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Eerily Calm Week For Rates

If there were a movie about mortgage rates, this week would be the part where they say "it's quiet... almost TOO quiet." Case in point: MND's daily mortgage rate index has held inside a range of 0.04% since last Tuesday.

This kind of thing happens several times per year. The previous two instances gave way to noticeably sharper movement, but there are older examples that resolved uneventfully.



The present indecision reflects the fact that the broader market is waiting for the next big development in the war. Oil prices and bond yields have generally moved higher as the war escalated and lower as prospects for peace improved. They bounced a bit higher this week due to uncertainty surrounding the state of the ceasefire and peace negotiations.

MBS and Treasury

	Price / Yield	Change
MBS UMBS 6.0	99.58	+0.48
10 YR Treasury	4.9238	-0.1198
30 YR Treasury	5.3131	-0.0931

Pricing as of: 11/20 3:54PM EST

Recent Housing Data

		Value	Change
Mortgage Apps	Nov 11	199.8	-2.35%
Building Permits	Oct	1.3M	-7.5%
Housing Starts	Oct	1.31M	+7.21%
New Home Sales	Sep	676K	-1.17%
Pending Home Sales	Oct	63	-4.69%
Existing Home Sales	Oct	3.99M	+0.25%
Builder Confidence	Nov	25	-13.79%

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Economic data was very light this week with Tuesday's Retail Sales being the only big ticket report. Even then, the market preferred to trade war headlines and corporate earnings, with the latter helping stocks hit another all-time high.

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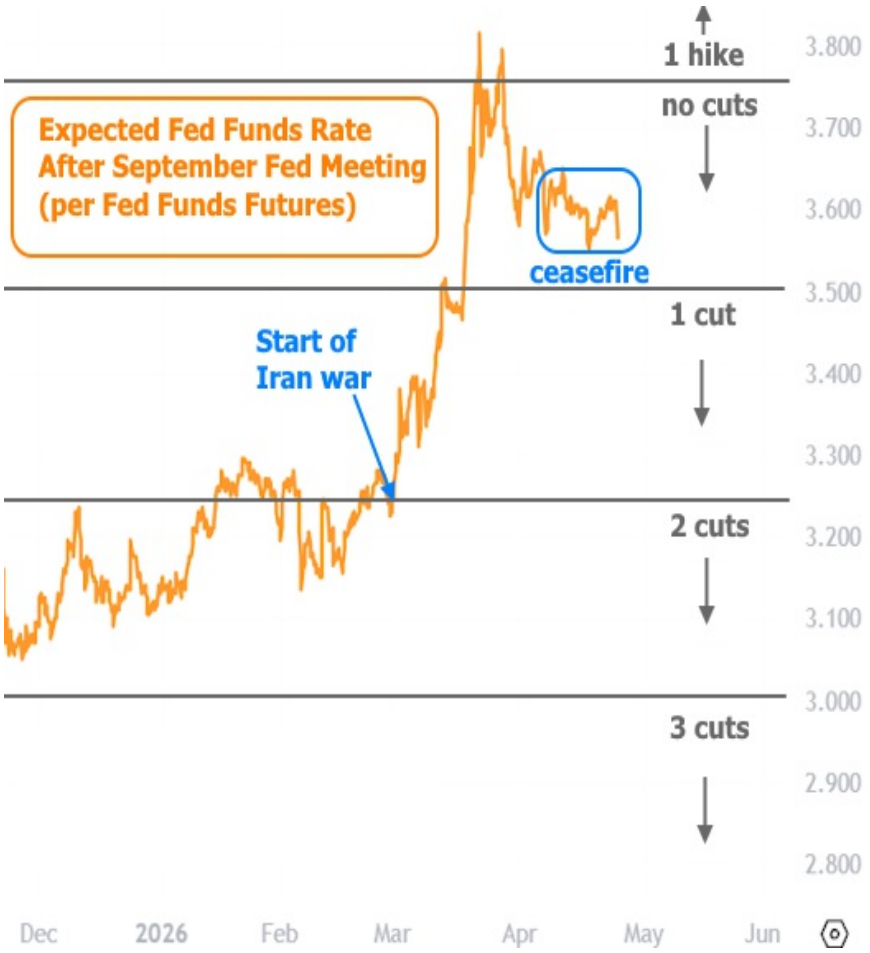
Next week's economic calendar is slightly more robust, but the market will likely continue to focus on the war-related headlines for primary cues. In addition to the data, there will be a Fed rate announcement on Wednesday, but the market has long since concluded that there is a zero percent chance of a cut or hike.

How about later in the year? With the DOJ dropping its case against Fed Chair Powell, some people expect a better trajectory for rates later this year under the presumed new Fed Chair Kevin Warsh. But the traders who bet on those outcomes disagree. There's been very little change in Fed rate expectations over the past several weeks. In short, before the war, the market thought we'd see at least 2 rate cuts in 2026. Now it sees zero. This could change in the future, but it would depend on inflation and economic data.

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Recent Economic Data

Date	Event	Actual	Forecast	Prior
Tuesday, Apr 21				
8:15AM	ADP Employment Change Weekly	54.75K		39K
8:30AM	Mar Retail Sales (%)	1.7%	1.4%	0.6%
8:30AM	Mar Retail Sales Control Group MoM	0.7%	0.2%	0.5%
10:00AM	Mar Pending Home Sales (%)	1.5%	0.1%	1.8%
Wednesday, Apr 22				
7:00AM	Apr/17 MBA Refi Index	1023.1		966.8
7:00AM	Apr/17 MBA Purchase Index	175.6		159.5
Thursday, Apr 23				
8:30AM	Apr/18 Jobless Claims (k)	214K	212K	207K
9:45AM	Apr S&P Global Services PMI	51.3	50	49.8
9:45AM	Apr S&P Global Manuf. PMI	54.0	52.5	52.3
Friday, Apr 24				
10:00AM	Apr Consumer Sentiment (ip)	49.8	47.6	53.3

Event Importance:

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

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Date	Event	Actual	Forecast	Prior
Tuesday, Apr 28				
9:00AM	Feb Case Shiller Home Prices-20 y/y (%)	0.9%	1.1%	1.2%
9:00AM	Feb FHFA Home Prices y/y (%)	1.7%		1.6%
10:00AM	Apr CB Consumer Confidence (%)	92.8	89	91.8
Wednesday, Apr 29				
8:30AM	Mar Housing starts number mm (ml)	1.502M	1.40M	1.356M
8:30AM	Mar Building Permits (ml)	1.372M	1.39M	1.538M
8:30AM	Mar Durable goods (%)	0.8%	0.5%	-1.4%
2:00PM	Fed Interest Rate Decision	3.75%	3.75%	3.75%
2:30PM	Fed Press Conference			
Thursday, Apr 30				
8:30AM	Apr/25 Jobless Claims (k)	189K	215K	214K
8:30AM	Mar PCE (y/y) (%)	3.5%	3.5%	2.8%
8:30AM	Q1 Employment costs (%)	0.9%	0.8%	0.7%
8:30AM	Q1 GDP (%)	2.0%	2.3%	0.5%
9:45AM	Apr Chicago PMI	49.2	53	52.8
Friday, May 01				
10:00AM	Apr ISM Manufacturing PMI	52.7	53	52.7

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