

# State lobbies for council grants

**GARETH PARKER**

WA councils have missed out on \$16.7 million of Federal Government grants in the past six years, according to WA Local Government Minister Jon Ford.

Mr Ford planned to lobby the Federal Government in Adelaide at a meeting of State and Federal planning and local government ministers.

He claimed councils, which rely on grants to fund roads and other infrastructure, had not received their fair share since the Federal Government changed the rules for grants in 1997-98.

"The Federal Treasurer stopped adjusting the funding for population growth and only adjusted for inflation," Mr Ford said.

"The Commonwealth has been

responsible for funding local government for decades. If they are serious about supporting local government, they should step up to the plate with more money.

"Local government is struggling to keep up with its service obligations, particularly in regional and remote areas, and the relative decline in funding received from the Commonwealth does not help."