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Diane Veltri Bendekovic,
Mayor

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PRESS RELEASE

DECEMBER 18, 2015; PLANTATION, FL: In light of the considerable amount of misinformation being generated concerning the City of Plantation's efforts to limit the size and scope of the Hyatt "Extreme Christmas" holiday display in order to address public safety risks caused by the display, the City wishes to again inform the public about this matter.

Plantation is not "trying to shut down the Hyatt holiday display," is not "against holiday displays" and is not "against Christmas." The City's only desire is that the Hyatt holiday display be consistent in size and scale with those of other residents that regularly appear in the City's single family neighborhoods and that do not cause nuisance impacts and threats to public safety.

The Hyatt Extreme Christmas display is extraordinary. The Hyatt's home is located at the beginning of Northwest 14th Street, which ends in a cul de sac. Without public safety intervention, visitors' cars block other cars from sharing the roadway, and the roadway becomes choked with pedestrians. The display is heavily advertised, and is interactive. Instead of being a "drive-by" residential holiday display, the Hyatts invite the public onto their property to participate in various activities. In addition to over 200,000 lights, dozens of animated displays, a Santa's Workshop, a 20-foot Ferris wheel, a 30-foot Christmas tree, and an extravagant amount of the "usual" Christmas décor, the Hyatt's advertisements have included "special events" of large screen movies, dance groups and music, and a live Santa Claus and reindeer being present. The Hyatts have competed in a nationally television reality show where contestants hoped to win a \$50,000 prize, and which resulted in visits to the single family residential area by a "Celebrity Judge" and television filming crews and equipment. It is not unusual for the Hyatts to have between a few hundred to over 1,000 nightly visitors at their home.

This week, Mark Hyatt claimed on a national television show that the City of Plantation advised him to charge display visitors so that he could, in turn, pay the City money. This is not true, and is yet another instance of a continued pattern of generating misinformation to portray him and his wife as victims. Despite numerous attempts by the City to work with the Hyatts to mitigate public safety concerns and minimize the display's negative impacts, the Hyatts refuse to cooperate.

The negative impacts of the Hyatt "Extreme Christmas" holiday display have included some of the Hyatt's neighbors complaining that they cannot access their homes as a result of the traffic congestion and crowds caused by the Hyatt's display, and other Hyatt neighbors moving out of their homes over the holidays to get away from the unreasonably intrusive effects of the Hyatt display. The congestion has also caused unacceptable risks to pedestrians, risks to safe vehicular circulation, and the concern that Fire and Emergency Medical Services to the area will be impeded during times that the Hyatt "Extreme Christmas" holiday display is open to the public.

As citizens, we all have a collective and basic responsibility to act in a way that does not create the risk of harm or inconvenience to others. In their unbridled zeal to promote themselves and their "Extreme Christmas" holiday display in their single family residential neighborhood and without any regard for public safety or the complaints of their neighbors, the Hyatts are acting irresponsibly.

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To effectively protect public safety, the Police Department has established a “safe zone” for a section of Old Hiatus Road to prevent public vehicular traffic but allow pedestrian access to the Hyatt “Extreme Christmas” holiday display. The City will continue to seek a Court injunction to have the nuisance aspects of the display controlled. The judicial relief requested is not to “shut down” or stop the display, but to have the display’s nuisance aspects controlled, so as to avoid continued necessary annual public safety intervention. One day, a judge will hear all of the evidence on this matter, and will make a decision. Let us not rush to judgment after considering only the information presented during the Hyatts’ publicity campaign. Instead, let us await the result of the presiding judge’s evaluation of the true facts of the matter, and respect whatever decision the Judge determines is legally appropriate under the circumstances.

The City of Plantation wishes everyone a safe and enjoyable Holiday Season.

Diane Veltri Bendekovic
Mayor, City of Plantation