**CITY OF CIVILITY PRESS RELEASE TEMPLATE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  DATE 05/12/23

**City of Santa Claus Named a City of Civility by Georgia Municipal Association**

**SANTA CLAUS, GEORGIA** – The City of Santa Claus has been designated as a City of Civility by the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA). The City of Santa Claus adopted a civility resolution in GMA’s new Embrace Civility program on May 1, 2023.

A 2019 poll by Weber Shandwick revealed that over 90% percent of Americans believe that incivility is a problem, with nearly 68% percent identifying it as a major problem. Civility is more than just politeness; it is about disagreeing without disrespect, seeking common ground as a starting point for dialogue about differences, listening past one’s preconceptions and teaching others to do the same.

As the golden rule states: Treat others as you want to be treated. Act and think towards others with respect, kindness, forgiveness, equality and love. Even those who may have different or opposing opinions than you.

GMA, in partnership with the Association’s nonprofit organization, Georgia City Solutions, created the Embrace Civility program to equip Georgia’s cities with resources to create more civility in their meetings and among their residents and meeting attendees. Civil behavior and speech are critically important to a healthy, functional, and respectful society. For public service to be effective, there must be an atmosphere of respect and tolerance and a commitment to a healthy public exchange of diverse ideas and viewpoints.

“I commend the City of Santa Claus for embracing civility and adopting the resolution to become a GMA City of Civility,” said GMA CEO and Executive Director Larry Hanson. “We believe that Georgia’s cities have a great platform to model open, free, and vigorous debate, while maintaining the highest standards of civility, honesty, and mutual respect.”

To become a City of Civility, city councils are required to adopt a Civility Resolution and pledge to engage in civil behavior with each other as well as with residents and meeting attendees. Cities also have a civility pledge that can be published or recited at meetings. Learn more about the Embrace Civility program at www.gacities.com/civility.