

## **The Road Ahead (6/30/05 Houston Press Letters to The Editor)**

### **Letters Houston Press**

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#### **The Road Ahead**

**Dream on: You have to give Gonzalo Camacho credit for having drive and imagination ["Digging It," by Greg Harman, June 16]. However, I think he's dreaming. One must recall the neighborhood push to have TxDOT do what he is proposing on that very short stretch of U.S. 59. They wanted a park over the freeway. They saw it had been done somewhere in Arizona. It was extremely expensive, and TxDOT said no way. We were just lucky that for only another \$40 million or so, they could continue the depression below grade, because they would have had to rebuild worn-out pilings supporting the old roadbed. Life is a matter of allocating scarce resources in an efficient manner. There is just not enough money for this idea. They can probably come to a compromise with fewer lanes and some good, sound walls.**

**Garth Whittington  
Houston**

**Can't-do attitude: I read your article about Gonzalo Camacho's I-45 tunnel vision with great interest. Those of us who live near downtown have begun to sense the inevitability of the demise of our neighborhoods. In my case, monster home development in the Heights has reduced 20 years of my blood, sweat and tears into teardown property. Perhaps the fact that the majority of Houstonians live outside the Loop gives our local governments the democratic right to bulldoze and pave over anything that stands in the way of profitable sprawl. While it's hard for me to see it from my front porch, maybe that's just progress.**

**However, I was most disappointed to read the litany of equivocation from Houston's transportation experts, particularly Carol Lewis, whom the mayor recently appointed to chair Houston's Planning Commission. Your story speaks to a loss greater than historic neighborhoods or green space. It demonstrates the erosion of Houston's seminal spirit and the absence of the audacity it took to build this community on the steamy banks of a shallow, slow-moving bayou, in the middle of nowhere. Enough excuses!**

**When did Houston become a can't-do city? When did we decide to focus on pursuing the temporary spotlight of events like the Olympics and the Super**

**Bowl, and build gaudy amenities that serve only a small fraction of Houston's citizens? When did we buy into all this meaningless "world-class city" crap? (Memo to H-town boosters: If you have to advertise it, it's probably not so.) When did such vanities supplant the honest desire to work toward the true long-term welfare of this city's residents?**

**The same-old, same-old, whether it's more and more concrete or poor-mouthing innovation, will not solve our problems.**

**Until our leaders and the myopic developer establishment they serve first are once again willing to fearlessly take on tough technical challenges, Houston is doomed.**

**Where's a rocket scientist when you need one?**

**Mark Sterling  
Houston**