

WARREN COUNTY RECORDER'S OFFICE



ANNUAL REPORT



2016
VOLUME THREE

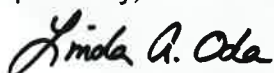
COUNTY RECORDER'S MESSAGE

“ It has been my privilege to serve as your Warren County Recorder. I completed my first four-year term on December 31, 2016 and what a whirlwind first term it was! Along with my outstanding staff, we have taken Warren County from a “green screen” DOS computer system to a state-of-the-art land records system that ensures all records are safe and accessible for centuries to come.

We have advanced Warren County to one of the most efficient offices in the State of Ohio by offering electronic recording of all documents and giving taxpayers the ability to access their own property records online through our new AVA software. We have been able to break down silos by working with County Auditor Matt Nolan and Treasurer Jim Aumann to allow searchers to do one search, but access all three of our offices. To the best of our knowledge, we are the only county in the State of Ohio that offers this service. Additionally, the Warren County Veteran's Service Commission is another county agency we continue to work with. It is an honor and privilege to work with Director Rod Eversole and his staff.

We have cut costs, increased services and have a customer service reputation that is second to none. As a direct result of this, I am pleased to say I was re-elected to my second term as your County Recorder in 2016 by almost an 80-percent margin. Thank you for your confidence, and I look forward to continuing to push the Warren County Recorder's office to new heights. ”

Respectfully,



Linda A. Oda
RECORDER



Since 1803, Linda Oda is the 24th person to hold the position of County Recorder.

WHY WE MATTER

The land records system, which includes the Sidwell numbering system adopted by Warren County in the late 1970s, preserves the knowledge of proper ownership that is easily accessible to everyone. Many citizens come in daily to use the Warren County Recorder's office to research their property lines, confirm ownership, acquire documents to prove their legal status, along with many other services.

It has been said that the reason for success of our country and capitalism is the guarding of land records to ensure property rights while being carefully documented. In Hernando de Soto's book, *The Mystery of Capital*, he states the the reason many countries are not as successful as the United States of America is because:

- A lack of credible public records prevents countries, businesses and individuals from leveraging an important source of capital;
- There are countries where more than 75% of the population have no proof they own their homes or property;
- More than \$9 trillion of capital exists in undocumented homes across the world.

OHIO VETERANS

The General Assembly for the State of Ohio has given authority and responsibility for several issues related to those who have served our country under Ohio Revised Code 317.2. Here in Warren County, we take these responsibilities seriously while working hand in hand with Warren County Veteran's Service Commission Director Rodney Eversole and his staff.

We have a comprehensive list of all deceased veterans (unavailable to the public), and where they are buried. The Veteran's Service Commission uses this information to place flags and other markers on grave sites, as well as to help families of veterans.

Warren County is the only Recorder's office in Southwest Ohio to issue Honor Reward Veteran ID cards. These cards are state issued, and can be similarly used as a driver's license to identify a person as a veteran. To receive this card, the veteran must first record his or her discharge papers. Original discharge papers are required by law – copies are unacceptable. All of these services are provided to veterans free of charge, including the recordings.

Warren County Recorder Linda Oda has been a frequently requested speaker at the Warren County Bar Association, civic and community organizations, along with veterans' events throughout Warren County.

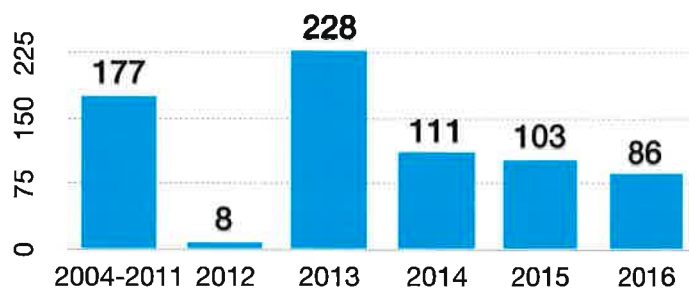
She would love the opportunity to visit with your organization to talk about the Warren County Recorder's office and the improvements that have been made to help you, as a Warren County resident, to better manage your land record documents (including deeds and mortgages).

To schedule a speaking date, please contact Recorder Oda at 513.695.2632 or loda@warrencountyrecorder.com.

Furthermore, Recorder Linda Oda has done several offsite recordings to assist veterans who are unable to drive to Lebanon during regular business hours. In conjunction with the Warren County Veteran's Service Commission, these outreach programs have been held in Springboro and Harlan Township. In 2017 we are hoping to visit even more communities.

For groups of 8 or more that would like Linda Oda and/or the Veteran's Service Commission Outreach team to visit, please call at 513.695.2632 or email loda@warrencountyrecorder.com.

Military Discharges (DD214s) Filed



Increase in DD214 recordings in 2013 is a result of a collaboration between the Warren County Recorder's office and the Warren County Veterans Service Commission.



Linda Oda speaking at a community event.

FISCAL INTEGRITY

Actual Expenditures 2016



We work hard to spend as few tax dollars as possible while still maintaining what we feel is the best customer service.

Everything we do in the Warren County Recorder's office is done with an eye on the bottom line. Any purchase that is made or personnel decision has to answer two questions:

1. Will it enhance our ability to serve the residents of Warren County?
2. Can it be done more cost effectively?

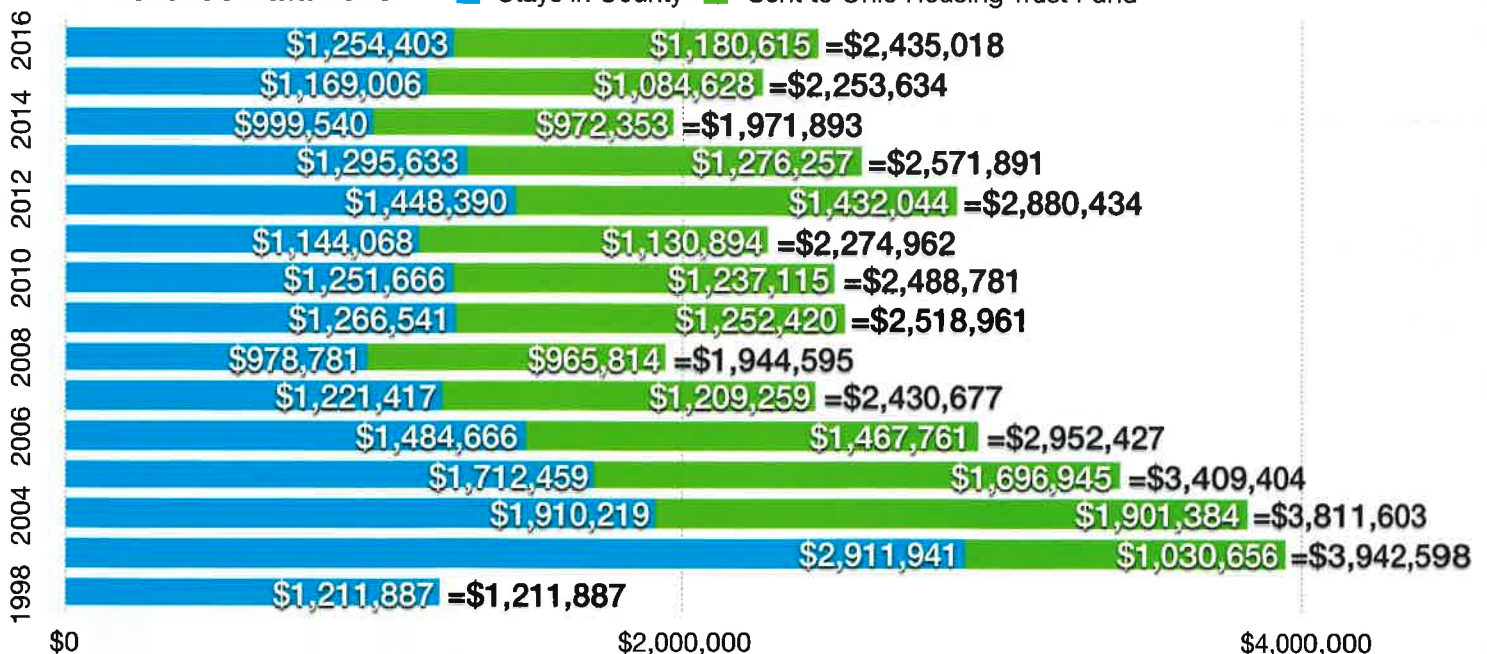
We feel it is our responsibility to tell you annually how much money that was spent in our office. Of the \$700,865 spent this past year, 94% of the total was in personnel and personnel related costs. This is why our office works diligently to keep costs as low as possible, while still providing the best customer service, knowledge and skills necessary to complete all of our requirements laid out in Ohio Revised Code Section 317.

We are pleased to tell you that in January 2016, almost 17% of our budget was returned back to the County's General Fund. This year, once again about 17% of our General Fund budget was unused, freeing that money up for other expenses throughout the county.

We also started a new fund in 2016 for technology upgrades. Instead of asking for additional money from the Commissioners every five years to lease new software, we have started a designated savings account where \$3.25 from every document that is recorded is allocated towards technology, software and software maintenance towards future upgrades.

Revenue Data 2016

■ Stays in County ■ Sent to Ohio Housing Trust Fund*



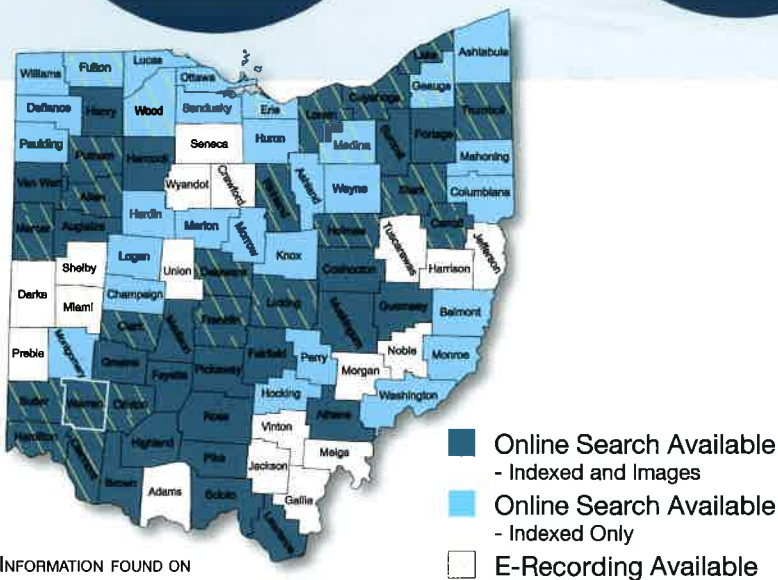
*According to the Ohio Development Services Agency, Warren County has received zero dollars back from the Ohio Housing Trust Authority in the past three years. 2013 was the last time Warren County benefitted from this state fund.

THE HIGHLIGHTS

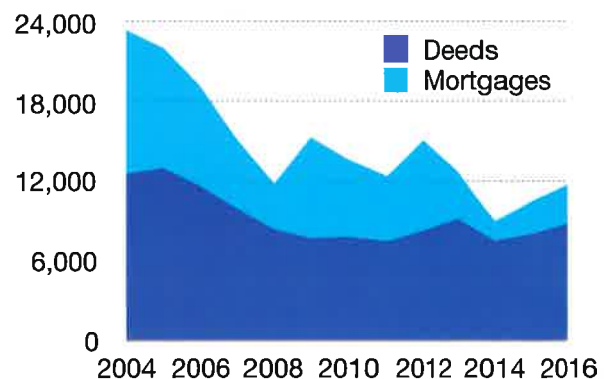
- Software updates to the Land Records system to allow for near automated indexing.
- Introduction of e-recording document services (with the exception of plats), including all conveyance documents in 2015. Warren County is just one of 26 out of Ohio's 88 counties that offers this service.
- Approximately 30 million pages have been scanned in and manually checked for redaction purposes (removing social security numbers). As a result, all documents that have been digitized are now available in the office.
- To avoid physical damage and further deterioration of original documents dating back to the 1700s, this office has begun an extensive digitization project to scan all documents to make available for public use.
- Partnered with the Warren County Veterans Service Commission to offer all veterans the opportunity to receive a Veterans ID card at no cost. Participating businesses will honor these cards for applicable discounts.
- Compiled and documented detailed information, including burial sites, on approximately 18,000 deceased veterans. The Ohio Revised Code requires all County Recorders to keep track of this information.

DID YOU KNOW...

Before Linda Oda, became Recorder, the information on deceased veterans was kept on 3" x 5" index cards. It took several months to transfer this handwritten information into a software program that is regularly updated and shared with the Warren County Veterans Service Commission.



Comparison of Deeds and Mortgages Recorded by Year





NEED A SPEAKER?

WARREN COUNTY RECORDER LINDA ODA WOULD CONSIDER IT A PRIVILEGE TO TALK ABOUT HER OFFICE AND HOW IT ASSISTS RESIDENTS.

LIKE ANY SUCCESSFUL OFFICE, THE WARREN COUNTY RECORDER'S OFFICE WILL CONTINUE TO EVOLVE AS IT FINDS BETTER, MORE EFFICIENT WAYS TO COMPLETE ITS RESPONSIBILITIES TO WARREN COUNTY AND ITS TAXPAYERS.

PROTECT *your most valuable* INVESTMENT

PROPERTY FRAUD  ALERT

PROPERTY FRAUD

What is it?

WHEN SOMEONE ILLEGALLY USES YOUR PROPERTY FOR FINANCIAL GAIN.

How does it happen?

SOMEONE RECORDS A FRAUDULENT DOCUMENT IN THE COUNTY LAND RECORDS OFFICE, MAKING IT LOOK LIKE THEY OWN YOUR HOME OR PROPERTY.

Should I be concerned?

YES! ACCORDING TO THE FBI, PROPERTY AND MORTGAGE FRAUD IS THE FASTEST GROWING WHITE-COLLAR CRIME.

What can I do about it?

TO ADDRESS THESE CONCERNS, THE WARREN COUNTY RECORDERS OFFICE HAS TEAMED UP TO CREATE A NOTIFICATION THAT WILL HELP YOU COMBAT THE EFFECTS OF LAND FRAUD AND OTHER SIMILAR FRAUDULENT ACTIVITIES.

SUBSCRIBE FREE OF CHARGE:
WWW.PROPERTYFRAUDALERT.COM | 1.800.728.3858

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT THE
WARREN COUNTY RECORDERS OFFICE.

DON'T FORGET TO LIKE US ON FACEBOOK! 

QUESTIONS? COMMENTS? SUGGESTIONS?

CONTACT RECORDER LINDA ODA

513.695.1382 | LODA@WARRENCOUNTYRECORDER.COM

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