


**CHRISTIAN COUNTY**

# Special Road District ends agreement with city of Ozark

*Ozark Special Road District commissioners say the former agreement with the city of Ozark became unworkable. OSRD wanted the city to consider reimbursing the road district for maintaining streets in city limits*

 by Zoe McIntyre  
3 hours ago



Ozark Special Roads District commissioner Jerry Countryman stands for a portrait next to a map of the city of Ozark's roads on Tuesday, Nov. 25, 2025, in Ozark. (Photo by Ellie Fryszak)

The Ozark Special Road District (OSRD) has suspended its agreement with the city of Ozark, ending the road district's maintenance of certain streets within the city.

In the Nov. 24 announcement, commissioners for OSRD cited multiple reasons for the decision, including an effort to make responsible use of their budget, an inability to negotiate an agreement with the city by the district's deadline, and grievances with the city's process when approving some developments.

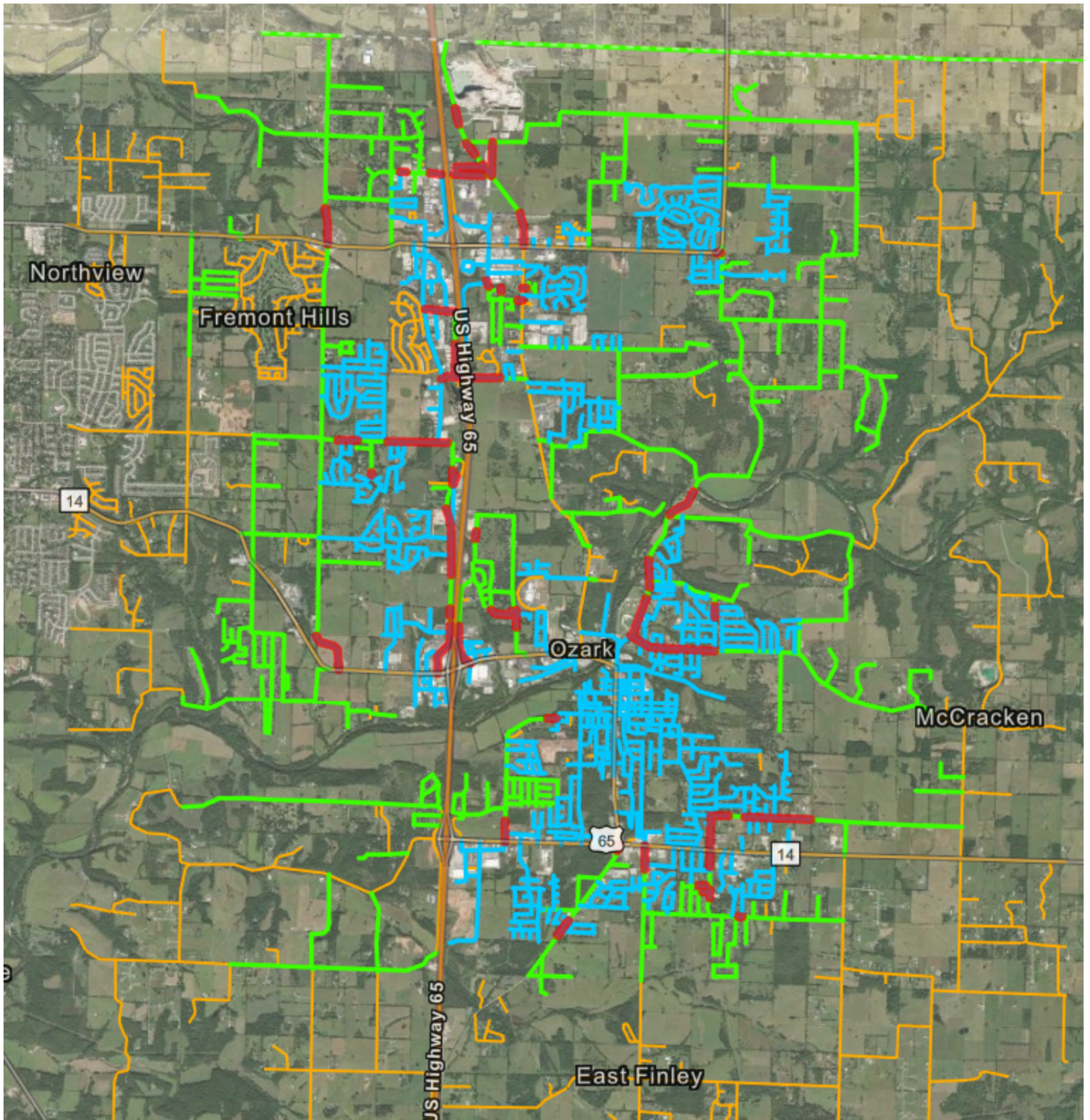
OSRD is responsible for maintaining over 100 miles of road in unincorporated Christian County. The road district says that in 2011, previous OSRD commissioners entered an agreement with the city of Ozark to maintain some roads within city limits.

According to city of Ozark Director of Communications Maria Neider, OSRD was maintaining roughly 17.5 miles of streets in the city. The two entities' intergovernmental agreement was suspended on Dec. 1.

"If we're maintaining 20% of our total road mileage for a municipality, then we get nothing back in return (and) someone else is not receiving the maintenance on their road, or the benefit of those tax dollars that paid it," explained OSRD commissioner Dwight McNiel.

In a **news release** OSRD stated, in part, that its commissioners have been concerned "that the City of Ozark is not requiring developers to comply with public roadway and/or stormwater standards when construction projects start."

# What does this mean for Christian County roads?



On this map, roads highlighted in blue are maintained by the city of Ozark while roads highlighted in green are maintained by OSRD. The roads highlighted in red were previously cared for by the road district, but are now the city’s responsibility. (Photo from OSRD)

The road district’s responsibilities include mowing and snowplowing as well as addressing bigger maintenance projects, such as paving and installing culverts.

Road district commissioners say that their annual budget is around \$2.4 million. Residents of Christian County pay a 33-cent **tax levy** toward OSRD.

In late November, OSRD commissioners and Ozark city staff both told the Daily Citizen that they could not provide a specific estimate of the budget impact of changing the maintenance responsibility for the 17.5 miles of road.

According to Ozark's public works director, the city maintained just over 102 miles of centerline roads before OSRD suspended the intergovernmental agreement. In Ozark's **proposed budget** for 2025, the city requested \$9.9 million in total for street expenses under its general fund.

On Nov. 24, Ozark city administrator Eric Johnson stated via email: "We understand that OSRD is exercising its right to terminate the IGA (intergovernmental agreement) and respect that. We are carefully evaluating the impact of that decision. In the interim, we will continue to work with our local partners to ensure that services are being provided and that we remain responsive to constituent needs."

## Road district says city has not required developers to follow OSRD policy



The southeast corner of the property slated for potential development by Marabella LLC, as seen from Blue Stem Road, maintained by the Ozark Special Road District. (Photo by Zoe McIntyre)

Commissioners for OSRD expressed grievances with the city’s communication and execution surrounding several large-scale developments currently in progress. According to commissioner Jerry Countryman, the city has not always required developers to communicate with OSRD and obtain the required permits.

The road district’s **access management policy** requires developers to submit plans and receive permits from OSRD for projects that would connect traffic or make improvements to OSRD-maintained roads. Additionally, the road district may require a traffic impact study or ask a developer to acquire additional right-of-way for necessary site improvements.

“We’ve been having a hard time getting the developers that come in to comply, and part of it is how the city handles the developers,” Countryman said.

“We kind of end up at the tail end of it, trying to clean up problems that they don’t take care of in their process.”



A pile of refuse from the Greenbridge Estates subdivision project sits near OSRD-maintained Greenbridge Road. (Photo by Ellie Frysztak)

According to McNeil, the road district discovered in late summer or early fall 2025 that the developer for the **Greenbridge Estates** subdivision was attempting to cut a new access onto Greenbridge Road without previously submitting plans to OSRD.

Countryman also claimed that the city did not require developers for the **Ozark Marketplace** CID or **Marabella** development to fully comply with OSRD’s access management policy.

“There’s been a lot of subdivisions going in (without fully complying). We end up with the end result (that) our roads that we take care of are being flooded, ditches are being washed out and we’re having to fix this and fix that,” Countryman said.

## **Ozark population growth complicates road maintenance**

Patrick Platter, attorney for OSRD, provided the Daily Citizen with three letters detailing some of the road districts’ attempts to negotiate a new agreement with Ozark. According to McNeil, OSRD set a deadline for

the city to complete negotiations by Nov. 1, then extended the deadline until Dec. 1.

In April 2025, the road district asked Ozark to jointly review its agreement with OSRD, stating that the current agreement was no longer workable. A letter from Platter, dated May 6, asked the city to review several topics, including which roads OSRD should maintain.

In a Nov. 3 letter, Platter laid out a series of terms for negotiation between the city and road district. These included a proposal for the city to reimburse OSRD at a rate of \$40,000 per year for each mile of street it maintained within city limits. Commissioners for OSRD say that Ozark never reimbursed the road district for maintaining municipal streets, as this was not part of the former agreement.

As the population of Ozark continues to balloon, Countryman stated that the road district needs to focus on using its budget to service roads outside of the city.

“It’s growing that fast, and the city can’t keep up with what they need to keep up with,” he said. “They’ve had a free ride and they’ve had a chance to negotiate with us, and we’re doing what we feel like is right for the taxpayers as a whole.”



## **Zoe McIntyre**

Zoe McIntyre was born and raised in the Springfield area. She covers Springfield’s surrounding communities, like Nixa, Ozark and Republic. While a student at Evangel University, she enjoyed working on staff at the school’s radio station and newspaper, where she served as editor in chief for one year. When she isn’t persuading her friends to read more news, she enjoys cooking and thrifting. **More by Zoe McIntyre**

