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## ***NEWS RELEASE***

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### **Natural gas could be in Branson December 1**

Officials with Southern Missouri Natural Gas told the Branson Board of Aldermen at a study session Thursday that they are aiming for a December 1 date for natural gas to be available for residents and businesses in Branson.

Dave Moody, CEO of Southern Missouri Natural Gas in Mountain Grove, MO, which has the gas franchise with the city, told aldermen that an office has already been set up in Hollister behind the Kum & Go convenience store on the west side of U.S. 65. Moody said the office is staffed with five employees with more expected to be hired later this year.

“We also have many contractors working on the gas lines in the Branson area that are employing about 500 folks to get this project completed by December 1,” said Moody.

A portion of the distribution system gas lines has already been buried along Roark Valley Road. The main gas line will follow a sewer easement near Roark Creek and extend south on Fall Creek Road to Highway 76. The gas pipe will then go 10-30 feet under the Lakeside Forest Wilderness Area and under Lake Taneycomo to College of the Ozarks. The natural gas for Branson is coming from Aurora, MO through a major transmission line.

“No trees or natural vegetation will be removed or disturbed in Lakeside Forest,” said Moody.

Southern Missouri plans to continue installing distribution lines in Branson next month that will eventually service residential and commercial customers. Moody said the conversion from propane to natural gas will be at no cost to new customers.

Moody also warned aldermen that there will be loud noises from the heavy equipment, lots of dust during the construction and equipment on city roadways. However, much of the work will be away from residential areas.

Aldermen asked Moody to provide the city and media with information in advance when there would be any exceptionally loud noises so the public would be aware.

Moody said his company hopes to construct a walking trail along the gas line easement adjacent to Roark Creek. He is working with the city's engineering department on finalizing the trail routes.

Southern Missouri also plans to conduct training for local fire and emergency agencies in the event of a gas line leak or fire.