



## Final public hearings

### Who:

The Review Board, parties, developer and members of the public

The Review Board may choose to hold a hearing at anytime during the assessment, which will be outlined in the workplan. Usually, hearings are held at the end of an environmental assessment, and they are for the developer and other parties to present their conclusions to the Review Board. Public hearings can be formal or community hearings. Formal hearings follow strict protocol, whereas community hearings are more flexible.

Hearings at the end of the process tie together and focus all the information gathered throughout the assessment. Such hearings give parties an opportunity to present their final arguments to the Review Board.

Outstanding issues can sometimes be resolved between parties in front of the Review Board. Questions between the parties, the developer and the Review Board can be a very important aspect of final hearings. Parties are expected to respond to questions and defend their positions on the issues. The Review Board may issue an undertaking for parties unable to provide a response to questions at the hearing. Undertakings provide answers before the Review Board closes the public record. However, the Review Board prefers that parties come to the hearing well-prepared and, if necessary, accompanied by expert witnesses capable of addressing the issues and answering questions.





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When parties don't resolve the issues during a hearing, the Review Board will make a decision based on its own values and the weight of all the evidence on the public record.

### **The Review Boards takes measures to give everyone a chance to prepare for the hearing:**

- The Review Board requires anybody wishing to make a formal presentation to inform the Review Board in advance.
- Presenters must submit their presentation in advance – a deadline will be set when the date of the hearing is set.
- The Review Board will give at least 45 days public notice about the hearing.
- The Review Board makes efforts to put up posters, radio ads and public service announcements, and posts a notice on the Review Board website.
- There are pre-hearing conferences to review the logistics of the hearing with the parties or presenters. During the pre-hearing conferences parties are encouraged to discuss and resolve any outstanding issues before the hearing is held.

### Tools

If there is a hearing that you would like to attend but cannot make it to, you can listen to the hearing online at: [reviewboard.ca](http://reviewboard.ca).

The public hearing information and presentations for a particular assessment can be found on the Review Board public registry. Go to [reviewboard.ca/registry/](http://reviewboard.ca/registry/) and fill out the developer, project and select public hearing stage in the search engine fields.