

# STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL BLOCKS

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**Received:** January 6, 2025; **Revised:** January 14, 2025; **Accepted:**  
August 15, 2025

## Abstract

The research objects of this paper are :(1) historical and cultural blocks; (2) Protection and development of historical and cultural blocks (3) Strategic management of protection and development of historical and cultural blocks. This study adopts mixed methods, including literature analysis, questionnaire survey, expert interview, field investigation and so on. The population is mainly composed of government managers, community service workers, cultural and artistic practitioners, regional residents, itinerant tourists and corporate investors. The data sources of the analysis and research are mainly collected through literature review, questionnaire survey, interview survey, photographic records, etc., and a variety of methods are used to analyze and process the data. **The research results include** :(1) related concepts and representative views of historical and cultural blocks; (2) reviewing the development process of historical and cultural blocks; (3) Forming strategic management guidelines for the protection and development of historical and cultural blocks.

**Keywords:** Historical and cultural blocks; Protection and development; Strategic management

## Introduction

With the soaring living standards of urban residents, the demand for improving the surrounding living environment and basic living facilities is also increasing, and most of the old urban areas are involved in the wave of old city transformation and urban renewal. The question of whether to preserve and develop, and how to preserve and develop historical and cultural blocks has come into public view. In fact, in the process of knowing and understanding a

city, the historical and cultural blocks of the city can best represent the style of a city. The overall environmental feature of historical and cultural blocks reflects its historical and cultural value, shows the typical features and characteristics of cities in different historical periods, and reflects the vein of urban historical development. However, with the rapid development of the city, the rapid increase of urban population and the deterioration of the living environment of the masses, the traditional historical and cultural street scene has gradually disappeared. Therefore, the protection of historical and cultural blocks has become an important part of the protection of historical and cultural heritage.

Adhering to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, According to the Opinions on Strengthening the Protection and Inheritance of History and Culture in Urban and Rural Construction issued by the General Office of the CPC Central Committee and The State Council in September 2021, "Clarify the protection priorities, strictly manage demolition, promote the activated utilization, promote history and culture, strengthen overall coordination, and improve the management mechanism", and the announcement of the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, PRC "Strengthen historical literature in urban and rural construction. To pass on protection, we must adhere to the principle of protection first, should ensure the full protection, the resource survey, planning, restoration and repair work is done effectively, and resolutely prevent large-scale demolition and construction, demolition and construction. We will continue to put the people as the center, explore ways to improve the diversified living environment in historical and cultural districts and historic areas, and carry out trials to protect and utilize historic buildings, so that the effective use of historical and cultural heritage can be integrated into economic and social development. As a guide, the strategic management research on the protection and development of historical and cultural blocks is carried out.

## **Research Objectives**

1. Sorting out related concepts and development processes of historical and cultural blocks.
2. Establish the protection and development model of historical and cultural blocks.
3. Establish strategic management strategies for the protection and development of historical and cultural blocks.

## Literature Reviews

**Historical and Cultural District:** In 1933, the Athens Charter proposed the concept of "buildings and Neighbourhood with historical value shall be properly preserved and not destroyed". The 1964 International Charter for the Protection of Cultural Buildings and Historic Places, the Venetian Charter, documented methods of recording and restoring cultural heritage and referred to the term historic places, which, unlike the concept of historic and cultural Neighbourhood as we know them today, referred to areas surrounding cultural objects. In 1999, the Charter of Beijing advocated that the construction and development of modern cities should ensure the "overall optimization of the quality of human life and the natural and human environment", comprehensively implement the strategy of sustainable development, advocate an "integrated" philosophy to understand and solve problems, and protect cultural heritage with the concept of sustainable and integral integration.

In 2005, the International Conference on World Heritage and Contemporary Architecture issued the Vienna Memorandum for the Conservation of the Historic Urban Landscape, an outline of principles and guidelines for the conservation of the historic urban landscape, which states that continuous change is an integral part of urban tradition. Historical cities should be a dynamic combination of history and current development. It is emphasized that when contemporary architecture is introduced into historic cities, emphasis should be placed on protecting the historical structure and formal characteristics of the city, and the historical features of the city should be avoided as far as possible.

The value analysis of historical and cultural blocks by international scholars highlights the concept of sustainable development, which generally emphasizes the social value, cultural value and environmental value of historical and cultural blocks. Tim Heath (1996) divides the value of historical and cultural blocks into seven aspects: 1. The value of environmental diversity. 2. The value of functional diversification and the synergy between functions. 3. Value of architectural diversity: A city is formed by a series of buildings of different periods and forms accumulated over time, and it is precisely because of the juxtaposition of past buildings and modern buildings that their value is revealed. 4. Aesthetic value, Appleyard says: "Old cities exhibit human scale, individuality, mutual care, craftsmanship, beauty and diversity, all of which are lacking in machine-made, modern cities." 5. Resource value, the reuse of waste buildings can reduce the consumption of energy and materials, achieve the protection of scarce resources, and effectively improve the level of resource management. 6. Commercial value, Lipkema once said: to attract private investment in historic preservation, it is necessary to create and enhance the

commercial value of historic buildings. 7. Continuity value: Historical and cultural blocks will strengthen people's attention to cultural continuity. Can effectively resist the influence of changing global cultural homogenization.

Dai Yan (2002) believes that historical and cultural blocks, as a rich and diverse public communication space, can reflect healthy and simple aesthetic tastes and traditional social values. Ms. Tessa Jowell (2004) initiated a debate on historical heritage, after which a consensus was reached that the value of historical and cultural blocks in the cultural field can be summarized into historical value, artistic value and scientific value, and in the economic field, there are physical use value and tourism value.

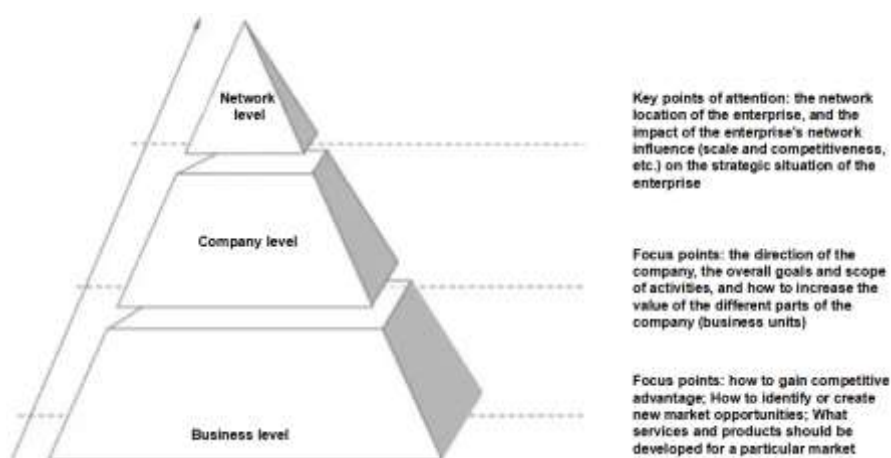
Protection and Development: Wang Dong (1999) believes that in the development of historical blocks, the urban texture preserved by traditional blocks can be changed to a certain extent according to the development of urban functions. Wang Biquan et al. (2000) agreed with the concept of sustainable development and pointed out that problems in public green space, ecological environment, residents' quality of life, traffic and disaster prevention should be paid attention to in the transformation of historical and cultural districts. Song Xiaolong and Huang Yan (2010) published the idea of "micro-cycle protection and renewal" through their research on Beijing's historic districts. They believed that conservation and renewal were complementary concepts and unified opposites, and advocated the integrity of blocks to be protected in an orderly cycle of "protection and renewal". Lin Shen (2011) studied the historical and cultural blocks of Zhongshan Road in Xiamen and proposed a new model of protection and renewal of historical and cultural blocks, such as self-renovation, rental renovation, demolition and new construction. Li Zhigang (2011) mainly analyzed the problems in the planning of historical and cultural blocks of ancient cities, including: restoring the old as the old, the original principle, public participation, people-oriented, etc.

Ruan Yisan (2011) proposed to promote the development of "pedestrian street" with multi-level block space, and carried out practical application in the construction of Shaoxing Road in Shanghai. Zheng Lipeng et al. (2011), in the construction project of Foshan Road historical and cultural block in Guangdong Province, focused on the value transformation of historical buildings and the sources of funds in their protection and renewal. Shen Lei (2012) believes that on the premise that respecting nature is the development of historic commercial blocks, it is the correct path to develop historic commercial blocks in cities by utilizing technologies such as network and ecological science to realize digital development. Ruan Yuxiang (2012) summarized the characteristics of urban space design in the renewal of urban historical and cultural blocks, which mainly include publicity, context and precipitation. He also pointed out that the

hierarchy of spatial design of traditional historical blocks should not be ignored. Wang Yaoxing (2017) also actively explored the conservation development and reuse of historical and cultural blocks in the context of urbanization.

**Strategic Management:** The early remarks on strategic management first appeared in the book *From Strategic Planning to Strategic Management* published by Ansoff in 1976. He first proposed "enterprise strategic management". He believed that strategic management refers to a series of operations and management businesses formed by combining daily business decisions with long-term planning decisions. Steiner (1982) pointed out in his book *Enterprise Policy and Strategy* that strategic management is a dynamic process in which the mission of an enterprise is determined, and the enterprise objectives are determined according to the external environment and internal operating factors of the enterprise, so as to ensure the correct implementation and ultimate realization of the objectives.

Ansoff (1965) divided strategy into "business strategy" and "business strategy" for the first time in his *Corporate Strategy*. Corporate strategy determines which business areas a company should enter. After the company enters certain business areas, the business strategy will determine the way and method of competition and operation in this field. Based on Ansoff's work, Schendell and Hofer (1980) developed the "four-level approach to strategic management", which can be used to examine all levels of strategy development, including the functional level, the business level, the company level, and the firm level. In the subsequent strategic management practice, scholars generally believe that it is not easy to distinguish between company-level and enterprise-level strategies, so the current strategic management hierarchy framework generally includes: company-level strategy, business-level strategy and function-level strategy. Jing Ying (2022) transformed this framework: enterprise strategy is divided into network level strategy, company level strategy and business level strategy (among which, network level strategy is still developing and needs to be supplemented with tools), taking it as the basic framework of strategy, and the three levels of strategy are integrated in the same framework. In this framework, the "functional level strategy" is removed, and he believes that strategy involves the top-level design of the company, while the functional level has already involved the operation level, so the design of specific functional strategies such as research and development, production, marketing, sales, service, etc., should belong to the consideration of each functional department, rather than the corporate strategy category.



**Figure 1:** Strategic management hierarchy.

**Related research:** This study is part of the research on the strategic management of conservation and development of historic and cultural districts. Researchers have reviewed more than 40 studies on the subject. However, the relevant research can be summarized as follows:

Wang Pengkai (2014) explored the spatial form, social structure composition, functional pattern and the evolution of architectural form of historical and cultural blocks, demonstrated the important role of terroir and culture in the embodiment of urban inclusiveness and diversity, and proposed the consideration strategies for the protection and development strategies of this block: (1) Continue the commercial and residential functions of the "Liyuan Courtyard" building, and protect the existing atmosphere of city life. (2) Continue and show some commercial characteristics. (3) Restore important historical scenes. Liao Hui (2017) conducted a quantitative exploration of the vitality of historical and cultural blocks based on POI data, constructed an impact framework for the specific street vitality of residential historical and cultural blocks, and quantitatively evaluated the influencing factors of street vitality. He believes that residential blocks should improve the mix of street functions, increase the density of the road network, and reduce the street scale, so as to meet the daily needs of residents in a smaller scale, create regional microcirculation, and enhance the vitality of the street.

Wang Teng (2019) proposed that the revival of historical and cultural blocks should grasp the principle of epoxality, and demonstrated how the mass maker space can drive the revival of historical and cultural blocks from the aspects of feasibility and necessity. Xue Kai (2020) investigated the vitality of public space of historical and cultural blocks through POI big data and PSPL

traditional research method. He believed that the development of historical and cultural blocks is a dynamic process, and the corresponding vitality enhancement strategies should also be dynamically adjusted accordingly. Duan Yuqi (2021) deduced the original appearance of the characteristic housing model from four aspects: space, facade, details and materials, analyzed the architectural entity style, form, materials, construction rules and internal structure in different historical stages, and analyzed the social and cultural causes of historical changes. Sun Yan (2022) proposed the protection and renewal strategy of historical and cultural blocks in three aspects: block, building and environment, and adopted phased construction in the blocks, and phased use in the buildings, and innovatively added the platform design of virtual Internet environment in the environment. Based on the theory of representation and non-representation, Wang Zhenting (2023) sorted out the current situation and problems of historical and cultural blocks and put forward the following three development paths: (1) Dig deep cultural connotation in time and space, improve the ability of historical and cultural expression; (2) Respect the independent will of indigenous people, actively retain their daily life practices; (3) deepen the integration of culture and tourism, and improve the types of tourism products.

## Research Methodology

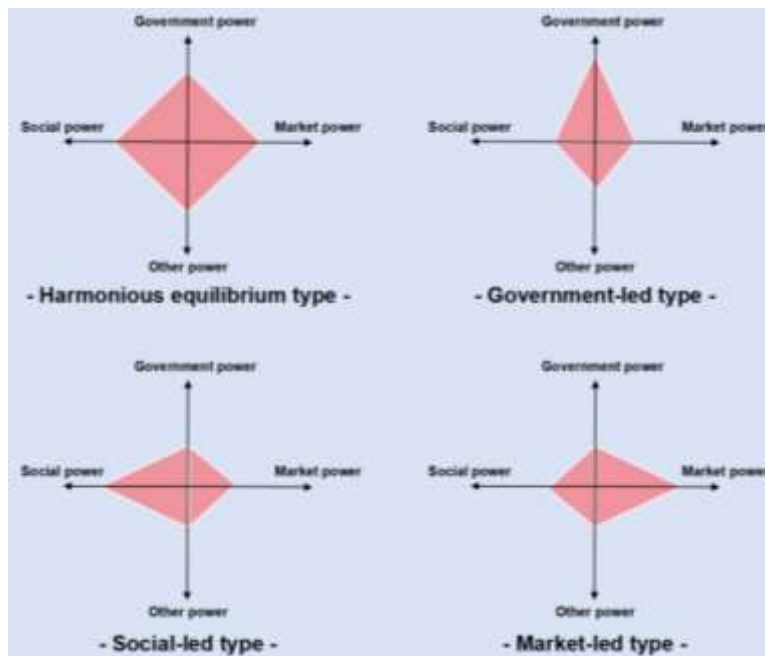
This study is an exploratory **research process**. Details are as follows: **Step1:** Analyze the concept, historical evolution and current situation of historical and cultural blocks. The elements and environment of protection and development are analyzed, and the basic development ideas and prospects are determined. **Step2:** According to China's social structure and protection status, combined with the protection experience of other regions, put forward the protection and development mode of historical and cultural blocks in different stages. **Step3:** Apply "urban cultural ecology theory" and "stakeholder theory" to the design and implementation management research, and build a strategic management model for the protection and development of historical and cultural blocks.

## Results

### **Misunderstanding of strategic management construction of historical and cultural blocks**

(a) Urban renewal is too fast, resulting in neglect of cultural inheritance. In the view of the lack of understanding of the importance of the protection of historical blocks, the method of demolition and reconstruction which is generally applicable to the old urban areas is adopted. In this process, the architectural activities overemphasized the single design, but ignored the interconnections among the building groups. The inherent style and form of the

historical district and cultural landscape were seriously damaged, the historical context was cut off, and many precious historical and cultural heritages were destroyed in the rough demolition and reconstruction process.



**Figure 2:** Misunderstanding of strategic management of historical and cultural blocks.

(b) Blindly pursuing the design volume, ignoring the urban personality. In the process of urban construction, there is a trend of excessive pursuit of scale expansion and renewal. The government and related departments have shown great enthusiasm for the construction of large plazas, lawns and landscaped avenues, but these projects emphasize functionality while often ignoring their cultural responsibilities. (c) Emphasis on economic value, lack of comprehensive consideration, too much emphasis is placed on material benefits, but the importance of cultural ecology and humanistic spirit is ignored. This phenomenon is manifested as blind comparison, which reflects the shallow cognition of cultural tradition, the deviation of understanding of urban spirit and the uncertainty of urban development prospect. Whether the city has the spirit, environment and atmosphere of humanistic care should be the key index to evaluate the level of urban construction and management quality.



### Research on protection and development mode of historical and cultural blocks

From the analysis of dynamic mechanism, the operation of protection mode mainly depends on its dominant driving force. In different historical periods, due to the different dominant driving force, the resultant force will have different tendencies and show different protection modes. According to the social structure and protection status, a dynamic protection model is proposed.



**Figure 3:** Protection-led model.

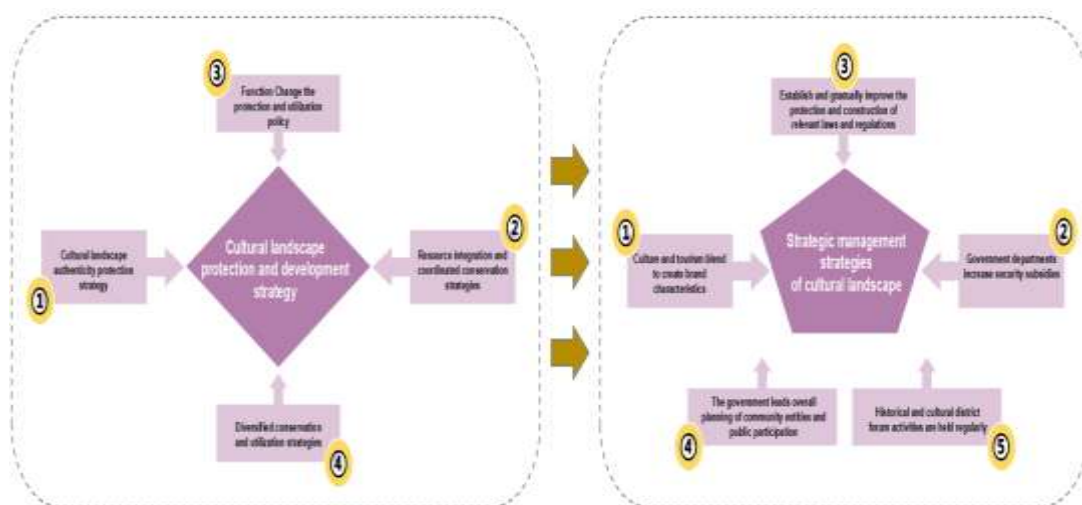
(a) The initial stage of protection. Dominant type: government-led + society-led. Dominant type: government-led + society-led. "Control" should be the primary objective of conservation efforts. Clearly delineate the scope of the protected area, control the demolition behavior, and prevent man-made damage. Such control measures may lead to limited environmental and infrastructure improvements in protected areas in the short term, resulting in increased maintenance costs to slow deterioration, which is one of the costs that conservation efforts must bear. However, once a block is clearly defined as a protected area, and the corresponding protection regulations are introduced, residents and units can be freed from the confusion of protection and renovation, maintenance and relocation.

(b) Protection of development stages. Leading type: market leading type. The protection of historical and cultural blocks not only requires capital investment, but also requires high technical support. In addition, the importance of in-depth study and understanding of history and culture cannot be ignored. With the continuous development of society and economy, the social and economic foundation required for protection work will gradually improve. With the enhancement of people's protection awareness, more and

more funds will be invested in historical and cultural protection. At the same time, the working methods of urban planning management departments will also undergo an important change, that is, from the traditional control mode to a more active guidance mode. In the process of this transformation, market-oriented operation will inject new vitality into the protection of cultural landscape of historical and cultural blocks.

(c) Protection mature stage. Dominant type: harmonious and balanced type. When the four key factors of policy support, capital investment, technology application and public participation are fully implemented and guaranteed, the dynamic protection of historical and cultural blocks will enter a new stage. At this time, the dominant driving force type will be transformed into a harmonious and balanced type, which means that these four leading forces will play their roles together and form an effective restriction and balance between each other. Through this mutual promotion, mutual checks and balances, we can achieve a win-win situation in the protection work of the four parties. In this mature stage of development, the concept of dynamic protection of historical and cultural blocks will be continuously and deeply implemented until the final protection goal is achieved.

### **Establish a strategic management strategy for the protection and development of historical and cultural blocks:**



**Figure 4:** Strategic management strategies for the protection and development of historical and cultural blocks.

### **Conservation and development strategies:**

The authenticity protection strategy of cultural landscape.

- Take minimal intervention and apply appropriate protective techniques.
- Relocation of historic buildings.
- Building external environment integration.

Conservation strategies of resource integration and coordination.

- Refactoring of transferable resources.
- Multi-stakeholder collaboration and facilitation, integrating different stakeholders, areas of expertise and resources. Clear common goals, cross-disciplinary team building, community engagement and communication, fund-raising and management, regular evaluation and feedback mechanisms, promotion of dialogue and cooperation among stakeholders

Function replacement protection and utilization strategy.

- Synergy between industrial transformation and upgrading and building protection.

- Art promotion and spatial layout optimization.

Diversified conservation and utilization strategies.

- Strengthen protection awareness.
- Digital protection and utilization.

### **Strategic management strategies:**

New business forms of related industries, the integration of culture and tourism to create brand characteristics.

Government departments will increase safety subsidies.

Establish and gradually improve the protection and construction of relevant laws and regulations.

- Clarify the subject of responsibility
- Take strict protective measures
- Clear protection prohibitions
- Plan the city's Purple Line and strengthen the protection of historic districts

- Announce to the public the names of cultural relics under protection and cultural heritage sites

The government leads the overall planning of community subjects and public participation.

## Discussions

The research results of the first objective show that there are two main reasons leading to the formation of these strategic management problems. The first is the lack of sustainable management concepts. Under the current background of actively constructing historical and cultural districts, the protection of green space plants is also gradually reduced because the cultural landscape construction is mainly occupied by public commercial buildings. Some managers usually either sell public space and green space directly, or build on public green space projects commercially. These behaviors have hindered the cultural value, social effect and environmental benefit of the landscape. Aligning with the assertion made by Ruan yisan al. (2001) that is to say, the historic district as a real estate development project, with the way of bidding commercial operation, in order to obtain benefits and profits. Some planning and design units often equate the protection and renovation planning of historic blocks with the planning and design of general urban old area reconstruction or tourist attractions, resulting in some planning is not scientific and reasonable, causing immeasurable losses to the protection of historic blocks. This is the crux of the destruction of many historic districts.

There is insufficient investment in management funds. For a long time, the financing of cultural landscape construction mainly relies on traditional financing channels such as government subsidies and bank loans. However, these traditional financing methods are usually accompanied by complicated approval processes and slow fund delivery speed, which is difficult to meet the financial needs of the rapid development of cultural tourism projects. The shortage of funds makes many cultural landscape construction projects unable to proceed smoothly according to the original plan, affecting the quality and efficiency of the projects. This aligns with findings by Zhang tian (2023), The results of the study pointed out that some projects were too optimistic at the start, and the investment scale and income expectations were insufficient, resulting in a slow return of funds and a broken capital chain. At the same time, there are poor operation and management. In order to recover investment, many historical and cultural district development projects are over-commercialized and charge high tickets, but ignore service quality and tourist experience, and have a single operation model and lack of innovation.

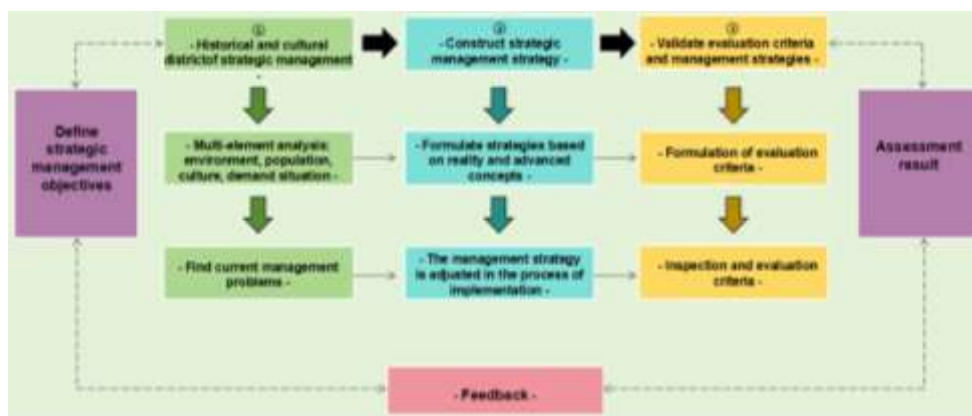
The results of the second objective show that historic districts can be explained by terms such as progressive conservation, rolling development and sustainable planning, the basic core of which is to take long-term development into account in the near future development. The control index is not static, and it is constantly modified and supplemented during the implementation of the planning scheme to achieve dynamic balance. As Zheng lijun (2005) mentioned,

the corresponding protection strategies should be determined according to local conditions, so that these historical areas can not only maintain their historical authenticity, but also adapt to the actual requirements of continuous development. The dynamic protection of historical blocks is not to provide for the elderly, but to rejuvenate them. Although dynamic protection will have an impact on the original style, it is necessary to carry-out, in order to protect the historic district, we can only pay some costs, the purpose of dynamic protection of the historic district is to minimize the cost. The key point of dynamic protection mode is that in different stages of protection, protection principles, strategies and planning will be different, and the protection mode will inevitably develop dynamically for different protection stages. This is accord with the description of Liu hui (2011). Combining the different dynamic protection factor index systems and conservation purposes of historical blocks, different protection assessment models can be constructed by combining the analytic hierarchy process, and then dynamic strategic adjustments can be made according to the protection sequence and protection intensity.

The results of the third objective show that the rule of law is the core foundation of strategic management, ensuring the stability and reliability of the management system and management mechanism, which is consistent with the study of Yu Ling (2023), that legislative means can ensure the long-term effective implementation of the plan, and mobilize the enthusiasm of all sectors of society to strengthen protection efforts. Take legal, economic, social and cultural measures and use economic incentives to promote conservation and ensure that planning intentions are achieved. In addition, in order to ensure the source of funds, the government actively builds a platform, broadens funding channels, establishes a high-level authoritative permanent institution directly responsible for protection and management, coordinates the relationship between various stakeholders, and ensures the protection, development and effective management of historical blocks, so as to enhance the administrative capacity and level of management and protection. This is similarity with Liuhai's (2020) focus on the planning focus, that is, to expand the financing channels of block protection, can use fund-raising, joint ventures, units and individuals, as far as possible to raise funds from the government, enterprises and individuals for historic block protection.

## New Knowledges

Through the management of the whole strategic model, a relatively stable and efficient management system mechanism is obtained, which is the so-called strategic management mode.



**Figure 5:** Strategic management model.

## Conclusions

How to realize the sustainable and high-quality development of the historical and cultural districts through conservation and development strategy management has become a very important research topic. The author finds that at present, scholars mainly study the evolution of historical and cultural blocks, protection principles and future urban construction prospects. There are few researches on the protection and development, strategic management and innovative development of the needle, and the level and level of the research results are relatively low. In this paper, combined with art management theory and method, to carry out the historical cultural block protection and development strategy management research. On the one hand, it explores the coordinated protection mode of historical and cultural blocks in different stages, on the other hand, it establishes the protection and development strategy and management strategy of historical and cultural blocks.

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