

CENTRAL SYDNEY

City of Sydney supports Chinese Heritage Museum to be established at Haymarket Library

SUPPORT for the establishment of a Chinese Heritage Museum in the heart of Haymarket continues to grow with the City of Sydney stamping its approval on the proposal.

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Craig Chung outside his Uncle Lee's building in China Town. Picture: Jess Husband

SUPPORT for the establishment of a Chinese Heritage Museum in the heart of Haymarket continues to grow with the City of Sydney stamping its approval on the proposal.

In June, Liberal councillor Craig Chung called on the City to support the establishment of the heritage museum as a way to provide permanent recognition of the contribution made by the Chinese community since the 1800s.

The motion, which called for a working group to be established, was amended by council to call on Lord Mayor Clover Moore to write to the Minister for Arts Don Harwin about the project.

Cr Moore wrote to the minister to “test the interest in and feasibility of a museum of Chinese heritage and culture”, a City spokeswoman said.



Chinese New Year celebrations at Sydney's Chinatown district.

The City confirmed it was ready to work with a community-led proposal for the museum.

“The City is looking to support a Chinese community organisation that is established to build support, funds and a viable model for a cultural museum,” a City spokeswoman said.

The State Government would need to back the project, however.

“The scale of investment required to establish a museum would require support through the NSW Government’s Cultural Infrastructure Strategy,” the spokeswoman said.



A Chinese New Year Parade in Sydney's Chinatown at Haymarket.

A similar proposal for a heritage museum was submitted to the City 18 months ago by the Haymarket Chamber of Commerce.

Chamber vice-president George Wing Kee said the project would provide a place to showcase the history and creativity of Sydney’s Chinese community and the broader impact China has had on the world.



George Wing Kee is the president of the Haymarket Chamber of Commerce.

Chinatown was a place of “companionship and comradeship”, a “nerve centre for Chinese people in Sydney,” Mr Wing Kee said.

The ideal location would be in the soon-to-be-vacated Haymarket Library, Mr Wing Kee said. The three-storey building will be empty when the library is transferred to Darling Harbour.

COLOURFUL CHINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS

State MPs Victor Dominello and Mark Coure, and federal MP David Coleman have all expressed their support for the project.

Cr Chung said that while a Chinese Heritage Museum is “on the top of the wishlist for the Chinese-Australian community”, asking the State Government to support the idea meant the museum was “buck-passed”.

Cr Chung said he would continue to work with Chinese community leaders to establish a Working Group for the project.