

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PANEL ON HOME AFFAIRS

Conversion of Kom Tong Hall for use as the Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum

PURPOSE

This paper briefs members on the proposed establishment and preparation of the Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum (the Museum) at Kom Tong Hall.

BACKGROUND

2. Over the years, the Government has been considering the setting up of a museum in Hong Kong to commemorate Dr Sun Yat-sen who studied and nurtured his revolutionary ideas here. As Dr Sun's activities in Hong Kong were mainly focused in the Central and Western District, Kom Tong Hall (KTH), a historical building at 7 Castle Road, Central, was considered ideal for the purpose. KTH was acquired last year for \$53 million for use as the proposed Museum.

Need For The Museum in Hong Kong

3. Dr Sun Yat-sen, a well-known revolutionary, spent his entire life on overthrowing the Qing dynasty as well as setting up a Republic. His achievements are recognized all over the world. Being revered by the Chinese everywhere, Dr Sun enjoyed worldwide reputation. Museums or mausoleums named after him can be found in Beijing, Fuzhou, Shanghai, Nanjing, Wuhan and Guangzhou in the Mainland, in Taipei across the strait, as well as in Kobe, Singapore and Hawaii overseas.

4. Hong Kong was the place where Dr Sun received his secondary and university education, nurtured revolutionary ideas and organized revolutionary attempts. He regarded Hong Kong as an important revolutionary base and set up the headquarters of Xingzhonghui (Revive China Society) here. He once revealed openly that Hong Kong was a place from which his revolutionary ideas originated. A brief account of Dr Sun with special reference to his activities in Hong Kong is at Annex A.

5. There has been a long cherished desire to provide for a Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum to commemorate his life and activities in Hong Kong in order to help enhance the public's understanding of the significant role he played in modern Chinese history. The proposed Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum can be linked with the Sun Yat-sen Historical Trail to introduce his activities in Hong Kong.

Suitability of KTH For Use As The Museum

6. Over the years, the Government has considered a number of sites and KTH is found most suitable for the proposed Museum. KTH is centrally located in the Central and Western District where Dr Sun had studied and organised his revolutionary activities, and is situated adjacent to the Sun Yat-sen Historical Trail, with the various attractions of the Trail in the vicinity. The building was constructed in 1914 by Ho Kom Tong (1866-1950) who was personally associated with Dr Sun, as both were admitted to the Central School (now Queen's College) in 1884. The site is zoned Government, Institution and Community on the Mid-Levels West Outline Zoning Plan, and the proposed museum facility is therefore a permitted use. Given a construction floor area of about 2 560 square metres, KTH provides adequate space for the Museum.

7. Being a typical Edwardian Classical building, the majestic and magnificent building is among the very few surviving structures in Hong Kong with a history of 90 years. The stained-glass windows, veranda, wall tiles and staircase railings are all preserved intact. The excellent physical condition in the building would minimise the need for major repairs or conservation works and saves the project a lot of time and money. The linkage of the KTH with Central via the Mid-Levels Escalator and the accessibility of public transport to Caine Road and Robinson Road at its vicinity also make the premises ideal for a museum.

PROPOSED FACILITIES OF THE MUSEUM

8. The proposed Museum will include a wide range of facilities to perform its multifold functions. Permanent exhibition galleries will be provided for displays to highlight the life and revolutionary career of Dr Sun with special reference to the political and socio-economic conditions of Hong

Kong. Special thematic exhibitions will be featured in the main hall, where symposiums and other activities are to be held. Apart from exhibitions, there will be activity room where small school groups and children can learn interactively, as well as interactive room and reading room where multi-media programmes will be provided for the general public to enhance their knowledge on Dr Sun and the 1911 Revolution. A video room will also be set up to show a wide range of documentaries on Dr Sun. As part of the project, provisions will be made to install modern facilities such as elevator, toilets for the disabled, air-conditioning system, security system and fire fighting equipment at the building, without damaging the heritage value of KTH.

PROJECT SCOPE AND NATURE

9. The project site of the KTH has a site area of about 1 020 square metres (m²) and construction floor area of about 2 560 m². The scope of work comprises:

- (a) five exhibition galleries cum lecture room for holding standing and temporary thematic exhibitions;
- (b) an activity room;
- (c) an interactive room;
- (d) a reading room;
- (e) two video rooms; and
- (f) other supporting facilities such as offices, a reception area, a gift shop, a meeting room, a collection store, and drop-off / picking up facilities for rehabilitation mini-bus.

10. A location plan is at Annex B. Layout plans for various floors are at Annex C. It is planned to start the construction works in September 2005 for completion of works in December 2006 and full opening of the Museum in 2007.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

11. Since June 2004, a panel of honorary advisers for the Museum has been set up by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), which includes Dr Sun's grandson, members of the Central and Western District

Council, and leading historians from tertiary institutions. A series of consultation forums have been arranged subsequently with the Committee on Museums, Museum's honorary advisers, District Councils, members of academic associations and residents in the vicinity of KTH. Unanimous support was received from all parties. Their views on the exhibit contents, range of museum services and ancillary facilities have been solicited.

PREPARATION WORK

12. Subsequent to the acquisition of KTH, LCSD has been preparing actively the establishment of the proposed Museum, in consultation with the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD). Efforts have been made to identify exhibits in Mainland China and abroad so as to enrich the exhibition content. The curatorial staff have visited museums in Macau, Nanjing, Shanghai, Beijing, Wuhan, Guangzhou and archive in London from which a substantial number of important artifacts related to Dr Sun and the 1911 Revolution have been identified and negotiated for loan. Among the highlights are the examination papers of Dr Sun, Imperial Edict of Abdication by Emperor Xuantong (the Last Emperor) and the marriage certificate between Dr Sun and Madame Soong.

13. From May to August 2004, a collection campaign was launched to identify artifacts related to Dr Sun and other revolutionaries to enrich the Museum's collection. The campaign was well-received. A few hundred items of calligraphies, manuscripts, letters, souvenirs, stamps and banknotes have been collected within a short span of four months. Selected collections will be displayed in the Museum.

14. Meanwhile, the History Department of the Hong Kong Baptist University has been commissioned to conduct a research project, focusing on Hong Kong's contribution towards Dr Sun's activities and the course of modern Chinese history. The project is expected to be completed by March 2005 and the findings will provide useful reference.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Non-recurrent Expenditure

15. The total costs of the Museum including building works, building services, drainage and external works, geotechnical works, fabrication of exhibitions and provision of museum facilities, and furniture and equipment are estimated at \$91.3 M.

Recurrent Expenditure

16. The annual recurrent expenditure of about \$6.7 million would be absorbed within the Home Affairs Bureau's operating expenditure envelope.

Annual Revenue

17. It is proposed that the current admission charge (i.e. \$10 for standard ticket, \$7 for group ticket (with 20 persons or above) and \$5 for concession ticket) of LCSD museums should apply to the proposed Museum. On that basis, the sale of admission tickets is expected to generate an annual revenue of \$0.6 million. As in line with the current practice, admission fee will be waived on Wednesdays as well as for pre-booked group-visits from schools and non-profit-making organisations all year round. Besides, the gift shop is expected to generate a small amount of rental revenue. The total projected revenue of \$0.636 million will make up for 9.7% of the Museum's recurrent expenditure.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

18. We expect that the conversion and fabrication work of the proposed Museum will take about 16 to 20 months. To tie in with the 140th anniversary of Dr Sun's birth, we aim to complete the works for soft opening of the Museum in the end of 2006 for systems testing and educational activities, in preparation for full opening to the public in 2007.

THE WAY FORWARD

19. We will seek the approval of the Public Works Subcommittee and the Finance Committee on 16 February and 4 March 2005 respectively for funding the above museum project.

Home Affairs Bureau

January 2005

A Short Biography of Dr Sun Yat-sen

(A) Birth and Studies

Sun Yat-sen, also named Dixiang (帝象), Wen(文), Deming(德明), or Zhongshan(中山), was born in Xiangshan County (香山縣) of Guangdong province on 12 November 1866. In 1878, he went with his elder brother to Honolulu and began his Western education there. In 1883, Sun came to Hong Kong and was admitted into the Diocesan School (拔萃書室) and later the Central College (the present Queen's College) where he completed secondary education. Between 1887 and 1892, Sun attended the Hong Kong College of Medicine for Chinese (香港西醫書院) where he received professional training in Western medicine. The College was later incorporated into the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Hong Kong, which was established in 1911. In Hong Kong, Sun studied the political and military theories from the West with great enthusiasm and frequently discussed current affairs with friends. Sun's revolutionary idea was inspired and nurtured in Hong Kong. When Sun visited the University of Hong Kong on 20 February 1923, he also said that "I feel as though I have returned home, because Hong Kong and the University of Hong Kong are the birthplace of my knowledge".

(B) Founding of Revolutionary Societies

In early 1894, Sun Yat-sen's petition for reforms failed. China's defeat in the first Sino-Japanese War added fuel to Sun's indignation and reinforced his belief that only through revolution could the country be saved. In November 1894, Sun brought together overseas Chinese in Honolulu to found the Xing Zhong Hui (Revive China Society, 興中會). Three months later, Sun returned to Hong Kong. Along with Yang Quyun (楊衢雲) and Xie Zuantai (謝纘泰), Sun rented No.13 Staunton Street in Central as the Society's headquarters under the cover of a commercial firm named Qian Heng Hang (乾亨行). In August 1905, Sun combined Xing Zhong Hui with Hua Xing Hui (Society for China's Revival, 華興會) and Guang Fu Hui (Restoration Society, 光復會) to set up the Tong Meng Hui (United League, 同盟會) in Tokyo, Japan. Its target was to "drive out the northern alien rulers, restore the Chinese nation, found the republic and equalize land ownership". In the same year, Sun sent Feng Ziyou (馮自由) and Li Zizong (李自重) to Hong Kong to set up the southern subsidiary of the League, which was located in the office of *China Daily*, a revolutionary organ in the territory.

(C) Organizing uprisings in Hong Kong

From 1895 to 1911, Sun Yat-sen took the lead in staging various revolts. Hong Kong was always the base of such anti-Qing activities as the Guangzhou Revolt (廣州之役), the Huizhou Revolt (惠州之役), the Huanggang of Chaozhou Revolt (潮州黃崗之役), the Qinuhu of Huizhou Revolt (惠州七女湖之役), the Guangzhou New Army's Revolt (廣州新軍之役) and the Huanghuagang of Guangzhou Revolt (廣州黃花崗之役). As a British colony, Hong Kong always served as a meeting place for members of anti-Manchu organizations, a centre for planning and preparation, a base for spreading anti-Manchu ideas by publishing revolutionary journals and newspapers, a base for ammunition smuggling and fund-raising on the pretext of business transactions, a recruitment centre for supporters from within and outside China, and a convenient asylum where revolutionaries could take refuge after unsuccessful uprisings. After the 1911 Revolution, Sun was first elected Provisional President. He later compromised with Yuan Shikai and resigned from the presidency. In the rest of his life, he continued his revolutionary career until his death on 12 March 1925.

擬建孫中山博物館地盤位置圖
Location Plan of the Proposed Dr. Sun Yat-sen Museum



擬建孫中山博物館樓層平面圖
Layout Plan of the Proposed Dr. Sun Yat-sen Museum



