

## \$100m for City Hall revamp

By FIONA CHAN

THE Urban Council is expected to earmark \$100 million for renovating the 29-year-old City Hall by the end of the year while debate goes on over a long-term redevelopment plan.

Chairman of the council's 10-member working group on the hall's redevelopment, Mr Stephen Lau Man-lung, said the renovation plan, including replacement of lifts and air-conditioners, would be tabled for discussion after the council

resumed its monthly meetings on September 10.

He was confident the council would approve the budget because a substantial sum had already been set aside for maintenance work in relation to a five-year plan beginning this year.

Improvement to the present facilities was necessary before redevelopment, which would take at least six years to finish, he said.

The issue of redeveloping City Hall arose early last year after the announcement of Metroplan, in which rec-

lamation projects would be introduced in Central and Wan Chai, leaving City Hall looking old, he said.

City Hall, which occupies an area of 11,000 square metres with two separate blocks and a connecting memorial garden, is one of the territory's major cultural centres for the performing and visual arts.

Mr Lau said the council so far had not held any formal discussion with the Government on the project since they had not yet reached any decision.