

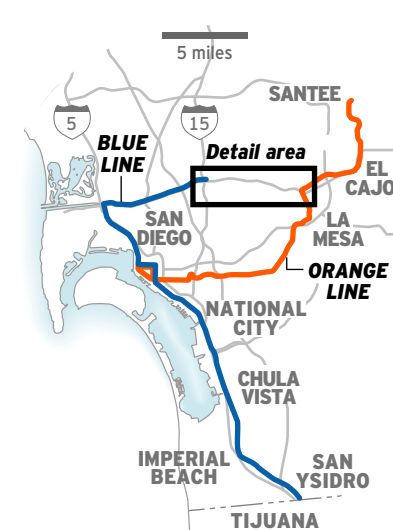
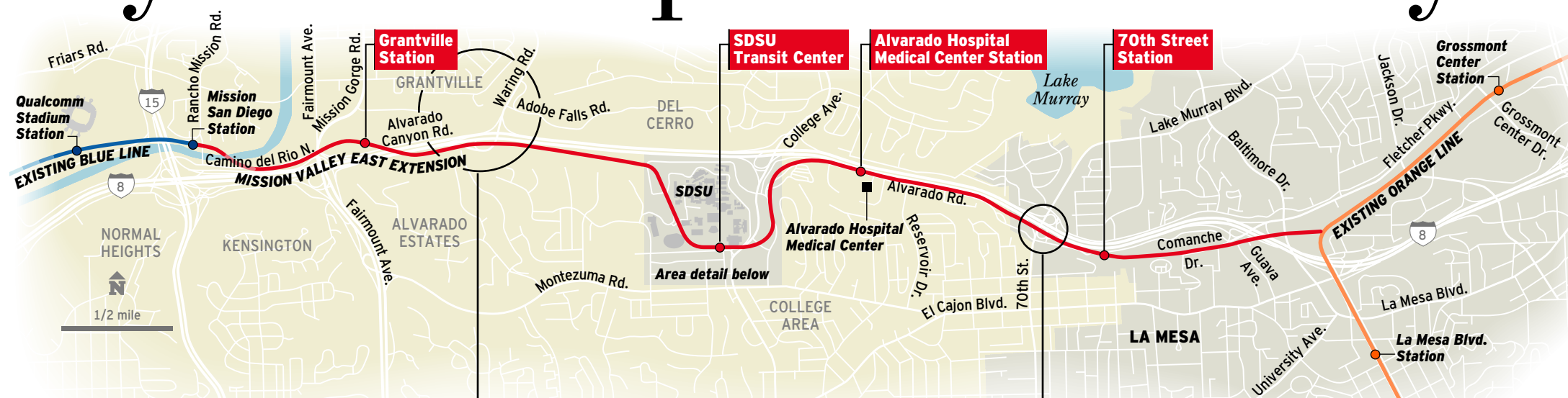
Trolley's next stop: SDSU and beyond

Research and graphic by DAVID HARDMAN / San Diego Union-Tribune

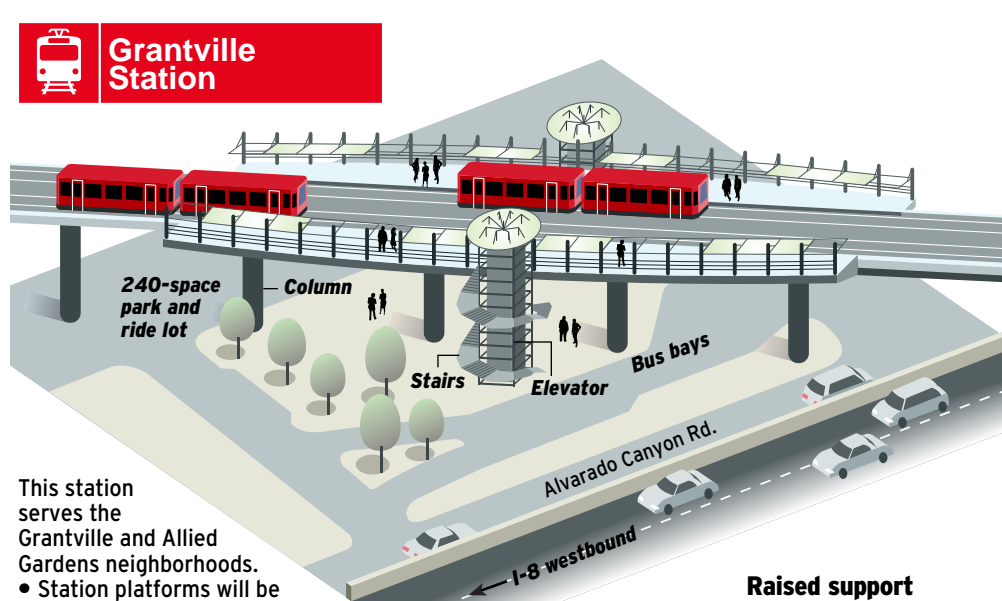
Completing a missing link in the San Diego Trolley system, the 5.8-mile Mission Valley East extension will carry an estimated 10,800 riders daily when it goes into service in early 2005.

Envisioned more than 25 years ago, the Metropolitan Transit Development Board's extension of the trolley's Blue Line will connect Mission Valley and East County along the Interstate 8 corridor. The extension adds four stops: Grantville, San Diego State University, Alvarado Hospital Medical Center and 70th Street. It will intersect the Orange Line in La Mesa.

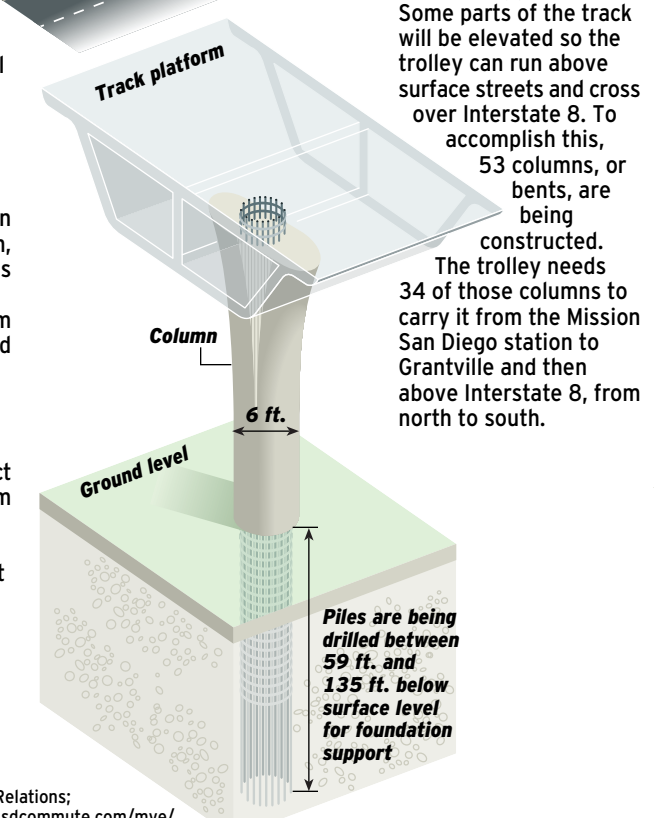
The construction budget, a combination of federal, state and local funds, is expected to be at least \$451 million. A \$20 million increase over the projected budget was announced last week along with plans to get lagging portions of the project back on schedule. Engineers estimate the cost could rise an additional \$5.6 million before construction is finished in January 2004. Track, electrical, signaling and other post-construction work will follow.



The missing link
The Mission Valley extension connects the Blue Line to the Orange Line near Baltimore Drive in La Mesa. The Blue Line currently stretches from San Ysidro in the South Bay through Chula Vista and National City to downtown San Diego, Old Town and Mission Valley. The Orange Line runs from Santee through El Cajon to La Mesa, Lemon Grove, eastern San Diego and then into downtown San Diego.



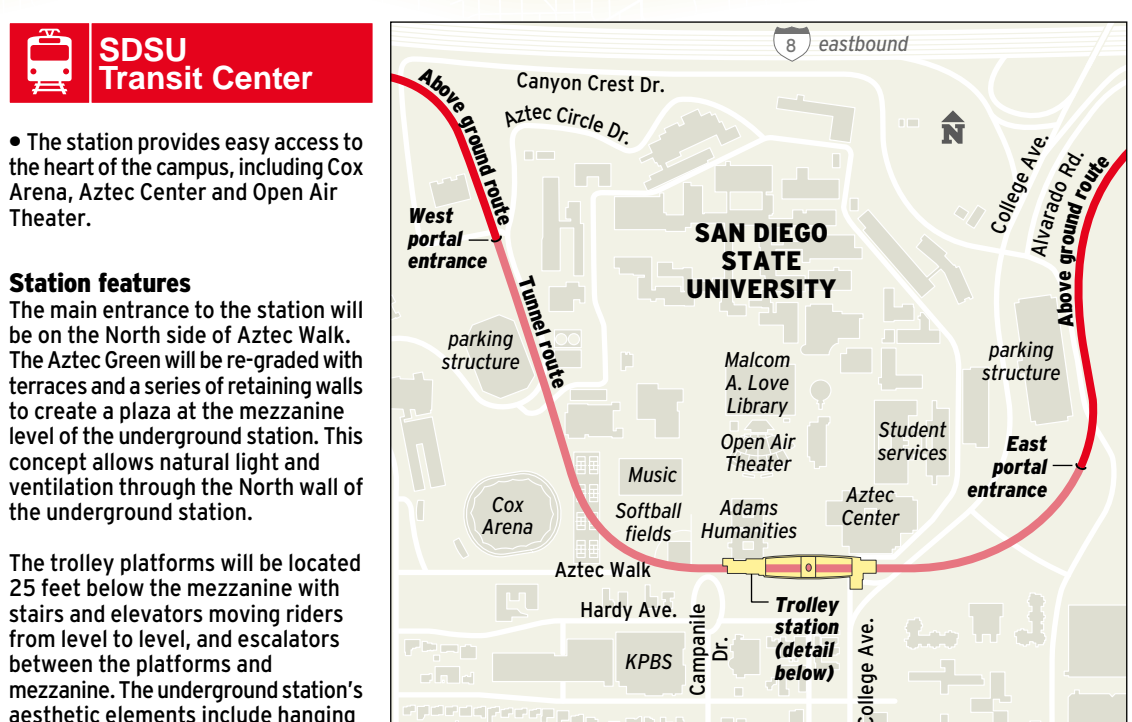
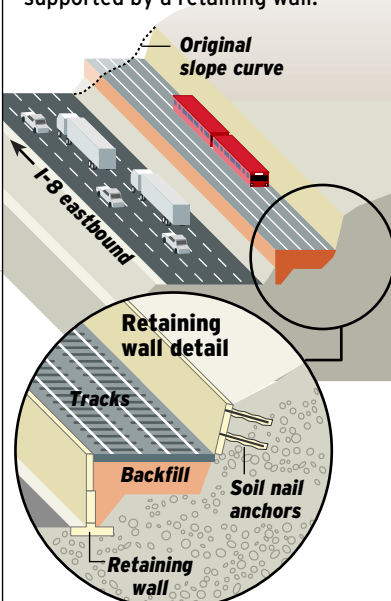
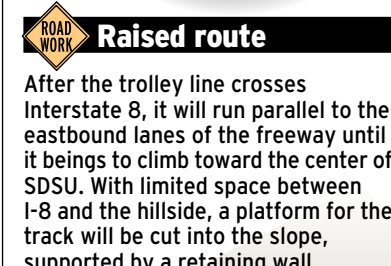
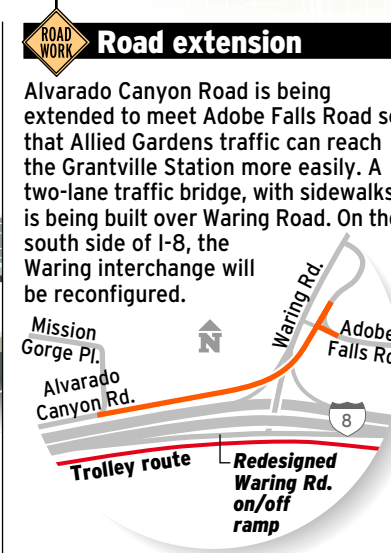
This station serves the Grantville and Allied Gardens neighborhoods.
 • Station platforms will be elevated 40 feet above a 240-space parking lot.
 • High-capacity elevators, as well as stairs, will provide access between ground level and the trolley platform.



Raised support
Some parts of the track will be elevated so the trolley can run above surface streets and cross over Interstate 8. To accomplish this, 53 columns, or bents, are being constructed. The trolley needs 34 of those columns to carry it from the Mission San Diego station to Grantville and then above Interstate 8, from north to south.

Station features
The design of the Grantville station includes a slightly curved platform, as well as slightly curved canopies above the platform providing shelter. The shapes of the platform and canopy shelter line are inspired by boat and airplane architecture as a tribute to the aviation and nautical industries in San Diego.

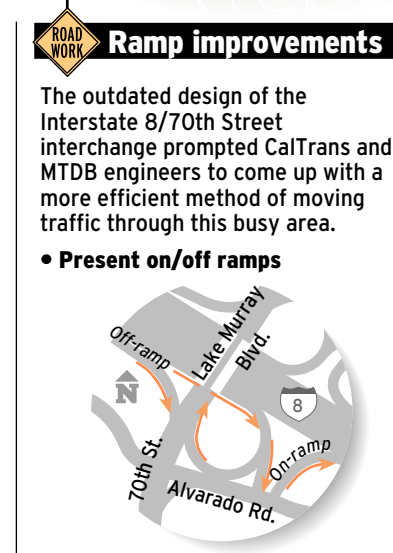
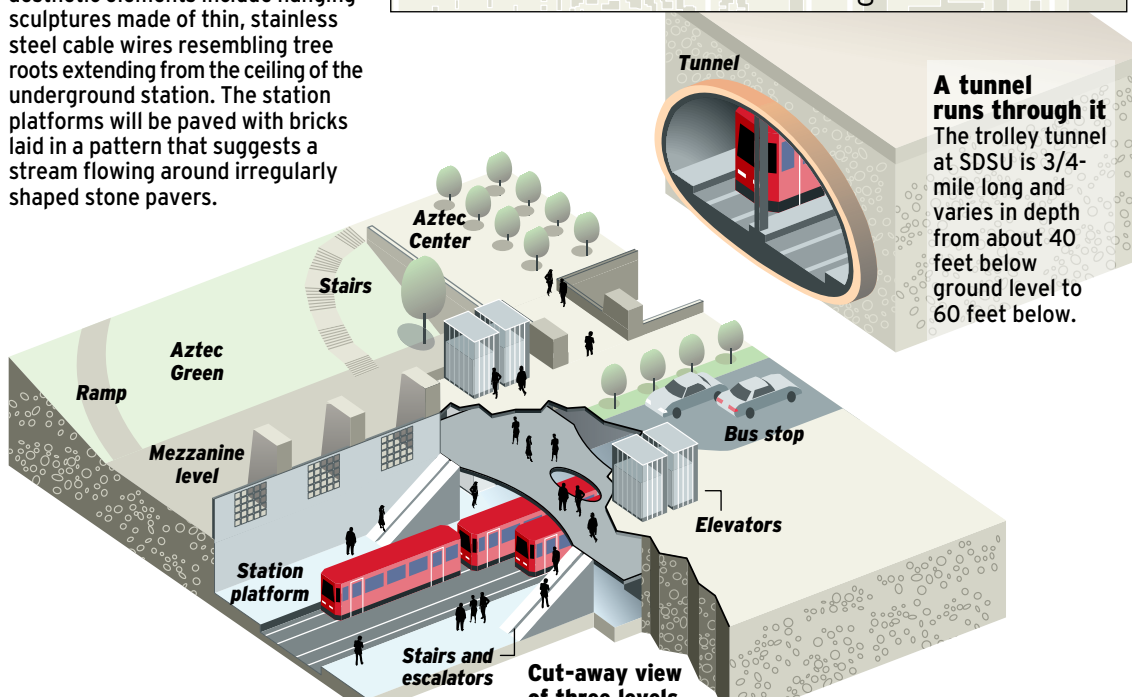
During the day, sunlight will project the shadow of the curved platform canopy onto the platform, illuminating art text inscribed on the canopy. At night, various light sources will wash the station in hues of red, white and blue light.



SDSU Transit Center
 • The station provides easy access to the heart of the campus, including Cox Arena, Aztec Center and Open Air Theater.

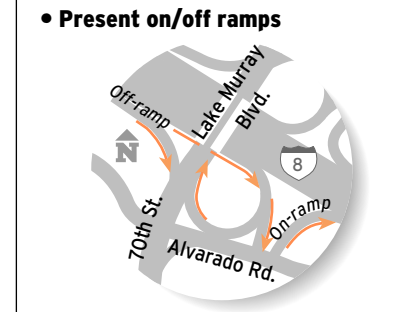
Station features
The main entrance to the station will be on the North side of Aztec Walk. The Aztec Green will be re-graded with terraces and a series of retaining walls to create a plaza at the mezzanine level of the underground station. This concept allows natural light and ventilation through the North wall of the underground station.

The trolley platforms will be located 25 feet below the mezzanine with stairs and elevators moving riders from level to level, and escalators between the platforms and mezzanine. The underground station's aesthetic elements include hanging sculptures made of thin, stainless steel cable wires resembling tree roots extending from the ceiling of the underground station. The station platforms will be paved with bricks laid in a pattern that suggests a stream flowing around irregularly shaped stone pavers.

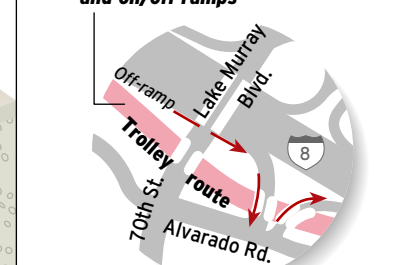


Ramp improvements
 The outdated design of the Interstate 8/70th Street interchange prompted CalTrans and MTDB engineers to come up with a more efficient method of moving traffic through this busy area.

• **Present on/off ramps**

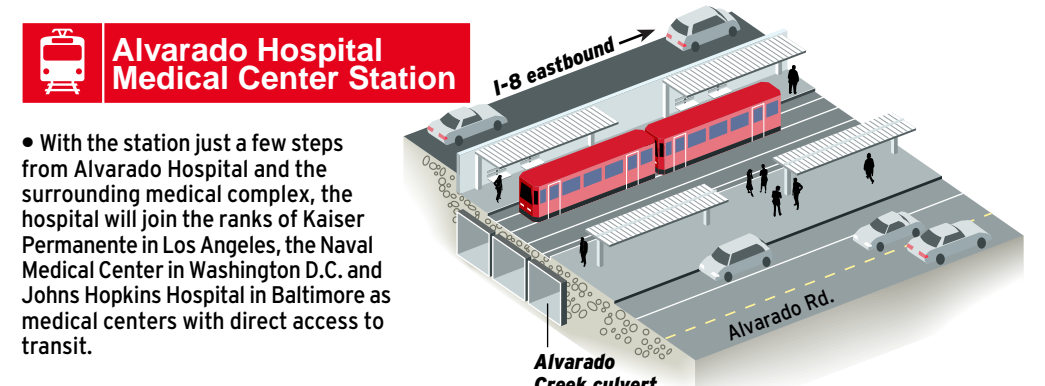


• **Redesigned on/off ramps**
 The trolley will run under 70th St. bridge and on/off ramps



The new design eliminates two off-ramps that fed onto crowded 70th Street. A new two-lane ramp will carry traffic from eastbound I-8 to a three-lane intersection with Alvarado Road. The intersection will be controlled by a traffic signal and at that point Alvarado will be seven lanes.

A bridge will be constructed on 70th Street to pass over the trolley and Alvarado Creek.



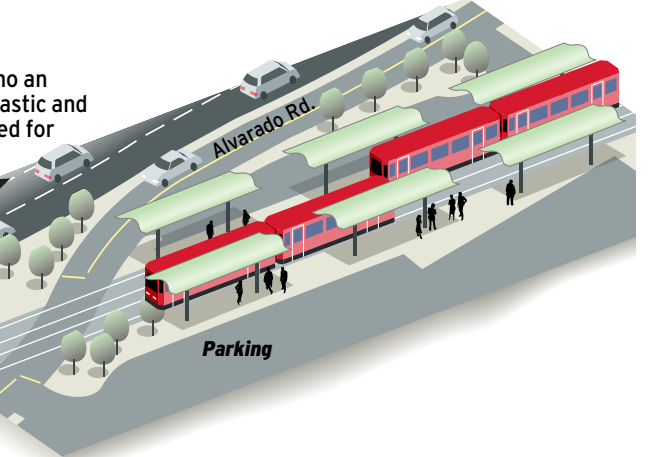
Alvarado Hospital Medical Center Station
 • With the station just a few steps from Alvarado Hospital and the surrounding medical complex, the hospital will join the ranks of Kaiser Permanente in Los Angeles, the Naval Medical Center in Washington D.C. and Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore as medical centers with direct access to transit.

Station features
The Alvarado Hospital Medical Center Station features a garden design with vines on trellises planted along the 360-foot freeway retaining wall. Transparent canopies will provide rain protection, and louvers will offer sun protection. The station design also features a 12-line riddle, provided as a fun activity for waiting riders. The riddle will be printed rhythmically on three bands of concrete tiles along the upper part of the retaining wall, which will have a rustic stone appearance.

Storm drain
From Alvarado Hospital Medical Center to 70th Street, the trolley tracks will be built atop Alvarado Creek by replacing the channel with a concrete structure that will carry storm water. The box culvert has been designed to carry the volume of water that might be seen from a 100-year storm.



Station features
The station's design and materials echo an environmental theme with recycled plastic and cobbles from Alvarado Creek to be used for benches, and with recycled glass aggregate to be used in the platforms. Drought-tolerant native plants and educational plaques to further the environmental theme will be found throughout the station.



SOURCES: Jennifer Chidester, GCS Public Relations; Jim Hecht and Ramon Ruelas, MTDB; www.sdcommute.com/mve/