For the third year in a row the Martin Labor Government has played smoke and mirrors with its so called “record” Infrastructure Budgets- and there is no better proof of this than the zero growth the Territory has recorded in each year, CLP Transport and Infrastructure Minister Denis Burke said today.

Mr Burke said once again Labor's promised “record” Budget includes tens of millions of dollars worth of projects that were in last year's Budget.

“The Palmerston High School is an example of that,” Mr Burke said.

“For the past two years the Government has been announcing in its Budgets that it is going to spend $11 million building a High School at Palmerston. And despite numerous phoney announcements during the course of those Budget years nothing has happened.

“For the third year in a row the $11 million has been rolled over into what is supposed to be a 'record' infrastructure Budget.

“The same thing has happened with the Government's spending on roads. The Martin Government is only spending $34.9m on Territory Highways and local roads despite receiving $42.5 million from the Federal Government in last week's federal Budget.

It makes a farce of the Government's claims that it is serious about addressing the appalling state of Territory Highways and local roads.”

Mr Burke said closer examination of the promised ‘record' spend reveals a cut in real terms by around $6 million when the Martin Government's forecast CPI of 2.2% is factored in.

“When you take into account that in 2003-04 the revote increased by more than 15% on what was projected by the Government you immediately understand why it is that these so called mammoth Budgets are all smoke and mirrors and part of the picture why growth has been zero for the past two years.

“Business would do well to ask themselves if an infrastructure Budget of $438m delivered 0.3 growth this year how will a Budget containing just $3m more deliver what the Martin Government is promising - 5.8% growth.”

Ends