

Shelburne opens park dedicated to Natasha Paterson



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Summer is in full swing and Shelburne youth have a new playground where they can swing, climb, and slide.

The Town of Shelburne announced July 28 that after three months of construction the newly upgraded Natasha Paterson Park playground is open to the community.

Natasha Paterson Memorial Park/Hyland Park at 340 Gordon Street is the town's primary baseball facility with three ball diamonds.

Originally known as Hyland Park, a portion of the park was officially renamed 'Natasha Patterson Memorial Park' in 2016. The decision to rename a portion of the park came after local resident Duncan Paterson and his family requested the renaming to honour Natasha, a young girl who was tragically killed in an accident at Fiddlefest in 2015.

In the 2023 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, it was noted that the playground equipment at Natasha Paterson Memorial Park was 'scattered' and 'lacks accessible pathways' to allow for connection to the playground areas.

The town completed the tender process for the project in October 2024 and awarded it to Openspace Solutions Inc. for a unique playground design.

'Their design goals were to provide a wide range of age-appropriate play experiences, develop a theme that would fit within the environment, and provide inclusive opportunities for users of all ages and abilities,' according to a release from the municipality. Construction at the park began at the end of April, with early work including the removal of the old playground equipment and preparing the area for the new installation.

Upgrades at Natasha Paterson Memorial Park focused on centralizing the play structure into a single, larger playground area located near the washrooms and pavilion for convenience and improved usage.

The new playground structure has accessible ramps and transfer stations and also includes features such as sensory panels, universal carousel, non-verbal communication board, rubberized surfacing, suspended nest, and swings, including an accessible seat and one seatbelt seat.

Community members have left positive responses on the town's announcement of the opening of the new playground structure.

'Wow, that is amazing. Thank you for including those with special abilities,' wrote one community member.

?Thank you to the Town of Shelburne for doing such a beautiful job of the Natasha Paterson Park. We are so grateful that you made this happen,? added another resident.

The cost of the project was included as a capital project in the Town of Shelburne's 2025 Budget