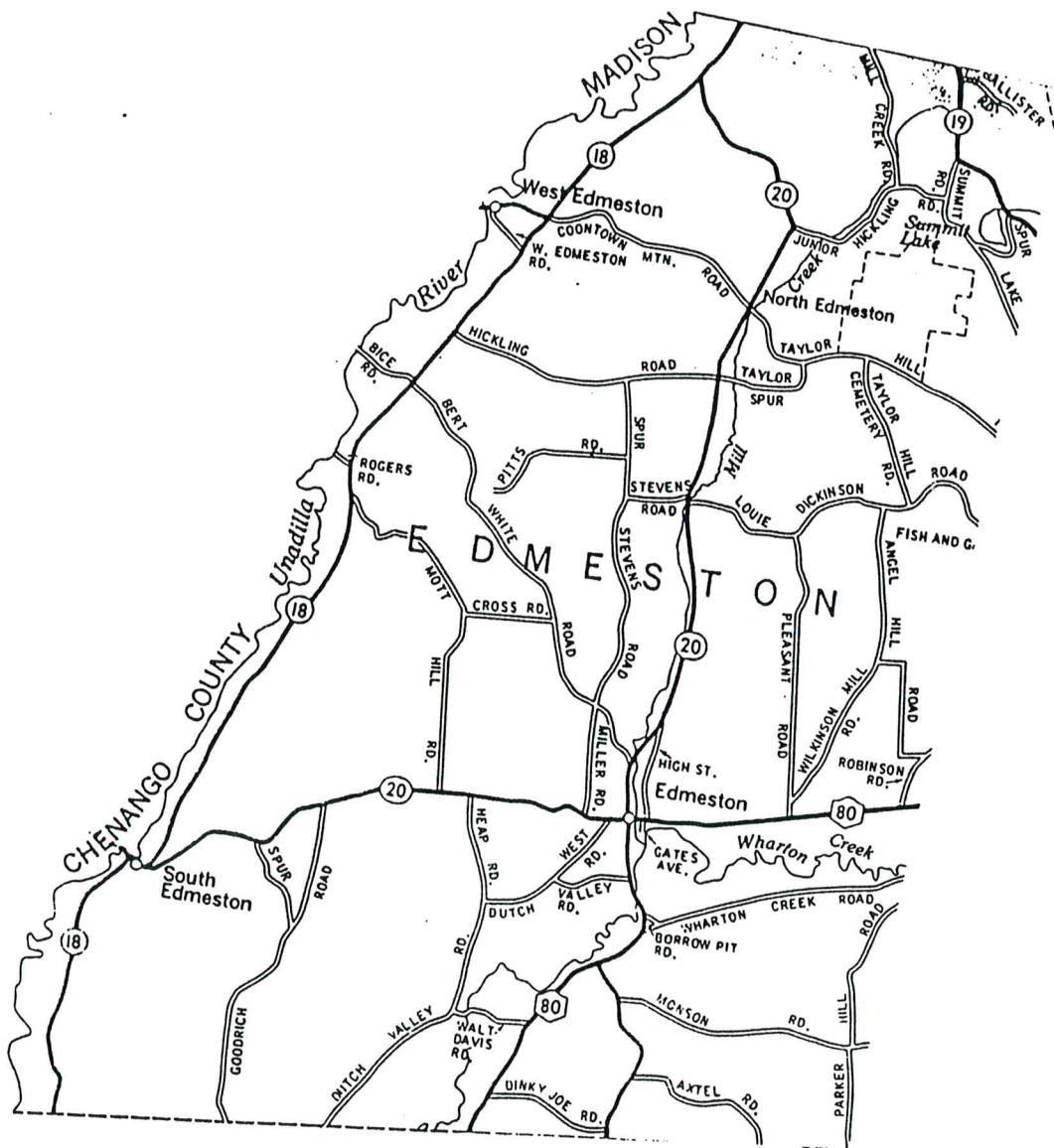


MASTER PLAN

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TOWN OF EDMESTON  
OTSEGO COUNTY  
STATE OF NEW YORK



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SECTION ONE: ENACTMENT, TITLE, AND PURPOSE

Section 1.1 Enactment: The Planning Board of the Town of Edmeston in the County of Otsego on this 21<sup>st</sup> day of JUNE, 1989 under the authority of Section 272a of Article 16 of Chapter 62 of the Consolidated Laws of the State of New York, hereby adopts the following Master Plan for the Town of Edmeston.

Section 1.2 Title: This document shall be known as THE TOWN OF EDMESTON MASTER PLAN.

Section 1.3 Purposes in View: This Master Plan is intended to summarize the natural and historic assets of the Town of Edmeston, to define its essentially rural and agricultural character, to provide guidelines for the preservation of the Town's natural and historic assets in a manner compatible with orderly economic growth, and to provide a basis for a detailed Land Use Ordinance to guide the future development of the Town.

## SECTION TWO: INTRODUCTION

Section 2.1: The Town of Edmeston has as assets, its natural beauty, rural setting and historical character. This beauty, setting, and character make the Town of Edmeston an attractive place to live.

Section 2.2: Pressures on the Town of Edmeston: The natural and historic assets of the Town of Edmeston are fragile resources. Without effective regulation of land use through local control, and taking into account their special qualities, growth is likely to occur in an indiscriminate, haphazard manner, marring natural beauty, diminishing historical character, straining local resources and polluting the environment. As growth occurs, measures must be taken to maintain air, water, and soil quality, to insure proper waste disposal, to minimize traffic hazards and congestion, and to protect historic and esthetic values.

Section 2.3: Property Values: Further, the Town of Edmeston is an economic resource, especially to its property owners. While growth can be a very positive asset, the way it occurs should be controlled. Indiscriminate development and poor planning damages the environment and lowers the quality of life and thus, is a direct threat to property value. New residential and commercial projects can increase congestion, crowd the schools, stress the environment, raise taxes, and make the area less, rather than more, attractive. An aim of an effective Land Use Ordinance - one that balances personal freedom with community responsibility - is to protect property values, while maintaining reasonable tax rate as growth occurs.

SECTION THREE: THE TOWN AND HAMLETS OF EDMESTON,  
WEST EDMESTON, AND SOUTH EDMESTON

Section 3.1 Importance of the Hamlets to the Town:

Residents of the Town of Edmeston will, for the foreseeable future, depend on the Hamlets of Edmeston, West Edmeston, and South Edmeston for essential facilities and services and in some cases, economic health. Examples of facilities and services located within the Hamlets would include: Edmeston Central School, places of worship, retail stores, bank, professional services, Edmeston Free Library, and places of business and employment. In addition, emergency service and fire protection centers are located in the Hamlets.

Section 3.2 Pressures from the Hamlets: Since there is limited potential for expansion within present Hamlet boundaries, increasing pressures for development in the Town of Edmeston, for both commercial and residential purposes, seem to be inevitable. Locations especially sensitive to such pressures include the areas along State Route 80, East and South of the Hamlet of Edmeston, and County Route 20, North and West of the Hamlet of Edmeston. The patterns of development in these areas require special attention in order to minimize pollution of ground and surface water, traffic congestion, and visual blight.



## SECTION FOUR: POPULATION AND LAND USE

Section 4.1 Density: Part of the essential character of the Town is its relatively low density of population. Population figures from the 1980 census show:

1. a) Town population : 1,673  
adjusted in 1985: 1,732
2. a) Housing Units : 657
3. a) Density : 38 per square mile

Density and stability can be regulated directly by establishing minimum allowable lot sizes, and indirectly by other devices such as Deeded Transferred Development Rights (DTDRs), and lot size averaging within a parcel, to maintain desirable population densities.

Section 4.2 Land Use: Wherever possible, existing patterns of land use in hamlets and rural areas should be respected, to preserve the integrity of the Town of Edmeston. For example, land removed from use as farmland or woodland cannot easily be returned to such use. Uses consistent with existing patterns should be encouraged when compatible with the characteristics of the land, in terms of factors such as drainage, erosion control, water supply, sewage, waste disposal and accessibility.

Section 4.3 Special Regulations: As the Town prepares for future expansion of its population, regulations should protect the historical and natural character of the Town through sign regulation, recognition of historical sites, buildings, and uses, protection of scenic vistas, screening around unsightly commercial and industrial lots, etc. These aims can be achieved by admitting commercial, institutional, and multiresidential uses through a Planned Development Unit (PDU) process under strict local control, designed to protect the essential character of the area in which any such use is proposed. A sense of historic and esthetic continuity is maintained by the use of traditional styles and materials, by the adaptation or renovation of existing older buildings, and by the preservation of natural features, such as woodlands, cultivated fields, pastures, streams, falls and ledges.

Section 4.4 Public Spaces: There exists at present publicly-owned recreational land in the form of county forest and town-owned land adjacent to the Town barn and to Edmeston Central School. The present status of this land should be maintained. In addition, the Town owns the sites of the old and new Town Halls in the Hamlet of Edmeston.

## SECTION FIVE: TRANSPORTATION

Section 5.1 Roads: The Town of Edmeston is presently served by a network of State, County and Town roads appropriate to its geography and rural character. These roads provide access to all areas of the Town. This network, if suitably maintained and improved, should be adequate for the needs of the Town for the foreseeable future.

Section 5.2 Congestion: Numerous Town roads, especially those which traverse steep terrain, are not suitable for handling the traffic flow associated with intensive development. Low population densities should be maintained in areas served by such roads, to minimize traffic congestion and hazardous driving conditions.

Section 5.3 Strip Development: Strip development along the major arterials in the Town of Edmeston, in addition to creating traffic hazards and congestion, could seriously diminish the attractiveness of the Town; therefore, commercial and industrial multiunit residential development along the highways should be carefully planned. Well-planned clusters, interspersed with low-density, residential, agricultural and conservation areas, will be preferred.



## SECTION SIX: ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC HEALTH

Section 6.1 Introduction: A major objective of the Town of Edmeston should be to maintain the natural environment so that it may be used and enjoyed by all the citizens of the Town. Residents and visitors have the right to a clean and safe environment. The cost of cleaning contaminated water, air, or soil is many times greater than the cost of keeping the environment clean from the start. Some contaminants cannot be removed from the water or soil at all. The cost of preventing pollution should be borne by the businesses, institutions or individuals who generated it. Restoring a resource to a usable condition should not become the burden of the taxpayers.

Section 6.2 Sewage Treatment Plant: The Town does not plan to build a sewage treatment plant. Such expensive public works should not be necessary as long as adequate on-site sewage disposal facilities and water systems are required.

Section 6.3 Water Supply: Any future acquisition of existing water systems or construction of new systems should not be a financial burden on the Town, but should be financed through user fees.

Section 6.4 Lot Sizes: Poorly-drained and impervious soils in many areas of the Town and Hamlets require larger lot sizes than would be necessary in locations with more favorable soil conditions. In all areas of the Town lot sizes must be sufficient given their soil type to provide on-site sewage treatment, and a safe water supply for the proposed use in question.

Section 6.5 Erosion: Erosion and siltation damage farmland and destroy habitats for fish and game. A Land Use Ordinance should stipulate practices designed to minimize runoff and erosion. Building on steep slopes or clearcutting woodlands should be discouraged.

Section 6.6 Wetlands: Lakes, groundwater, streams, ponds, bogs, marshes, swamps and other wetlands should be protected.

Section 6.7 Discharges: State and Federal laws prohibiting many kinds of discharges into surface and ground water or into the air are often inadequate for local conditions. Local ordinances should prohibit pollution of water, air, or soil by toxic and noxious materials or conditions. Enforcement and penalties should be local as well as State and Federal responsibilities.

Section 6.8 Natural Features: Valuable natural features, including scenic vistas, should be protected wherever possible.

Section 6.9 Environmental review: All applications to the Town and Village for approval of actions which have the potential for significant threats to the environment should be subject to thorough environmental review in accordance with the procedures prescribed in the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR).

