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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**GOVERNOR'S BUDGET CALLS FOR MORE FUNDING FOR ROADS, RECREATION
Significant Intersection of Transportation and Tourism**

MADISON, Wis. (March 6, 2019) —Wisconsin Gov. Tony Evers' proposed state budget includes new revenue sources for the upkeep of roads, which are key to growing the state's tourism economy.

Department of Transportation Secretary-designee Craig Thompson and Tourism Secretary-designee Sarah Meaney outlined the intersection of the two agencies at a news conference today in Wisconsin Dells.

"A safe and efficient transportation infrastructure is critical to all we do in Wisconsin," said Thompson. "From tourism to business development to getting children to school safely, we cannot do it without good roads."

Additionally, Gov. Evers proposed an additional \$5 million for tourism marketing and a new Office of Outdoor Recreation within the Department of Tourism to capitalize on the number one reported marketable reason for visiting Wisconsin¹.

"Whether they travel for an indoor water park or to hike at a state park, we get more than 90 percent of our tourists by road," said Meaney. "In order to grow our tourism economy, we need safe transportation options for our travelers."

Here are budget highlights from both departments:

Department of Tourism:

- Create new Office of Outdoor Recreation within the Tourism Department.
- Increase marketing budget by \$5 million over the biennium.

¹ Longwoods International study



Department of Transportation:

- Proposed changes would increase transportation funding by more than \$600 million over the two-year, providing new revenue to maintain and repair roads, bridges and highways throughout the state.
- Increase in gas tax of 8 cents per gallon; the average driver will pay an estimated \$3.33 more a month for gas.
- Motorists will also see cost savings by repealing the minimum markup law.

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About the Wisconsin Department of Tourism

The mission of the Wisconsin Department of Tourism is to market the State as the Midwest's premier travel destination for fun by executing industry-leading marketing programs and establishing strategic partnerships. The Department plays a significant role in generating greater economic impact and jobs for Wisconsin. The portal for traveler information can be found at: www.travelwisconsin.com.

Tourism had a \$20.6 billion impact on the state's economy in 2017, up \$631 million or 3.2 percent from \$20 billion in 2016. The industry supports 195,255 jobs in Wisconsin.

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