

**SOURCE:** EastValleyTribune.com (Mesa, AZ)  
**AUDIENCE:** 373,970 [provided by Nielsen//NetRatings]  
**DATE:** 11-15-2008  
**HEADLINE:** Valley Metro announces light-rail debut parties

Source Website

November 15, 2008 – 11:26PM

Valley Metro announces light-rail debut parties

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Mike Branom , Tribune

With every passing day, the Valley comes closer to the Dec. 27 coming-out party for light rail.

Metro, the agency running the trains, has announced there will be nine large-scale celebrations across the 20-mile alignment, plus smaller shindigs at other stations on opening day.

East Valley road work update

A. Forest Avenue between 6th and 7th streets

Forest reopens Thursday.

B. Warner Road at McClintock Drive

Westbound Warner restricted to one lane from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

C. McQueen Road between Queen Creek and Ocotillo roads

McQueen closed through Dec. 5.

D. Dobson Road at Germann Road

Right-lane restrictions on northbound Dobson and westbound Germann.

E. 8th Avenue at Dobson Road

Westbound 8th restricted through Monday.

F. McKellips Road from Val Vista Drive to Higley Road

Road restrictions on eastbound and westbound McKellips.

G. Granite Reef Road north of Indian School Road

Granite Reef closed Monday through Nov. 25.

H. Hayden Road at Indian Bend Road

Southbound curb lane on Hayden closed through Friday.

I. Riggs Road between Recker Road and Val Vista Drive

Road restrictions on Riggs through Nov. 21.

J. Higley and Queen Creek roads

Intersection will end restrictions Monday.

K. Queen Creek Road between Crismon and Signal Butte roads

Lane restrictions on Queen Creek will end Dec. 1.

Got a commuting gripe?

Call the Gripe Line, (480) 898-6411, or send your complaints, questions or comments about commuting to [gettingthere@evtrib.com](mailto:gettingthere@evtrib.com) or by regular mail to Getting There, Tribune, P.O. Box 1547, Mesa, AZ 85211.

Working west from Mesa, the stations hosting big events, and their themes, are:

\* Sycamore and Main Street: It All Starts Here --- Sponsored by Salt River Project. Celebrate Mesa's future with live music, food and fun for the whole family including a kids zone and a classic car show. This celebration also launches Mesa's new bus rapid transit service, Valley Metro LINK, which will provide residents another transit option.

\* Fifth Street and Veterans Way: Destination Tempe --- Sponsored by Gray Development, *Avenue Communities* and Aloft Tempe. Come to know all that Tempe has to offer with festival booths, a farmers market, archaeology displays and a kids area. This celebration also serves as the opening of the Tempe Transportation Center, the city's newest building certified as "green."

\* Mill Avenue and Third Street: Mill Avenue Experience --- Sponsored by Hayden Ferry. Step into the urban oasis that is Mill Avenue, which offers a wide variety of culture, entertainment and dining options.

\* Priest Drive and Washington Street: Papago Park Celebration --- Sponsor SRP joins its neighbors, the Phoenix Zoo and Desert Botanical Garden, for interesting exhibits and fun things to do and learn.

At the other stations, Metro is relying upon community involvement. Local businesses, nonprofits, neighborhood associations and other organizations will be the featured highlights in those places.

Celebrations will run from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., with free train rides until 8 p.m. If partygoers want to skip the lines for trains and return to their original destinations, free bus shuttles will also be provided on the opening weekend. Free rides will continue through Dec. 31.

For more information, visit

[www.metrolightrail.org/grandopening](http://www.metrolightrail.org/grandopening) .

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***Highlights: Avenue Communities***