Union-Miles Development Corporation was founded in 1981, as a spin-off organization of the Union-Miles Community Coalition. The Union-Miles Community Coalition was a well-established community action group (comprised of residents, businesses and churches) that collaborated to improve the quality of life in the neighborhood.

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First UMDC Office - 9111 Miles Ave.

UMDC's early focus was housing rehab and repair. The organization received significant funding to expand its activity after challenging Society National Bank's poor record of minority mortgage loans. Society National Bank, in a settlement agreement, made funds available to UMDC and several other Cleveland neighborhoods to support the model of partnering community development corporations with banks to improve home ownership opportunities in the inner city. Over the course of UMDC's early years, the organization complemented its housing focus with strong community organizing programs with street clubs and other community stakeholders.

In 1983, UMDC engaged in a partnership to purchase and rehab the Cermak Building, a large apartment complex located at East 93rd and Union Avenue. UMDC hired a property manager who worked closely with the Board to supervise operations at the property. After a few years of success, the Cermak Building began to post financial losses, which ultimately led UMDC to sell the building. Although the Cermak Building project came to a close under unfortunate circumstances, it was considered a successful enterprise by many, as UMDC was one of the first CDC's in Cleveland to acquire and manage such a large building.

By the mid 1980's, additional staff were brought on board to manage two exciting new initiatives – weatherization and paint programs. In 1987, UMDC reached another milestone by successfully completing its first new housing project, which was two homes built on Ferris

Avenue. To expand on the success of that effort, UMDC led the construction of 8 houses built on Miles Avenue as part of a mini-development called the Garret A. Morgan Place, which became a city-wide model. By 1991 the John P. Green project was completed, which was 16 home project built on Harvard Avenue and MLK Boulevard. During that timeframe, UMDC also built the Miles Plaza at East 131st and Miles Avenue. Through each of these initiatives, UMDC raised the bar for CDC's across the city as a result of their innovative and entrepreneurial approaches to development projects.

As UMDC moved into the mid-1990's, its housing programs continued to flourish. 30 homes were purchase for rehabilitation as part of an agreement with H.U.D. The Union-Miles Homes I Project built 50 homes in 1994, followed by the Union-Miles Homes II Project, which added 43 new homes in 1997. By the year 2000, Union-Miles Homes III added another 25 homes to the Union-Miles neighborhood.

Although the mid to late 90's were productive from a housing development perspective, UMDC encountered significant decline in the morale and effectiveness of its human resources. From 1997 to late 2000, three different Executive Directors headed the organization. During this same timeframe, tension at the board level peaked, with strong differences of opinion between the founding board members and new board members, which set the organization back and impeded progress. Equally challenging to this period was a disconnect of UMDC (real and perceived) from the community that it served.

The year 2000, however, marked the beginning of several important strides for UMDC. The organization completed the rehabilitation of the Miles Park Carnegie Library and moved its full operations there, while also fully renting the remaining building space to other community service providers. The Board completed a restructuring process, and named Jennifer Madden as the new Board President. In 2001, Debra Prater was hired as Executive Director, which rounded out the new leadership team and infused new energy and direction into the organization. UMDC also renewed its commitment to community organizing. 2001 UMDC reevaluated its effectiveness and restaffed the entire organization. Subsequently they completed a year long Neighborhood Master planning process which produced a mechanism for planning and implementing consistent development. Housewarming and EPP programs were added to the cadre of programs that the organization currently offered which represented over $600,000 dollars of investment within the community.

UMDC returned to its organizing s roots by reacrivating over 20 block clubs. These organizing efforts also netted the following issue committees: The Railroad committee, The Greenspace Committee and The Education Committee. The collaborarion between agency and

neighborhood caused the Cleveland School Board to change their plans to erect a k-12 on the John Adams School site to their new decision to bring back the John Adams High School with a track and field on the site. In addition to organizing successes UMDC in conjunction with Cleveland Housing Network and Rysar Properties developed over 60 scattered site homes.

They continued their development initiatives by implementing a Business Revitaliztion District which governs the Retail improvements within the areas of .....Designed the Family Dollar located at 93rd and Miles and completed the necessary land asembly to construct 30,000 square feet of new retail in the Miles and 131st area.