Executive Summary
Rookie City Councillor Tim O’Hare — A Record to Defend

Part 1 of 5 Series | October 11, 2026

Coverage: approximately 2018 to his first election on October 24, 2022. Later sources are identified where they describe earlier events.

Approximately 862 words | Estimated reading time: 5 minutes
Charts, sources and disclaimer excluded.

Purpose and Background

This first article examines Tim O’Hare’s background before his first election to Thorold City Council. It reviews his arrival in Thorold, teaching and woodworking experience, community advocacy and the Ormond Street planning dispute. The John Brown House dispute is included as context, with the limits of the evidence about either O’Hare’s involvement made clear.

A September 2022 profile reported that O’Hare moved to Thorold four years earlier, placing his arrival around 2018. He was reported as 63 then, making him approximately 67 at the 2026 election, depending on his birthday. He and his wife, Anna, previously lived in Toronto. His 2026 candidate statement describes him as a retired high school teacher, curriculum leader and cabinet maker, married for 39 years, with two children and a grandchild.

O’Hare won his first election on October 24, 2022, with 1,930 votes, finishing third. That result preceded a council voting record for residents to assess. In my view, voters can now compare his original promises with his decisions during his first term.

Ormond Street Development Dispute

Before his election, O’Hare helped organize neighbours opposing development he considered unsuitable for their neighbourhood. His campaign emphasized responsible development, heritage protection, affordable housing, green space and tree preservation. The dispute concerned proposed variances for a six-storey, 40-unit apartment building at 16 Ormond Street South, the former Riganelli’s Bakery site.

The Ontario Land Tribunal heard the appeal on July 5, 11 and 15, 2022. It granted Tim party status as a neighbouring owner who had participated in the Committee of Adjustment process and retained a planner. He represented himself and called planner Stephen Bedford. The Tribunal identified discrepancies between Bedford’s written report and testimony and gave his evidence little weight. That criticism concerned the planner’s evidence; it was not a finding of misconduct against Tim.

On December 2, 2022, after the election, the Tribunal approved the four remaining requested variances. The developer subsequently alleged that Tim’s participation extended a planned one-day hearing into three days and claimed approximately $100,000 in City costs. Those were attributed allegations, not independently verified costs or Tribunal findings that Tim acted improperly. Tim said the dispute concerned neighbourhood compatibility and that he accepted the decision.

I recall Tim telling me he tried to negotiate personally with the developer but was unsuccessful. I have also been told that an earlier offer was more favourable to neighbours than the eventual outcome. Without the written offer, settlement terms and evidence of who authorized rejection, I cannot establish that Tim rejected a better deal on the community's behalf. The earlier $200,000 cost claim and suggestion that he forced the City to incur it are not substantiated by the records reviewed.

Teaching and Student Relationships

Lakeshore Collegiate Institute's teacher-room list identifies "O'Hare Timothy" as teaching "Tech (Wood)" in room 122. This supports his woodworking teaching background, but does not establish his academic qualifications or the broader student-mentoring descriptions supplied in earlier notes. A 2019 home-restoration article also describes his teaching and cabinet-making experience.

In the publicly accessible sources reviewed, I found no substantiated report or finding of inappropriate relationships between Tim O'Hare and students, and no evidence substantiating a claim that he moved from Toronto to escape such trouble. I have no factual basis to endorse that allegation. This describes the limits of the research, not a comprehensive background clearance. The supplied Globe and Mail link and claims about lifelong student friendships remain unverified.

John Brown House and Committee Accountability

In 2020, Anthony DiFruscia proposed 15 bungalow townhouses requiring demolition of the house at 205 St. David's Road. The heritage committee supported designation; the owner opposed it and raised financial concerns. Council unanimously rejected the recommendation in November 2020, citing fairness and timing. That decision was separate from development approval.

Later records list Anna and Tim as heritage committee members in 2021, but do not establish their individual participation in the 2020 dispute. I recall a speaker, whom I remember as Councillor John Kenny, warning against imposing the committee's wishes on unwilling owners. His identity, exact wording and the meeting date remain unverified. The recording is needed before treating that recollection as evidence.

An owner's objection does not itself prevent heritage designation. The committee advises; City Council makes the municipal designation decision under provincial law. Owners have objection and appeal rights. Current procedures differ from those applicable in 2020, so today's process should not be presented as the exact procedure then.

I am concerned about the effect of the dispute on a family coping with bereavement. The November 2020 report refers to DiFruscia's late wife. The reported July 2020 death date and committee members' knowledge of the illness remain unverified. The family's circumstances warrant sensitivity, but committee membership alone does not establish either O'Hare's participation, knowledge or responsibility.

Conclusion

My impression is that O'Hare presented himself as an approachable, "aw-shucks" candidate. Some residents I have spoken with now question whether that image reflects his public record; I share that concern. In my view, the Ormond Street dispute raises questions about negotiation and the evidence supporting his case. However,

disputed costs, settlement terms and either O'Hare's involvement in the 2020 heritage dispute remain unverified. I invite documented corrections and additional evidence. Part Two returns to his preparations to run as a rookie candidate.

Charts

Election/term	Details
2022 election	Elected with 1,930 votes, finishing third among council candidates.
2022–2026 term	His first council term runs from November 15, 2022, to November 14, 2026.
2026 election	Listed by the City as a certified council candidate seeking re-election.

Event	Findings and limits
March 17, 2022	The Committee of Adjustment deferred its decision for further review of the parking study.
April 6, 2022	The developer appealed the Committee's non-decision to the Ontario Land Tribunal.
July 2022	Tim participated as a self-represented party and called planner Stephen Bedford. The Tribunal recognized his interest as a neighbouring owner.
Evidence	**The Tribunal identified discrepancies between Bedford's written report and oral testimony and gave his evidence little weight. This was criticism of the planner's evidence, not a finding of misconduct against Tim.**
December 2, 2022	**The Tribunal approved the four remaining requested variances. This outcome followed the election, but concerned the pre-election dispute.**

Date	Reported events
Before 2020	According to owner/developer Anthony DiFruscia's later statement to council, he had been approached years earlier about heritage designation and declined. The house at 205 St. David's Road remained identified as a potential heritage property without formal designation.
June 2020	DiFruscia proposed 15 bungalow townhouse units, requiring demolition of the house. Questions about its historical significance brought the heritage committee into the process.
Later in 2020	The committee supported designation. Historian Sarah King Head's assessment found that the house had historical value and met designation criteria. DiFruscia opposed designation and told council that it threatened his

Date	Reported events
	family's finances.
November 2020	**Council unanimously rejected the committee's request. Councillors raised concerns about fairness and the timing of designation during the development process. The heritage decision was separate from the townhouse development application.**
March 2021	Architectural Conservancy Ontario recorded demolition of the house as underway.
July 6, 2021	The committee minutes identified in my research list Anna and Tim O'Hare as members. This establishes membership by that date, but does not establish their participation in the 2020 dispute.
November 2021 onward	A November 2021 report lists Anna and Tim O'Hare as members and Craig Finlay as chair. Anna appears as chair on the 2023–2024 roster. These later records do not establish that she chaired the committee in 2020.

Disclaimer

This article contains my opinions, identified recollections and cited public information. Questions and allegations are not findings of wrongdoing. A committee roster does not establish participation in a particular decision; an unsuccessful planning case does not establish misconduct. Attributed claims about costs or negotiations remain unverified unless supported by records. The absence of a substantiated report in the sources reviewed is not proof that every possible record has been checked. I welcome documented corrections and responses and will correct material errors brought to my attention.

Nicholas Bozza

Registered Third-Party Advertiser — City of Thorold

nbozza@go2cai.ca

Source Notes and Verification Limits

[1] Lakeshore Collegiate Institute, teacher-room list, entry "O'Hare Timothy — 122 — Tech (Wood)." School-hosted document: https://schoolweb.tdsb.on.ca/Portals/lakeshoreci/docs/Teacher%20Rooms%20April%206.pdf. This supports the listed teaching assignment, not personal student testimonials or academic qualifications.

[2] ThoroldToday, "City takes steps towards protecting Port Robinson wildlife," April 2023. https://www.thoroldtoday.ca/local-news/city-takes-steps-towards-protecting-port-robinson-wildlife-6917726. Documents the later student construction project; retained outside the pre-election narrative.

[3] Ontario Land Tribunal, Milski Inc. v. Thorold (City), OLT-22-003399, decision issued December 2, 2022; hearings July 5, 11 and 15, 2022. https://www.omb.gov.on.ca/e-decisions/OLT-22-003399-DEC-02-2022.pdf. Primary source for Tim's party status, expert evidence and the variance decision.

[4] ThoroldToday, "Ormond Street developer wins case at Ontario Land Tribunal," December 12, 2022. https://www.thoroldtoday.ca/local-news/ormond-street-developer-wins-case-at-ontario-land-tribunal-6232577. Source of the developer's attributed allegations; not independent confirmation of costs or responsibility for hearing length.

[5] ThoroldToday, "John Brown house determined to be a non-heritage site, can be demolished to make room for town houses," November 20, 2020. https://www.thoroldtoday.ca/local-news/john-brown-house-determined-to-be-a-non-heritage-site-can-be-demolished-to-make-room-for-town-houses-2896736. Reports council's unanimous rejection and the owner's account.

[6] Ontario, "The designation process," Designating Heritage Properties. https://www.ontario.ca/document/designating-heritage-properties/2-designation-process. Current guidance; not a reconstruction of the exact appeal procedure in 2020.

Additional background sources: ThoroldToday, September 9, 2022 candidate profile; October 6, 2026 candidate statement; 2019 Munro House restoration profile; City of Thorold 2022 poll-by-poll results. Links appear in the full article. July 2021 minutes, recalled council remarks, settlement offers and City costs require verification against original records.