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**A European theme park to locate in Atlanta, Georgia:  
Walk the streets of a miniature replica of Atlanta and other U.S. cities.**

The Atlanta Development Authority (ADA) recently returned from a very successful business development mission to Europe. An Atlanta delegation led by the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce met with business leaders and entrepreneurs in three countries. Emerging from the visit is a possible new tourist attraction for the City of Atlanta modeled after Madurodam, one of the premier tourist destinations in the Netherlands.

Eric de Groot, managing director of the Holland America Chamber in Atlanta, took the Atlanta delegates, including Charles Whatley, director of commerce and entrepreneurship for ADA, to this fascinating place.

Madurodam is a miniature city – built on a 1:25 scale – composed of replicas of Dutch landmarks made with the same building materials (brick, glass, steel) used in life-sized construction. Windmills turn, tour boats float down canals, fire fighters extinguish a fire in the harbor and a modern train moves through the city’s railway. The city has a population of 66,000, served by an actual mayor and city council of Dutch youth. About 5,236 tiny trees and 3,150 street lamps surround Madurodam’s 338 buildings. Structures such as the ING bank office complex took longer than four years to construct.

Since Madurodam opened in 1952 more than 50 million visitors have enjoyed this mini metropolis, which bills itself as “All of Holland in just one city.” A similar concept, where young and old could walk across the United States of America, would be developed in Atlanta. Legoland in California is probably the U.S. attraction most comparable to Madurodam.

“Improving the perception of Atlanta as a top family vacation spot is important to the city,” Whatley says. “Beyond the Georgia Aquarium, Center for Puppetry Arts and the new World of Coca-Cola, Atlanta needs additional family-style attractions, and Madurodam can fill that void and serve as an amusement park and educational destination.”

Whatley and de Groot are exploring what locations are currently available, either downtown or elsewhere within the Atlanta city limits.

**About ADA**

The Atlanta Development Authority is a major catalyst for residential and commercial economic vitality in the City of Atlanta.

### **About Madurodam**

Holland's most famous tourist attraction for more than 55 years, the miniature city of Madurodam was opened as a war monument and charity foundation. Through the years, many members of the Dutch Royal Family have attended special events in Madurodam. The city's first mayor was Princess Beatrix. Since 1980, a new mayor has been chosen each year by the youth municipal council of Madurodam, which consists of 22 secondary school students from The Hague. Madurodam has two modern, operational restaurants with views of the city, a souvenir shop and space to host meetings and parties. Thirty-five employees maintain this attraction.