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PIPELINES VOTED CANADIAN PRESS BUSINESS STORY OF THE YEAR

Trans Mountain expansion and the Line 3 replacement were approved, while Northern Gateway rejected. The increasingly divisive debate over pipelines, with the economic benefits and environmental concerns they carry, has been selected as The Canadian Press business story of the year. In an annual survey of newsrooms across the country, pipeline development edged out another politically charged issue — real estate — by a single vote, a reflection of how the two stories competed for attention throughout 2016.

The year saw Prime Minister Justin Trudeau attempt to strike a grand bargain of sorts: approving Kinder Morgan's expansion of Trans Mountain and the replacement of Enbridge's Line 3 while also pushing ahead with a national carbon price and rejecting Enbridge's Northern Gateway. "In a debate between economy and the environment, the Trudeau government's decision has

not only huge political implications, but has sparked debate and protests over the rights of indigenous peoples that tarnishes the Liberal brand," said Paul Samyn, editor at the Winnipeg Free Press. The decision to greenlight the Kinder Morgan proposal, which would see an existing pipeline that runs from Edmonton to Burnaby, B.C., nearly triple its capacity, was Trudeau's most controversial.

The project has triggered protests, sparked legal challenges and tested federal-provincial relationships, themes that are likely to dominate the headlines next year. "This is the year in which the rubber hit the road," said Benjamin Dachis, associate director of research at the C.D. Howe Institute. "This is the culmination of years of policy debate, of policy change." From coast to coast, the question over whether to build more pipelines to access markets abroad confronted mayors, premiers and community leaders at almost every turn.

The review of the Energy East Pipeline also made news when it was aborted in August over concerns about conflict of interest involving the panel overseeing TransCanada's application to build the project. If built,



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the development would see crude shipped from Alberta to as far east as Saint John, N.B. Another pipeline that appeared to be on its deathbed a year ago — the Keystone XL project — was given new life following Donald Trump's presidential victory in the U.S. last month. Trudeau said earlier this month he remains supportive of the pipeline, which would carry oil from Alberta to Nebraska.

The hot housing sector also earned the consideration of business newsroom leaders as politicians on every level took action in a bid to address prices that have spiralled to dizzying heights, particularly in Vancouver and Toronto. "Is there a more important issue facing Canada's economy?" asked Noah Zivitz, managing editor of Business News Network. "Real estate has served as a pillar while other economic drivers have fallen by the wayside. Yet that reliance on housing has only inflamed fears over household debt levels, barriers to entry, foreign investment, and the risk of a correction." Real estate worries also resonated outside Canada's largest cities. "Toronto and Vancouver may be the focus of discussion at a national level, and rightly so, but rising prices and limited choice are

having an impact in markets across the country," said Ron DeRuyter, business editor at the Waterloo Region Record. "Many Canadians fear they will not be able to buy a home; others feel bullied into paying more than they should pay. And the higher prices go, the more the spectre of a crash looms." Governments tried to intervene without rocking the foundations of the market. In B.C., Premier Christy Clark instituted a surprise 15 per cent tax on foreign buyers in Metro Vancouver and the city moved ahead with a tax on vacant homes. At the federal level, federal Finance Minister Bill Morneau tightened mortgage rules. Pipelines garnered 26 per cent of the ballots cast, with real estate getting 22 per cent. Other headline-grabbing stories circled back to oil and the environment, with the carbon tax and fires in Fort McMurray, Alta., both tied at 15 per cent. There were 27 votes in all. "The disruption to production in the oilsands during the Fort McMurray wildfire gave Canadians a better appreciation of the important role the massive energy development plays in the national economy," said Kevin Usselman, news director at 660 NEWS CFFR in Calgary. The

carbon tax became entwined with resource development as both Trudeau and Alberta Premier Rachel Notley said it was a critical policy to allow for the responsible expansion of pipelines. Dachis at the C.D. Howe Institute said governments showed they were willing to make tough choices on energy, but failed to devise policies needed to increase the supply of housing. "The common thread of what the government has done, governments have done ... when it comes to carbon pricing and pipelines, is that they've done things that people think are politically harmful, but are in the best interest of the country," said Dachis. "But that's not happening in zoning, or housing development." Douglas Cudmore, senior editor of business, innovation and justice at the Toronto Star, said the carbon pricing story was important because of its far-reaching impact. "If there's one story (dull as it might seem to readers) that could change not just the way we live but the way our kids and grandkids live, it's governments finally being brave enough to get serious about carbon emissions."

**NOVA SCOTIA
STARTS CLOCK ON
CONSTRUCTION OF
BEAR PAW PIPELINE**

Environmental approval of pipeline between Point Tupper and Goldboro comes with 41 conditions. Nova Scotia's environment minister has started the countdown clock for construction of a new pipeline. Margaret Miller granted environmental approval to the Bear Paw Pipeline Corporation on Thursday. The 62-kilometre project would connect a yet-to-be-constructed LNG export facility in Point Tupper, Richmond County, to a gas plant near the Goldboro industrial area in Guysborough County that's also yet to be built.

According to the company's website, the pipeline will cross dozens of watercourses, including the Strait of Canso. Miller's approval comes with a set of 41 conditions, including that work on the project begin within the next two years unless she grants a written extension. In her letter to the company, Miller says she believes "any adverse effects or significant environmental effects" can be "adequately mitigated through compliance" with the conditions.

**TECK'S LNG TESTING
COMES TO AN END**

Last year Teck Resources began experimenting with a liquefied natural gas (LNG) and diesel hybrid fuel to power six haul trucks at its Fording River coal mine 29 kilometres northeast of Elkford. Teck was hoping LNG would cut costs and reduce emissions but in a Dec. 14 statement, the company said it was ending the project this month. The particular LNG technology used in this pilot did not achieve targeted emission reductions.

However, Nic Milligan, manager of community and aboriginal affairs, said the company is committed to using LNG as an alternative fuel source. The pilot project started in October 2015 and was the first time LNG was used as haul truck fuel at a Canadian mine site. "[The project] has provided many valuable [lessons] to Teck, such as safe use of LNG and integrating new technologies at our operations," said Milligan. "We are currently assessing other suitable LNG technologies and the results of the pilot will help to inform our next steps," he continued. In a June statement, the company said it could eliminate about 35,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions and reduce fuel costs by more than \$20 million annually if the LNG and diesel hybrid fuel were used across Teck's steelmaking coal operations.

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LNG is the same as the natural gas people use to heat their homes but it's turned into a liquid by freezing it to -162°C. To replace full diesel with a diesel/LNG blend to fuel haul trucks, Teck used conversion technology to retrofit the diesel engines without the need to change the original design. New hardware was mounted externally on the trucks. If a haul truck equipped with a conversion kit ran out of LNG, it automatically switched over to diesel and continued to run. FortisBC transported and supplied LNG to the mine site and provided financial support towards upgrading the truck maintenance shop, said the statement. Will LNG replace diesel as the fuel of choice for haul trucks? Not for a while said Travis Balaski, an executive with Calgary-based natural gas company Ferus. Balaski said it's a challenge right

now for companies to switch to LNG because Western Canada's supply infrastructure is not robust and viable engine technologies have yet to be developed. "When you get into rail and mining trucks, that's a more complex system you're trying to implement and I'd say the technology has come a long way in the last couple of years but there still needs to be a year or two of development to really refine it," he said. Balaski said that if combustion technology is perfected, an engine burning LNG could emit 20 to 30 per cent less carbon dioxide and other pollutants than if it were just burning diesel. "I can't speak for Teck," he said. "But there has to be further refinement in the engine technology in order to get the maximum value out of those emission reductions."

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