



★ Connecting a Community

Clermont County, Ohio

Located east of Cincinnati along the Ohio River, Clermont County, Ohio, is an appealing blend of rural and suburban communities with strong schools, a diverse economy, a proud history, and numerous recreational opportunities.

To help meet the evolving needs of these thriving communities, Clermont County's government has prioritized finding technology that improves:

- **Connectivity:** optimizing operations across departments
- **Efficiency:** replacing paper-driven systems with digital workflows
- **Transparency:** making key data easily accessible to its community
- **Engagement:** providing 24/7 online access to tasks such as electronic bill payment and permitting

For help achieving these goals, Clermont County's government has turned to Tyler Technologies, a pioneer in integrated solutions built specifically for the public sector.

The county's priorities are part of a larger goal of achieving a connected community that is transparent, collaborative, and engaged. For Clermont County Auditor Linda Fraley, this adds up to improved services for county residents.

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Organization Profile

- **Industry:** County
- **Location:** Clermont County, Ohio
- **Number of Employees:** 1,136
- **Population:** 209,642
- **Tyler Client Since:** 1995
- **Tyler Products Used:** Enterprise ERP (powered by Munis®), Cashiering, Content Manager, Enterprise Permitting & Licensing (powered by EnerGov™), Enterprise Assessment & Tax (powered by lasWorld®), Assessment Connect, Data & Insights

“A connected community means that if you’re a resident of Clermont County you see Clermont County as one when really there’s many departments and 20 elected officials,” says Fraley, who has been a leader in using technology to improve operations. “I feel like the more Clermont County gets connected and the more we all have access to data the better people are being served.”

Connecting Operations

Since 2010, Clermont County has used Enterprise ERP for its financial systems. Enterprise ERP’s integrations with other Tyler products connect courts, assessment, financials, health, HR, permitting and licensing, records, and more. For example, Tyler’s Cashiering solution connects Enterprise Permitting & Licensing with Enterprise ERP financials. This means the county has a single source of truth and that all departments have access to the latest financial information.

“We share the database with the treasurer’s office, so we always work together and we’re combined into one piece of software,” says Cindy Hawk, deputy auditor of real estate operations. “Whether they’re posting a payment or we’re making a tax adjustment, whatever it might be, it’s all done in unison. When we’re working in unison with the treasurer the product is always current, so there’s never a lag of passing data back and forth because it’s all integrated.”

As Jennifer Hartley, deputy auditor – financial operations, explains, a core benefit of using products built to integrate from the ground up is efficiency and automated updates.

“Connected communities means that the software and its applications can talk to each other,” says Hartley. “To provide that information to the community, to be able to use multiple products with Tyler Technologies has been very efficient and effective – being able to have our Open Finance, to have our Open Data, to be able to talk to our different systems. We’re entering that information in one system, and it automatically goes out to the multiple applications.”

Building Efficiencies Through Technology

Tyler has been key in moving the county away from paper processes as well as simplifying access to data collection and analysis. Using Tyler applications, the county has streamlined:

- HR operations, simplifying onboarding and benefits selection with employee self-service functionality
- Invoice approvals, using Content Manager for sign-off workflows
- Gathering and analyzing real estate data with Assessment Connect

Hartley points to invoice management as a key example of improved efficiency.

“We use Content Manager and our everyday processing for invoices for any of our HR personnel actions,” she says. “In our legacy system we were very paper driven. Our departments within the county would have to get the invoice, and they would have to find their department head to sign off on that invoice and return it to our office for us to enter it into our legacy system and process it for payment. With Content Manager and Enterprise ERP, we have an electronic, paperless approval process.”

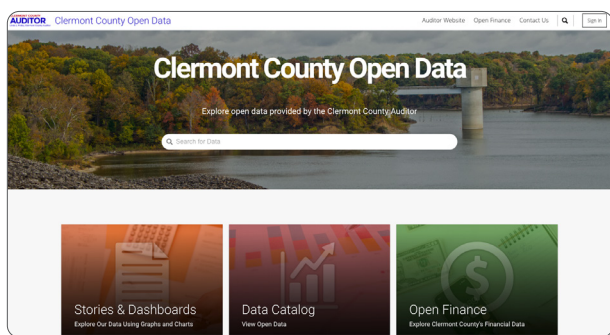
In addition, Assessment Connect, a data intelligence tool for assessment analytics, has proven to be a valuable software addition.

“Assessment Connect is really the tool that ties everything together for mass appraisal,” says Krissy Broussard, deputy auditor – real estate project manager. It provides one streamlined platform with everything that an assessor would need about a property right at their fingertips. Before we had Assessment Connect we were doing a lot of manual data creation from multiple massive spreadsheets.”

The county has also come to appreciate the benefits of Tyler's cloud-based solutions that are secure, flexible, scalable, and efficient, and which also enhance remote connectivity.

"The key benefits of the cloud are scalability and cost savings," says Chris Davis, information systems department director.

"We don't have to have the additional hardware, data storage, additional infrastructure to support that hardware. We don't have to worry about additional staff to manage that infrastructure. Not having to maintain on-prem servers frees up my resources and my team members to do other things."



Clermont County's portals provide community members with access to key data and self-service options.

The Power of Data Transparency

The community's desire to access data easily is clear, says Fraley.

"I'd say one of the most important things about my job is transparency," she says. "People want to know what we do and how we do it – that their tax dollars are accounted for. And, when it comes to assessment, making sure that everyone is treated fairly and equitably."

To provide easy online access to data, the county launched an open data initiative using Tyler's Open Data platform. The county's public-facing online portal provides easy-to-access data related to property taxes, values, and characteristics, as well as insight into revenue, spending, payroll, and much more. In addition, the open data site uses GIS mapping for insight into topics such as parcels, real estate sales, and tax increment financing (TIFs).

In Their Own Words:

"I feel like the more Clermont County gets connected and the more we all have access to data the better people are being served."

— **Linda Fraley**, Clermont County Auditor

"We were able to use Data & Insights to be able to put data out there so people could see what changed in their property," says Chris Mehlman, deputy auditor – special projects. "They can find out, 'Why is my value changing from 'X' and now to 'Y' or what's happening that caused this?' It gives them more information and makes them well informed so that when they contact us, we can have a conversation that is more useful for them. Many times they can answer their questions just by taking a look at the data."

The community has benefitted in many ways:

- School districts can look at financial data that impacts their budgeting
- Taxpayers can easily dig into county spending
- Businesses can research property records
- County staff spend less time responding to FOIA requests

Building Engagement

Clermont County community members benefit from the ability to interact electronically with the county on their own schedule.

"Providing self-service options to the community is great," says Julianne Nesbit, Clermont County health commissioner. "It's something that our contractors can use. They can go online and schedule inspections and manage permits and licensing. Also, the public can go in and pay for permit fees that they may owe. It's very easy for them to go online and take care of that, not necessarily during our regular business hours, and contractors can schedule inspections up until midnight the night before."

Data & Insights at Work

Clermont County community members are finding real value in the ability to self-serve data online via the county's open data web portal.

Lynn Koogler, who has been in real estate for nearly 50 years explains, the value of Open Data to his business:

"When I used to go into the county auditor's office, the county recorder's office, and the county engineer's office, I spent 50% of my time in those three offices. And when everybody started going online, it made life so much easier.

"In Clermont County, we have probably one of the best auditor sites that there is in the state of Ohio. It's easy to get around in. I can go ahead and find out who owns the property. I can get a survey at the site. I can go ahead and see the history of real estate payments. I can get GIS information, which means that I can go in and get a survey. It's just been tremendous – the technology and what has happened in Clermont County."

Mark Brown, systems analyst, also points to constituent convenience when speaking about Enterprise Permitting & Licensing and Cashiering.

"We took in close to three-quarters of a million dollars in online payments last year alone through self-service," says Brown. "The public never had that type of access to the permitting system before. Now they can go on and create permits. And the ability to take electronic payments from constituents means the county get its revenue in a timely manner because it makes it easier to pay."

Embracing Innovation

As he looks to the future, Mehlman recognizes that the role of technology is always evolving and that Tyler continues to innovate.

"I think Tyler does a really good job of research and development," he says. "Tyler's not static. Since we have been with Tyler, I can honestly say it's constantly changing and moving. Sometimes the government may not necessarily like that, but the whole evergreen approach and philosophy have been very beneficial because we look at it as an investment Tyler has made into us."

Fraley, who has overseen Clermont's hard work, is quick to explain that the process of continuous improvement is hard work with a big payoff.

"I don't want to give anybody an idea that we haven't gone through some rough roads. When you make changes and when you convert data and when you're trying to make things better, there seems like there's always that rough period," she says. "However, I think that what we have found out is that the rewards far outweigh those difficult times. It's not always been easy, but the rewards have been great."

To learn more about Tyler's Public Administration solutions, contact us at info@tylertech.com | 1.833.895.3783 | tylertech.com

