**DESPITE PANDEMIC-RELATED IMPACT, Tourism CONTINUES drivING Economic PROGRESS**

**for shores & islands Region**

**$1.9 Billion in Total Tourism Sales in 2020**

**LAKE ERIE SHORES & ISLANDS, OHIO, August, 2021 –** A wide variety of world-class activities, attractions, restaurants, overnight accommodations and more, combined with many factors related to travel habits during the pandemic helped sustain our region’s tourism industry in 2020 despite negative impact related to the pandemic.

According to a study conducted by Tourism Economics, one of the world’s leading providers of economic analysis, visitors helped generate $1.9 billion in tourism sales in 2020, a decrease of only 14% from the 2019 study.

Total tourism sales include direct, indirect, and induced spending and represent a number of different economic activities, including: transportation; recreation; retail; lodging; and food & beverage. The direct sales spending breakdown by sector for our area is approximately 23% retail, 14% food & beverage, 13% recreation & entertainment, 12% lodging, and 9% transportation. Transportation costs comprise the cost of air, train, ferry transportation, car rental, etc. Gasoline costs are included in the retail sector.

In the Lake Erie Shores & Islands region, tourism also means jobs. One in every four jobs in Erie County is tourism-related as well as one in every six jobs in Ottawa County. Approximately 11,863 people were employed in 2020 within the travel and tourism industry locally. Tourism wages were $314 million in 2020.

The tourism industry in the region also generated $250 million in taxes. More than $68 million in State of Ohio taxes were generated by Erie and Ottawa County tourism activities, with a combined additional $54 million in county taxes for Erie and Ottawa Counties. Tax dollars generated through tourism help support many of the municipal services our residents count on, and reduce our residents’ tax bills.

“2020 was certainly a year of great challenge for the tourism industry and especially early on many businesses struggled to hang on; some in fact could not”, said Larry Fletcher, President of Lake Erie Shores & Islands. “As we look at some of our successes from 2020, we must never forget about the human and economic suffering the pandemic caused for many”.

The decrease in visitation and associated spending in 2020, while down, did not drop as much as had been anticipated, or to the extent many larger market destinations experienced. Travelers stayed closer to home, drove instead of flew, and gravitated toward outdoor activities, all of which the Shores & Islands region benefited from.

The data for this study is coordinated by [TourismOhio](http://www.ohio.org/) and executed by Tourism Economics, a division of Oxford Economics.

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