	Forecast	Prior
9:45AM	Aug S&P Global Services PMI	55.2	54	55.0
10:00AM	Jul Existing home sales (ml)	3.95M	3.93M	3.89M
Friday, Aug 23				
10:00AM	Jul New Home Sales (ml)	0.739M	0.63M	0.617M
10:00AM	Fed Chair Powell Speech			

Upcoming Economic Data

Date	Event	Forecast	Prior
Monday, Aug 26			
8:30AM	Jul Durable goods (%) ☆	4%	-6.6%
Tuesday, Aug 27			
9:00AM	Jun FHFA Home Prices y/y (%) ☆		5.7%
9:00AM	Jun Case Shiller Home Prices-20 y/y (%) ☆	7.1%	6.8%
10:00AM	Aug CB Consumer Confidence (%) ☆	100.1	100.3
Thursday, Aug 29			
8:30AM	Q2 GDP (%) ★	2.8%	1.4%
8:30AM	Aug/24 Jobless Claims (k) ☆	234K	232K
10:00AM	Jul Pending Home Sales (%) ☆	0.2%	4.8%
Friday, Aug 30			
8:30AM	Jul Core PCE Inflation (y/y) (%) ★		2.6%
8:30AM	Jul Core PCE (m/m) (%) ★★	0.2%	0.2%
9:45AM	Aug Chicago PMI ★	44.6	45.3
10:00AM	Aug Consumer Sentiment (ip) ☆	67.8	66.4

Who is Mid Valley Financial?

Mid Valley Financial, located in Fresno, CA, is the Central Valley's premier destination for a wide range of residential and commercial real estate loans. Our commitment to excellence has made us a trusted partner for property buyers and investors seeking tailored financial solutions.

****Why Choose Us:****

With a track record spanning back to our inception in 1985, we have established ourselves as a reliable and innovative lender. We proudly serve properties exclusively within California, having funded loans in all 58 counties of the state. Our deep-rooted experience enables us to navigate complex loan scenarios with expertise and efficiency.

****Our Approach:****

At Mid Valley Financial, we prioritize your financial goals. Whether you're a first-time homebuyer, envisioning your dream property, refinancing an existing mortgage, or looking to tap into your property's equity, our seasoned loan officers offer a wealth of knowledge and over 300 years of collective experience. We ensure that your funds are prepared when you need them, providing a smooth and swift loan process.

****Unlocking Possibilities:****

As one of California's leading direct lenders, we've streamlined the loan process, minimizing obstacles that often deter borrowers. Many of our clients receive approvals within an hour, showcasing our dedication to quick and hassle-free solutions.

****Your Journey with Us:****

Contact the MVF team today and let us put your journey to property ownership on cruise control. Our mission is to empower borrowers while fostering enduring and meaningful relationships. With highly competitive rates, a commitment to transparency, and a dedication to your financial success, Mid Valley Financial is your partner in realizing your real estate aspirations.

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