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The Dots Put an Exclamation Point on Record-Breaking Drop in Rates

We came into this week expecting the Fed's Dot Plot to set the tone, or at least to create a good amount of movement in rates, and that's exactly what happened.

The dot plot refers to a chart that appears 4 times a year in economic projections released by the Fed. Projections are not the same as predictions, but the dots still provide the market with valuable insight as to how the Fed will change short term interest rates if the economy evolves as expected.

Specifically, the Fed sees job growth generally moderating and inflation gradually falling toward target levels. The dots essentially say "if that stuff keeps happening in the same way it has been happening, here's where we expect the Fed Funds rate to be."

The last dot plot came out with the September Fed meeting. It showed the median rate staying about 0.50% higher than the previous dot plot in June. Rates didn't love that. With support from resilient economic data, the dots were a catalyst for a push up to the highest interest rates in decades by the end of October.

Heading into this week's dot plot, we knew things would look better for rates based on recent Fed speeches and more moderate economic data over the past 2 months, but we didn't know how much better. Here's exactly how things changed for the "end of 2024" time frame most scrutinized by market participants:

National Average Mortgage Rates



	Rate	Change	Points
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Mortgage News Daily

30 Yr. Fixed	7.09%	+0.07	0.00
15 Yr. Fixed	6.56%	+0.03	0.00
30 Yr. FHA	6.62%	+0.07	0.00
30 Yr. Jumbo	7.35%	+0.04	0.00
5/1 ARM	7.30%	+0.06	0.00

Freddie Mac

30 Yr. Fixed	7.02%	-0.42	0.00
15 Yr. Fixed	6.28%	-0.48	0.00

Rates as of: 5/17

Market Data

	Price / Yield	Change
MBS UMBS 6.0	100.40	-0.15
MBS GNMA 6.0	100.78	+0.04
10 YR Treasury	4.4223	+0.0454
30 YR Treasury	4.5610	+0.0549

Pricing as of: 5/17 5:59PM EST

Recent Housing Data

		Value	Change
Mortgage Apps	May 15	198.1	+0.51%
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%

September Meeting **December Meeting**

Meeting	Number of Correct Answers	Frequency	Outlier
September Meeting	4.2	2	No
September Meeting	4.6	3	No
September Meeting	4.8	3	No
September Meeting	5.2	5	No
September Meeting	5.4	4	No
September Meeting	5.6	1	No
September Meeting	6.0	1	No
September Meeting	5.2	1	Yes
December Meeting	4.2	4	No
December Meeting	4.6	6	No
December Meeting	4.8	7	No
December Meeting	5.2	2	No
December Meeting	5.4	2	No
December Meeting	4.6	1	Yes
December Meeting	4.0	1	No

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Read or subscribe to my newsletter online at: <http://housingnewsletters.com/michaelbaker>

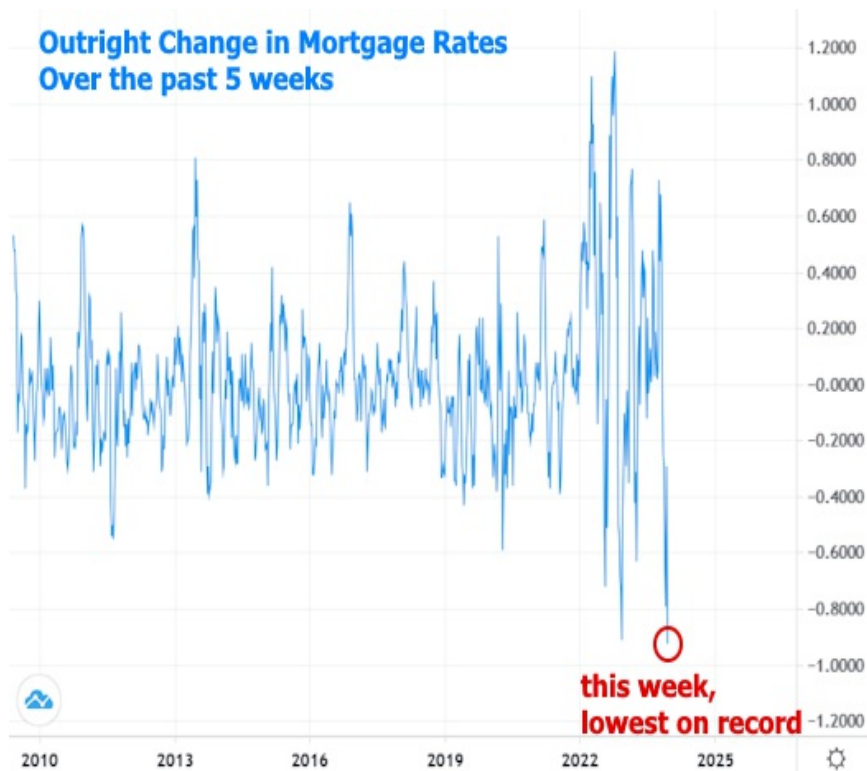


2yr Treasury yields have more in common with near-term Fed Funds Rate expectations while 10yr yields move more like mortgage rates. Speaking of mortgage rates, they had quite a week, although you'd only know it by looking at actual daily averages such as the Mortgage News Daily index as opposed to weekly surveys that don't yet reflect the huge drop in the 2nd half of the week.

30 Year Fixed Mortgage Rates



While Freddie Mac's rate index fell by bigger amounts in the 1980s on a few occasions, this is the biggest 5 week drop on record for the MND index. The following chart shows the 5-week change in rates. In other words, the drop that began in November is the biggest we've seen in decades, even if only slightly bigger than the drop seen last year.

Outright Change in Mortgage Rates
Over the past 5 weeks

In addition to the dot plot, Fed Chair Powell mentioned that the Fed had begun to discuss rate cuts. It's important to keep in mind that Powell has also been clear that the Fed could actually hike rates again if inflation were to pick back up. He's also been clear in saying that inflation would need to keep moving lower in order to make rate cuts a reality. As far as this week's Consumer Price Index (CPI) data was concerned, we're on the path, but still far from the destination.



We won't get CPI again until the new year. Moreover, we won't get much by way of other relevant economic data before then either. Combine that with the typical decline in trader participation in late December and it's not unfair to say the jury is pretty much out for the next few weeks. Rates may ebb and flow a bit, but the important decisions are on hold until big-ticket data and more robust participation return after the holiday break.

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Recent Economic Data

Date	Event	Actual	Forecast	Prior
Monday, Dec 11				
11:30AM	3-Yr Note Auction (bl)	50		
Tuesday, Dec 12				
8:30AM	Nov y/y CORE CPI (%)	4%	4%	4%
8:30AM	Nov m/m CORE CPI (%)	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%

Event Importance:

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

Date	Event	Actual	Forecast	Prior
Wednesday, Dec 13				
7:00AM	Dec/08 MBA Purchase Index	149.6		144.5
7:00AM	Dec/08 MBA Refi Index	445.8		373.3
8:30AM	Nov Core Producer Prices MM (%)	0%	0.2%	0%
8:30AM	Nov Core Producer Prices YY (%)	2%	2.2%	2.4%
2:00PM	Fed Interest Rate Decision	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%
2:00PM	FOMC Economic Projections			
2:30PM	Fed Press Conference			
Thursday, Dec 14				
8:30AM	Nov Import prices mm (%)	-0.4%	-0.8%	-0.8%
8:30AM	Dec/09 Jobless Claims (k)	202K	220K	220K
8:30AM	Nov Retail Sales (%)	0.3%	-0.1%	-0.1%
Friday, Dec 15				
8:30AM	Dec NY Fed Manufacturing	-14.5	2	9.1
9:15AM	Nov Industrial Production (%)	0.2%	0.3%	-0.6%
9:45AM	Dec S&P Global Services PMI	51.3	50.6	50.8
Monday, Dec 18				
10:00AM	Dec NAHB housing market indx	37	36	34
Tuesday, Dec 19				
8:30AM	Nov Housing starts number mm (ml)			1.372M
Wednesday, Dec 20				
7:00AM	Dec/15 MBA Refi Index			
7:00AM	Dec/15 MBA Purchase Index	148.7		149.6
10:00AM	Nov Existing home sales (ml)	3.82M	3.77M	3.79M
Thursday, Dec 21				
8:30AM	Dec Philly Fed Business Index	-10.5	-3	-5.9
8:30AM	Q3 GDP (%)	4.9%	5.2%	2.1%
8:30AM	Dec/16 Jobless Claims (k)	205K	215K	202K
Friday, Dec 22				
7:30AM	Nov Building permits: number (ml)	1.467M		1.498M
8:30AM	Nov Core PCE (m/m) (%)	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%
8:30AM	Nov Core PCE Inflation (y/y) (%)	3.2%	3.3%	3.5%
8:30AM	Nov Durable goods (%)	5.4%	2.2%	-5.4%
10:00AM	Nov New Home Sales (ml)	0.59M	0.685M	0.679M
10:00AM	Dec U Mich conditions	73.3	74	68.3
10:00AM	Dec Consumer Sentiment (ip)	69.7	69.4	61.3
2:00PM	Christmas Early Close			
Wednesday, Jan 10				
1:00PM	10-yr Note Auction (bl)	37		

Date	Event	Actual	Forecast	Prior
Thursday, Jan 11				
1:00PM	30-Yr Bond Auction (bl)	21		
Wednesday, Jan 17				
1:00PM	20-Yr Bond Auction (bl)	13		

About Michael

If you are thinking about buying or refinancing a home in the Kansas City area, you've probably faced the dilemma of hiring the right Loan Officer to handle your mortgage. You may be concerned about working with someone that doesn't know the area, or who doesn't listen to you. Maybe you're worried about a loan officer who is more concerned with a commission than making sure you're properly taken care of.

Great news - I can help!

IF YOU ARE THINKING OF BUYING A HOME... I would love to share with you the mortgage loan products that are available to you, and also talk about what homes might be coming onto the market very soon. As a Kansas City resident who also went to college just down the street in Lawrence, I'm not just your loan officer but also your neighbor. I'd love to talk to you about my knowledge not only about the Kansas City market, and what neighborhoods would be perfect to you but also help you truly understand the landscape of the mortgage industry today, and introduce you to great Real Estate Agents that are ready to go to work for you and find you the perfect home. I'll help guide you through appraisals, inspections, title searches, and finally closing.

IF YOU ARE A REALTOR LOOKING FOR A REFERRAL PARTNER... I would love to sit down with you over a cup of coffee and show you ways to generate leads for your business and help you grow your clientele through some easy processes that NO other Real Estate Agents are doing. I am a growing Social Media guru that can show you my tips and tricks on how I've doubled my Twitter base in just a month!

If it sounds like I can help you, please contact me directly through Linked In, email me at mbaker@affinityhomeloan.com or call/text me at 913-735-5363. If you're not yet ready for a conversation, but you'd like to learn more about me and how I can help you or about the mortgage process in general, including great blog posts to send out to your clients, check out my website at <http://www.michaelbakerhomeloans.com>.

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