



华南理工大学

South China University of Technology

专业学位硕士学位论文

**Renovation Design of Changhua Street in Liwan District of
Guangzhou from the perspective of Spatial Narrative**

作者姓名	陈扬
学位类别	建筑学硕士
指导教师	导师组
所在学院	建筑学院
论文提交日期	2025 年 4 月

Renovation Design of Changhua Street in Liwan District of Guangzhou from the perspective of Spatial Narrative

A Dissertation Submitted for the Degree of Master

Candidate: Chen Yang

Supervisor: Mentor Group

South China University of Technology

Guangzhou, China

分类号： TU98

学校代号： 10561

学 号： 202221006307

华南理工大学硕士学位论文

空间叙事视角下广州市荔湾区昌华大街更新设计研究

作者姓名： 陈扬

指导教师姓名、职称： 导师组

申请学位级别： 建筑学硕士

学科专业名称： 建筑学

研究方向： 城市更新设计

论文提交日期： 2025 年 4 月 19 日

论文答辩日期： 2025 年 5 月 26 日

学位授予单位： 华南理工大学

学位授予日期： 年 月 日

答辩委员会成员：

主席： 王璐副教授

委员： 刘铮副教授 禤文昊讲师 谢凌峰教授级高工 Prof. Francesco Novelli

华南理工大学

学位论文原创性声明

本人郑重声明：所呈交的论文是本人在导师的指导下独立进行研究所取得的研究成果。除了文中特别加以标注引用的内容外，本论文不包含任何其他个人或集体已经发表或撰写的成果作品。对本文的研究做出重要贡献的个人和集体，均已在文中以明确方式标明。本人完全意识到本声明的法律后果由本人承担。

作者签名：陈扬

日期：2025 年 5 月 28 日

学位论文版权使用授权书

本学位论文作者完全了解学校有关保留、使用学位论文的规定，即：研究生在校攻读学位期间论文工作的知识产权单位属华南理工大学。学校有权保存并向国家有关部门或机构送交论文的复印件和电子版，允许学位论文被查阅（除在保密期内的保密论文外）；学校可以公布学位论文的全部或部分内容，可以允许采用影印、缩印或其它复制手段保存、汇编学位论文。本人电子文档的内容和纸质论文的内容相一致。

本学位论文属于：

☐ 保密（校保密委员会审定涉密学位论文时间：____年__月__日），于____年__月__日解密后适用本授权书。

☒ 不保密，同意在校园网上发布，供校内师生和与学校有共享协议的单位浏览；同意将本人学位论文编入有关数据库进行检索，传播学位论文的全部或部分内容。

（请在以上相应方框内打“√”）

作者签名：陈扬

日期：2025 年 5 月 28 日

指导教师签名：王

日期：2025 年 5 月 28 日

作者联系电话：18071158178

电子邮箱：1528119512@qq.com

联系地址(含邮编)：广州市天河区五山路 381 号建筑学院 (510640)

摘要

当下，城市同质化和均质化现象的加剧导致了城市特色和记忆的丧失，城市面貌发生了显著变化。在三旧改造和城市微更新政策的引导下，广州历史城区的保护与传承研究与实践迎来了新的发展契机。然而，在经济效益与保护工作的驱动下，传统历史城市空间的改造往往更侧重于物质空间的改造，忽视了非物质性要素的作用。这导致了历史街区的记忆场所消失和城市历史文脉的断裂。因此，如何有效保护历史文化、延续城市文脉以及讲好城市故事，成为历史街区更新改造的重要研究议题。

研究通过理论研究和国内外空间叙事案例分析，归纳出空间叙事理论在历史街区研究中的应用方式，并构建适用于历史街区的设计框架，包括叙事要素梳理、叙事主题确定和叙事结构归纳。选取广州“昌华大街”历史街区作为研究对象。该片区是西关历史街区的重要组成部分，也是西关水系的重要部分。研究采用城市叙事空间的方法，综合运用文献查阅、古地图与历史影像分析以及居民访谈等手段，探讨该区域的叙事特征。

研究发现，广州荔湾区昌华大街的叙事主题结构历经上千年城市发展变迁逐步形成并延续。叙事结构在清末晚期初步形成，民国时期趋于稳定，但在现代出现明显的叙事断裂与模糊，历史文化感知不足，主要表现为早期叙事场景消失、人们对叙事空间背后事件的遗忘，以及叙事网络与市民生活融合度降低等问题。基于空间叙事理论，系统梳理街区叙事主题与线索后，研究建议应依托历史线索的叙事框架，应用叙事主题优化、叙事语境优化、叙事场景营造及叙事路径组织等策略，推动昌华大街更新，塑造独特城市空间。

本研究的创新之处在于，首先，采用了古地图和文史资料作为新的研究资料，系统整理并分析了这些数据，客观说明了数据来源与筛选，填补了现有研究在叙事资源梳理方面的不足。其次，从“叙事”角度切入，关注情感和记忆等非物质文化要素，补充了广州历史城区研究的视角，为本土文化传承提供了新的思路。

关键词：空间叙事；历史街区；昌华大街；叙事场景营造

Abstract

Currently, the intensification of urban homogenization and standardization has led to the loss of urban characteristics and memories, resulting in significant changes to urban landscapes. Under the guidance of policies for the renovation of "three old" areas and urban micro-updates, the research and practice of protecting and inheriting historical urban areas in Guangzhou have reached a new stage. However, driven by economic benefits and conservation efforts, the renovation of traditional historical urban spaces often emphasizes material transformation while neglecting the role of non-material elements. This has resulted in the disappearance of memory sites in historical districts and a disconnection in the city's historical context. Therefore, effectively protecting historical culture, continuing urban narratives, and telling compelling urban stories have become crucial research topics in the renovation of historical districts.

This research synthesizes theoretical research and analyzes domestic and international cases of spatial narratives to summarize the application of spatial narrative theory in historical district studies. It constructs a design framework suitable for historical districts, including the organization of narrative elements, determination of narrative themes, and summarization of narrative structures. The research focuses on the historical district of "Changhua Street" in Guangzhou, which is an important part of the Xiguan historical area and the Xiguan water system. Employing the method of urban narrative space, the study comprehensively utilizes literature review, analysis of historical maps and images, and resident interviews to explore the narrative characteristics of the area.

Research Findings reveal that the narrative thematic structure of Changhua Street in the Liwan District of Guangzhou has gradually formed and persisted over a thousand years of urban development. The narrative structure began to take shape in the late Qing Dynasty and stabilized during the Republic of China period. However, in modern times, there has been a noticeable narrative disconnection and ambiguity, leading to insufficient historical cultural perception. This is primarily reflected in the disappearance of early narrative scenes, the public's forgetfulness regarding the events behind the narrative spaces, and a decreased integration of the narrative network with citizens' lives. Based on spatial narrative theory, the research systematically organizes the district's narrative themes and clues, suggesting that the renovation of Changhua Street should rely on a narrative framework based on historical clues. Strategies such as optimizing narrative themes, enhancing narrative contexts, creating narrative scenes, and organizing narrative pathways are recommended to promote the renewal of Changhua

Street and shape a unique urban space.

The innovations of this study are as follows: First, it utilized ancient maps and historical documents as new research materials, systematically organizing and analyzing these data to provide an objective explanation of their sources and selection, thereby addressing the existing gaps in the organization of narrative resources. Second, by adopting a "narrative" perspective, the study focuses on non-material cultural elements such as emotions and memories, enriching the research on Guangzhou's historical districts and offering new insights for the preservation of local cultural heritage.

Keywords: Spatial Narrative; Historic District; Changhua Street; Narrative Scene Creation

Contents

摘 要.....	I
Abstract.....	II
Figure Lists	VIII
Table Lists	XII
Chapter 1 Introduction	1
1.1 Research Origin.....	1
1.1.1 Urban Heritage Preservation Receives Significant Attention	1
1.1.2 The Value and Dilemma of the Xiguan Changhua Historic District	1
1.1.3 Feasibility of Introducing Spatial Narrative Theory in Historic District	2
1.2 Research Objectives and Significance	3
1.2.1 Research Objective.....	3
1.2.2 Theoretical Significance.....	3
1.2.3 Practical Significance	4
1.3 Review of Relevant Research	4
1.3.1 Review of Research on Spatial Narrative Theory	4
1.3.2 Review of Research on Historical Districts	13
1.3.3 Literature Review Analysis	22
1.4 Research Questions and Methods	22
1.4.1 Research Questions	22
1.4.2 Research Methods	23
1.5 Research Framework.....	24
Chapter 2 Fundamental Research on Spatial Narratives.....	25
2.1 Definition of the concept.....	25
2.1.1 Narrative Space	25
2.1.2 Event.....	25
2.1.3 Narrative Element	25
2.1.4 Historical and Cultural District	26
2.2 Research Basis of Spatial Narrative Theory.....	26
2.2.1 Connotations and Characteristics of Narrative and Spatial Narrative.....	26
2.2.2 The Composition and Process of Spatial Narrative	28
2.3 Spatial Narrative and Historical Cultural Block Protection	30
2.3.1 Contrasts with Traditional Renewal Theories	30

2.3.2 Methods of Spatial Narrative in the Renewal of Historical Blocks	31
2.3.3 The Applicability of Spatial Narrative in Historical Spaces	33
2.4 Case Study of Historical District Narratives	34
2.4.1 Foreign Case Studies	34
2.4.2 Domestic Case Studies	39
2.5 Narrative Space Research Pathway	45
2.5.1 Narrative Space Analysis	46
2.5.2 Narrative Theme Summarization	47
2.5.3 Narrative Structure Construction	48
2.5.4 Narrative Space Creation	48
2.6 Summary	49
Chapter 3 Background and Current Situation of Changhua Street.....	50
3.1 Overview of Changhua Historical District.....	50
3.1.1 Geographic Location	50
3.1.2 Historical Evolution	52
3.1.3 Value Features	53
3.2 Changhua Historical District Space Analysis.....	54
3.2.1 Utilization of Public Space.....	56
3.2.2 Street Scale Analysis	58
3.2.3 Spatial Line of Sight Analysis.....	60
3.3 Current Condition of The Buildings in Changhua Historic District	61
3.3.1 Status of Conservation of Historic Architectural Heritage.....	61
3.3.2 Distribution of Architectural Function	64
3.4 Changhua Historical District Experience Analysis	65
3.4.1 Main Population Analysis	65
3.4.2 Spatial Behavior Analysis	66
3.4.3 Spatial Needs of Various Populations	70
3.5 Problem Analysis of State of Changhua Historical District.....	73
3.5.1 Insufficient Historical and Cultural Perception.....	73
3.5.2 Poor State of Architectural Space Protection	73
3.5.3 Poor Utilization of Historical Public Space	74
3.5.4 Homogeneous Business Types and Decreased Integration of Daily Life ...	74
3.5.5 Re - examination of Current Situation Problems on Spatial Narrative	75
3.6 Summary	75

Chapter 4	Narrative Space Analysis of Changhua Street.....	77
4.1	A Compendium of Narrative Elements of Changhua Historical District	77
4.1.1	Analysis of the Events	78
4.1.2	Analysis of Architectural Elements Clue	84
4.1.3	Analysis of Streets and Alleys Clue	88
4.1.4	Analysis of the Natural Landscape Clue	91
4.2	Integration of Narrative Elements	92
4.2.1	Integration of Narrative Element Characteristics.....	92
4.3	Analysis of Narrative Themes	95
4.3.1	Relationship Between Narrative Themes and Narrative Elements	95
4.3.2	Summary of Narrative Themes	96
4.4	Construction of Narrative Structure	97
4.4.1	Extraction of Narrative Nodes.....	97
4.4.2	Generation of Narrative Structure	98
4.5	Summary	99
Chapter 5	Renewal Strategies for Narrative Space of the Changhua District	101
5.1	Goals and Principles of Narrative Space Renewal.....	101
5.1.1	Creating Narrative Scenes and Arranging Narrative Stories.....	101
5.1.2	Historical Node Conservation and Innovating Narrative Expression	101
5.1.3	Strengthening Urban Memory and Enhancing Participant Experience	102
5.2	Narrative Strategy Proposed.....	102
5.2.1	Narrative Themes Optimization: Clarifying Spatial Themes.....	102
5.2.2	Narrative Context Optimization: Enhancing Humanistic Elements	104
5.2.3	Narrative Scene Recreation: Reconstructing Historical Events.....	106
5.2.4	Narrative Pathway Organization	111
5.3	Summary	112
Chapter 6	Application of Narrative Spatial Renewal in the Changhua District.....	113
6.1	Design Framework	113
6.2	Overall Design.....	113
6.3	Application of Narrative Strategies	116
6.3.1	Narrative Themes Optimization	116
6.3.2	Narrative Context Optimization.....	119
6.3.3	Narrative Scene Creation	124
6.3.4	Narrative Pathway Organization	143

6.4 Summary	148
Conclusion and Prospects	149
1. Conclusion.....	149
2. Innovation.....	150
3. Prospects.....	150
References	152
Appendix	158
Acknowledgements	185

Figure Lists

Figure 1-1 Research Scope of Changhua Street.....	2
Figure 1-2 The cluster analysis of international research on spatial narratives	4
Figure 1-3 Cluster analysis of domestic spatial narrative research.....	9
Figure 1-4 Progress in research on spatial narratives.....	11
Figure 1-5 Cluster Analysis of Foreign Historic Districts.....	13
Figure 1-6 Cluster Analysis of Domestic Historic Districts.....	16
Figure 1-7 History of Preservation and Utilization of Guangzhou Historical Area.....	17
Figure 1-8 Research framework.....	24
Figure 2-1 Factors of Narrative Concern	28
Figure 2-2 Three Elements of Spatial Narrative	29
Figure 2-3 Spatial narrative processes	30
Figure 2-4 Narrative Theory in Historic Districts Updating Methods	33
Figure 2-5 Compatibility of Narrative and Historical Space	34
Figure 2-6 Boston Freedom Trail.....	35
Figure 2-7 Actual view of the Boston Freedom Trail.....	36
Figure 2-8 Heritage Narrative Nodes and External Narrative Space.....	36
Figure 2-9 Spatially guided narrative threads	37
Figure 2-10 Boston Freedom Trail Space activities	37
Figure 2-11 Narrative development lineage of the Grand Canal in Venice	38
Figure 2-12 Venice Narrative Structure.....	38
Figure 2-13 Venice Festivals and Events	39
Figure 2-14 Narrative Space Creation in St. Mark's Square	39
Figure 2-15 Spatial Narrative Themes of the Southern Song Imperial Street.....	40
Figure 2-16 Spatial Narrative Structure of the Southern Song Imperial Street	41
Figure 2-17 Narrative Space Creation in the Southern Song Imperial Street	42
Figure 2-18 restore the emperor's imperial activities	42
Figure 2-19 Narrative Themes of the Great Tang Dynasty	43
Figure 2-20 Narrative structure of the Great Tang Dynasty.....	44
Figure 2-21 Narrative Scene of the Great Tang Dynasty	44
Figure 2-22 Spatial Narrative Research Methodology.....	46
Figure 2-23 Narrative Space Analysis Diagram.....	47
Figure 3-1 Location map of Changhua historical district	51

Figure 3-2 Geographical position of Changhua Historical District	51
Figure 3-3 The evolution of the historical form of the Changhua area	53
Figure 3-4 Three ways of partitioning spatial syntax	55
Figure 3-5 Spatial Syntax Measurement Boundary	56
Figure 3-6 Spatial accessibility analysis of Changhua historical district	57
Figure 3-7 Public space accessibility	57
Figure 3-8 Street Scale Classification	58
Figure 3-9 Street scale section of Changhua historical district	59
Figure 3-10 Sight space analysis	61
Figure 3-11 Status of sight space	61
Figure 3-12 Status of architectural heritage conservation	62
Figure 3-13 Classification of built heritage types	63
Figure 3-14 Situation of unused buildings	63
Figure 3-15 Building function and business distribution	64
Figure 3-16 Building remodeling for community service	65
Figure 3-17 Research on the use of the population	66
Figure 3-18 Spatial Behavioral Distribution of Crowds	67
Figure 3-19 Changhua Historical District living behavior chain	68
Figure 3-20 Results of the Questionnaire on the Existence of Problems at Sites	71
Figure 4-1 A staged research of narrative elements	78
Figure 4-2 A compendium of historical events	80
Figure 4-3 Architectural Narrative Clues	85
Figure 4-4 Map of Structural Development in the Qing Dynasty	88
Figure 4-5 Narrative Clues of Qing Dynasty Streets	89
Figure 4-6 Map of Structural Development during the Republic of China	89
Figure 4-7 Narrative clues in the streets of the Republic of China	90
Figure 4-8 Map of contemporary structural development	90
Figure 4-9 Map of contemporary structural clue	91
Figure 4-10 Natural Landscape Narrative Clues	92
Figure 4-11 Narrative Theme of Commercial Development of Changhua River	97
Figure 4-12 Spatial identification of narrative nodes	98
Figure 4-13 Overall Narrative Structure	99
Figure 5-1 Narrative Theme Structure	103
Figure 5-2 Narrative Vocabulary Enrichment	104

Figure 5-3 Comparison of Xianfeng Community Primary School Renovation.....	105
Figure 5-4 Narrative Space Arrangement.....	106
Figure 5-5 Historical scene reenactment.....	106
Figure 5-6 Recreation of scenes from the Great Tang Dynasty's Night City.....	107
Figure 5-7 Application of metaphorical techniques	108
Figure 5-8 Use of repetition and contrast.....	108
Figure 5-9 Square Renovation in Tai Miu Kok Historic District	109
Figure 5-10 Xiguan ministry activities.....	110
Figure 5-11 Pop-up chocolate festival.....	110
Figure 5-12 Construction of a new pedestrian corridor in the Roman Colosseum	111
Figure 5-13 Guidance system.....	112
Figure 6-1 Narrative Strategy Framework Diagram	113
Figure 6-2 Organization of the narrative structure of Changhua historical district	114
Figure 6-3 Planning Control Documents	114
Figure 6-4 Site status before renovation	115
Figure 6-5 General plan after remodeling	115
Figure 6-6 Axonometric rendering	116
Figure 6-7 Spatial distribution of narrative themes.....	117
Figure 6-8 State of the Narrative Environment.....	118
Figure 6-9 Narrative discourse rich.....	118
Figure 6-10 Narrative paving after remodeling.....	119
Figure 6-11 Changhua historical district protection line (Source: planning documents).....	120
Figure 6-12 Narrative Function Modification before.....	121
Figure 6-13 Narrative Function Modification.....	121
Figure 6-14 Narrative context weaving.....	122
Figure 6-15 Changhua River Water Transport Commercial Culture Main Line.....	123
Figure 6-16 Residents' Daily Life Narrative Subline	124
Figure 6-17 Status of space along the lake.....	125
Figure 6-18 Before and after renovation plan of the space along the lake.....	125
Figure 6-19 Waterfront Exhibition Narrative square.....	126
Figure 6-20 Waterfront Exhibition Narrative Square Section.....	127
Figure 6-21 Current status of space at Zongsheng Pharmaceuticals.....	127
Figure 6-22 Narrative Node of li Zongsheng Pharmaceuticals.....	128
Figure 6-23 Zongsheng Pharmaceuticals Renovation Intentions.....	129

Figure 6-24 Waterfront Square Intended Transformation	129
Figure 6-25 Waterfront Narrative overhead space section	130
Figure 6-26 Status of Waterfront Gardens.....	130
Figure 6-27 Waterfront Garden Renovation Plan.....	131
Figure 6-28 Waterfront Garden renovation intentions	132
Figure 6-29 Waterfront Garden section	132
Figure 6-30 Status of the Banyan Square site	133
Figure 6-31 Banyan Tree Square Plan Renovation	134
Figure 6-32 Axonometric drawing of Banyan Tree square renovation.....	134
Figure 6-33 Section of Banyan Square	135
Figure 6-34 Status of the Garden House Historic Residence.....	136
Figure 6-35 Historical scenes of life in Xiguan	137
Figure 6-36 Scenes of life in the Republic of China	137
Figure 6-37 Profile of life in the Republic of China 1	138
Figure 6-38 Profile of life in the Republic of China 2	139
Figure 6-39 The current state of the masonry streets and alleys	139
Figure 6-40 Qing Dynasty street node renovation plan	140
Figure 6-41 Restoration of the Qing Dynasty Street Narrative Scene	140
Figure 6-42 Narrative axonometric map of hemp slate street.....	141
Figure 6-43 Nodal Map of Narrative Nodes in Granite Stone Streets	142
Figure 6-44 History of the Water Flower Market.....	142
Figure 6-45 Weekend market	143
Figure 6-46 Festival placement.....	143
Figure 6-47 Aquatic Narrative Route	144
Figure 6-48 Open Space Accessibility Node.....	144
Figure 6-49 Narrative Space Accessibility Enhancement.....	145
Figure 6-50 Narrative Path Linking Narrative Nodes.....	146
Figure 6-51 Narrative Guidance Building Blocks.....	147
Figure 6-52 Narrative path guide	148

Table Lists

Table 1-1 Western Spatial Narrative Theory Research Process	6
Table 1-2 A Compendium of the Research Process of Xiguan Historic District	20
Table 3-1 Street scale proportions of Changhua historical district	60
Table 3-2 Common behavioral activities and spatial scenes in site	69
Table 3-3 Interview and research on Changhua historical district	72
Table 4-1 Historic District Narrative Elements Sorted	77
Table 4-2 Historical Events Clue Sorting.....	80
Table 4-3 Architectural Narrative Clues.....	86
Table 4-4 Narrative Discourse Integration	94

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Research Origin

1.1.1 Urban Heritage Preservation Receives Significant Attention

With the rapid development of urban economies, the preservation of historically and culturally significant cities faces increasingly severe challenges. In 2020, Guangzhou issued the "Guidelines for Deepening Urban Renewal to Promote the Protection and Utilization of Historical and Cultural Cities," clearly stating that the preservation of these cities should address both material and immaterial aspects. The guidelines emphasize preserving the current state and refined renovation, focusing on historical districts' appearance, integrity, authenticity, and continuity. They also call for exploring and protecting the multiple values of historical cultural heritage, promoting traditional values and customs, and fostering the integration of historical culture with modern life. Furthermore, the 2022 "Protection Plan for the Historical District of Changhua Street" highlights the importance of exploring historical context and authentically presenting the cultural values of traditional culture and intangible heritage while enhancing the integration of material and immaterial elements.

Despite over thirty years of practice in protecting historically significant cities, the current state of preservation remains concerning. The large-scale land leasing and urban redevelopment have led to the remodeling of many historical buildings, resulting in the gradual loss of historical events and cultural memories. Consequently, scholars argue that the primary conflict in historical urban areas is between fragmented spatial realities and the need for historical context protection^[1].

1.1.2 The Value and Dilemma of the Xiguan Changhua Historic District

This research focuses on the Changhua Historical District in Xiguan, Guangzhou, which has a peninsula shape, bordered to the north by Fengyuanzhong Alley, to the east by Longjin West Road and Enning Road, and the southwest by the Changhua River (Figure 1-1). As a concentrated showcase of residential architecture from various historical periods since the late Qing Dynasty, Changhua Street reflects living concept and architectural style evolution. However, current preservation efforts primarily focus on the static protection of material forms, neglecting the transmission of social structures, historical contexts, and cultural significance.

Furthermore, the Xiguan area, where Changhua Historical Street is located, has been the site of several significant historical events. However, due to frequent population movement and residents' self-renovations, the sense of experience and memory of these events has gradually

faded. In 2022, the government revitalized and protected the Changhua Historical District. Therefore, it is essential to explore the cultural value of historical events and implement targeted material renovations to enhance the district's historical recognition and transmission, thereby increasing its overall cultural value.

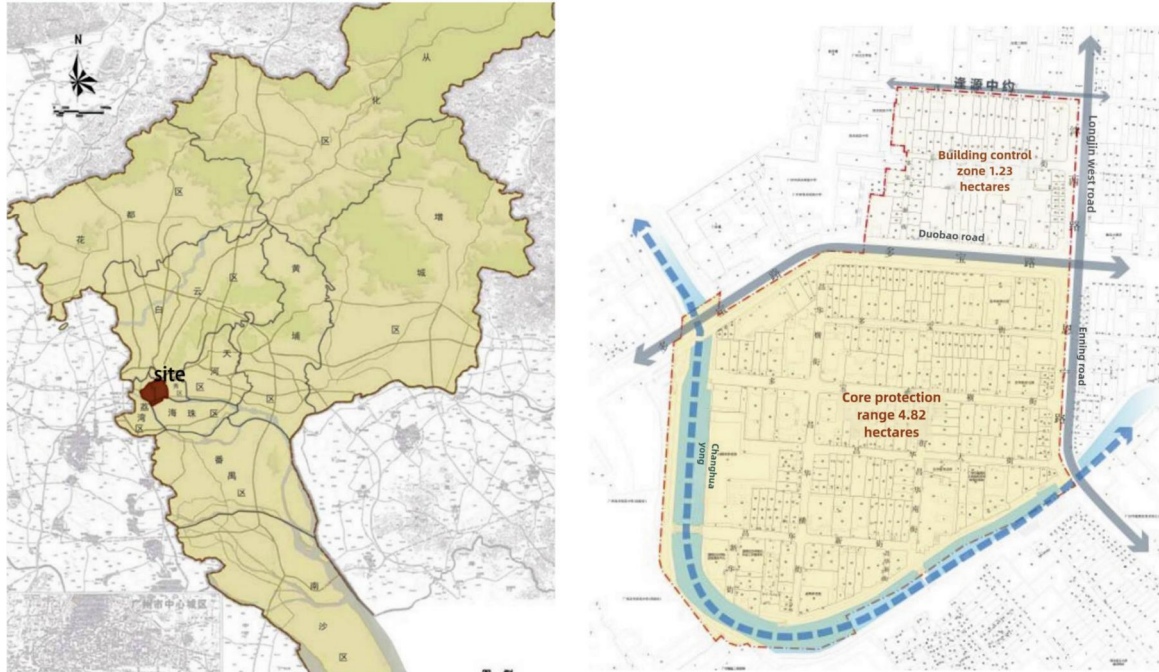


Figure 1-1 Research Scope of Changhua Street (Source: Self-drawn)

1.1.3 Feasibility of Introducing Spatial Narrative Theory in Historic District

The theory of spatial narrative, which has developed from the field of literature, has transcended traditional narrative domains and has gradually extended into fields such as architecture and urban planning, trending towards diversification. The spaces of historical districts possess strong narrative attributes, while a wealth of historical events can provide a diverse repository of materials for narrative. Therefore, the theory of spatial narrative can serve as a new perspective, viewing the spatial places of districts as narrative media that "tell stories" and showcase the unique cultural characteristics of the city. Spatial narrative expresses storytelling through means such as material forms and scene creation^[2]. It can organize and showcase explicit physical forms and existing elements, organically linking previously chaotic and isolated material spaces (such as various architectural protection units, streets, squares, and natural vegetation) to create clear and highly recognizable spatial forms and sequences. It can effectively inherit the historical development context and protect cultural heritage, thus introducing the theory of spatial narrative, which can offer a new perspective for addressing the renewal and protection of historical districts.

1.2 Research Objectives and Significance

1.2.1 Research Objective

This research uses the theory of spatial narrative as a starting point to systematically outline its theoretical framework and applications in protecting historical districts, exploring its compatibility with methods for historical district protection and development. Historical districts are collections of material spaces and carriers of urban history, culture, and collective memory. The theory of spatial narrative provides a new perspective for interpreting historical districts by revealing lived experiences, collective memories, and spatial characteristics, achieving an organic integration of material space and socio-cultural elements. This integration not only helps to continue the historical context but also breaks through the limitations of traditional district renewal models, providing new pathways for the dynamic renewal of historical districts.

Based on this basis, the research proposes an updated strategy for Changhua Street based on the theory of spatial narrative. This theory excavates the "stories" inherent in the district, deeply analyzing its historical and cultural values to provide methodological support for protection and renewal. The research combines the theory of spatial narrative with the actual situation of Changhua Street, proposing targeted design strategies to protect cultural heritage and activate contemporary social values effectively. This approach not only provides the theoretical basis and practical guidance for specific cases like Changhua Street but also offers a referable model for the protection and renewal of other historical districts.

1.2.2 Theoretical Significance

Currently, research on urban narrative spaces in China often remains at the descriptive level of urban spatial phenomena. As a key component of urban space, historical districts are shaped by both material spaces and intangible cultural activities. However, in the process of modernization and renewal, the maintenance of socio-cultural emotions is often overlooked, leading to insufficient exploration of the cultural connotations of historical districts. This has negatively impacted these areas' integrity, public participation, and sustainable development. This research, based on the theory of spatial narrative, aims to explore the integration and presentation of material and non-material elements in historical districts. It seeks to break through the traditional focus solely on material renewal, emphasizing the value of cultural expression and social interaction in the development of historical districts.

Taking Changhua Street as a specific urban space for research, this research begins with non-material cultural elements, such as emotions and memories within the site, aiming to

contribute to existing theoretical framework.

1.2.3 Practical Significance

In the preservation of historical districts, focusing solely on material restoration can easily overlook the cultural and historical connotations of the space. The theory of spatial narrative emphasizes starting from historical events and people's experiences, paying attention to spatial characteristics and their changes over time. Therefore, design should focus on promoting interaction between space and people and enhancing interpersonal communication, in order to increase the vitality, influence, and practicality of historical spaces.

This research analyzes case studies that apply narrative space theory to historical sites in order to explore strategies for the preservation and design of historical districts. It constructs a narrative research path, utilizing historical events to comprehensively plan and apply narrative elements, thereby elucidating the operational mechanisms of narrative spaces. Furthermore, it uses this mechanism to analyze the narrative elements of Changhua Street, establishing a design logic that activates its narrative space and addresses the existing challenges faced by Changhua Street.

1.3 Review of Relevant Research

1.3.1 Review of Research on Spatial Narrative Theory

This research aims to better understand the current directions and trends in international research on Spatial Narrative. A cluster analysis was conducted using VOSviewer on 282 articles from the Web of Science Core Collection (Figure 1-2). The analysis reveals clusters such as "narrative," "space," "planning," "policy," "development," and "approach."

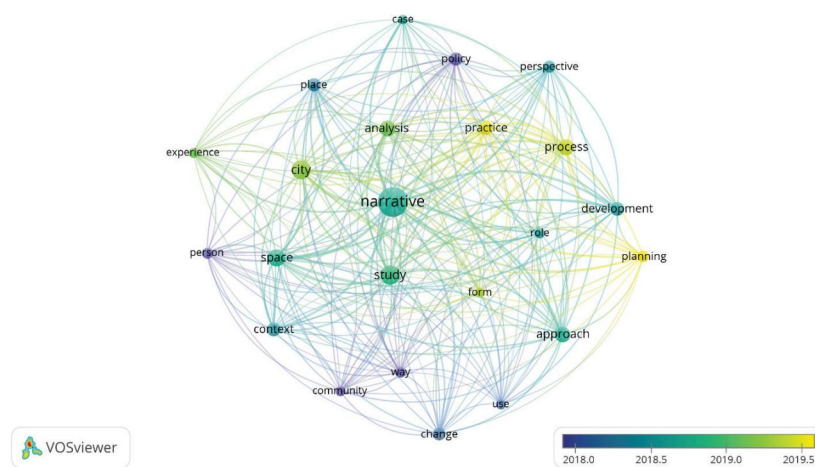


Figure 1-2 The cluster analysis of international research on spatial narratives (Source: Self-drawn)

(1) Progress in International Research on Spatial Narrative Theory

The initial concept of narratology originated from the research of literary works, positing that narrative refers to "the expression of a series of real or fictional events through language or written text." As the research of narratology has evolved, its definition has expanded beyond the narrow confines of literature. "A nursery rhyme, a film, or even a glance can be considered a narrative." It has gradually transformed into a theory concerning "narration, narrative texts, images, events, and cultural products that tell stories."

The development of narratology has gone through the classical, classic, and post-classic periods. Its theoretical connotations and research perspectives have continuously evolved and innovated. Driven by the spatial turn, an important branch called spatial narratology has emerged. In the classical narrative period, as an instinctive means of expression for human beings, narrative originated from the study of literary works. With "events" as the core^[3], it focused on content description, emphasized the presentation of plot and character elements. Structurally, it followed the continuity of the chronological order and plot development, and focused on the "matter" itself. During the classic narrative period from the 1950s to the 1970s, based on structuralism as the theoretical foundation, the research focus was on literary structure, plot logic, and narrative techniques. Gerard Genette proposed a three-layer conceptual system of narrative, story, and narration in his work "Narrative Discourse" in 1972. However, the research in this period had the limitation of a low degree of correlation with the social environment, culture, and history^[4]. In the 1990s, post-classic narratology research rose in the United States. It reflected on the theories of classic narratology, attached importance to interdisciplinary and transmedia research, and analyzed works within the social context, history, and culture. This has promoted the expansion of narratology research into social, historical, cultural contexts, and psychological spaces, and has driven the vigorous development of emerging fields such as film narratology and spatial narratology^[5]. In the second half of the 20th century, the shift in the spatial concept of Western thinkers has promoted the spatial turn of narratology, breaking the traditional narrative's dependence on the linearity of time and providing theoretical support for urban human geography^[6]. For example, in 1984, "Towards a Theory of Narrative Space" proposed three levels: terrain, space-time, and text^[7], revealing the multi-dimensional perception of narrative space by readers, injecting new thinking into postmodern spatial design, and enabling the research to go from the material form to the connotation, semantics, and cultural value levels of space^{[8][9]}. As shown in the following table (Table 1-1).

Table 1-1 Western Spatial Narrative Theory Research Process (Source: Self-drawn).

Period	Content	Narrative Content	Narrative Features
Classical Narrative Period	Event itself	Event	Plot itself, single narrative description purpose
Classic Narrative Period	Structure and operation mechanism of the work itself	How to write	Language sequence, plot expression logic
Post-Classical Narrative Period	Subjectivity	The guiding role of the subject	Sociality, multidisciplinary integration
	Social and historical background	The role of the external environment	
Narrative Turning Point Period	Architectural space	How space narrates events	Space technique application

In the field of spatial narrative research abroad, spatial narrative, as a powerful design concept and analytical tool, has increasingly received extensive attention and in-depth discussion. Researchers have become more aware that space is not only a carrier of material functions but also an important medium for cultural inheritance, emotional sustenance, and memory awakening. Current research mainly focuses on core directions such as narrative structure, narrative mode, and narrative space language. These directions constitute the key elements of spatial narrative theory and lead the continuous expansion and deepening of this field.

1. research progress in Narrative Structure: The narrative structure is the cornerstone of spatial narrative theory, which determines how space is organized, presented, and how it carries stories. Francois Penz from the School of Architecture in Cambridge, UK, combined narrative theory with the study of moving images to research architectural space, providing a new perspective for narrative structure research^[10]. The research team on narrative environments at the University of Cambridge deeply analyzed the historical connotations of urban spaces from the perspective of narratology. They explored the narrative means that influence the organization of urban spaces, such as the preservation of historical axes in urban planning and the layout of landmark buildings. They studied how these means weave coherent or unique narrative threads in the development process of the city. At the same time, the influence of spatial structures at different scales, such as the structures of blocks, urban areas, and the entire

city, on narrative has also been included in the research scope. The large-scale spatial structure sets the overall narrative tone of the city, while the small-scale block structure adds details and richness. This team advocates the construction of an urban narrative system, aiming to integrate diverse urban spatial elements, tap potential narrative resources, inject new vitality into urban development, and expand the possibilities of urban development in cultural, social, and other aspects^[11-13]. Azaryahu conducted an empirical study on the urban heritage sites in regions such as North America, Europe, and Israel. He summarized three narrative strategies: declarative, continuous or discontinuous, and subject narrative, and used these three methods to organize the tourism spaces of urban heritage sites^[14]. Beurskens and others pointed out that in the process of European integration, urban renewal involves the complex relationship among space, narrative, and daily practice. Essentially, it is a game of power and discourse. Different groups compete for the right to speak about space through narrative, influencing the evolution of spatial forms and functions^[15].

2. Research Progress in Narrative Space Language: The narrative space language focuses on the description of places in spatial design and how to enhance the readability and experience of space. When studying the spatial inequality in the post-industrial city of Narva in Estonia, Pfoser (2018) paid attention to the role of narrative practices in dealing with the process of spatial polarization. Facing the development dilemma brought about by spatial polarization, the local community reshaped the cultural value of marginal spaces through strategies such as constructing a positive narrative of belonging, strengthening professional identity, and looking forward to future visions, and successfully transformed the architectural space into an important carrier for community resistance and spatial reconstruction. This practice shows that cultural narrative is not only a description of space but also a powerful tool for promoting social change^[16]. In architectural design practice, many pioneering cases have broken through traditional paradigms through innovative narrative methods. For example, the Parc de la Villette designed by Bernard Tschumi deconstructed the traditional park layout through the "point-line-plane" system. Through the symbolic metaphor of the red "Folie", it broke the single functionality of space and gave it multiple narrative possibilities. The Berlin Jewish Museum designed by Daniel Libeskind, with its tortuous and fragmented spatial form, sharp geometric lines, and metaphorical lighting design, transformed the painful history of the Jewish nation into a perceivable spatial language. When visitors move in the complex space, the oppression, turns, and changes in light all tell the weight and complexity of history. Through techniques such as "symbolism" and "metaphor", it constructs a spatial narrative system with profound cultural connotations, making the building go beyond the physical entity and become a spiritual

container that carries national memory and emotions.

3. In terms of narrative mode language: the narrative mode determines the path of story development and communication in space, deeply influencing the audience's perception and understanding of spatial narrative. Matthew Potteiger and Jamie Purinton studied aspects such as the narrative time sequence, narrative form, and narrative meaning in "Landscape Narrative: Design Practices for Telling Stories"^[17]. In the narrative time sequence, landscape spaces can guide tourists to experience stories step by step through linear, non-linear, and other time arrangements. Narrative forms cover diverse expressions from the concrete to the abstract, such as sculptures and paving patterns. The narrative meaning is related to deep connotations such as culture and history, making the landscape space go beyond the physical entity and become a carrier for the bearing and dissemination of meaning. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington designed by the renowned Chinese-American designer Maya Lin is also a typical example of spatial narrative design techniques. The two V-shaped black marble walls rise from the ground, with the names of the fallen inscribed on them. The design of the work shortens the distance between people and that historical period, and tells that story through the names of each soldier. Diao and Lu proposed a method based on narrative guidance to revitalize urban memory places. They identified the content of urban memory, constructed a reasonable narrative structure, and used narrative techniques to integrate urban memory into the design of green spaces. For example, in the design of urban parks, taking local traditional festival activities as memory points, they constructed a linear narrative path, connected different functional spaces, and set up relevant landscape features and cultural display areas along the way, enhancing residents' cultural identity and community cohesion. While protecting cultural heritage, it also promotes the fair use of green spaces and expands the application scope of narrative modes in urban space design^[18].

Summary: In Western research, spatial narrative theory holds advantages in exploring the relationships between spatial cognition and perception, temporal evolution, and the connections between material and non-material connotations. It aligns closely with spatial analysis and design methods. The research of spatial structures and hierarchies provides an analytical model from the perspective of perception and experience, ensuring that humanistic connotations permeate the entire process of design, construction, and use. In recent years, this theory has shown diverse development, with enhanced quantitative research solidifying its scientific and systematic nature. Many studies demonstrate how narrative strategies can be used to reinterpret urban space, cultivate community resilience, and strengthen cultural identity, reflecting the broad applicability of spatial narrative theory.

(2) Progress in Domestic Research on Spatial Narrative Theory

In this research, using VOS view to cluster analysis 320 articles on spatial narratives in CNKI, Core Collection, presenting "spatial narrative," "landscape design," "narrative space," "Spatial Sequence," "Historic District," "Traditional Village," "Urban Space" and so on. The clusters of "urban space" and "historic district," "traditional village" and "urban space" were clustered (Figure 1-3).

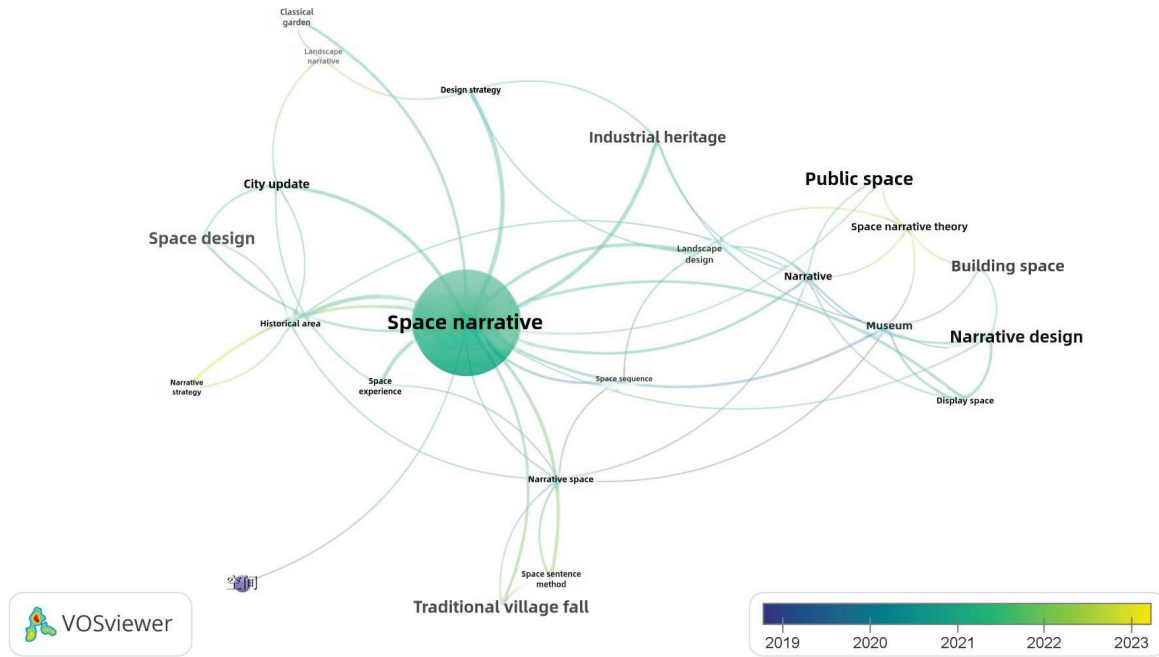


Figure 1-3 Cluster analysis of domestic spatial narrative research (Source: Self-drawn)

In the late 20th century, domestic scholars gradually engaged in the exploration of spatial narrative theory. In the initial stage of research, the core work was to draw on Western spatial narrative theory and conduct in-depth research on traditional narrative text categories such as literature and film and television texts. With the continuous advancement of research, the application field of spatial narrative theory has been continuously expanded, extending to many fields such as architecture, urban planning, and landscape design, which can be divided into the following stages.

1. Introduction Phase of Narrative Studies in China: Research on narratology in China began around 2000, initially focusing primarily on the field of literature. In 2006, Long Diyong started to pay attention to spatial narrative research, systematically exploring the research areas and content of narratology based on the development of related theories abroad (Figure 1-4). Early studies mainly involved the translation and introduction of Western works, focusing on the introduction of narrative theory and its applications, laying a foundation for subsequent

research^[6].

2. Initial Stage of Domestic Space: During this stage, a series of research achievements with academic value emerged. In "Novel Narratology", Xu Dai compared ancient Chinese narrative thoughts with Western narratology and deeply explored the characteristics of narrative methods of both sides. In 2004, Hu Yamin published "Narratology", systematically sorting out the internal structure and narrative vocabulary of narratology. In "Spatial Theory and Literary Space", Lu Yang analyzed the traditional Chinese spatial narrative mode and contemporary spatial narrative theory research. In addition, through academic papers such as "The Past, Present and Future of Narratology", Hu Yamin provided diverse perspectives for constructing a narratology research system with local characteristics from different viewpoints^[8]. At the same time, in 2004, Zhang Nan's team proposed the "Urban Story Theory" and explored urban narrative theory through empirical research. Generally speaking, the core of narrative research in this stage has gradually shifted to the domestic local space field, forming distinct characteristics of the turn in domestic space research (Figure 1-4).

3. Application Stage of Narrative Theory: After 2014, the domestic spatial narrative theory entered a period of rapid development. The research gradually matured and showed the characteristics of interdisciplinary integration, and began to be applied to urban space design (Figure 1-4). In 2010, Professor Lu Shaoming from Shanghai Jiao Tong University published an article titled "The Ontological Construction of Contemporary Architectural Narratology", expounding the process of the gradual maturity of narratology theory after its application in the architectural field in the 1980s and summarizing its relatively complete development context^[19]. The article pointed out that guided by the basic characteristics of "logicality and literariness" of spatial narrative, the process of constructing physical space should be endowed with spiritual significance. Subsequently, Xiao Jing's team constructed a narrative mode of "object-space-event" for the protection planning of famous cities. In "Research on the Cultural Narrative Strategy of Urban Built Heritage", Xue Wei proposed a cultural narrative framework based on "text-context", focusing on the display of historical inheritance and cultural values. In addition, in "Research on the Narrative Image of Guangzhou's Historical Urban Area", Wu Kaiqing proposed specific strategies for the protection and inheritance of narrative images by combining the analysis of historical contexts^[20].

Overall, although the domestic spatial narrative theory started late, it has developed rapidly. The research focuses on interdisciplinary integration and empirical application, highlighting historical and cultural inheritance, as well as innovative methods and technologies. This theoretical system not only expands the research scope of narratology but also provides

solid theoretical support and practical guidance for cultural heritage protection, spatial design, and urban development.

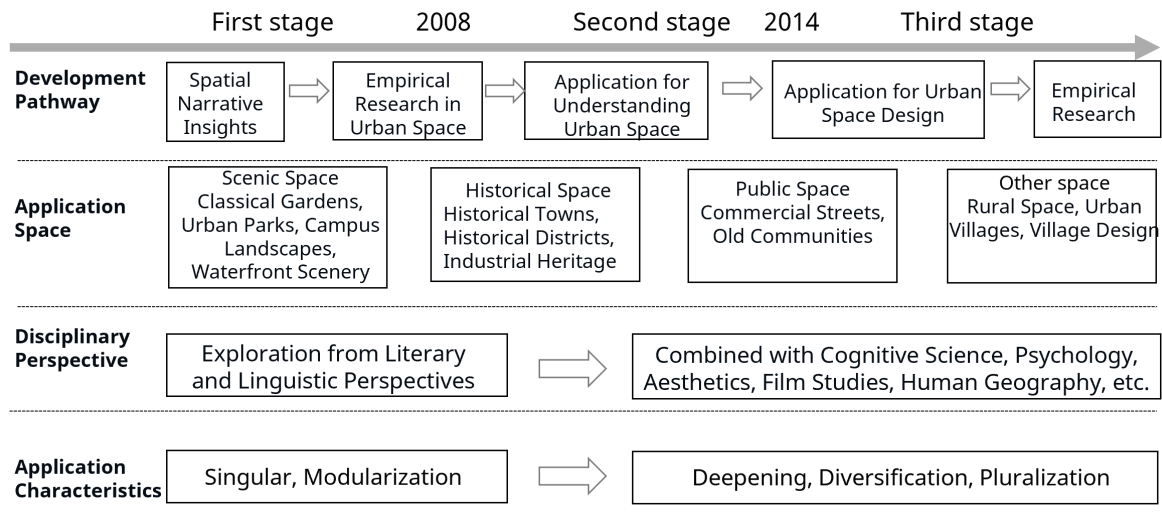


Figure 1-4 Progress in research on spatial narratives (Source: Reference^[21])

In recent years, significant progress has been made in domestic spatial narrative research across several key directions, primarily including landscape space, historical and cultural heritage space, and urban public space design research.

In terms of narrative structure: Based on UNESCO's theories of "value correlation" and "historical stratification," Xiao Jing and Cao Ke (2022) treat historical town landscapes as "texts," analyze landscape narrative elements, and construct a "grammatical structure." They propose an "organic protection" strategy that conforms to the laws of "stratified narration," providing a systematic landscape narrative approach for the conservation of historical towns^[22]. Xiao Jing and Cao Ke (2022) further emphasize the application of these theories to establish a "grammatical structure" for landscape narratives, thereby offering a systematic framework for narrative structures in historical town protection^[23].

In terms of narrative methods: Through quantitative research on the narrative environment system of historical urban areas, Zhang Nan innovatively constructs a quantitative research system for urban narrative systems, including a "narrative database," "quantitative research on narrative systems," and "micro-level research on key cases," providing a new methodological path for narrative method studies^[24]. Taking Chaozhou Ancient City as a typical case, He Shaoying et al. (2016) deeply analyze the spatial narrative characteristics of traditional belief sites, accurately (extract) key elements and their integration paths, and open up new perspectives for the application of narrative methods in the protection of historical and cultural heritage^[25]. Xu Wen et al. (2024) take the Grand Canal National Cultural Park (Suzhou section)

as a research object, construct a value grading evaluation system for urban material cultural heritage, excavate themes from spatial and temporal dimensions, and ingeniously link scenarios to propose a complete narrative scenario system framework and landscape control strategies, providing a highly valuable reference model for narrative method design in the protection of similar heritage^[26]. In the field of industrial heritage, some projects use technologies such as 3D reconstruction, virtual reality (VR), and augmented reality (AR) to digitally restore and reproduce the historical scenes of industrial heritage. By constructing virtual tour routes, visitors can experience industrial production processes immersively and engage with the stories behind industrial heritage, enriching the dimensionality of industrial heritage narrative methods and enabling deeper understanding of the heritage's connotations.

In terms of narrative spatial language: Based on narrative theory, Fan Xijia and Zou Yiliao (2018) analyzed the setting of living subjects in public spaces, took "commercial plazas" as an example to study the behaviors and experiences of different subjects, and proposed design strategies for narrative methods to support sustainable urban development^[27]. Wang Shufen et al. (2020) took the Zhujiafen Community in Beijing as a case study. Aiming at the urban memories and emotions often ignored in the public spaces of old communities, they proposed renewal strategies integrating community cultural memories to create spaces with rich cultural characteristics and a sense of belonging^[28]. Digital narrative technologies have also been applied. For example, light and shadow interaction technologies are used to project images related to industrial production and workers' lives on the facades or internal spaces of industrial buildings, combined with environmental sound effects to create a specific narrative atmosphere. Some industrial heritage sites use digital interactive installations to allow visitors to independently explore the stories behind industrial heritage, enhancing interactivity and participation, and improving the readability and experiential quality of the space^[29].

Summary: Domestic scholars in spatial narrative theory research have demonstrated distinct characteristics of interdisciplinary integration and innovative application. They not only draw on Western narratology theories but also conduct localized explorations based on domestic realities. Notably, in the past two decades, domestic scholars have begun to explore the practical applications of spatial narrative theory in urban planning, architecture, and landscape fields. By analyzing the narrative logic and cultural connotations of space, they have formed innovative research paradigms. However, existing results often focus on the macro urban level, while systematic research on micro scales, such as historical districts, is still in a developmental stage, and its theoretical framework and practical pathways require further deepening.

1.3.2 Review of Research on Historical Districts

(1) Progress in International Research

This research aims to better understand the current directions and trends in the international field of historical district research. A clustering analysis was conducted using VOSviewer on 258 articles from the Web of Science Core Collection (Figure 1-5), revealing clusters such as "environment," "building," "community," "policy," "characteristic," "approach," and "resident."

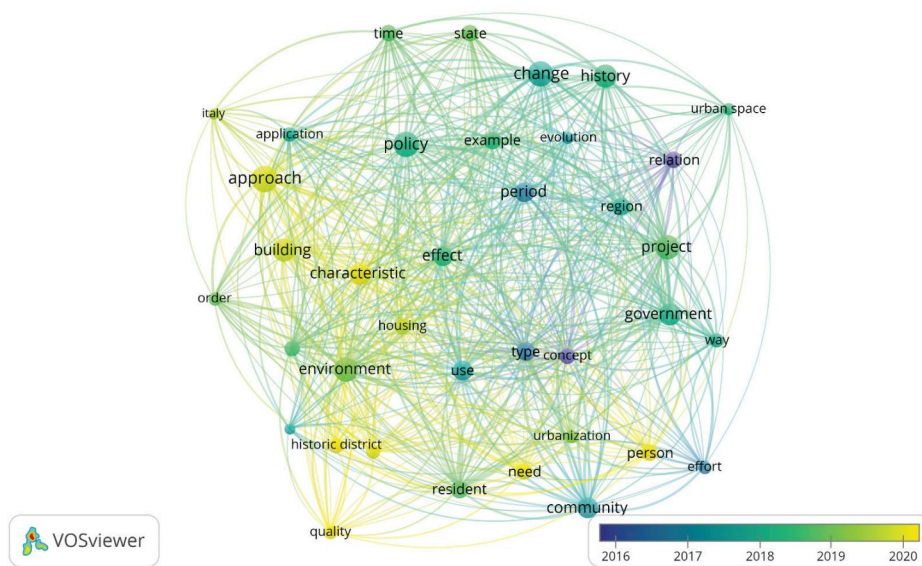


Figure 1-5 Cluster Analysis of Foreign Historic Districts (Source: Self-drawn)

After World War I, Western countries actively focused on the preservation of historic districts. International organizations such as CIAM, ICOMOS, and UNESCO recognized the challenges these areas face today. In response, they issued various legal documents, charters, and conventions that have significantly influenced global preservation efforts. These initiatives provide essential guidance for the protection and development of historic districts. Overall, the charters and regulations can be categorized based on evolving concepts, ranging from the protection of individual monuments to the maintenance of the overall environment, from focusing on physical space to cultivating the spirit of place, and from static preservation to dynamic sustainable development. The research process can be divided into three stages.

1. The Emergence of the Concept of Historical Districts (1900s–1930s)

In the early 20th century, the concept of historical district preservation was still in its infancy. Western countries lacked a clear definition of historical districts, and the cultural value of historical buildings was generally overlooked by the public. The common practice at the time was to demolish old buildings to make way for new facilities, leading to the destruction of many

buildings and districts with cultural, artistic, and historical significance. In 1933, the "Athens Charter" first proposed the concept of historical districts, emphasizing the importance of protecting buildings and districts with historical value. However, the focus on preservation remained limited to individual buildings, and the overall character of districts did not receive adequate attention^[30].

2. Legislative Practice Exploration Period (1960s–1980s)

After World War II, as urban historical built environments suffered severe impacts from war destruction and reconstruction, countries gradually began to legislate the protection of the overall character of historical districts. From the 1960s to the 1980s, countries such as France, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Japan successively enacted laws like the "Malraux Law," the "National Historic Preservation Act," the "Urban Civilization Law," and the "Cultural Property Protection Law," which set clear requirements for the protection and management of historical districts. At the same time, the "Venice Charter" (1964) and the "Washington Charter" (1987) expanded the scope of protection from individual buildings to the overall environment of districts, including building functions and landscape elements, emphasizing the integrity and continuity of historical districts. The protection of historical districts entered a comprehensive and in-depth phase, with related research becoming increasingly diverse and practical experiences enriching, providing important references for subsequent studies^[31].

3. Period of Enhanced Conceptual Awareness (1990s–Present)

Since the 1990s, with the acceleration of globalization, the concepts surrounding historical district preservation have undergone profound changes. Preservation efforts have gradually shifted from a singular focus on the physical restoration of spaces to a comprehensive consideration of regional context, social impact, and economic value. Countries such as France, the United Kingdom, and Japan have introduced new regulations that emphasize the multidimensional presentation of heritage value and the flexibility of protection models. In 2011, ICOMOS and UNESCO promoted advanced concepts such as "historical layering" and "dynamic governance" through documents like the "Recommendation on Historic Urban Landscapes," advocating for an open and inclusive attitude toward preservation^[32]. During this phase, preservation concepts increasingly focus on adaptability to urban development, striving to achieve the sustainable inheritance of historical district heritage resources. This development marks the entry of historical district preservation into a comprehensive and sustainable new era^[33].

Research on historic districts exhibits characteristics of interdisciplinary integration and the combination of theory and practice. Researchers continuously explore new theoretical

frameworks, methods, and technological approaches, including the spatial forms and linguistic structures of historic districts, cultural identity, and community participation, as well as the application of digitalization and intelligence in the study of historic districts.

In terms of spatial forms and language of historic districts, researchers emphasize the importance of historic buildings and the economic vitality of districts while preserving historical heritage. The article "New Designs in Historic Context—Starchitecture vs Architectural Conservation Principles" examines and evaluates the impact of iconic architectural cases on historical contexts through international preservation standards and charters^[34]. However, in the article "New Architecture in Historic Context," Arnóth Ádám, Vice President of ICOMOS Hungary, focuses on new buildings in the Buda Castle area and emphasizes that new architecture should learn from the site's traditions, understand the logic and structural framework of local architecture, capture the spirit of the place, and employ contemporary architectural language to align with the local cultural landscape and architectural heritage^[35].

Additionally, researchers focus on cultural identity and community participation. In their article "Social Enterprise and the Development of Cultural Heritage Assets as Catalysts for Urban Placemaking" (2019), Beck and Brooks affirm the value of urban cultural heritage in connecting various parts of the community and generating new activities, emphasizing that cultural sharing can further expand this value and provide more employment opportunities, thereby promoting urban environmental improvement^[36]. The research also highlights the importance of community participation in the protection of historic cultural districts, revealing residents' perceptions and attitudes toward the preservation of urban historical and cultural heritage through surveys and correlation analysis.

In the realm of digitalization and intelligence, researchers have conducted in-depth empirical analyses of the protection and regeneration of historical districts by introducing various theories and technical methods. Wang Zimin (2024) constructed a quantitative evaluation system by introducing urban catalyst theory, analyzing the landscape catalytic effects of urban open spaces in Chongqing from the perspectives of dynamics, spatiality, and temporality. This research not only revealed the current construction status and future development potential of open spaces at different scales but also provided scientific decision-making support for the continuous renewal of urban spaces^[37]. Fang et al. (2023) utilized deep learning and GIS technology, taking the streets of Shanghai as an example, to explore the significant impact of environmental facilities and physical spaces on street aesthetics through large-scale aesthetic assessments, providing theoretical foundations and practical directions for

optimizing urban walking environments^[38].

International research on historical district preservation has evolved from conceptual emergence to legislative practices and enhanced awareness. Initially focused on individual heritage buildings, the preservation efforts have expanded to encompass the overall character of districts, including buildings, landscapes, and functional components, particularly in response to post-war reconstruction and global challenges.

Recent preservation concepts emphasize balancing material spaces with socio-economic values, promoting ideas like "historical layering" and "dynamic governance." This interdisciplinary research integrates theory and practice to enhance residents' quality of life and economic vitality while safeguarding historical heritage. It also highlights cultural identity, community participation, and multi-source data integration, providing scientific methods and empirical support for the protection and regeneration of historical districts. These international experiences offer valuable references for preserving historical and cultural districts in our country.

(2) Progress in Domestic Research on Historical District

For the current direction and trend of domestic Historic District research, the VOS view was used to cluster analysis of 720 articles in CNKI, the core collection (Figure 1-6), presenting clusters such as "urban renewal," "commercialization," "tourism development," "public space," "spatial syntax," "heritage protection" and so on.

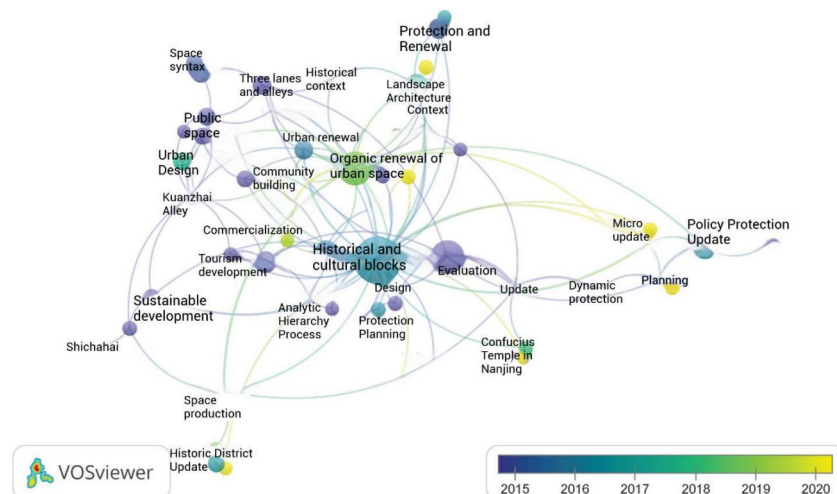


Figure 1-6 Cluster Analysis of Domestic Historic Districts (Source: Self-drawn)

This article focuses on the research overview of the Xiguan historical district in Guangzhou. In 1982, Guangzhou was honored as one of the first national historical and cultural cities in China, marking the beginning of preservation efforts for historical and cultural cities. The period from 1990 to 1999 was characterized by a large-scale demolition and construction

phase led by developers, while from 2000 to 2010, it shifted to a phase of government-led renovation of dilapidated buildings and legislative protection. From 2010 to 2014, there was a transition to a "three-day" classification renovation period, where the market initiative was reinforced by government control. Since 2015, the focus has been on micro-renovations of districts, aiming for a balance of diverse interests.

Over nearly two decades, researchers have tirelessly explored the Xiguan historical and cultural district, resulting in substantial research outcomes. The research scope encompasses several key areas, including preservation and renewal planning, urban morphology, and renovation practices (Figure 1-7). Below is a summary of the research developments in each phase.

Enlightenment period	Large-scale Demolition and Construction under Market Exploration	Government-led Renovation and Legislative Protection Period	Three-old transformation	Micro-Renovation Period
1980–1989	1990–1999	2000–2010	2010–2014	2015–now
Strengthening of planning controls and creation of protected lots	Development led by developers in old urban housing areas	Government-led renovation and establishment of protective legislation	Renovation of old buildings, transitioning from market initiative to strengthened government control	Micro-renovations in districts, seeking a balance of diverse interests

Figure 1-7 History of Preservation and Utilization of Guangzhou Historical Area (Source: Reference^[38])

1. Initiation Stage of Historical City Protection (1986–1999)

After Guangzhou was designated as one of the first national historical and cultural cities in 1982, a protection system was promptly initiated. In 1983, the "Protection and Urban Landscape Planning of Guangzhou Historical and Cultural City" introduced the innovative "point-line-surface" protection model, expanding the focus from individual cultural relics to entire characteristic residential areas.

During the 1980s, the renovation of Guangzhou's old city followed a "government-led + developer-operated" model. However, this approach, driven by an excessive pursuit of economic benefits, often resulted in the destruction of historical features. In response, policy adjustments in 1999 eliminated developer involvement in preservation efforts and established the principle of "protection first."

That same year, the "Regulations on the Protection of Guangzhou Historical and Cultural City" introduced the concept of "historical and cultural protection zones," creating a hierarchical control system that included designated protection areas and construction control zones. This marked a significant shift toward legal governance in the protection of Guangzhou's

historical and cultural heritage (Table 1-2).

In the research process of the protection and renewal of the Xiguan historical and cultural district, Mr. Zeng Zhaoxuan provided a detailed explanation of the natural and historical geography of the Guangzhou area from ancient times to the present^[40]. Huang Fuyi's "Guangzhou City Fang Zhi" compiled ancient literature related to water systems and streets like Lychee Bay in the old city^[41]. Additionally, the "Wuyang City Pulse" and "Illustrated Urban Context"^[42] compiled by the Guangzhou Urban Planning Bureau and the Guangzhou Urban Construction Archives contain numerous precious historical images, vividly showcasing the urban landscape of ancient Guangzhou.

In summary, during this stage, Guangzhou initially established a historical and cultural city protection system: the scope of protection expanded from point-like "historical relics" to "traditional residential protection zones," ultimately establishing the concept of "historical cultural protection zones," marking a shift in protection philosophy from individual relics to overall landscape control. The content of the protection system was continuously refined, covering elements such as historical relics, traditional streets, and water landscapes, providing an important foundation for the systematic protection of subsequent historical and cultural districts.

2. Renovation and Activation Stage under the Context of the Asian Games (2000–2014)

Entering the 21st century, the model of old city renovation in Guangzhou underwent significant changes. After 2000, with the revision of the "Cultural Relics Protection Law of the People's Republic of China" (2002), the concept of "historical cultural districts" was introduced for the first time, shifting urban renewal from large-scale demolition and construction to protective development (Table 1-2). Dr. Xu Yifang and others were among the first to explore this area in 2000. They analyzed the protection planning of some typical historical buildings and urban residential environments, delving into issues of historical site protection and the reshaping of living environments. They advocated for the integration of Xiguan residents and the protection of historical buildings with social, cultural, and material spatial factors, implementing a comprehensive protection strategy^[43]. Li Song suggested improving the environment around ancient buildings in Xiguan, promoting coordination between new and old buildings, which is a worthy research topic^[44]. Wu Min (2008) analyzed the traditional features of Xiguan by categorizing them into two components: intangible and tangible forms, constructing a protection and renewal system composed of three levels: landscape coordination areas, landscape composition areas, and areas for landscape protection and old city renewal^[45]. These studies collectively promoted the transition of historical protection in Guangzhou from

individual building protection to overall landscape control, providing important theoretical support for subsequent protection planning.

3. Value Enhancement Stage under the Framework of Historical City Protection and Renewal Regulations (2014–Present)

During this stage, Guangzhou enhanced historical protection through regulatory measures. The 2014 "Guangzhou Historical and Cultural City Protection Plan" established a "six-tier protection system," designating 26 historical cultural districts and 19 historical landscape areas, covering urban heritage and intangible cultural heritage.

In 2015, the Urban Renewal Bureau was formed, and the "Guangzhou Urban Renewal Measures" integrated historical protection into legal frameworks. The 2016 "Guangzhou Historical and Cultural City Protection Regulations" introduced a protection catalog and a multi-departmental collaboration mechanism, shifting focus to a systematic approach.

In 2021, responding to directives against large-scale demolition, the "Implementation Opinions" and "Work Guidelines" introduced a micro-renovation model and a three-tier review system, establishing a comprehensive protection mechanism for planning and construction management.

Meanwhile, interdisciplinary research from diverse perspectives began to emerge (Table 1-2). For example, Zhu Xuemei explored how to construct an urban space in Xiguan that adapts to the interrelationships among location context, historical buildings, traditional streets, cultural customs, and environmental features^[46]. Qiao Shuo elaborated on the need for inclusive urban development to address the integration of different social groups and the uneven development of urban construction through micro-renovation of the Fengyuan Street Xiguan community^[47]. Wang Lin, from the perspective of value protection, focused on the holistic protection of Guangzhou's historical cultural districts, proposing three different spatial scales for revitalization practices: "district cluster—district unit—neighborhood," providing new ideas and methods for the protection and renewal of historical cultural districts and advancing research in this field toward more practical applications^[48]. These research findings complement each other, gradually deepening and continuously refining the theoretical system for the protection and development of the Xiguan historical and cultural district.

Table 1-2 A Compendium of the Research Process of Xiguan Historic District (Source: Self-drawn)

Stage	Time	Direction	Core content
Initiation Stage of System Construction	1986-1999	Construction of Regulatory System and Theoretical Exploration	Establishment of a hierarchical control system. Research on historical geography and literature to outline the historical development of Guangzhou.
Asian Games-Driven Activation Stage	2000-2014	Protective Development and Interdisciplinary Integration	Development of comprehensive protection strategies and a three-tier system for landscape control
Regulatory Improvement and Enhancement Stage	2014—now	Full-Process Protection and Refined Practices	Establishment of a six-tier protection system, implementation of micro-renovation models and a veto system, development of spatial adaptation theory

With the acceleration of urbanization and increased awareness of cultural heritage protection, significant progress has been made in domestic research on historical districts across several key areas. This progress reflects scholars' in-depth exploration in both theoretical and practical dimensions, including strategies for the protection and renewal of historical districts, value assessment and quantitative analysis, spatial morphology and social network structures, and the relationship between historical districts and tourism development.

In terms of strategies for the protection and renewal of historical districts, Li Xiangbei and Yang Xingying (2019) utilized urban morphology typology to explore planning and design for traditional historical and cultural districts. Through the application of morphological typology, they proposed strategies for the restoration of historical districts, providing scientific methodological support for the protection and renewal of these areas^[49]. Liu Yaqi, Guo Qian, and Xiao Lei (2021) examined the transformation of the Panxi Restaurant as a case study, discussing the application of urban catalyst theory in the protection and renewal of historical districts. By introducing catalyst theory, the research identified the Panxi Restaurant as a catalytic point, and through its renovation and activation, it stimulated the overall renewal of the surrounding historical district. The results indicated that catalyst theory could effectively invigorate historical districts and promote their sustainable development^[50].

Meanwhile, in value assessment and quantitative research of historical districts, Xiao Jing, Li Heping, and others (2019) proposed a development approach for historical district protection guided by characteristic value. They conducted a quantitative analysis to organize and manage the protection elements of the Civico historical cultural district in Chongqing. This research

emphasized the importance of quantitative analysis in identifying the value of historical districts and formulating protection strategies, providing methodological support for their scientific protection^[51]. Deng Wei, Hu Beibei, and others (2024) focused on the value connotation and holistic heritage characteristics of town-type historical cultural districts, constructing a comprehensive value assessment system through the integration and analysis of multi-source data. This research considered not only the material cultural heritage value of historical districts but also incorporated multiple dimensions, such as intangible cultural heritage and socio-economic value, providing a scientific basis for comprehensive value assessment^[52].

Regarding the spatial morphology and urban structural characteristics of historical districts, Professor Tian Yinsheng's research team at the South China University of Technology utilized relevant theories such as conzenian urban morphology to research the evolutionary characteristics and driving mechanisms of urban morphology in areas like Guangzhou's Overseas Chinese Village, old cit. They proposed quantitative analysis measures based on the three elements of morphological regional basis—plan type, building type, and land use^[53]. Dr. Huang Huiming focused on the old city of Guangzhou, applying the concept of morphological typology to deconstruct evolutionary patterns using the "morphological unit" system, analyzing the formation process of morphological patterns, revealing self-organizing mechanisms, and proposing effective means for morphological design intervention control in planning^[54].

In terms of the relationship between historical districts and tourism development, Xia Xueying and others (2022) conducted research on the recreational perception of the commercial suitability of the Nanjing Confucius Temple historical cultural district, proposing suggestions for optimizing commercial formats and enhancing visitor experiences, thereby providing a reference for the commercialization path of district tourism development^[55]. Xie Dixiang and Wu Jiaqian (2023) performed an in-depth research of visitor perception imagery of the Yongqing block on Enning Road in Guangzhou based on network text analysis, revealing visitors' cognition, emotions, and satisfaction regarding the district's tourism resources, which provided a basis for optimizing tourism development in the area^[56].

A systematic review of the literature on the Xiguan historical district in Guangzhou highlights two main characteristics. First, research emphasizes spatial descriptions and morphological analyses of historical evolution, focusing on spatial patterns, architectural features, and functional layouts. Second, the methodology primarily employs morphological analysis, centering on objective descriptions of the material spatial layer. However, there is a notable lack of focus on non-material cultural elements, such as emotions and memories, in the analysis of historical urban spaces.

1.3.3 Literature Review Analysis

Current academic research on historical districts primarily emphasizes the material spatial layer, often overlooking the rich historical and cultural values embedded within these spaces. Both qualitative and quantitative analyses are utilized, with advancements in technology leading to a diversification of research methodologies.

The introduction of spatial narrative theory provides new avenues for studying historical districts. This theory transcends the limitations of two-dimensional perspectives in literature and art, expanding research into perceivable three-dimensional spaces and enhancing its dimensionality. By constructing a spatial system based on the three levels of "object - field - event," spatial narrative theory effectively illustrates the spatiotemporal attributes of historical districts, highlighting their unique historical contexts and spatial characteristics. Thus, examining Guangzhou's historical districts through the lens of spatial narrative offers a novel perspective.

Domestic research on spatial narratives started relatively late. Although certain progress has been made, it mainly focuses on theoretical discussions, and there is still room for improvement in constructing research frameworks and innovating research methods. At this stage, research on historical districts based on narrative theory is quite scarce. Existing related studies mostly approach historical districts and architectural heritage from a literary perspective, employing qualitative descriptive methods.

Considering the above literature review, this research will focus on several key questions for in-depth exploration: How to construct a systematic research approach for spatial narratives, how to effectively establish the intrinsic connection between spatial narratives and historical districts, and how spatial narrative theory can provide a rigorous logical framework for the narrative construction of historical districts. The aim is to fill the existing research gaps and promote further development in the field of historical district research.

1.4 Research Questions and Methods

1.4.1 Research Questions

Combining the history and current status of the Changhua Street historical district in Guangzhou, this research will revolve around the following questions:

1. What events in the Changhua Street district are worth narrating? How did they form? What problems currently exist in the area?
2. How can narrative renewal strategies be proposed to address the existing issues in Changhua Street?

Through the research of these questions, this research aims to outline a spatial narrative framework, identify the narrative sources of the historical district of Changhua Street in Xiguan, Guangzhou, and propose corresponding narrative strategies.

1.4.2 Research Methods

1. Literature Research Method

This research uses a literature review to gather studies on spatial narratives and historical district renewal from various sources. It aims to understand the concepts and applications of spatial narratives while analyzing current research on historical district protection and development. This analysis identifies challenges and establishes a foundation for advancing the protection and renewal of Changhua Street through narrative design methods.

2. Field research method

The field research method is essential for gathering data and directly analyzing the spatial narrative characteristics of historic districts. This involves assessing the status of material elements in the Changhua Street historic district, such as buildings and streets while researching significant historical events and legends for primary data. By viewing material space as a narrative “medium” and historical event as narrative “materials,” this research offers scientific evidence for constructing and protecting its narrative space.

3. Case study method

The case study method analyzes and compares historical districts domestically and internationally to identify effective strategies for historical narratives. It highlights innovative approaches for protecting and developing urban areas, including material preservation, cultural heritage transmission, public participation, and sustainable development. By considering the specific conditions of Changhua Street, the research extracts applicable narrative strategies from successful practices in various districts.

4. Ancient map, historical image analysis method

This research analyzes ancient maps and historical imagery of Guangzhou to identify key urban nodes of historical and cultural significance. By interpreting maps and synthesizing related materials, the study outlines the narrative spatial elements of Changhua Street across different historical periods, establishing a foundation for spatial narrative research in historical districts.

1.5 Research Framework

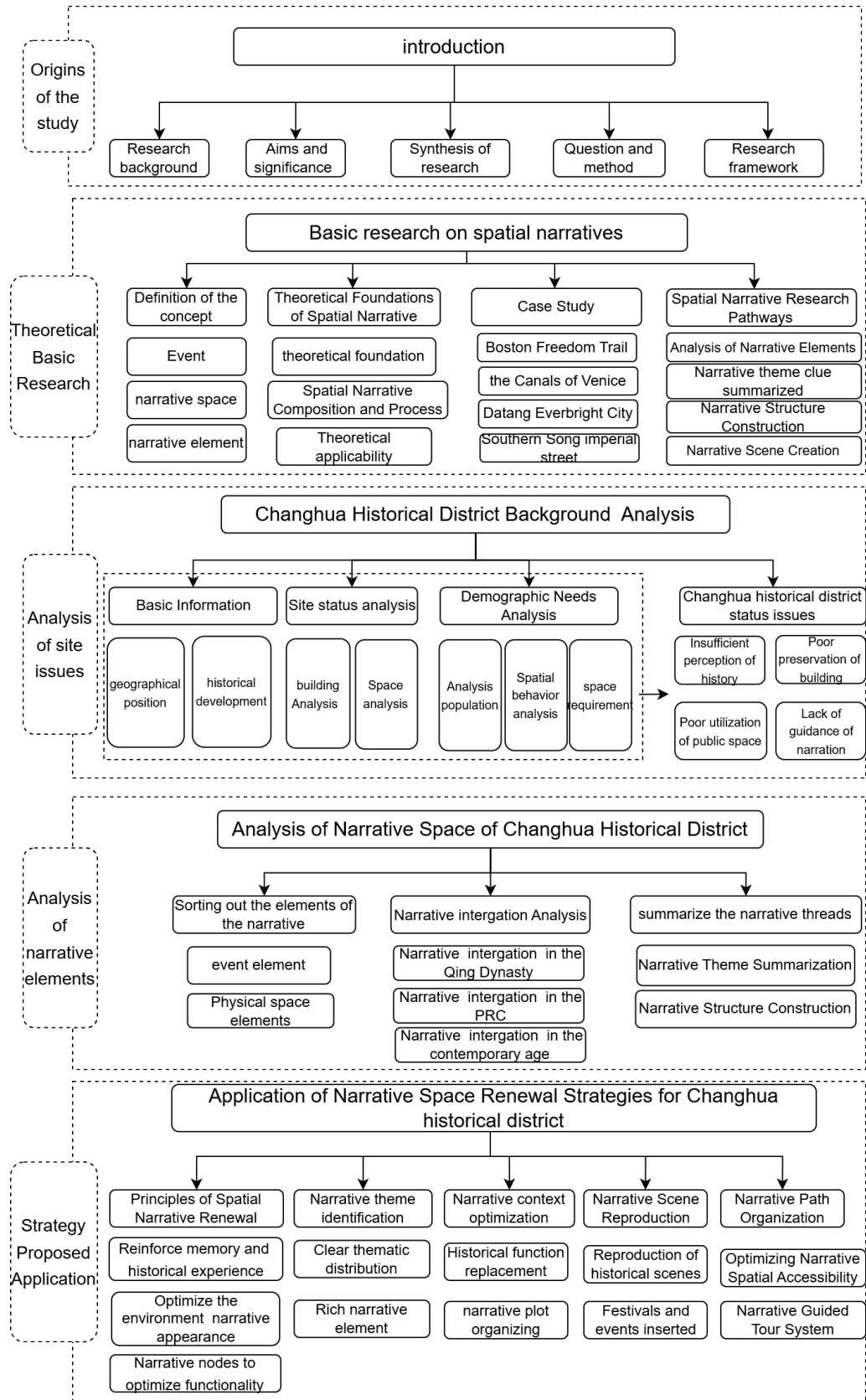


Figure 1-8 Research framework (Source: Self-drawn)

Chapter 2 Fundamental Research on Spatial Narratives

2.1 Definition of the concept

2.1.1 Narrative Space

The research on urban narrative space is based on Kevin Lynch's theory of urban imagery. It focuses on understanding urban space from the perspective of subjective cognition and narrative. Narrative space refers to urban spaces that can tell stories. It organizes narrative elements and paths to present cultural information and its context through spatial mediums, allowing the public to perceive it intuitively. Such spaces carry diverse narrative content, including history, fiction, and biography, involving multiple layers such as textual structure, story space, and reader psychological space. Narrative space not only concerns the material form of space but also emphasizes the events and meanings embedded within it. Through the situational perception of spatial experiencers, it stimulates associations and resonances related to historical contexts, thereby deepening the understanding of the underlying historical culture. It is a "spatiotemporal complex" that combines time and space, aiming to enhance the emotional experience of the audience, convey the social and cultural values of space, and achieve effective narrative functions^[58].

2.1.2 Event

In the research of architecture and urban space, the concept of "events" has long been a focal point. Aldo Rossi posits that the city is a theater for human events, where specific spaces are generated by particular events occurring within them, filled with emotions and memories passed down through generations^[59]. Zhang Nan and Liu Naifang argue that diverse urban events are significant occurrences in urban space that impact urban life, characterized by uniqueness, diversity, continuity, and storytelling. People's experiences in space depend not only on the physical environment but also on the patterns of events experienced in that space^[60]. The term "event" in the Cambridge Dictionary has a broader meaning, referring to significant historical occurrences. In this research, events are defined as occurrences with sufficient significance that exert a special influence on urban space.

2.1.3 Narrative Element

Narrative elements are a collective term for various significant events, cultural characteristics, natural phenomena, and artificial construction elements that reflect the characteristics of the research subject and meet the requirements of narrative space. After organizing and comparing various classification methods, this research adopts the classification

method proposed by Professor Zhang Nan from Central South University in collaboration with the Cambridge Narrative Environment Research Centre, which categorizes narrative elements into four types: natural elements, artificial elements, cultural elements, and event elements^[61]. Here, narrative elements are classified into natural elements, artificial elements (such as buildings and street features), and event elements.

2.1.4 Historical and Cultural District

Ruan Yisan (1999) defines historical districts as "areas in the city that retain rich remnants and can realistically reflect the traditional style or ethnic local characteristics of a certain historical period, containing numerous cultural relics, modern historical sites, and historical buildings, and having a certain scale." This concept is similar to other terms such as "historical sites" and "historical cultural districts." The Washington Charter (1987), based on the Venice Charter, revised the definition of "historical sites" to refer to "town areas of historical significance, including ancient central areas or other regions that preserve historical styles. These areas are not only witnesses of history but also carry the values of traditional culture." In China, historical cultural districts refer to key protected historical areas recognized and announced by the people's governments of provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities, commonly referred to as "historical cultural districts." Although these concepts differ in origin and scope, this research adopts Ruan Yisan's definition, incorporating its broad and general connotation, and considers legally designated historical areas as part of the historical district category. Additionally, by integrating the spatial occurrences of historical events and folk culture, this research defines historical districts as a comprehensive spatial category encompassing historical heritage, cultural transmission, and social memory.

2.2 Research Basis of Spatial Narrative Theory

2.2.1 Connotations and Characteristics of Narrative and Spatial Narrative

1. The Connotation of Narrative

Narrative, or storytelling, involves the recounting of events and serves as a process through which individuals express and convey information. It is also foundational to the development of social history and culture. Spatial narrative refers to the use of material elements within a space as a narrative medium by the narrator, employing narrative techniques and strategies to present the historical information and social culture contained within that space. In this way, previously implicit and fragmented urban historical and cultural information can be presented in an intuitive and complete manner. Through people's cognitive and associative processes

regarding space, a deep connection between the recipient and the space is established, thereby achieving the narrative goal. The emergence of spatial narrative opens up new perspectives and methods for cultivating urban spirit and shaping a sense of place attachment and identity, providing a novel entry point for the research of urban morphology and space.

2. Spatial narrative features

(1) Plurality of Narrative Subjects

Different from other types of narratives, spatial narrative often involves narrators from multiple fields, such as sociologists, architects, and urban planners, and their participation often occurs spontaneously. In major urban planning projects, planning committees often bring together multiple subjects, which enables the pooling of ideas. However, it may also lead to situations where opinions need to be compromised or even result in a deadlock due to imbalanced viewpoints. Spatial narrative can also be jointly created by individuals, public groups, and government agencies at all levels. For example, in the planning of large commemorative parks. The creation and arrangement of spatial narrative take a long time, and the identities of narrators can be carried on for decades or even centuries. In the spatial narrative of historical areas, in addition to the conventional types of narrators, it also includes historical figures who have influenced the physical form or connotations of these areas. Although these historical figures did not directly participate in the narrative, they enrich the connotations of the areas.

(2) Characteristics of Synchronicity and Diachronicity

Synchronicity and diachronicity are linguistic analysis methods proposed by Ferdinand de Saussure. The former studies the relationships among elements within a system (with time at a standstill), while the latter studies the evolution of the system (with time in motion). After the introduction of narrative theory into urban space, it has established diachronic and synchronic connections between people and space. This characteristic is more prominent in the spatial narrative of historical areas. Historical areas are the products of long-term development and are the physical manifestation of history, culture, etc., possessing both synchronicity and diachronicity. Vertically, their formation and development run through the social process, showing diachronicity; horizontally, they are a process of interaction among elements, demonstrating synchronicity. When narrating, it is necessary to take into account both the relationships among internal elements and the evolution of the area itself.

(3) Autonomy of the Experiencing Subjects

Most narrative media assume that the audience experiences the narrative according to the storyteller's intentions. However, in spatial narrative, due to the diversity of activity routes and the complexity of spatial elements, it is difficult to maintain a chronological order. Under

specific circumstances, spatial narrative has a clear spatio-temporal sequence and narrates along linear elements such as paths. Nevertheless, the flexibility of route selection is an inherent property, making it difficult to strictly control the activity routes of the experiencers. Therefore, it is necessary to guide the experience with spatial, visual, and geographical clues. For example, using gates as starting and ending markers, and boundaries to maintain the visual and narrative order, and using landmarks and displays at important nodes to inform. By considering the flexibility of the experience path and repeating important narrative content, spatial information can be better conveyed and the connotations can be expressed.

2.2.2 The Composition and Process of Spatial Narrative

The core elements of spatial narrative include the narrator, the narrative medium, and the audience, where the narrative medium consists of the spatial material elements chosen by the narrator. These elements can encompass various forms, ranging from sensory experiences (such as oral storytelling and music) to three-dimensional representations (such as sculptures, architecture, theater, and 3D maps), gradually unfolding the dimensions of the narrative.

Different dimensional spatial media play distinct roles in the narrative, progressing from language and text to spatial perception, thereby showcasing a rich tapestry of historical and cultural connotations. However, these three elements do not exist in isolation. They are closely interconnected and work together. As Italo Calvino stated, space and events are inseparable. Their combination constitutes a complete narrative. It is essential to focus on the interplay between material elements (space), non-material elements (events), and individuals. (Figure 2-1).

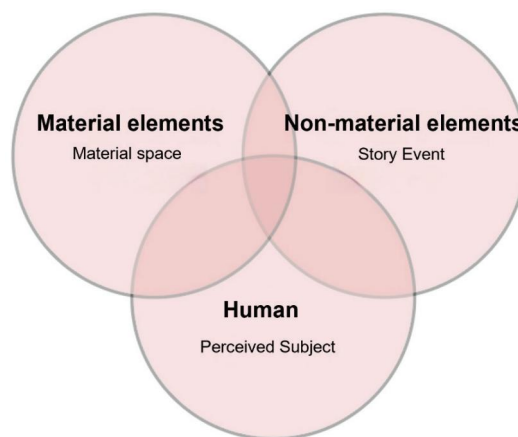


Figure 2-1 Factors of Narrative Concern (Source: Self-drawn)

The core elements of spatial narrative include the narrator, the narrative medium, and the audience, where the narrative medium consists of the spatial material elements chosen by the narrator. These elements can encompass various forms, ranging from sensory experiences (such

as oral storytelling and music) to three-dimensional representations (such as sculptures, architecture, theater, and 3D maps), gradually unfolding the dimensions of the narrative.

Different dimensional spatial media play distinct roles in the narrative, progressing from language and text to visual and spatial perception, thereby showcasing a rich tapestry of historical and cultural connotations. However, these three elements do not exist in isolation. They are closely interconnected and work together. As Italo Calvino stated, space and events are inseparable. Their combination constitutes a complete narrative. It is essential to focus on the interplay between material elements (space), non-material elements (events), and individuals. (Figure 2-2).

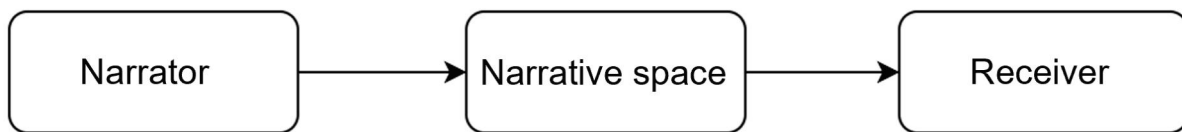


Figure 2-2 Three Elements of Spatial Narrative (Source: Self-drawn)

Within the theoretical framework of spatial narrative, the interaction among the narrative subject, the medium, and the audience constitutes a dual dynamic process. The first process involves the narrative subject encoding information for dissemination through the medium. The second process is the audience's interpretation, which is based on individual experience and involves decoding meaning. The mechanism for generating spatial meaning encompasses both the creative intentions of the narrative subject and the cognitive reconstruction by the audience (Figure 2-3).

This bidirectional interactive open system requires that research perspectives not only focus on the technical aspects of one-way information transmission but also emphasize the phenomenon of meaning proliferation that occurs during the audience's reception process.

To achieve the complete transmission of spatial information, the narrative subject must employ a dual-dimensional design strategy when organizing the medium. On the one hand, it involves optimizing the comprehensibility of spatial information through principles of cognitive psychology. On the other hand, it fully activates the potential of the medium to stimulate the sensory experiences of the audience. This design philosophy helps the audience break through the constraints of established narrative frameworks, allowing for creative interpretations that possess subjectivity, thereby establishing a deeper emotional connection between individuals and the spatial environment. Through this multidimensional narrative practice, spatial narrative can not only achieve flexible and multifaceted communication effects but also promote the audience's cognitive construction and value identification of space,

ultimately realizing the dynamic expansion of spatial connotations.

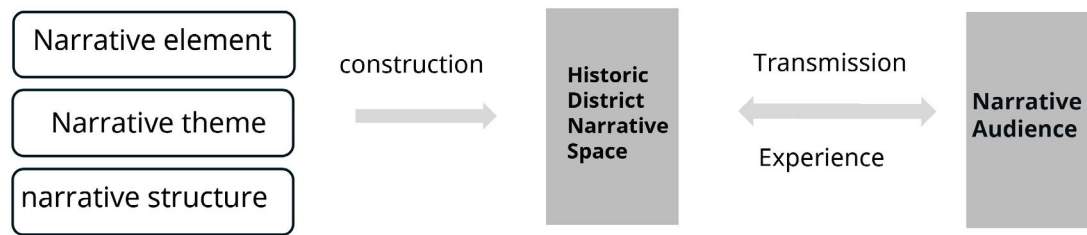


Figure 2-3 Spatial narrative processes (Source: Reference redrawing^[21])

2.3 Spatial Narrative and Historical Cultural Block Protection

2.3.1 Contrasts with Traditional Renewal Theories

The combination of spatial narrative theory and urban renewal theories has a profound impact on the development of traditional protection models and narrative-oriented models. The differences in theoretical support between these two models also reflect their different focuses in terms of goal orientation, methodological approaches, and social values.

(1) Organic Renewal Theory: Static Restoration vs. Dynamic Narrative

The traditional protection model adheres to the concept of "gradual and metabolic renewal" within the organic renewal theory, concentrating on the static restoration of physical forms. For instance, the organic renewal concept proposed by Professor Wu Liangyong is often manifested in the craft - based restoration of historical buildings to maintain their original appearance. Through archaeological research, verification of historical documents, and utilization of traditional materials, the authenticity of the physical forms of historical heritage is ensured. This model takes the integrity of the physical entity as its core objective, emphasizing the static preservation of historical spaces.

In contrast, the narrative - oriented model expands the "growth" concept in the organic renewal theory, transforming it into a dynamic narrative approach. It breaks away from single - dimensional material restoration and continuously updates the narrative content of historical spaces through carriers such as digital technology and cultural activities. In the renewal of historical blocks, for example, activities like themed exhibitions and immersive dramas are organized, enabling historical stories to be constantly reconstructed through dynamic interpretations. As a result, the space becomes a carrier for the continuous growth of cultural memories.

(2) Urban Image Theory: Heritage Preservation and Cultural Inheritance

When applying the urban image theory, the traditional protection model focuses on

enhancing the material recognizability of space. By preserving the physical forms of image elements such as paths, boundaries, and nodes proposed by Kevin Lynch—including restoring historical streets and maintaining landmark buildings—it constructs identifiable historical space symbols. The core goal is to achieve the material preservation of historical heritage, providing the public with intuitive historical cognitive symbols.

The narrative - oriented model, grounded in the urban image theory, elevates the objective to cultural inheritance. It not only pays attention to the preservation of material elements but also emphasizes the activation of the cultural connotations behind these elements through narrative. Taking historical buildings as narrative nodes, for example, multimedia guides are used to tell the historical stories they carry. This enables the inter - generational transmission of cultural memories as the public perceives spatial images, thereby promoting the inheritance and continuation of cultural connotations

(3) Place Theory: Single - dimensional Protection and Multiple Values

The application of place theory in the traditional protection model focuses on exploring the spiritual significance of physical spaces, aiming to realize the single - dimensional value of heritage protection. By safeguarding the spirit of place embedded in historical spaces and using them as material carriers of cultural memories, it meets the public's needs for admiring and researching historical sites and maintains the continuity of historical contexts.

The narrative - oriented model deeply integrates the place theory with public participation, creating multiple social values. It constructs an interactive system of "place - narrative - public," enabling the public to develop cultural identity and a sense of community belonging during their participation in spatial narratives. Meanwhile, through means such as cultural tourism development and the incubation of cultural and creative industries, the spirit of place is transformed into economic value, achieving the multi - dimensional unity of historical space protection, cultural inheritance, community development, and economic benefits.

2.3.2 Methods of Spatial Narrative in the Renewal of Historical Blocks

The physical remnants formed during the historical evolution of cities carry the social and cultural memories of specific periods. However, in the rapid process of urbanization, the physical carriers of historical and cultural blocks are facing varying degrees of decay or transformation, leading to the gradual dissolution of the humanistic value system they embody. This real - world dilemma urgently calls for the establishment of a theoretical framework that integrates material and intangible elements. With its unique advantages in the translation of cultural symbols and the reorganization of spatial structures, spatial narrative theory has

emerged as a crucial approach to addressing this challenge.

(1) Organizational Logic of Narrative Structure and Spatial Sequence

In the renewal of historical blocks, spatial narrative takes the "point - line - plane" as its fundamental framework, organically connecting scattered material elements such as historical buildings, street alleys, and functional areas. Through narrative techniques such as chronological narration and flashback, it constructs a historical development context and spatial hierarchy with temporal depth. In the diachronic dimension, by taking the time axis as a clue, it sorts out the evolution trajectory of the block. By preserving the architectural styles and functional remains of different periods, it forms a perceivable historical narrative chain. At the synchronic level, through the functional reorganization of spatial nodes and path optimization, it creates diverse scenarios for cultural display and life experiences, achieving the interactive connection of spatial elements. These two aspects are intertwined, transforming the historical block into a three - dimensional narrative network that bears memories.

(2) Translation Strategies of Rhetorical Devices and Spatial Editing

Spatial narrative theory is dedicated to excavating the cultural connotations embedded in space. Through the narrative arrangement of the physical space, it uses the visualized "spatial language" to tell the stories of places, realizing the visual expression of cultural values. Such narrative design can not only awaken the collective memories of people towards historical blocks but also stimulate the public's deep - seated identification with regional culture. In the practice of historical block renewal, spatial narrative mainly realizes the transmission of cultural values through two main paths. First, by optimizing the spatial structure and strengthening the characteristics of landmarks, it constructs a clear spatial cognitive system, enhancing the sense of orientation in historical blocks. Second, by means of cultural symbol translation and the activation of public spaces, it reshapes cultural scenes that evoke a sense of belonging, strengthening the public's identification with the block(Figure 2-4).

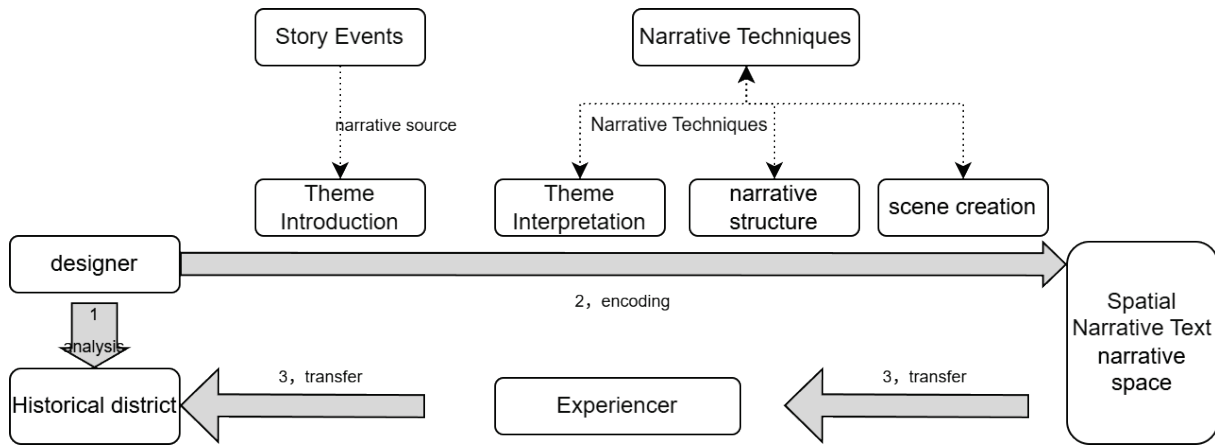


Figure 2-4 Narrative Theory in Historic Districts Updating Methods Source: (Self-drawn)

2.3.3 The Applicability of Spatial Narrative in Historical Spaces

The material remnants formed during the evolution of urban history carry specific social and cultural memories of particular periods. However, in the rapid process of urbanization, the physical carriers of historical districts face varying degrees of decay, loss, or transformation, leading to the gradual dissolution of their inherent cultural value systems. This pressing reality necessitates the establishment of a theoretical framework that integrates both material and non-material elements. Spatial narrative theory, with its unique advantages in cultural symbol translation and spatial structure reorganization, emerges as an important pathway to address this challenge.

The narrative theory system encompasses three core dimensions: narrative elements, narrative techniques, and narrative frameworks. Narrative elements include the basic units that constitute narrative texts (such as vocabulary, paragraphs, and grammatical rules), while narrative structure involves the logical organization of plot arrangement, character relationships, and temporal sequences. Correspondingly, the material spatial structure focuses on the planning and configuration of physical spatial elements, including architectural layouts, road networks, and landscape nodes. Both share a significant commonality at the organizational logic level: they center on the connection of elements to achieve effective information transmission through the establishment of systematic associative mechanisms. Specifically, narratives form semantic chains through combinations of words, constructing complete storylines and material spaces, on the other hand, create spatial sequences through the integration of elements, shaping recognizable place characteristics.

The intrinsic relevance of spatial narrative to the preservation of historical districts manifests on three levels: First, as carriers of cultural symbols, the spatial distribution patterns of material remnants exhibit isomorphism with the semantic generation mechanisms of

narrative texts. Second, the spatial sequence organization of historical districts can be likened to the grammatical rules of narrative texts, forming logically clear spatial narrative structures through techniques such as axis guidance and node reinforcement. Finally, the living heritage of cultural assets requires the establishment of a mechanism for interpreting spatial texts, utilizing narrative methods to analyze the mapping relationship between material forms and value connotations. The feasibility of this theoretical transplantation has been validated in practice (Figure 2-5). By viewing historical districts as readable spatial texts, it becomes possible to systematically reveal the cultural logic behind their material representations, providing theoretical support for the holistic protection and narrative renewal of historical districts.

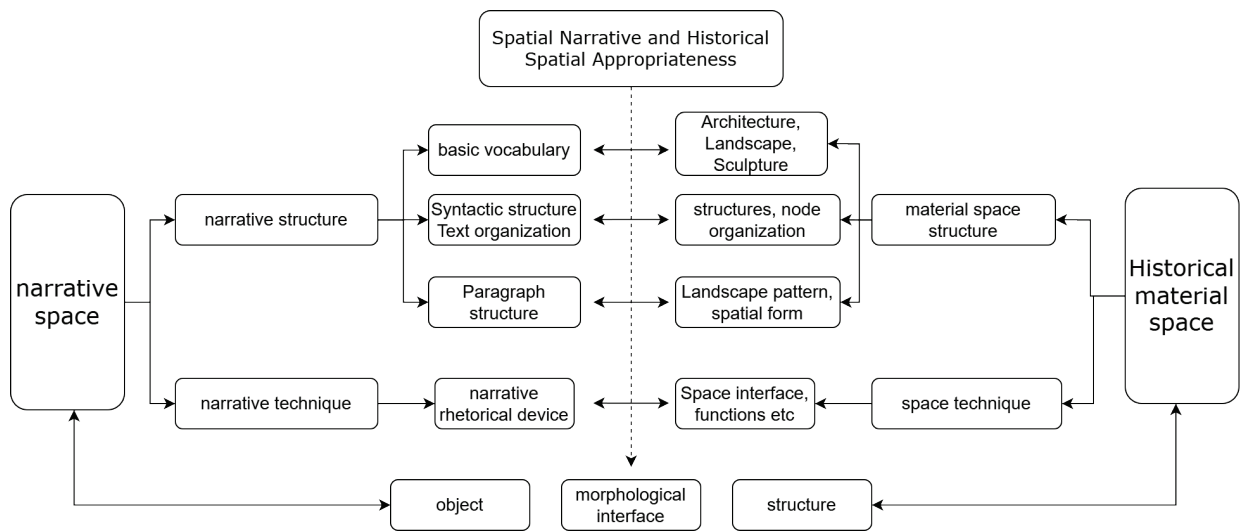


Figure 2-5 Compatibility of Narrative and Historical Space (Source: Self-drawn)

2.4 Case Study of Historical District Narratives

2.4.1 Foreign Case Studies

(1) Boston Freedom Trail

Located in the heart of Boston, USA, the 4-kilometer-long trail is an urban heritage trail that documents the history of the American Revolution. Sixteen culturally relevant heritage sites are linked by a continuous red brick road. These heritage sites are carefully organized to showcase important historical figures and events that are closely related to the history of the founding of the United States as an independent nation, creating a heritage trail with a unified plot and spatial diversity. In addition, by incorporating elements of education and tourism, the Freedom Trail has brought significant economic and social benefits to Boston^[62](Figure 2-6).



Figure 2-6 Boston Freedom Trail (Source: Reference^[61])

1. Clarifying the Narrative Theme: the Boston Freedom Trail stands out primarily because it has a clearly defined narrative theme, creating a cohesive narrative story. By focusing on the history of the American Revolutionary War, it uncovers significant events, notable figures, and revolutionary moments that have considerable audience appeal and recognition. These historical fragments are anchored in spatial carriers, linking historical stories with heritage clusters to organize and arrange a narrative path that showcases "independence" and "freedom" (Figure 2-6).

2. constructing the narrative path, classic historical segments that are most familiar to the public were selected to reinforce memory. These segments include the site of the Boston Massacre on the eve of the Revolutionary War, the Boston Tea Party planned at the Old South Meeting House, the Bunker Hill Monument marking the outbreak of the Boston Siege, and the reading of the Declaration of Independence at the Old State House. The events are arranged chronologically to build the narrative path, culminating at the site of the Bunker Hill Battle in 1775, which carries strong symbolic significance. The 221-foot-tall granite obelisk, with its massive scale contrasting sharply with the surrounding landscape, serves as a spiritual bastion and becomes a focal point in the spatial design (Figure 2-7).



Figure 2-7 Actual view of the Boston Freedom Trail (Source: Reference^[62])

3. In the early 20th century, with the socialization and professionalization of the heritage preservation movement, heritage protection in the United States expanded beyond merely safeguarding "monuments" or emphasizing the authenticity of the internal arrangements of protected objects, and began to focus more on the aesthetic value of heritage and its harmony with the surrounding environment, as exemplified by notable sites such as the domed Massachusetts State House, the historic Faneuil Hall, and the food-renowned Quincy Market. Consequently, the narrative space of the entire path encompasses not only the heritage itself but also the closely related external spaces, creating a narrative environment that reflects the developmental context of America through the guidance of landscape storytelling. (Figure 2-8).



Figure 2-8 Heritage Narrative Nodes and External Narrative Space (Source: Reference^[61])

In the guiding design of the path space, the techniques of direct representation and suggestive association are adopted. For example, through the application of guide signs, war-related symbols (Figure 2-9) are extracted and repeatedly used in different landscape elements so that visitors can visually form a unified perception of the display path. The choice of paving materials is based on the use of red bricks and metal graphic symbols that fit in with the surrounding environment, thus paving a historical path. The path not only guides the visitor but also suggests that it is a path of historical value in an uninterrupted, obvious, yet subtle way.



Figure 2-9 Spatially guided narrative threads (Source: Reference^[62])

At the same time, the narrative path incorporates event activities, enhancing the narrative quality of the heritage through interactive forms such as role-playing. At many sites, interpreters dressed in 18th-century costumes portray historical figures and recount historical events from the perspective of those who experienced them (Figure 2-10). This form of interaction enhances the sense of historical immersion and enables visitors to experience the historical context in greater depth.



Figure 2-10 Boston Freedom Trail Space activities (Source: Reference^[62])

(2) the Canals of Venice

The spatial narrative practice in Venice integrates various strategies to construct a logically coherent and richly nuanced narrative system, showcasing the city's unique culture and historical context. The spatial narrative revolves around core themes such as maritime culture, commercial traditions, and artistic ambiance, with the organization of temporal and spatial relationships serving as an essential foundation. The Grand Canal, as the lifeline of the city, not only embodies the development of Venice but also organically connects various historical neighborhoods and key landmarks through its network of waterways. By exploring the intrinsic connections between space and historical events, Venice weaves historical narratives and cultural threads into its spatial storytelling, providing visitors with a means to perceive time and space^[64].

1. Venice uses the Grand Canal as a narrative theme to construct a narrative path through

the Grand Canal, which the path is constructed by connecting multiple narrative elements, including St. Mark's Square (marking the development of Venice as a maritime and trading power), the Church of Our Lady of the Lilies (the history of the Barbaro family), the Rialto Bridge (the story of the Venetian merchants that took place here), the Church of St. Jeremiah, the Barefoot Bridge (a modern feature controversy), and so on (Figure 2-11).

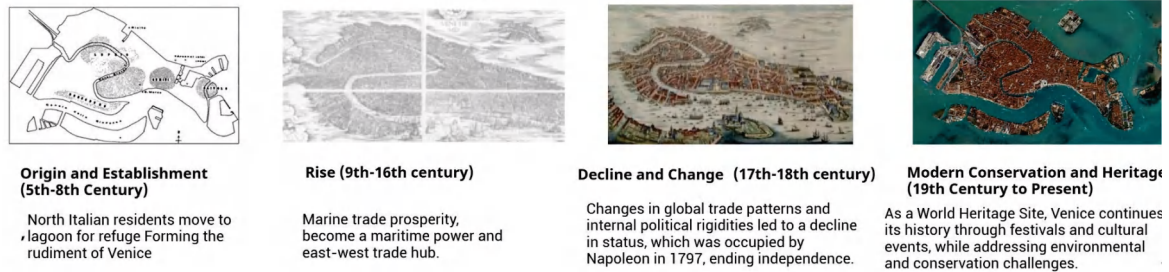


Figure 2-11 Narrative development lineage of the Grand Canal in Venice (Source: Self-drawn)

2. constructing a narrative framework, Venice employs a clear hierarchical, and logically coherent layout strategy that highlights the overall characteristics of the city while showcasing the unique features of different areas. Overall, Venice constructs a central narrative path that runs through the city, with the Grand Canal as its main axis (Figure 2-12). The Grand Canal not only connects the city's major historical landmarks but also organically integrates various cultural and historical sites through its intricate network of waterways.

In terms of local spatial design, Venice reflects the layered narrative themes through the distribution of palaces, squares, and neighborhoods. For instance, St. Mark's Square, as a core node, serves as the narrative center with its grand architecture and rich cultural symbolism. Meanwhile, the surrounding neighborhoods and waterways offer a more intimate and nuanced spatial experience, revealing another facet of the city's daily life.

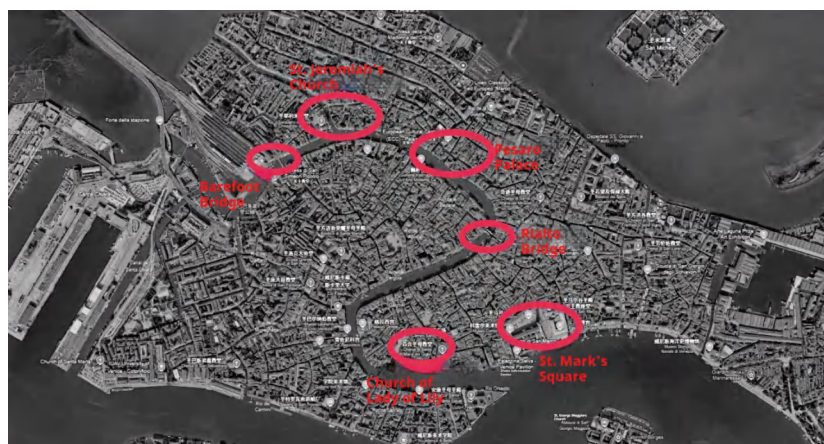


Figure 2-12 Venice Narrative Structure (Source: Self-drawn)

3. creating narrative space: Cultural themes are further externalized through festive events

and art exhibitions. For instance, events like the Water Festival and the Biennale dynamically present the city's narrative content, transforming static architecture and spatial settings into vibrant narrative experiences. This strategy not only deepens the cultural connotation of spatial narratives but also attracts greater global attention, creating a dual interaction between space and culture (Figure 2-13).



Figure 2-13 Venice Festivals and Events (Source: Reference^[64])

Narrative spaces make full use of techniques such as light and shadow, spatial scale, and environmental expression. For instance, St. Mark's Square, as the core of Venice, integrates commercial, religious, and public activities, and historical symbolism, earning the title of "the stage of the city." Additionally, the square serves as a venue for public events, hosting municipal celebrations, bullfights, horse races, and even executions, reflecting its role in social governance. Two columns transported from Constantinople stand in the square, endowing it with historical significance.

Today, the square continues to function as an important cultural landmark in Venice, showcasing a unique charm that blends history and modernity, offering visitors a broad perspective and cultural immersion (Figure 2-14). These techniques collectively create Venice's distinctive narrative appeal, providing innovative ways to protect and transmit the city's culture.

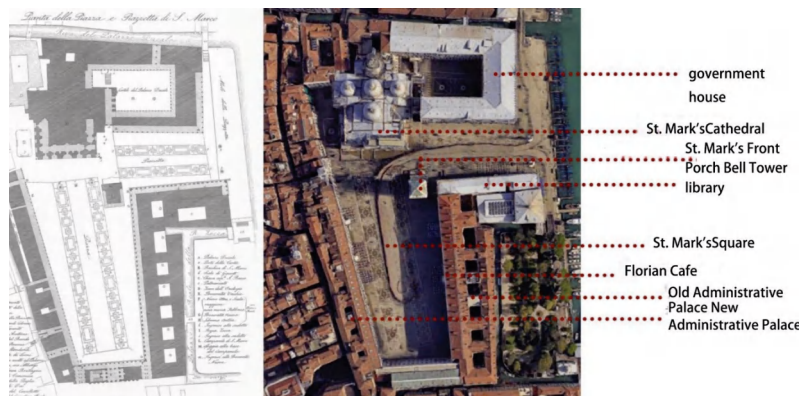


Figure 2-14 Narrative Space Creation in St. Mark's Square (Source: Self-drawn)

2.4.2 Domestic Case Studies

(1) Southern Song Imperial Street

The Southern Song Imperial Street is located on Zhongshan Road in Hangzhou, stretching

approximately 1500 meters. As the central axis of the Southern Song capital, Lin'an, it once served as a center for commerce and cultural entertainment. The street is often described as "flowing water around ancient streets, small bridges connecting old shops, and clear pools surrounding old residences." Over the years, the area has experienced significant historical changes, resulting in a landscape that is both damaged and mixed with architectural styles from different periods.

In 2007, the Hangzhou municipal government undertook a renovation project. The Imperial Street was historically the route taken by Southern Song emperors to pay homage to their ancestors at the Jingling Palace. After nearly nine centuries of change, the Southern Song Imperial Street still retains its unique charm and character, serving as a bridge connecting the past and the present. The renovation project employs narrative montage techniques to facilitate a dialogue between history and modernity.

1. Narrative Theme: The project aims to preserve the texture of the Song Dynasty Imperial Street (12 meters wide) and the remnants of Republican-era architecture, constructing a temporal montage of the "Southern Song Axis - Ming and Qing Market Scene - Republican Style." As the central axis of the Southern Song capital, the Southern Song Imperial Street embodies themes of royal worship and commercial activity. Its composite spatial form of "Royal Power Axis + Market Context" (Figure 2-15) makes it an important case study for researching the development of ancient Chinese capitals.

The street flourished continuously from the Song Dynasty to the Republican era, with a "front shop and back workshop" layout emerging during the Yuan and Ming dynasties. The Republican period saw the introduction of a mix of Chinese and Western architectural styles, showcasing the layered characteristics of time that span over a millennium.

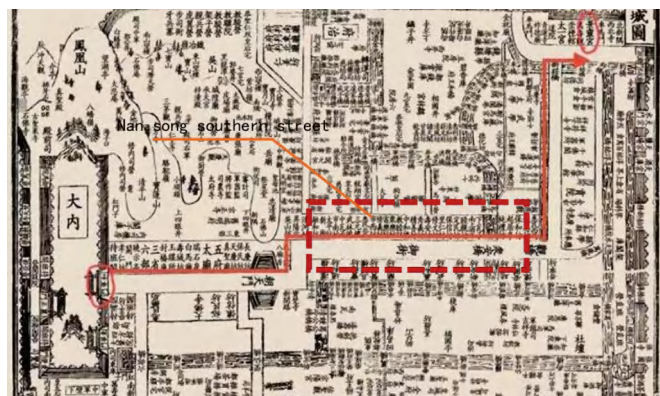


Figure 2-15 Spatial Narrative Themes of the Southern Song Imperial Street (Source: Reference^[65])

2. constructing narrative structure: Through the technique of "deconstruction and reconstruction," the Southern Song Imperial Street juxtaposes the texture of the Song Dynasty

Street, the market layout of the Ming and Qing dynasties, and the remnants of Republican-era architecture. This street is built on a main axis running north to south, continuously intersected by east-west street spaces, resulting in a rich spatial sequence. This structure resembles the montage technique used in film, where shifts and combinations of shots create different scenes and psychological experiences.

Small buildings, sculptures, and other structures are strategically inserted along the street, skillfully integrating the street with square nodes. These nodes not only enrich spatial variation but also provide visitors with diverse experiences and psychological perceptions. As one moves along the street, they encounter a dynamic range of spatial experiences, transitioning from enclosed to open spaces and from tranquility to bustle.

This dynamic narrative structure allows visitors to continuously experience new scenes and emotional impacts while walking. Techniques such as the narrowing and widening of space, along with the alternation between hard and soft surfaces, further enhance the sense of spatial layering and rhythm (Figure 2-16).

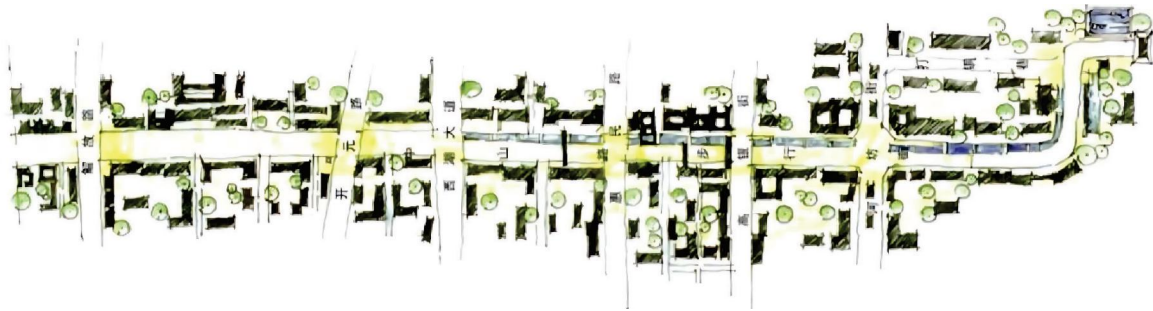


Figure 2-16 Spatial Narrative Structure of the Southern Song Imperial Street(Source: Reference^[66])

3. the creation of narrative space: The Southern Song Imperial Street employs a juxtaposition of hard and soft surfaces, progressing linearly along the street. A continuous water feature has been excavated within the originally dry street, creating a "land-river grid" texture for the area. The updated planning focuses on the narrative subjects: residents and visitors. It combines the presentation of the Imperial Street ruins with historical life scenes and small landscape features, aiming to achieve restoration and perception of historical memory within a modern context. This design not only enriches spatial layering but also provides visitors with diverse visual and psychological experiences. The insertion of new buildings and the updating of functions have made the Southern Song Imperial Street's uses more flexible. For instance, European-style structures such as churches and banks have been restored and adapted to incorporate modern functions, such as worship and prayer activities. This approach preserves the historical essence of the buildings while meeting contemporary usage needs. (Figure 2-17).



Figure 2-17 Narrative Space Creation in the Southern Song Imperial Street(Source: Reference^[67])

Scene Recreation: During the Southern Song Dynasty, the emperor held a three-day Heaven Sacrifice ceremony every three years. Although the Imperial Street was constructed for the emperor's processions, a significant portion of the citizens of Lin'an lived nearby, resulting in tens of thousands of shops lining both sides of the street. After the Southern Song period, this area continued to serve as an important commercial center in Hangzhou and the central axis of the old city.

Each year, during the sacrificial ceremonies, the Song emperor would typically ride in a ceremonial jade carriage, preceded by two elephants clearing the way. Following closely were elegantly dressed officials and guards, accompanied by a procession of singers and dancers that extended over ten meters. Outside the imperial path, there were roads for the common people and drainage ditches, beyond which stood a bustling array of shops, all contributing to the unique cultural charm of the area. The Southern Song Imperial Street recreates the historical scenes of the emperor's processions through organized activities along the street (Figure 2-18).



Figure 2-18 restore the emperor's imperial activities(Source: Reference^[68])

(2) The Great Tang Nocturnal City

The Great Tang Eternal City, located in Xi'an, is a vibrant urban public space that integrates culture, tourism, and commerce. Its design draws upon the narrative backdrop of the Tang Dynasty's golden age, vividly showcasing the splendor and charm of Tang culture through the fusion of spatial layout, thematic scenes, cultural activities, and modern technology. As a classic example of urban narrative space, the Great Tang Eternal City successfully combines cultural memory with contemporary experience, becoming a model of heritage and innovation^[70].

1. Narrative theme: Through the extraction and analysis of the historical context of Tang Chang'an, the narrative theme of the Great Tang Eternal City primarily revolves around "Tang Culture." This thematic choice not only reflects respect for and continuity of traditional culture but also aligns with the modern city's pursuit of cultural diversity. The design of the entire commercial street, from architecture and landscape to interiors, is imbued with elements and symbols of Tang culture, allowing visitors to feel as if they were transported back to the prosperous Tang Dynasty a thousand years ago (Figure 2-19).

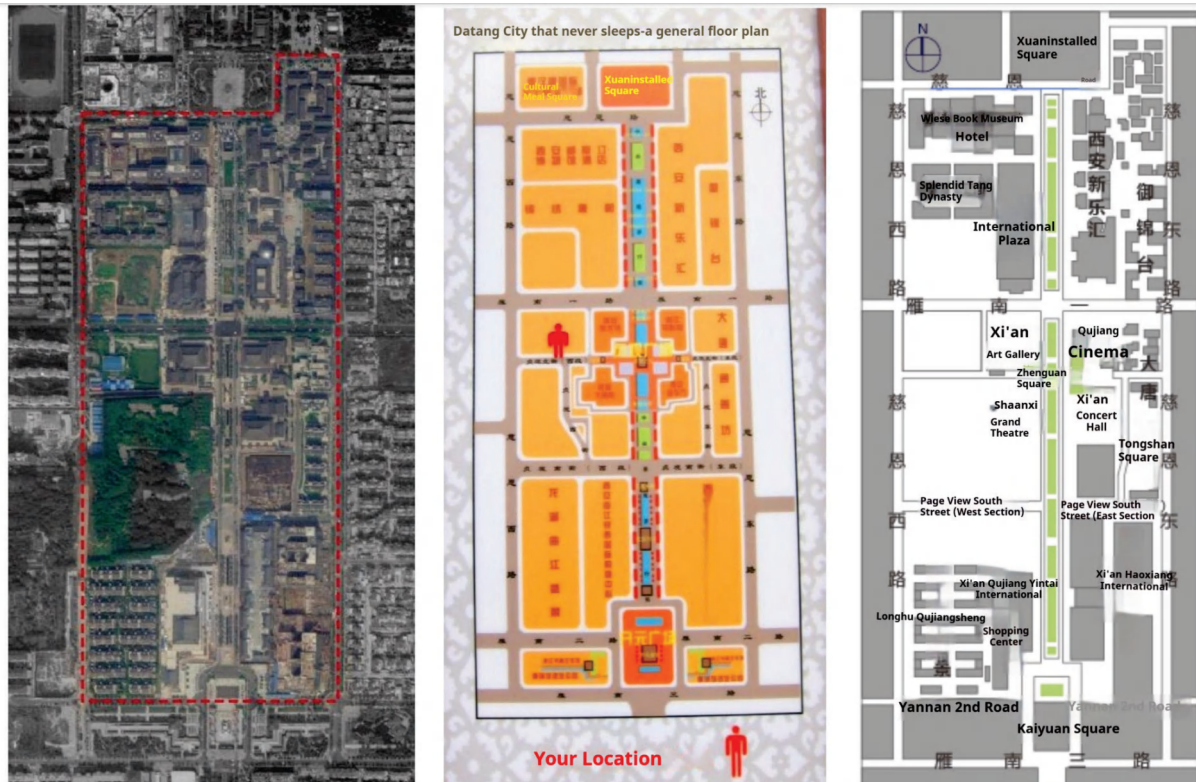


Figure 2-19 Narrative Themes of the Great Tang Dynasty(Source: Reference^[71])

2. the narrative structure of the Great Tang Eternal City combines linear storytelling with multiple narrative threads. The commercial street is designed with a linear layout, starting from Xuanzang Square and ending at Leading the New Era Square, connected by a main axis that runs through the entire area. This linear arrangement allows visitors to follow a predetermined route, gradually experiencing the changes in space and the creation of a cultural atmosphere. Within the commercial street, various thematic squares, cultural and historical venues, and groups of sculptures serve as nodes that form multiple narrative threads. Each of these nodes has its own unique function, collectively creating a complete narrative system (Figure 2-20). For instance, the Zhenguan Group Sculpture in Zhenguan Square, cultural performances in Kaiyuan Celebration Square, etc., multiple squares form an open - contract - open narrative structural pattern. ^[71]

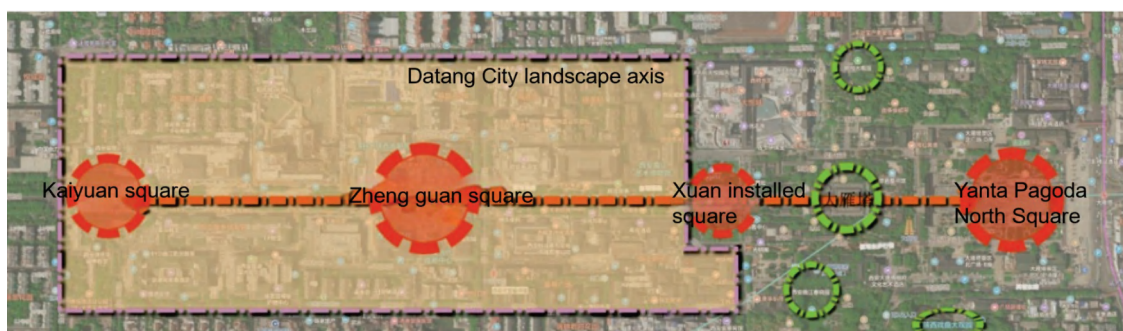


Figure 2-20 Narrative structure of the Great Tang Dynasty(Source: Reference^[70])

3. Narrative Scene: within the Great Tang Eternal City, including Xuanzang Square, Zhen Guan Square, and Kai Yuan Celebration Square, serve as the core gathering and activity areas for visitors, functioning as key points in the spatial narrative. Each square utilizes distinctive sculptures, landscapes, and cultural activities to vividly showcase the cultural characteristics and historical events from different periods of the Tang Dynasty. Additionally, the commercial street features cultural venues such as the Xi'an Art Museum and Xi'an Concert Hall, which host a variety of cultural exhibitions and performances, further enhancing the cultural depth and narrative richness of the area (Figure 2-21).

The district also cleverly incorporates five groups of sculptures that depict historical figures and events from the Tang Dynasty, artistically recreating historical scenes that harmoniously blend with the surrounding environment, creating a unique visual landscape. Moreover, the Great Tang Eternal City has thoughtfully designed functional areas such as water features, performance spaces, and entertainment zones. These spaces not only cater to visitors' leisure and entertainment needs but also complement the overall narrative theme in their design and layout, significantly enhancing the spatial storytelling appeal of the commercial street. This allows visitors to enjoy their leisure time while deeply experiencing the unique charm of Tang culture.



Figure 2-21 Narrative Scene of the Great Tang Dynasty(Source: Reference^[72])

Summary: Through the analysis and critique of domestic and foreign historical 地段 (historical area) narrative cases, traditional protection of historical blocks focuses on architectural restoration, emphasizing authenticity but neglecting the interaction between history and modern life and spatial narrative functions.

The narrative-oriented protection mode, guided by "spatial narrative" theory, views historical blocks as dynamic spaces for cultural memory. By digging into historical connotations, it creates a clear-themed and logical narrative path, using diverse spatial techniques to enable a dialogue between history and modernity. This mode values physical space protection and activates historical culture through spatial narrative, enhancing public emotional identification and cultural experience.

Common methodologies: Extract unique historical and cultural genes, refine identifiable themes (e.g., "independence", "marine civilization", "prosperity of the Tang Dynasty"), establish a unified narrative logic. Create narrative climaxes with core nodes (e.g., monuments, squares), enrich details with secondary nodes (alleys, shops), forming a spatial hierarchy. Use interactive experiences (role-playing, performances), functional integration (culture + commerce + residence) and dynamic events (festivals, exhibitions) to shift historical space from static display to dynamic narrative.

2.5 Narrative Space Research Pathway

Based on case analyses, a structured spatial narrative research path is established: First, integrate on-site surveys with an event-oriented methodology to conduct preliminary narrative analysis of historical districts. This involves systematically organizing key historical events (e.g., cultural practices, social transformations, architectural evolutions) linked to the district, then exploring their associated spatial contexts (urban fabrics, landmark sites, public spaces) and carriers (artifacts, oral histories, traditions). Through criteria like representativeness and historical significance, a curated set of events is selected to build an "event-space" archive, accompanied by clear display principles (authenticity, continuity) and objectives (cultural interpretation, community engagement) to lay narrative foundations.

Next, using spatial narrative logic, analyze narrative elements (physical forms, cultural symbols, experiential qualities), distill thematic cores (e.g., urban memory, cultural evolution), construct multi-layered frameworks (macro-district, meso-block, micro-node), and design narrative spaces that activate historical layers. Historical districts are interconnected via singular or plural themes, forming display structures that emphasize temporal continuity (historical progression) and spatial succession (thematic pathways), thus creating coherent

thematic routes.^[23] (Figure 2-22).

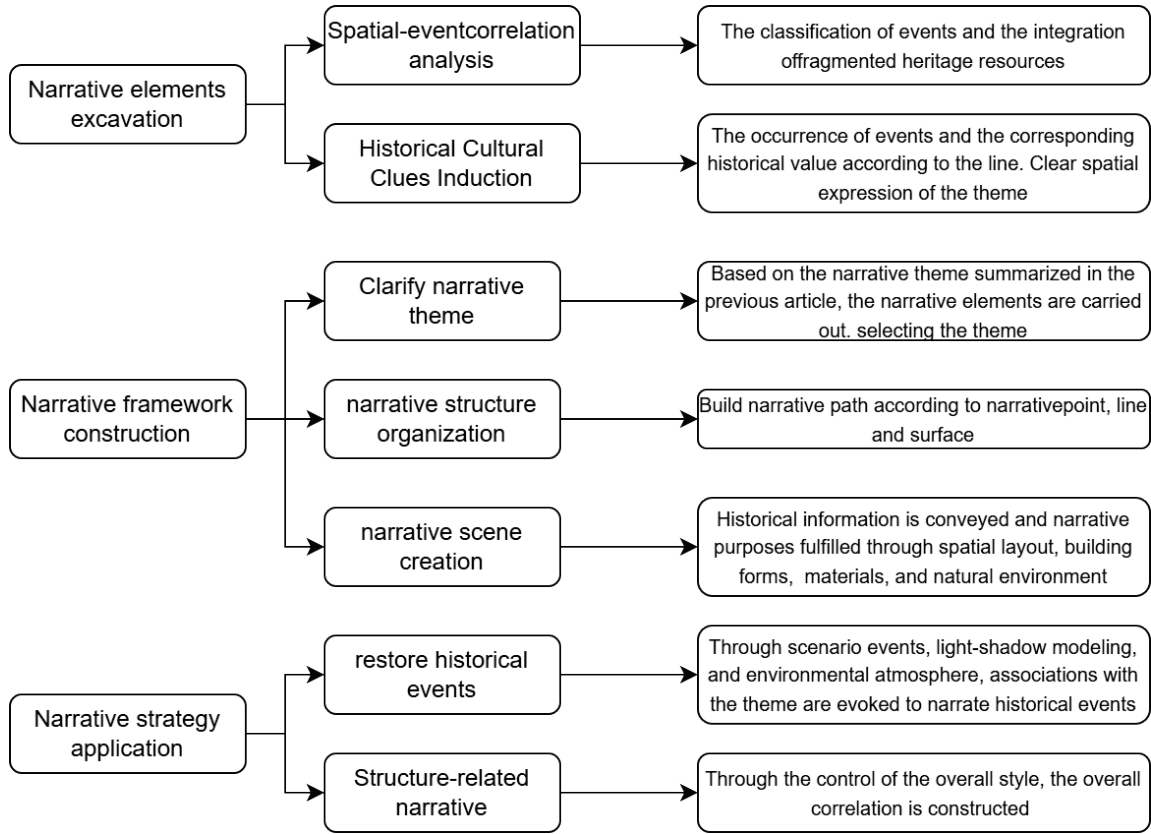


Figure 2-22 Spatial Narrative Research Methodology (Source: Reference^[23])

2.5.1 Narrative Space Analysis

The urban narrative space, as a concrete embodiment of historical context, is a composite system formed by the interplay of urban stories and material spaces. It exhibits multidimensional characteristics, encompassing tangible elements with significant narrative functions—such as buildings, squares, and water systems—as well as spatial structures like street textures and built areas, extending to natural landscapes and distinctive constructions. Based on this understanding, this research focuses on the narrative space of the Changhua Street historical district, employing an event-oriented approach to systematically excavate and select narrative events that possess historical authenticity, cultural relevance, and spatial mapping.

In the event selection process, the principle of "prioritizing significant events and retaining the essence" is upheld, employing a dual verification mechanism of archival research and field investigation. Key symbolic events that reflect critical junctures in urban development and core aspects of collective memory are extracted, ensuring the typicality and completeness of historical narratives across temporal and spatial dimensions^[24].

On this basis, a coupled "event-space" analysis model is constructed (Figure 2-23). By deconstructing event elements from historical documents and visual materials, spatial layout

characteristics, architectural evolution, and environmental changes are systematically organized into a multidimensional spatial narrative database. This database supports narrative presentations and reconstructs urban imagery and design methodologies, creating a design logic that integrates "narrative space element organization—narrative theme determination—narrative structure construction."

Specifically, historical events serve as clues for spatial organization, employing techniques such as place sequence reconstruction, spatial interface restoration, and narrative path design. This approach facilitates the protective renewal of historical material spaces and the spatial reproduction of cultural narratives, ultimately constructing a narrative space system characterized by temporal continuity and immersive experiences^[21].

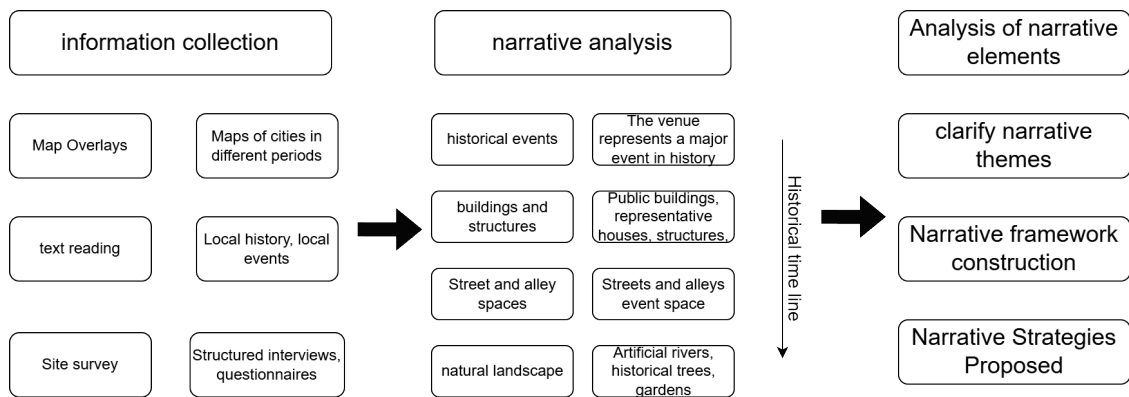


Figure 2-23 Narrative Space Analysis Diagram (Source: Self-drawn)

2.5.2 Narrative Theme Summarization

The purpose of a spatial narrative is to construct an overall narrative guided by clear themes, effectively interpreting the intangible cultural connotations of historical districts and creating display spaces that embody a rich cultural atmosphere. Therefore, the entire process should first clarify the narrative themes.

The construction of narrative themes is a process of layered interpretation of the historical and cultural information of historical districts. By sorting through events, historical events recorded in historical documents that are related to the historical district are used as narrative materials. Based on the analysis of the relationships between various scattered historical events (parallel events, inherited events), corresponding narrative themes are extracted, and the selected historical districts are categorized under single or multiple themes. Here, the overall narrative themes and regional divisions of the district are determined based on major historical events, structured interviews, and the preservation status of historical architectural heritage.

2.5.3 Narrative Structure Construction

While arranging the narrative elements, it is also necessary to consider the path relationships between various nodes to form a clear narrative structure and coherent narrative logic. The spatial arrangement needs to follow specific logical clues, such as temporal logic and causal logic.

Through logically organized district stories, the narrative's guiding nature is strengthened, creating a sense of rhythm that deepens people's impressions of the narrative content, thereby forming a sense of identity with the place^[21].

The narrative structure of historical districts typically adopts chronological narration, arranging events according to the order in which they occurred. This narrative method strictly requires the chronological order of events, allowing visitors to intuitively perceive the evolution of historical events through the chronological logic of the display space.

Specifically, chronological narration can be divided into four forms: linear, reverse, interpolated, and parallel narration, to meet the display needs of different historical contexts and situations. In historical districts, chronological narration serves as the primary method of the overall narrative. This method can more effectively interpret the connotations of the display themes, strengthening visitors' understanding and perception of abstract historical stories, thereby enhancing the interpretability and readability of the display.

2.5.4 Narrative Space Creation

Narrative strategies transform events into spatial language to create clear and orderly node spaces. The specific expressive techniques are divided into two categories: abstract and concrete, which can be used individually or in combination to enhance the expressive layers of space.

Abstract methods include metaphors, symbols, contrasts, repetitions, exaggerations, and naming, focusing on constructing narrative logic through a hierarchical structure of "words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs, and sections," emphasizing the narrative rhythm of "introduction, development, turn, and conclusion," and imbuing the space with implicit cultural meanings. Concrete methods focus on scene recreation and historical restoration, directly presenting events or historical plots, suitable for highlighting thematic spatial designs and enhancing the intuitiveness and emotional impact of spatial narratives.

The core of spatial narrative design lies in the integration of narrative content and spatial forms. It guides spatial layout through narrative logic, creating a one-to-one correspondence between space and story, while combining historical space with the functional needs of the area

to realize the revitalization of historical space.

2.6 Summary

This chapter lays the theoretical foundation for subsequent research by clarifying the concept of spatial narrative. First, in the conceptual definition section, the core concepts of narrative space, events, narrative elements, and historical districts are clarified, elucidating their roles and interrelationships in spatial narrative. Narrative space is not only a carrier of history, culture, and emotions but also a spatiotemporal composite that stimulates audience emotions and associations through spatial forms and experiences.

Events, as important components of spatial narrative, endow space with deeper cultural connotations through the combination of specific historical events and space. The classification of narrative elements further clarifies the importance of three types of elements—natural, artificial, and events—in spatial narrative.

Secondly, in the theoretical foundation section, research indicates that spatial narrative theory can effectively integrate tangible and intangible cultural heritage, providing a new paradigm for the holistic protection of historical districts. Finally, through the analysis of domestic and international cases, the specific manifestations of spatial narrative in practical applications are demonstrated.

From narrative space analysis, the determination of narrative themes, and the construction of narrative paths to the creation of narrative spaces, the comparison of different cases provides vivid examples of the theoretical application of spatial narrative. It proves that the combination of history, events, and space can effectively convey cultural values and enhance the emotional identification of the audience.

Chapter 3 Background and Current Situation of Changhua Street

3.1 Overview of Changhua Historical District

3.1.1 Geographic Location

The Changhua Street historical and cultural district is situated in the Liwan District of Guangzhou, residing on the western side of the city's historical urban area. This district serves as a quintessential example of a residential historical and cultural enclave within the Xiguan area, known for its rich heritage and vibrant community life. To the north, it adjoins the Liwan Lake - Fengyuan Street historical and cultural district, while to the southeast, it connects with the Enning Road historical and cultural district. Notably, its proximity to significant attractions such as Liwan Lake Park and Yongqing Block—both located within a one-kilometer radius—enhances its appeal as a cultural and recreational hub.

The district benefits from its strategic location near educational institutions, including Xiguan Peiying Middle School and Xiguan Peizheng Primary School, as well as the Third Affiliated Hospital of Guangzhou Medical University. These establishments not only contribute to the community's educational and health services but also foster a lively atmosphere that attracts families and students. Furthermore, the presence of retail businesses along Enning Road, Longjin West Road, and Duobao Road ensures that residents have access to relatively complete living facilities, encompassing shopping, dining, and essential services. This combination of amenities results in overall favorable locational conditions, making Changhua Street an attractive area for both residents and visitors.

Guangzhou's Xiguan Historical District Development Plan (2019–2025) outlines a strategic framework to revitalize the Xiguan historical urban core, prioritizing the adaptive reuse of heritage districts and buildings while establishing seven distinct functional zones as focal points of renewal. Central to this initiative is the integration of cultural preservation with contemporary urban functions, aiming to activate historical spaces through thematic clustering and community-oriented development.

The Changhua Street historical and cultural district occupies a pivotal position within this plan, situated at the juncture of two key designated areas: the Lychee Bay Xiguan Folk Culture Area—which seeks to preserve and showcase traditional Cantonese folk customs (Figure 3-1, Figure 3-2).

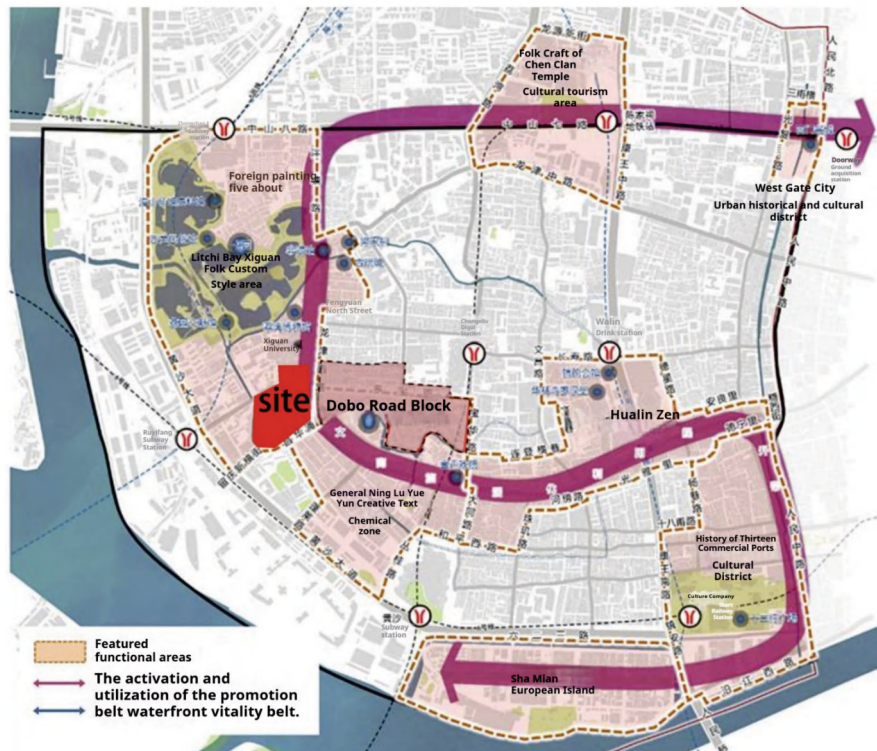


Figure 3-1 Location map of Changhua historical district(Source: Self-drawn)

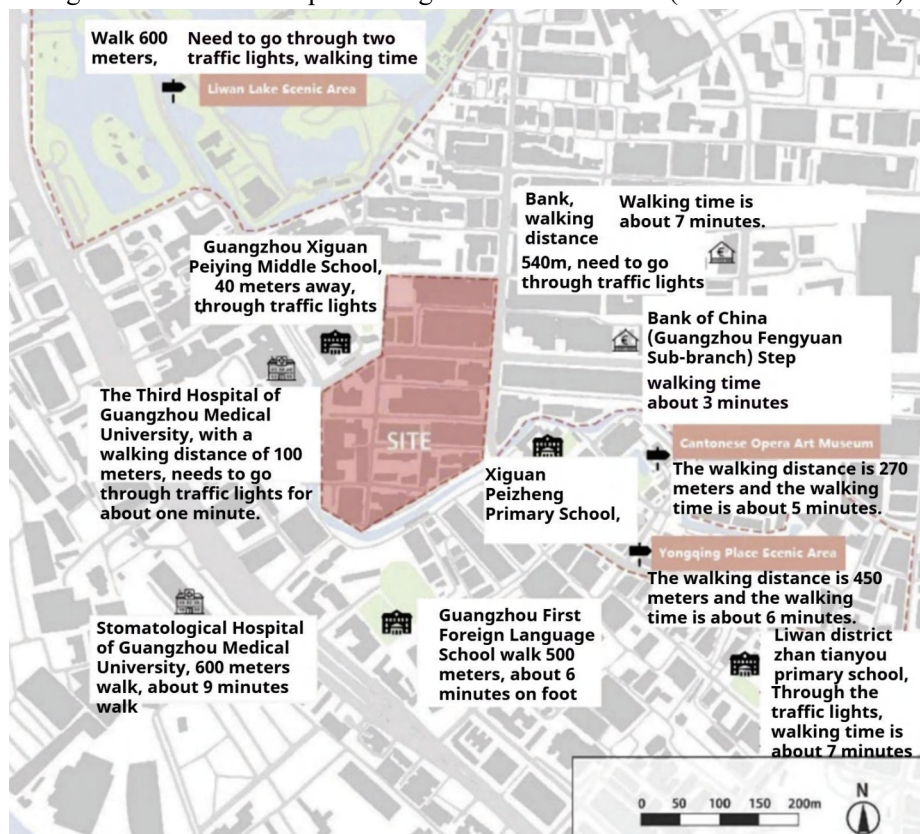


Figure 3-2 Geographical position of Changhua Historical District (Source: Self-drawn)

3.1.2 Historical Evolution

The Changhua Street historical and cultural district has undergone a transformation from rural countryside to retreat palaces and private gardens and finally to modern residential communities, witnessing the historical process of urbanization in the western suburbs of Guangzhou during the late Qing Dynasty (Figure 3-3).

During the Southern Han Dynasty, the Liu Clan built a separate palace and imperial gardens in Lychee Bay, forming the royal garden site "Changhua Yuan." Subsequently, during the Ming and Qing dynasties, Lychee Bay flourished as a cultural and economic hub, with the Changhua River becoming a defining waterfront landscape. Wealthy merchants and scholarly families capitalized on this heritage, constructing private Lingnan-style gardens that merged classical royal design principles with local architectural traditions—characterized by curved gables, stone bridges, and lush greenery.

In the early 20th century, the introduction of Western residential community concepts promoted the transformation of Changhua Street, leading to the concentrated construction of Western-style residences in Xiguan, attracting middle-income groups to settle and reflecting the influence of Western architectural culture on residential forms. During the Republic of China period, Changhua Street, with its unique geographical location and waterfront advantages, became an ideal residence for the affluent. After 1923, overseas Chinese and government officials built garden-style independent residences here, showcasing diverse architectural styles and owner backgrounds. With urban redevelopment and the opening of new streets, such as Duobao Road and Enning Road, commercial shops emerged, further attracting middle-income groups to settle.

After the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War, high-income groups migrated away, and the district gradually became a residence for low- and middle-income families. After the war, the government expropriated vacant houses and divided them for rent to economically disadvantaged residents to address housing issues, transforming Changhua Street into a residence for the public. Subsequently, after the reform and opening up, with economic development, enterprises and institutions built high-rise staff dormitories in the district, attracting the middle class to congregate again. The historical evolution of Changhua Street reflects the changes in social structure and residential forms in the Xiguan area of Guangzhou, showcasing the spatial and cultural transformations during the process of urbanization^[77].

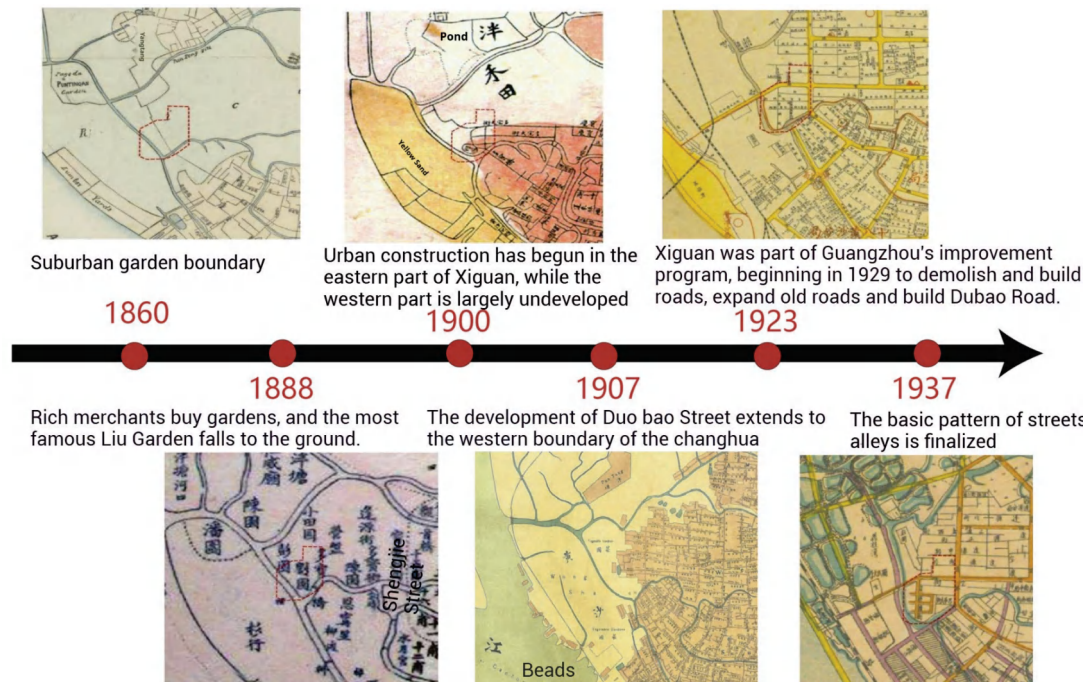


Figure 3-3 The evolution of the historical form of the Changhua area (Source: Self-drawn)

3.1.3 Value Features

From the former "Changhua Garden" to the present "Changhua Street Historical and Cultural District," Changhua historical district has experienced the entire historical process of Guangzhou's urbanization and modern transformation, becoming an important area for the westward expansion of the Xiguan residential district.

Through long-term historical and cultural accumulation, it has gradually become a historical heritage with public cultural value, showcasing the following distinctive features:

1. Important sample of the evolution of the historical form of Xiguan area

Changhua historical district has undergone the entire process of urbanization in the western suburbs of Guangzhou, evolving from marshy fields to retreat palaces, and from private gardens to modern residential areas. Today, it still retains the grid-like street pattern from the Republic of China period, featuring various distinctive street spaces such as colonnaded streets, cobblestone alleys, waterfront streets, and traditional lanes, embodying the local characteristics of traditional street scenery, historical events, and life in Xiguan^[77].

2. Historical segment of the modern transformation of residential architecture in Guangzhou

Changhua Street has a significant construction period, encompassing almost all types of residential buildings from the late Qing to the early Republic of China in Guangzhou. This includes traditional bamboo houses and Xiguan mansions from the late Qing period, Western-

style residences built and inhabited by wealthy merchants and political figures under Western architectural influence in the early Republic, garden-style independent residences from the mid-Republic period, as well as collective and row houses that emerged in the later Republic period. The various residential building types in the district that blend Lingnan charm with Western styles showcase the development of residential spatial patterns and architectural styles in Guangzhou, representing an important historical segment in the modern transformation of residential forms in the Xiguan area^[75].

3. Important Spatial Carrier of Celebrities' Settlement in the Republican Period

Changhua Street was once a gathering place for prominent figures, including the former home of Ho Hau Wah's father, He Xian, the residence of Chen Jitang's wife, Mo Xiuying, the home of China's first Director of the Health Bureau, He Chichang, as well as the residences of high-ranking officials from the Wang Jingwei regime such as Chen Yaozu, Zhao Guizhang, and Chen Qingxuan, along with the former homes of Cantonese opera celebrities like Luo Jiabao, Qianliju, Liang Shaojia, Lang Junyu, and Chen Tianzong.

Therefore, the Changhua Historical and Cultural District serves as an important spatial carrier for the lives, social relationships, and historical stories of numerous celebrities.

3.2 Changhua Historical District Space Analysis

Narrative space analyzes space with the aid of narratology. It not only dissects the geometric form of space but also constructs the historical, social, and cultural significance of the urban environment within the historical context. In the 1970s, the team led by Bill Hillier proposed the space syntax theory, which can accurately quantify the logic of urban form and provides a syntactic - grammatical system for narrative space. Both narrative space and space syntax interpret humanistic history from the perspective of geographical space, which is in line with the way humans experience space. The consistency of their internal logic makes their combination feasible. By calculating variables such as the integration degree and choice degree of public spaces, this approach analyzes their forms and spatial characteristics, and explores the current problems of public spaces in blocks.

In spatial research, space syntax adheres to the idea of moving from the part to the whole, requiring an understanding and generalization of space. The specific approach is to divide the large - scale space of the research object into multiple small - scale spaces, and then construct a spatial model to achieve the perception and grasp of the overall space of the research object.

Currently, the convex space model method, the visibility graph analysis (VGA) model method, and the axial model method are commonly used for spatial segmentation (Figure 3-4),

and these methods are respectively applicable to different fields. Among them, the convex space model method subdivides the overall space of the research object into several convex spaces with unobstructed internal lines of sight, mainly used for the research of interior architecture or nodal spaces; the VGA model method divides the overall space into an infinitely subdivided grid, mostly used for the research of non - linear spaces; the axial model method represents the entire research space with the fewest and longest axes, mainly applied to linear spaces such as streets.

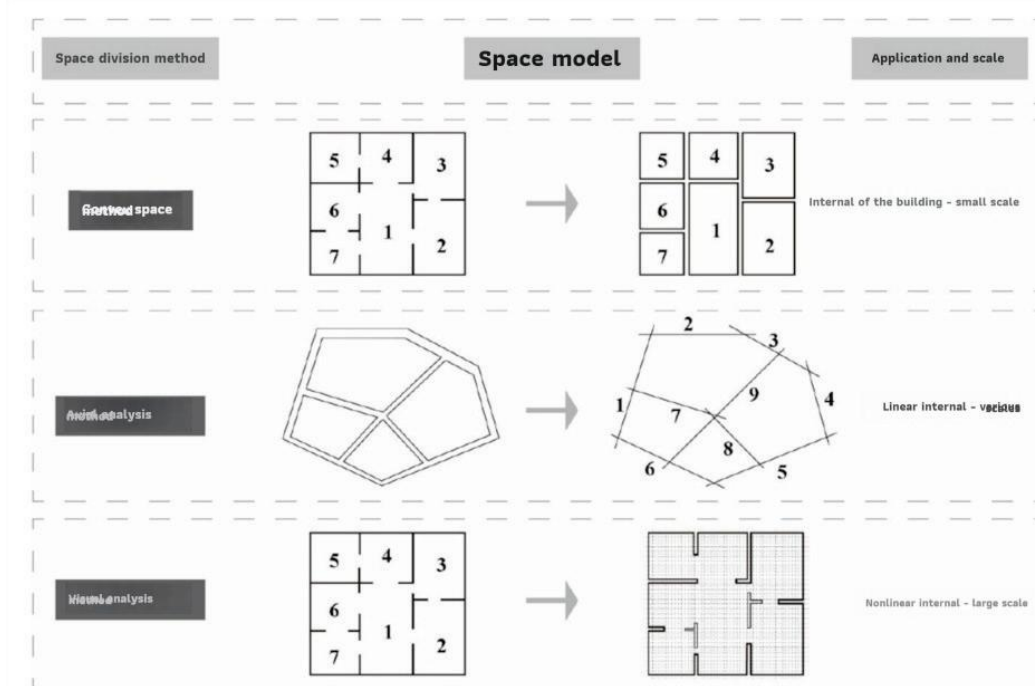


Figure 3-4 Three ways of partitioning spatial syntax (Source: Reference^[76])

Syntactic variables are used to quantitatively describe spatial relationships based on spatial segmentation and relationship diagrams. The fundamental index among syntactic variables is spatial depth. Based on it, indices such as integration, choice, and connectivity value are derived to conduct a multi - dimensional quantitative description of the connection relationships among various spatial elements. Since this paper uses space syntax to analyze the space of historical blocks, mainly through the study of street space, the axial analysis method is selected.

Modeling boundary setting: It is clearly stated that the modeling scope mainly focuses on the core area of the historical block. The buffer zone is set as an outward expansion of 100 meters from the block (referring to the common scale in similar historical block studies), and major roads, rivers and other obstacles are included as spatial - blocking elements (Figure 3-5). In this paper, the measured CAD planning drawings of Xiguan in Huagarden, Guangzhou, together with Google high - definition maps in 2020, on - site photos, planning text drawings,

etc. are integrated to ensure that the model is consistent with the actual spatial logic. Due to the small scale of the site, according to the time of people's walking paths. Based on previous research experience and the actual situation of this village, 100m, 200m, 400m, and 600m are selected as walking radii, and 800m and 1000m are selected as travel radii with the help of different transportation means.



Figure 3-5 Spatial Syntax Measurement Boundary (Source: Self-drawn)

3.2.1 Utilization of Public Space

The internal public spaces of the Changhua Historical District are relatively crowded. Following extensive redevelopment along the Changhua River after the reform and opening-up, and due to a lack of effective organization, the existing open spaces in the area are limited in scale and have not been fully utilized. The streets and alleyways are important spatial elements within the district, holding significant historical preservation value and supporting residents' daily activities and historical events. However, their functionality and vibrancy vary in the current situation.

Field research indicates that the waterfront area in the southern part of the district has good spatial continuity, providing citizens with places to walk and relax. However, the waterfront area on the northern side is narrow, lacking concentrated activity spaces and multiple discontinuities, which results in poor accessibility and limits the overall user experience. The spatial structure within the community is dense. Apart from the streets, most of the open spaces

are enclosed by walls, transforming them into private courtyards. Residents generally complain about a lack of community activities or places for daily interaction and exercise, and due to the absence of suitable resting areas, it is difficult for people to stop and linger. The riverbank, as a public space in Changhua Historical District, has low accessibility (Figure 3-6).

Additionally, there are only four public open spaces in the community. Apart from the bridge in the southwest corner of the community, the sports facilities are the only venues for community activities. However, due to garbage accumulation, these facilities have gradually become neglected. The other three spaces are dispersed along the river, and in fact, there is no open space in the center of the district. Due to the absence of a unified parking plan, haphazardly parked vehicles occupy part of the main street space. The lack of public spaces is detrimental to fostering community life and perpetuating traditional cultural activities (Figure 3-7).

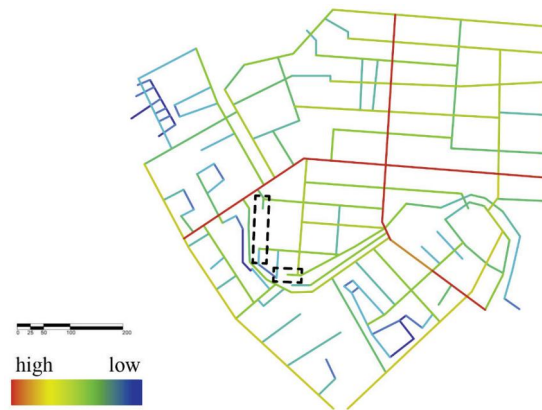


Figure 3-6 Spatial accessibility analysis of Changhua historical district(Source: Self-drawn)



Figure 3-7 Public space accessibility(Source: Self-drawn)

3.2.2 Street Scale Analysis

The spatial structure of the Changhua Historical District is characterized by a "four horizontal and two vertical" street layout. The north-south vertical streets include Changhua Cross Street, Changhua East Street, and Changhua South Street, facilitating movement and connectivity. The east-west horizontal streets consist of Duobao Street, Duobao South Cross Street, Changhua Street, and Changhua New Street, forming a clear grid pattern that enhances navigation.

This layout reflects the development model of the Baohua community from the late 19th century, emphasizing organized growth and connectivity. As a well-preserved example of traditional urban planning in Guangzhou, the "four horizontal and two vertical" configuration not only promotes efficient transportation but also fosters social interaction. This interconnectedness is essential for maintaining the district's vibrant atmosphere, ensuring its role as a cultural and social hub within the Liwan District (Figure 3-8).

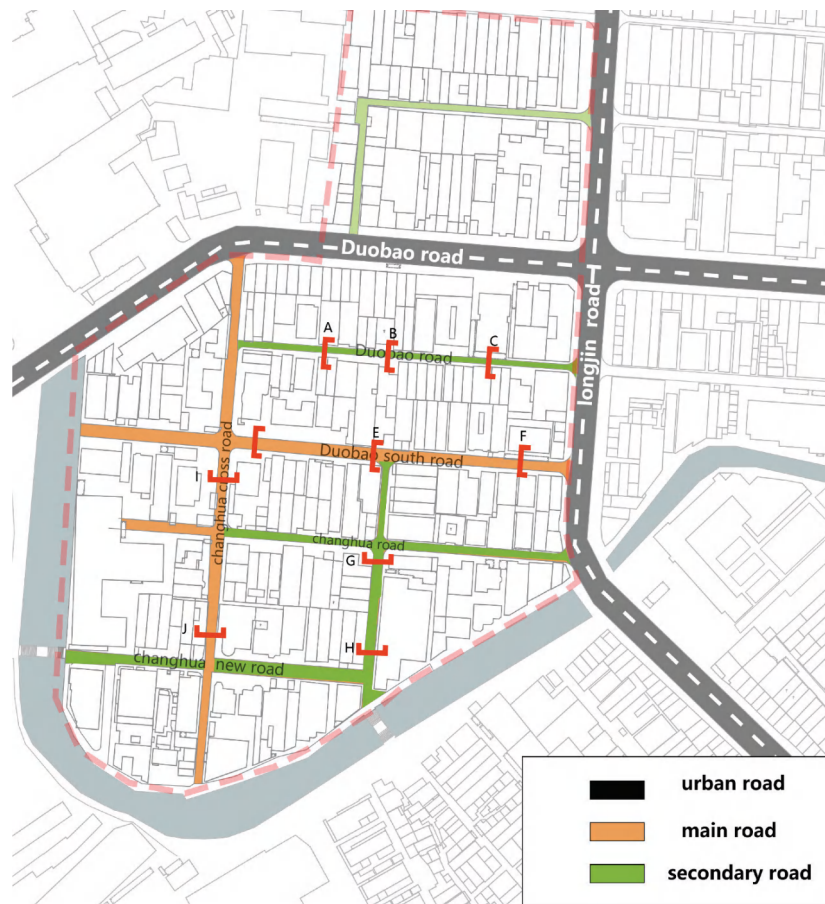


Figure 3-8 Street Scale Classification(Source: Self-drawn)

In modern urban development, the widths of some streets have been adjusted under the dual influence of historical and contemporary planning. Within the district, Duobao Street and Changhua Street are the narrowest streets, with an average width maintained at 4–5 meters.

This is related to the municipal renovations during the early Republic of China and reflects the demand for improved living conditions. With the introduction of garden-style independent houses, the width of driveways has increased, allowing traditional streets such as Duobao South Cross Street, Changhua Cross Street, and Changhua New Street to widen, with average widths rising to 5–7 meters.

However, the proportions and scales of street spaces are not constant. With the reconstruction and renovation of buildings, the heights of the structures on both sides have changed significantly. During the Republic of China period, buildings in the Changhua District were primarily 2–3 stories, with a few being 1 or 4 stories. However, today, buildings of 5–9 stories are increasingly common. To expand their living space, some residents have built sheds between the front facades at entrances and the open spaces in front, further altering the spatial proportions of the streets (Figure 3-9). Taking Changhua Street as an example, its typical street sections (Sections D, H, and J) now appear more compact due to the emergence of high-rise buildings. The psychological impact of the vertical interface of the street on people is mainly reflected in the width-to-height ratio of the building interface. Therefore, the scale of the streets and alleys is judged according to the D/H value. (Table 3-1).

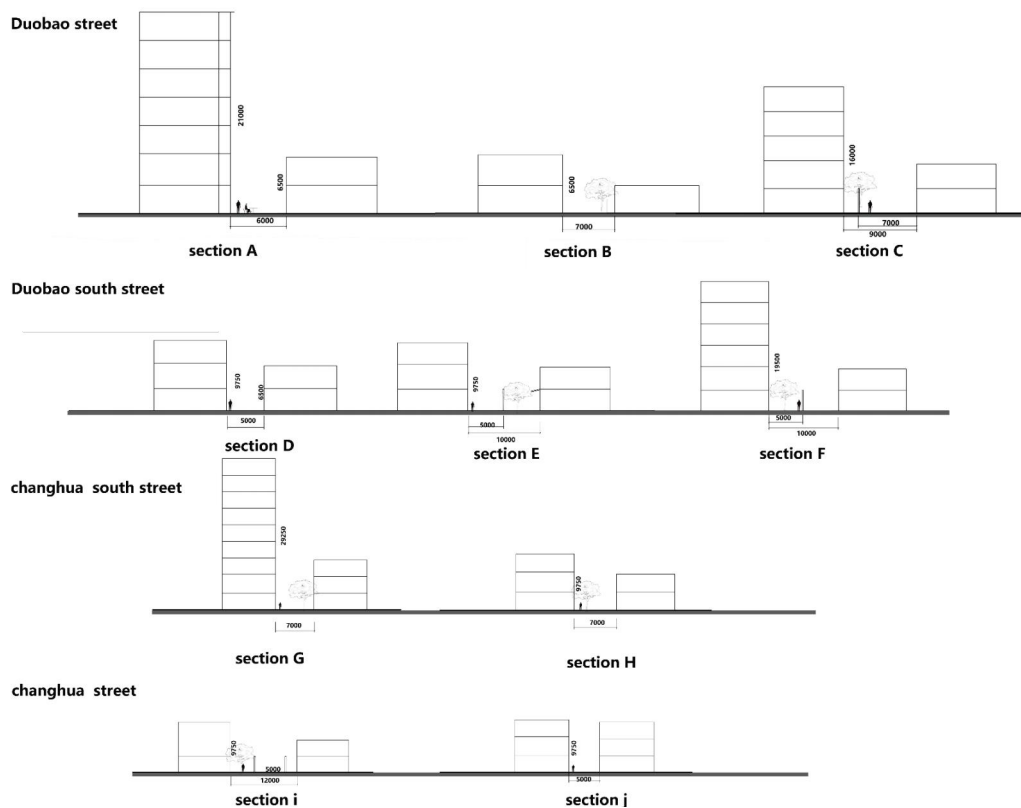


Figure 3-9 Street scale section of Changhua historical district(Source: Self-drawn)

According to the table (Table 3-1), the urban roads of Changhua Street, such as Duobao

Road and Enning Road, have a high spatial suitability and offer an open view. The main street in the district, Changhua Cross Street, has a relatively suitable scale, while other roads, such as Duobao South Cross Street, Changhua New Street, and Changhua South Street, exhibit poorer spatial suitability. The presence of newly constructed modern multi-story residences in the district creates a strong sense of visual compression.

Table 3-1 Street scale proportions of Changhua historical district(Source: Self-drawn)

Street Name	Type	Average weight (D/m)	Average height (H/m)	D/H
Duobao road	Urban road	12.00	14.00	0.86
Longjin road	Urban road	12.00	12.00	1.00
Duobao south road	Main road	6.00	9.00	0.67
Duobao street	Main road	5.00	8.00	0.63
Changhua cross street	Main road	6.00	7.00	0.86
Changhua street	Secondary road	4.00	8.00	0.50
Changhua new street	Secondary road	5.00	7.00	0.71
Changhua south street	Secondary road	5.00	20.00	0.25

3.2.3 Spatial Line of Sight Analysis

According to the results of the street view analysis, the visual integration along the Liwan River area has significantly improved, reaching its maximum at the intersection of Changhua Cross Street and the water body. Residents and visitors here can observe more historical buildings and landscape resources. However, most buildings within Changhua Street, particularly those of historical value, are surrounded by walls (Figure 3-10). On the one hand, this makes the grouping and street structure of the Historical District clearer. On the other hand, the feature of the enclosure wall is mainly white concrete wall, which is not in harmony with the historic and traditional features. In addition, various advertising flyers are attached to the wall, which greatly affects the cleanliness of the interface on both sides of the street. The height of the wall is close to two meters, which greatly obscures the historic buildings and is not conducive to pedestrians seeing their historic character. One would expect to be able to observe

more historic buildings and landscape resources (Figure 3-11). However, public spaces within the street remain less visible, while the riverfront sightlines to the left are poorly obscured by the nursing home.



Figure 3-10 Sight space analysis(Source: Self-drawn)



Figure 3-11 Status of sight space(Source: Self-drawn)

3.3 Current Condition of The Buildings in Changhua Historic District

3.3.1 Status of Conservation of Historic Architectural Heritage

The preservation units within the historical district of Changhua Street comprise a variety of structures, including cultural heritage protection units, historical buildings, traditional buildings, and immovable cultural heritage protection buildings. This diverse architectural

landscape is crucial for reflecting the region's historical and cultural narrative. Currently, over 40 buildings in this area are identified as urgently needing protection, highlighting their significance as key components of both the material and cultural heritage of Changhua (Figure 3-12).

The buildings within this area can be classified into five distinct categories: independent garden - style residences, row houses, bamboo tube houses, arcade - style buildings, and the Xiguan Mansion and Xiguan Western - style House.

For example, the buildings along Duobao Road and Enning Road are of a mixed - use nature, skillfully integrating commercial and residential functions to meet the requirements of the local community. In contrast, No. 16 Changhua New Street serves as a public service building, offering essential services to both residents and visitors. The majority of the remaining buildings are residential, covering both single - family and multi - family dwellings. These residential buildings mirror the diverse living patterns and social dynamics that exist within the district, thereby providing insights into the social fabric of the area during different historical periods.

In summary, the preservation of these historical buildings is vital for maintaining architectural diversity and cultural heritage. By implementing effective preservation strategies, we can ensure that the unique historical narrative of Changhua Street (Figure 3-13).



Figure 3-12 Status of architectural heritage conservation(Source: Self-drawn)



Figure 3-13 Classification of built heritage types(Source: Self-drawn)

However, due to some property owners having long relocated from Guangzhou, many historical buildings have remained vacant. The vacancy rate of houses on both sides of Changhua New Street is closely related to its relatively remote geographical location. Some garden-style residences are also in a state of disuse due to a lack of occupancy (Figure 3-14). To effectively utilize these architectural resources, it is essential to integrate their characteristics with the needs of the neighborhood by introducing cultural and community public service.

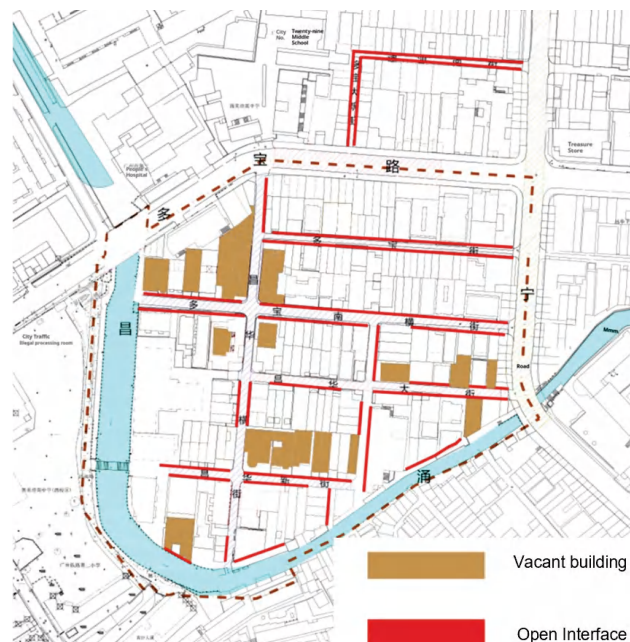


Figure 3-14 Situation of unused buildings(Source: Self-drawn)

3.3.2 Distribution of Architectural Function

Changhua Street has a long history, with most buildings constructed over 80 years ago. Over the course of significant social changes and historical accumulation, the transformation processes of various parts of the neighborhood have been inconsistent. As a result, the original physical spatial forms and their continuously evolving uses have struggled to adapt, and the area remains primarily residential.

Analysis of the site's point of interest (POI) data reflects the diversity of the street, with retail and restaurants accounting for the highest proportion at 58.89%, mainly located along Duobao Road and Enning Road, attracting many visitors. Within Changhua Street, life services, education, and training comprise 26.25%, primarily serving the local residents.

Public service facilities within Changhua Street are relatively scarce, mainly consisting of streets and alleys, concentrated on the right side of the area near the arcade street of Enning Road. Additionally, most surrounding businesses in the area are food service establishments, including tea restaurants, fast food outlets, breakfast shops, pastry shops, and some clothing stores distributed along Enning Road and Duobao Road's arcade street. There are no vegetable markets or supermarkets within the community (Figure 3-15).



Figure 3-15 Building function and business distribution (Source: Self-drawn)

At the same time, the district has also renovated public service buildings such as nursing homes, community service stations, and kindergartens, which are noticeably of good architectural quality. The units or enterprises occupying these public properties, driven by practical needs for daily operations and external receptions, often enhance the care and maintenance of the buildings. While ensuring basic functional requirements, they also undertake additional renovations to improve the appearance and quality of the properties. Some

residential buildings have had their exterior walls repainted, windows and doors replaced, and structural reinforcements made. Property owners with sufficient financial means may even renovate their buildings and operate small businesses or studios (Figure 3-16).



Figure 3-16 Building remodeling for community service (Source: Self-drawn)

Generally speaking, Duo Bao Road and Enning Road serve the residents and tourists with commercial services in the riding street, while the internal streets and lanes are mainly used for living, and the internal space of the walking paths and lanes along the river needs to be further excavated for the historical events there, combined with the requirements of the residents' living, and the corresponding renovation measures should be put forward.

3.4 Changhua Historical District Experience Analysis

3.4.1 Main Population Analysis

In the process of creating narrative spaces in historical districts, the primary task is to consider the diverse needs of different user groups. To gain a deeper understanding of the specific expectations various users have for narrative spaces, this research employs a combination of field observations and questionnaire surveys, aiming to comprehensively collect user experiences and feedback regarding different narrative spaces.

The questionnaire survey was conducted through offline research methods to ensure the data's breadth and representativeness. Specifically targeting the active population within the historical district, we conducted a detailed investigation into their specific needs for narrative spaces. A total of 72 questionnaires were distributed, providing data support for subsequent analysis (Figure 3-17).

According to demographic data provided by the community, in the core protection area of Changhua Garden, there is a permanent population of 3,332 and a floating population (tenants) of 462. Among the residents, those aged 0-14 years account for 13%, those aged 15-59 years comprise 51%, and those aged 60 and above make up 36%. The northern protection control area belongs to the Xiguan Dahu community (partial), with a permanent population of 131 and

a floating population (tenants) of 19. Among these, those aged 0-14 years account for 1%, those aged 15-59 years comprise 45%, and those aged 60 and above reach 54%. There are two nursing homes in the district, with a total of over 500 beds, and the average age of the elderly residents is over 80 years. They are under closed management and have little interaction with community residents. This data reflects the demographic characteristics of the district, primarily consisting of long-term local elderly residents and incoming tenants.

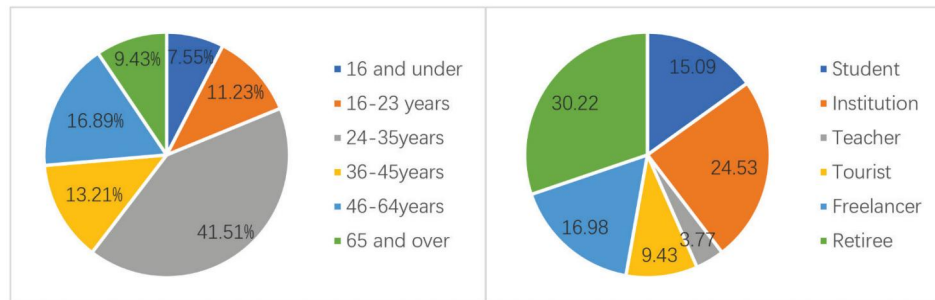


Figure 3-17 Research on the use of the population (Source: Self-drawn)

3.4.2 Spatial Behavior Analysis

The Changhua Street historical and cultural district features a diverse range of building styles, including Lingnan - style houses with their distinct eaves and tiled roofs, along with modern structures that blend well with the area. Its public spaces, like traditional streets, narrow alleys, and small plazas, are important communal areas for residents.

These public areas are more than just passageways. Beneath the old banyan trees, residents sit on small stools, chatting over tea or enjoying the sun. In front of houses, women do needlework while children play nearby. Such activities are crucial to the community's social structure.

In Xiguan's traditional residential area, daily life combines simplicity and richness. Morning markets are busy as locals haggle for fresh goods, a long - standing tradition. Family events in courtyards bring neighbors together. Neighborly greetings and shopkeepers' stories add to the community's warm atmosphere.

Despite having different generations, from long-term residents to new arrivals, people in this historical district show similar behaviors. Their respect for traditional festivals and home - decorating during special times are deeply rooted in Xiguan's cultural background, emphasizing a strong sense of place and community continuity^[78](Figure 3-18).

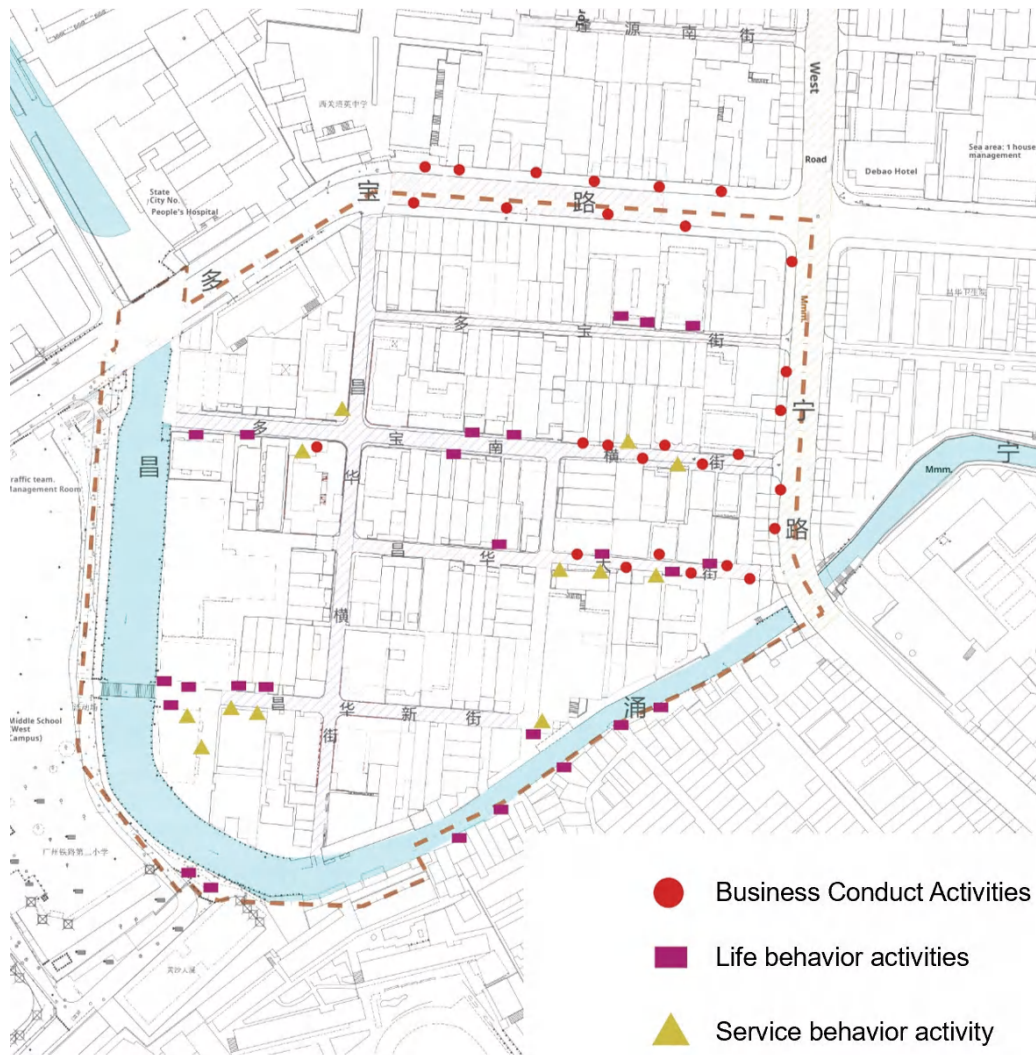


Figure 3-18 Spatial Behavioral Distribution of Crowds (Source: Self-drawn)

In Xiguan's traditional residential community, daily life, services, and commercial activities are concentrated in three main types of spaces: street spaces, semi-enclosed architectural spaces, and waterfront areas. These public spaces are the hubs for residents' daily routines and social exchanges.

Street spaces function as essential living areas. Here, residents carry out activities like washing at public water points, planting small greenery, hanging laundry to dry, and playing with children. Such activities not only fulfill daily requirements but also foster a sense of community as neighbors interact. Service activities, too, are mainly located in street spaces. Traditional service industries such as barbershops, shoe repair stands, and tailoring shops are scattered here, providing convenient daily services. These establishments are not just service providers; they also serve as gathering spots for neighbors to chat and engage with the community.

Semi-enclosed architectural spaces, including courtyards and the areas between buildings,

play a crucial role in resident communication and relaxation. Courtyards in traditional Lingnan - style houses are private yet communal, where families gather for meals and festivals, and neighbors meet for casual conversations. The spaces between buildings offer quiet corners for residents to unwind, maintaining a balance between privacy and social connection.

Waterfront areas, like the Changhua River, have become extensions of daily life and social interaction. They provide scenic spots for walks, exercise, and group activities, enhancing residents' quality of life.

Commercial activities are centered in the vibrant street spaces, especially in the arcade areas of Duobao Road and Enning Road. These areas are the commercial core of Xiguan, filled with local shops, markets, and food stalls. The diverse trade and economic exchanges create a lively atmosphere, attracting both residents and visitors. Despite the commercial activity, the district manages to maintain a relatively subdued commercial nature, preserving the traditional community's peaceful environment. This harmonious coexistence of commerce and tranquility is a key feature of Xiguan, enabling it to uphold its cultural heritage while meeting modern demands. In summary, the daily life, services, and commercial activities of the Xiguan community are deeply intertwined with its street spaces, semi-enclosed architectural areas, and waterfront zones. These environments not only meet the basic living needs of residents but also foster social interactions and economic activities, creating a vibrant, cohesive community that reflects the rich cultural tapestry of Xiguan. The interplay of these elements highlights the importance of public spaces in shaping the dynamics of traditional residential communities (Figure 3-19, Table 3-2).

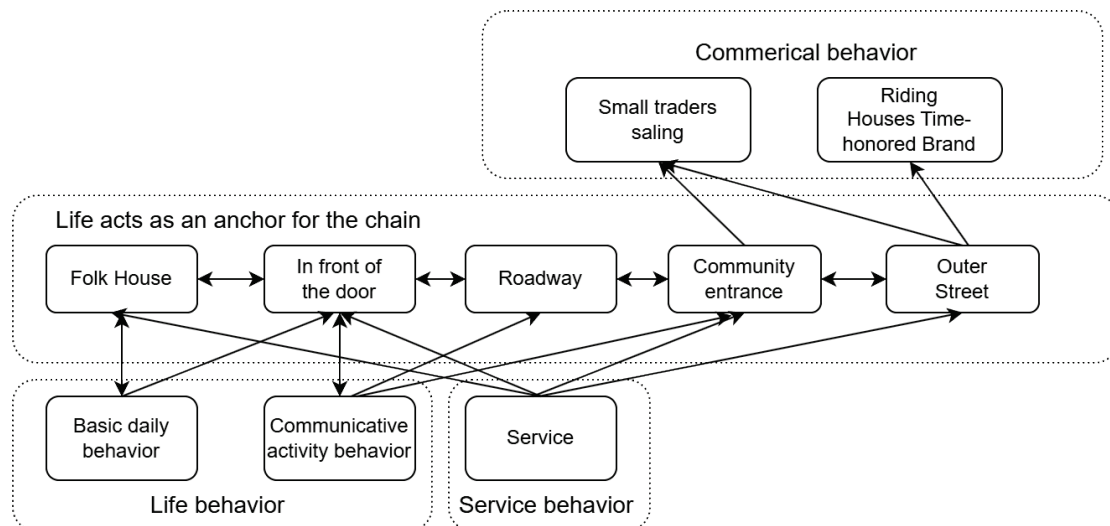




Figure 3-19 Changhua Historical District living behavior chain (Source: Self-drawn)

Table 3-2 Common behavioral activities and spatial scenes in site (Source: Self-drawn)

Type	Specific Content Table	Location	Space Type	Living Space Scene
Daily Activities	Washing	In front of the door	Street lane space	
	Drying clothes	In front of the door	Street lane space	
	Accompanying children	In front of the door, lane, and community entrance	Street lane space, water space	
	Playing cards and chess	In front of the door, lane	Semi-enclosed space	
Service Behaviors	Shoe Repair	Residential house, in front of the door, outer street	Semi-enclosed space, street lane space	
	Sewing and traditional manual sewing	Residential house, in front of the door, outer street	Semi-enclosed space	
	Haircut	Residential house, outer street	Street lane space, semi-space	
Commercial Behaviors	Fixed stall	Inner street, community entrance	Street lane space	

Table 3-2 Common behavioral activities and spatial scenes in site (Continued) (Source: Self-drawn)

Type	Specific Content Table	Location	Space Type	Living Space Scene
Commercial Behaviors	Store	Community entrance、Outer street	Street lane space	
	Commercial sales on the arcade street	Outer space	Street lane space	

3.4.3 Spatial Needs of Various Populations

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs divides human needs into five levels, which are, from the most basic to the most advanced, physiological needs, safety needs, the need for belonging and love, the need for respect, and the need for self - actualization. In the process of in - depth analysis of the spatial needs of historical blocks, this study adopts the method of stratified sampling. Firstly, the residents of Changhua Street are divided into different age groups, namely those under 16 years old, those aged 16 - 35, those aged 36 - 65, and those over 65. Then, the method of random sampling is used to conduct interviews among residents at various levels. Samples were stratified and extracted through community registration data, with a total of 52 valid interviews completed. Among them, young people (16-35 years old) accounted for 32%, middle-aged people (36-65 years old) accounted for 41%, and elderly people (over 65 years old) accounted for 27% (Figure 3-20).

In terms of spatial needs, 82% of respondents support activating idle historic buildings, with 73% preferring their transformation into community museums or public activity centers. Additionally, 65% of residents expect improved accessibility to waterfront spaces, proposing the opening of riverfront walkways blocked by walls. young visitors mainly seek leisurely strolls and photo - taking chances at attractions. They yearn for spaces that vividly reflect the iconic cultural elements of Xiguan, like scenic lakeside walking paths, trendy specialty coffee shops, and well - curated history museums. In contrast, middle-aged and older visitors are more deeply interested in immersing themselves in the historical atmosphere, actively looking for facilities such as comfortable resting chairs, charming lakeside promenades, and traditional food shops dotting the streets.

Residents' functional needs for Changhua Street primarily center around daily living aspects. They explicitly express a strong desire for more outdoor chess rooms, convenient fitness facilities, warm community canteens, accessible express delivery stations, and practical takeout drop-off points. Additionally, they sincerely hope to repurpose idle historical residences while carefully maintaining the historical character of the area (Table 3-3).

Therefore, the renewal of the district demands a delicate balance between safeguarding historical features and catering to diverse contemporary needs. By meticulously increasing activity spaces, comprehensively optimizing service facilities, and substantially improving greenery and transportation conditions, the living experience for residents can be remarkably enhanced. This not only benefits the long-term inhabitants but also attracts new settlers.

Additionally, the establishment of cultural corridors and the organization of traditional cultural activities can fully satisfy homeowners' strong desires for cultural heritage preservation. Simultaneously, these initiatives can effectively draw in tenants and tourists, thereby fostering the sustainable development of the district in a more comprehensive and far-reaching manner.

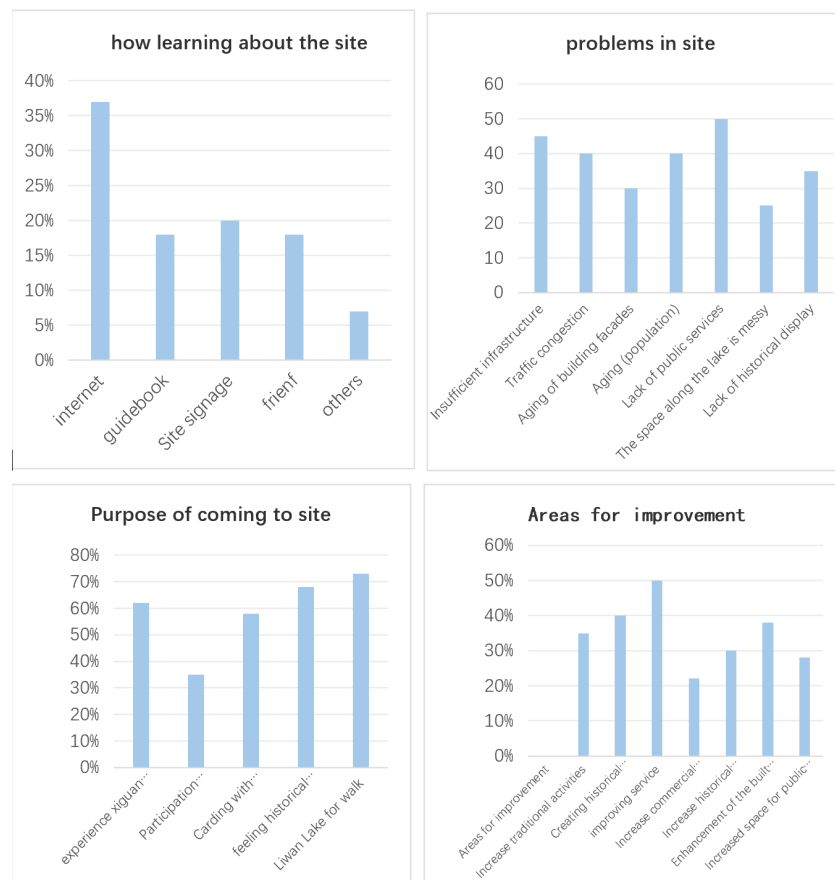


Figure 3-20 Results of the Questionnaire on the Existence of Problems at Sites (Source: Self-drawn)

Table 3-3 Interview and research on Changhua historical district (Source: Self-drawn)

Function Demands	Residents' Interviews and Field Observation Descriptions	Length of residence
Fitness Functions	16-35 residence: "In the past, I would go to the fitness area in the morning for activities, but when it's crowded, I feel like the place is small. Now it's occupied by garbage and smells bad."	5-10year
Garbage Station	16-35 residence: "The garbage station environment is poor, and it smells bad because of the garbage piles. Now, no one goes there."	1year below
Benches for Rest	16-35 residence: "I like to go for walks in the park, but sometimes I feel like there aren't enough benches for us to rest on."	5-10year
Open-air Chess and Cards	65 residence: "Playing chess and chatting with old friends is our favorite activity. We used to play mahjong at the bulletin board gate, but after the pandemic, it stopped."	1year below
Public Toilets	65 residence: "There are too few toilets in the park, especially for us old people. It's inconvenient when they are far away."	10year above
Public Service Station	36-65 residence: "There seems to be no fixed public service point in the community. If there were a place where we could ask questions or even borrow a wheelchair or measure blood pressure, that would be great."	10year above
Small Garden Square, Parking	36-65 residence: "I hope there are more garden-feature squares where we can not only exercise but also play chess and chat. Now, there are cars."	1-5year
Entertainment Area	36-65 residence: "My child plays downstairs usually, but there aren't many facilities, so he can only play at the doorway. It's a bit monotonous. It would be nice if there were more things to play with."	5-10year
Parking Area	36-65 residence: "My biggest concern is safety. My child likes to play by the roadside, but there is no clear parking area or dedicated bike lane, a bit dangerous."	5-10year
Waterside Facilities	65 residence: "The waterside embankment is a place that children like to go, but the facilities are not complete enough, such as the guardrail height. I'm not at ease letting them play alone."	5-10year
Food Delivery Service Point	16-35 residence: "Food delivery often arrives at the community entrance, but there is no fixed place to put it, so it's often left in disarray. It would be more orderly if there were a service point."	5-10year

Table 3-3 Interview and research on Changhua historical district (Continued) (Source: Self-drawn)

Function Demands	Residents' Interviews and Field Observation Descriptions	Length of residence
Courier Service Point	16-35 residence: "We have couriers every day, especially on weekdays when no one is home to receive them. It would be nice to have a courier service point so that it's convenient for everyone to pick up their packages."	10 year above
Cultural Exhibition	16 below residence: "I came from Yongqing block. This block is well-preserved and has many old Western Guangzhou historical buildings. It would be nice if there were more historical and cultural exhibitions or displays of old artifacts."	1-5year
Function Demands	16-35 residence: Residents' Interviews and Field Observation Descriptions	/
Historical and Cultural Experience	16-35 residence: "If you didn't tell me, I wouldn't know this was the former residence of Mo Xiuying. This house does have Lingnan characteristics, but we can't go inside and can only look at it from the outside."	1-5 year

3.5 Problem Analysis of State of Changhua Historical District

3.5.1 Insufficient Historical and Cultural Perception

Field research shows that the historical and cultural atmosphere on Changhua Street is weak, and the prosperous scene of water transportation in early - stage Guangzhou no longer exists. Most tourists merely take photos perfunctorily during their visits, and many historical spaces are enclosed by walls and left idle. For local residents, historical public spaces are limited to the streets and alleys in front of their doors, resulting in poor tour - ability and practicality of public spaces. As a result, users find it difficult to gain a deep sense of participation and authentic experience.

3.5.2 Poor State of Architectural Space Protection

1. Forgetting of Architectural Space Memories

At present, the protection work of historical buildings on Changhua Street has been carried out. Some historical residences have been included in Guangzhou's protection list, but the work is still in its initial stage. The current work mainly involves the micro - protection of the facades of some buildings, with insufficient attention paid to the characteristics and functions of historical spaces. Many historical building clues have not been explored, leading to some buildings being sold to social individuals for renovation. Meanwhile, there are also artificial

expansions with modern styles, which have damaged the overall architectural style of Changhua Street to a certain extent.

2. Idle Protected Historical Buildings

Many historical buildings on Changhua Street are currently idle. Due to the compact and reticular layout of the streets and alleys, the limited activity space is often blocked by walls. At the same time, with the increasingly diverse functional needs of people, the mismatch between spatial functions and actual demands has gradually become prominent, causing these buildings to face the dilemma of functional decline and spatial disappearance. With the development of society and policy changes, the functions of these buildings urgently need to be re - planned and utilized.

3.5.3 Poor Utilization of Historical Public Space

The historical spaces on Changhua Street, such as the former residences of historical celebrities, have low accessibility. Moreover, the preserved Changhua Yong has been transformed into a private nursing home, resulting in the truncation of the riverside leisure space. Residents and tourists mostly choose to engage in activities on the opposite bank. The newly - built schools and nursing homes in the surrounding area have also disrupted the continuity of the waterfront space, making the riverside pedestrian system discontinuous, and reducing both comfort and attractiveness. This spatial fragmentation further leads to a disconnection in spatial form from the nearby Yongqingfang Scenic Area, affecting the activity experience of residents and tourists. Although this block is located between the Liwan Lake Scenic Area and the Yongqingfang Scenic Area, it fails to effectively utilize its geographical advantages and lacks necessary connections and integration.

3.5.4 Homogeneous Business Types and Decreased Integration of Daily Life

The business forms in the area are highly homogeneous, mostly consisting of small shops such as barber shops and flower shops that merely meet basic living needs. This monotony results in a significant lack of cultural experience - based business models, severely weakening the cultural dissemination function. Compounding the issue, the community population shows a pronounced trend of aging and homogenization, making it extremely challenging for public service facilities to adequately cover all age groups. Consequently, the absence of historical display and comprehensive life - service facilities has led to a notable reduction in the integration of community life and the historical environment, disrupting the harmonious coexistence between the past and present.

3.5.5 Re - examination of Current Situation Problems on Spatial Narrative

From the perspective of spatial narrative, the above - mentioned current situation problems vividly reflect the fragmentation and imbalance of spatial narrative on Changhua Street. The insufficient perception of historical and cultural heritage, mainly due to the lack of systematic presentation, leads to the blurring of narrative clues, thereby making it arduous to evoke emotional resonance among visitors and residents. The inadequate protection of architectural spaces directly damages crucial narrative carriers, impeding the seamless transmission of historical stories. The ineffective utilization of historical public spaces results in discontinuous narrative scenes, severely restricting public engagement in the spatial narrative. Moreover, the monotonous business forms and weakened integration with daily life further highlight the poverty of narrative content, falling short of meeting diverse contemporary needs.

3.6 Summary

This chapter provides a comprehensive analysis of the background, current situation, and spatial characteristics of the Changhua Street historical cultural district, meticulously revealing its historical evolution, profound cultural significance, and the complex spatial challenges it confronts. Geographically situated in the Xiguan area of Liwan District, Guangzhou, Changhua Street enjoys unique geographical advantages and boasts a rich historical and cultural heritage. From the Qing Dynasty to the Republic of China and into the modern era, the district has undergone continuous transformations, serving as a living witness to the urbanization process of Guangzhou's western suburbs. It embodies numerous historical narratives and cultural legacies, from traditional commercial activities to local folk customs, making it a precious cultural treasure trove.

However, through in - depth on - site research and detailed analysis of Changhua Street, several critical issues have emerged. The efficiency of public space usage remains disappointingly low, with problems related to inappropriate street scale, insufficient service facilities, and a lack of effective spatial organization and planning. These factors not only undermine the vitality of the district but also significantly affect the quality of life for local residents. In particular, the slow progress in revitalizing historical buildings and the intergenerational conflicts in spatial interfaces have hindered residents' daily activities and disrupted the continuity of traditional culture.

Based on this thorough analysis and adhering to the narrative spatial research framework outlined in Chapter 2, the subsequent section will embark on an exploration of historical narrative clues within the site, carefully identify narrative themes and structures, and propose

targeted spatial optimization design strategies. This work will lay a solid foundation for the future renewal design of Changhua Street, aiming to restore its cultural charm and enhance its functionality.

Chapter 4 Narrative Space Analysis of Changhua Street

4.1 A Compendium of Narrative Elements of Changhua Historical District

Based on the classification of narrative space elements in the previous text, this section will chronologically outline the diverse material heritage elements preserved in the historical district of Changhua Street. By organizing these elements along event lines, we can elucidate their narrative space. These elements not only possess a strong sense of history, era, and place but also reflect the various stages of people's production activities within the district. They document the unique historical evolution and cultural connotations of the historical district. The narrative elements will be categorized as follows to clarify their connections (Table 4-1).

Table 4-1 Historic District Narrative Elements Sorted (Source: Self-drawn)

Category	Description
Event	Diverse urban events occurring in the area
Material Elements	Cultural relics and monuments, former residences of celebrities, traditional houses, bridges, etc.
Street & Alley Venues	Public spaces (including streets, alleys, yards, and squares)
Natural Landscapes	Natural environments (such as rivers, ponds, and ancient trees/plants)

As an important component of Guangzhou's historical urban area, the narrative elements of Changhua Street exhibit significant phased characteristics in their spatiotemporal evolution.

During the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), the bustling commerce of Lychee Bay facilitated the formation of the "front shop, back warehouse" pattern, while the residential planning along Duobao Road established the texture of the street market. The intangible cultural accumulation of this period is reflected in the commercial culture fostered by the Guangdong-Hong Kong trade and the spatial memory of the boat-dwelling culture nurtured by the Pearl River system, collectively laying the foundation for the maritime trade identity of Changhua Street.

In the Republican period (1912-1949), the reconstruction of colonial modernity led to significant transformations in the material space: the blending of Eurasian architectural styles in the colonnaded buildings, the introduction of garden-style residences, and the road expansion projects promoted by municipal offices collectively constructed a new narrative spatial system.

In contemporary times (1949 to present), the narrative elements of Changhua Street present a characteristic of spatiotemporal collage in a postmodern context. The material space has undergone multiple iterations: a surge in community service functions, the emergence of numerous factories after the reform and opening up, and the expansion of commercial land, all contributing to a spatial landscape layered with different historical strata.

Comparative analysis of these three periods shows that the urban narrative of Changhua Street has evolved through the interplay of material space and intangible culture. The commercial culture of the Qing Dynasty faced the reconstruction of colonial modernity during the Republican era, while contemporary times are marked by cultural deconstruction and reconstruction in a postmodern context. This spatiotemporal evolution reflects a spiral progression of "disjunction - continuity - regeneration" and reveals the dynamic mechanism of urban narrative as a vessel for collective memory. Consequently, this section will outline the narrative elements of Changhua Street by period. (Figure 4-1).

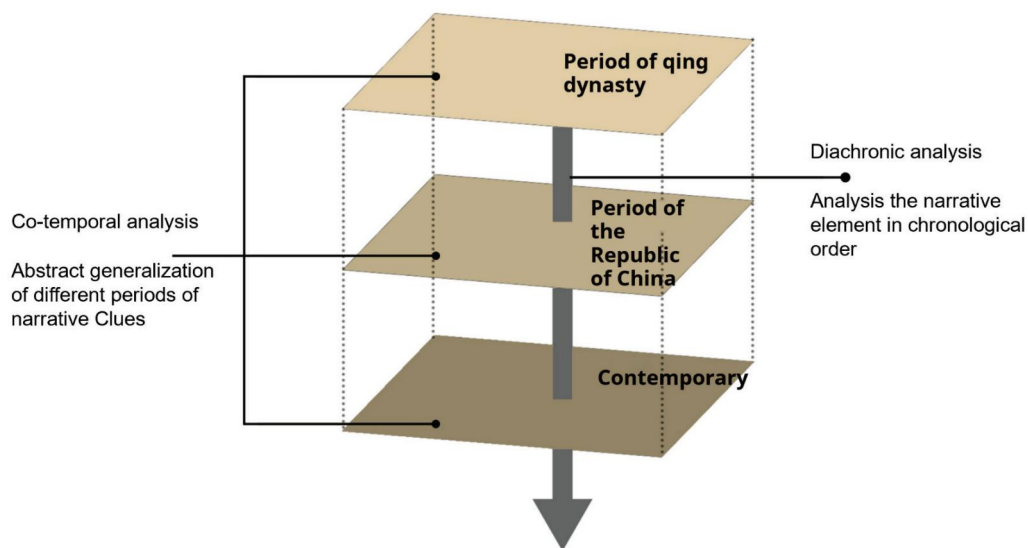


Figure 4-1 A staged research of narrative elements (Source: Self-drawn)

4.1.1 Analysis of the Events

(1) Principles of event selection

In narrative space theory, the selection of event elements is of paramount importance, as it significantly influences the understanding of historical and cultural districts. The chosen event elements must possess unique historical contexts and should be events that have already occurred, thereby distinguishing them from events in other urban spaces.

Events are intrinsically linked to emotions and must be remembered; this remembrance is essential for the continuity of history and the preservation of social and cultural structures. Therefore, when selecting event elements for historical and cultural districts, it is crucial that

they exhibit irreproducibility and encapsulate local historical memory. This selection process not only acknowledges the historical significance of the events but also enriches the understanding of the cultural landscape, enabling future generations to engage with and appreciate their heritage.

(2) Statistics and Classification of Events in Historic District

Previous research by Zhang Nan categorizes urban narrative space into natural environment stories, historical and cultural narratives, and civic life accounts. Liu Naifang highlights that this space is shaped by diverse micro-level events, such as celebrity incidents and historical occurrences. The selection of events should prioritize significant public occurrences closely related to local residents' lives and that achieve shared psychological recognition.

Focusing on Guangzhou, this research organizes historical events into key categories: significant public events impacting the community, cultural events reflecting artistic heritage, historical milestones shaping identity, local narratives capturing civic life, and folk events emphasizing community traditions. This framework elucidates the relationship between urban events and their narrative spaces, enhancing our understanding of how historical events influence Guangzhou's collective memory and cultural identity. The categories are as follows:

1. Natural Urban Events: Changhua Street is located along the Changhua River section, close to Lychee Lake Park, adjacent to the colonnaded street of Longjin West Road. The natural environment harmoniously integrates with the urban layout, making natural urban events one of its important development threads. These events reflect the changes and developments in Guangzhou.

2. Historical Events: This includes historical wars events, political events, and construction events. War and political events: The significant events recorded in the Liwan area during wartime. Numerous residences of historical figures from modern history are distributed along Changhua Street, narrating the historical stories of urban development. Construction events directly impacted the spatial morphology of Changhua Street.

3. Cultural Events: This includes cultural events, commercial events, and celebrity events. Cultural events have, to some extent, promoted social development at the time and played an important role in enriching the spiritual life of local residents. Commercial events have driven the economic development of Xiguan and improved living conditions while also introducing many new external commercial types and spatial forms. Celebrity events reflect the contributions of important figures during the development of Changhua Street (Figure 4-2, Table

4-2).

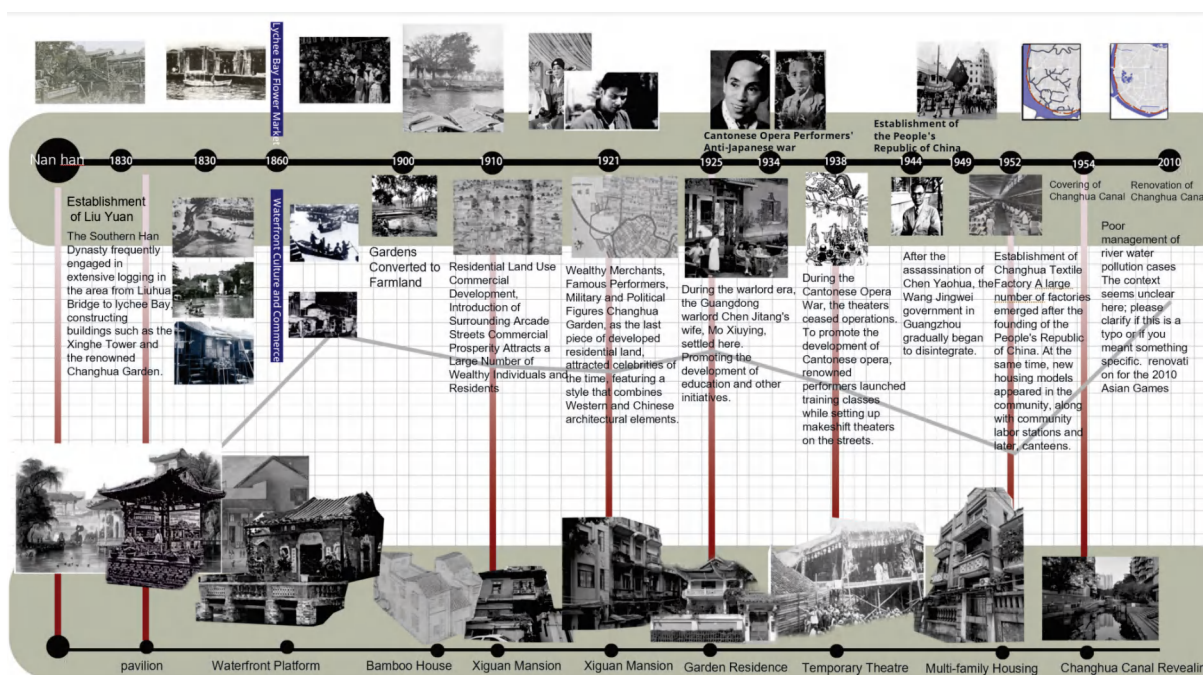


Figure 4-2 A compendium of historical events (Source: Self-drawn)

Table 4-2 Historical Events Clue Sorting (Source: Self-drawn)





Event Category	Time	Event Content	Narrative Space	historical image
Historical Event	Southern Han Dynasty	Han Dynasty had construction projects in the area from present Liuhua Bridge to Lychee Bay.	Changhua river	
Natural environmental events	Qing Dynasties	The Xiguan area is low and flat, with a special water town culture formed by the dense river and prosperous trade.	Lychee Bay	
	Qing Dynasties	the creation of the Boat Head Morning Tea and the Lychee Bay Flower Market	Lychee Bay	

Table 4-2 Historical Events Clue Sorting (Continued) (Source: Self-drawn)

Event Category	Time	Event Content	Narrative Space	historical image
Natural environmental events	1958	Lychee Lake Park established in 1958. Roads have replaced waterways	Lychee Lake Park	
Natural environmental events	After the Founding of New China	factory was built on the banks of Lychee Bay. It's very polluting. The river is converted into a culvert.	Zhongsheng factory	
	Late Qing Dynasty	2010 Asian Games Environmental Improvement of Uncovered Resurgence in Lychee Bay	Shimin Square, Dobao Square	
political event	1918	Urban development Changhua Court becomes an important stopping point for development.	Xiguan Bay & Liubo Bay	
construction event	1911	Doubao built many businesses and attracted a large number of wealthy merchants to live there.	Doubao Road & Changhua Street	
	During the War of Resistance Against Japan	Changhua Court opens up for sale to tycoons, introduces garden-feature detached houses.	Changhua Street	
political event	1960s	Changhua yuan was bombed by Japanese forces, and Shimin Bridge became a refuge.	Near Shimin Bridge	

Table 4-2 Historical Events Clue Sorting (Continued) (Source: Self-drawn)

Event Category	Time	Event Content	Narrative Space	historical image
construction event	1970s-1980s	Many factories have been established in the neighborhood. For laborers, the first community labor station comes	4 Changhua East Street	
construction event	Qing Dynasties	factory in Changhua district was later acquired by the First Chinese Medicine and converted into a nursing home	23 Changhua Street	
celebrity event	During the Republic of China	Liu Xuexun founded Guangzhou's first ticketed public theater near his Liu Garden, with easy access to water and land transport.	Theater Near Liu Garden	
celebrity event	Contemporary	Many Cantonese opera stars lived on Changhua Street as opera education	Changhua Street	
commercial event	Contemporary	Local overseas Chinese founded Dobao Kindergarten, setting a model for overseas.	Duobao Kindergarten	

In the historical image collection "A Century of Change in Guangzhou"^[80], as well as in related historical and cultural materials such as "Liwan Cultural History"^[81], "A Thousand Years of Business in Yuexiu"^[82], "The Story of Guangzhou (Episodes I-III)"^[83-85], and Old Shadows of Guangzhou^[86], historical events are organized through chronological clues, clearly demonstrating the evolution of the Liwan District, where Changhua Street is located, amidst natural, political, and social changes. Based on historical timelines, the narrative of Changhua

Street has undergone three main periods: the late Qing Dynasty, the Republic of China, and the post-establishment of the People's Republic of China.

During the Ming and Qing Dynasties, Guangzhou was the only port in China open to foreign trade. The unprecedented prosperity of Guangzhou's foreign transportation and trade propelled the social and economic development of the city. The area around Changhua Street served as the site of the Southern Han Dynasty's royal palace, with well-developed waterway transportation, numerous gardens, and a rich lychee production. As the city developed, the low-lying terrain of the Xiguan area, with its dense network of rivers, supported the livelihoods of the fishing community. Markets and workshops concentrated along the riverside, making Changhua Street a region where commerce and agriculture intertwined, characterized by numerous Xiguan Mansion and bamboo houses as the primary residential types^[87]. The narrative spaces frequently appearing in ancient maps include bamboo houses, riverside spaces, and stone-paved streets and alleys.

From the early years of the Republic of China, Guangzhou began demolishing city walls, constructing roads, building arcaded buildings, and establishing a modern transportation system that integrated land and water transport. This laid the foundation for a modern urban planning and management system, making Guangzhou the first modern "city" in the Republic of China^[88]. Changhua Street gradually evolved into a region combining commerce and agriculture, with residents primarily living in Xiguan Mansion and bamboo houses. During the Xinhai Revolution, this area became an important base for revolutionaries and played a role in anti-Japanese propaganda. At the same time, a large number of wealthy merchants and notable figures moved in, introducing Western-style buildings and garden-style independent residences, which diversified the architectural landscape. Cantonese opera flourished during this period on Changhua Street, with many famous performers settling here, promoting a deep integration of commerce and culture. As Xiguan Mansion was gradually demolished, arcaded buildings emerged as a new architectural style, and the rise of cultural facilities like tea houses and theaters further enhanced the commercial vitality of the district.

After the founding of the People's Republic of China, the government implemented urban reconstruction, improving living conditions for residents and promoting the construction of collective housing and factories. During this period, Guangzhou's urban construction was large in scale and progressed rapidly, with industries such as commercial services, finance and trade, cultural entertainment, and tourism flourishing, making it one of the fastest-growing and most vibrant cities in China at that time. Simultaneously, the old city of Guangzhou entered a phase of rapid renewal and transformation^[89].

However, with the covering of rivers and streams, environmental pollution intensified, and the urbanization process altered the original natural landscape. After the establishment of the country, the main narrative spaces of Changhua Street gradually adapted to the demands of urban modernization while continuing the spatial patterns of the Republic of China. For example, the former Zhongsheng Pharmacy was acquired and transformed into a nursing home, and industrial support facilities such as community labor stations and collective housing emerged one after another. Additionally, most garden residences were acquired by the government and converted into rental properties, further reflecting the transformation of urban spatial functions and changes in social structure.

4.1.2 Analysis of Architectural Elements Clue

Historical buildings, like frozen slices of time, carry the material memory of Changhua Street's evolution from the prosperous trade of the Qing Dynasty to its contemporary functional transformation. Through field research and literature review of the buildings in the district, they can be categorized into three main types based on a chronological sequence, with each period's architecture serving as a three-dimensional text for interpreting the narrative of the district through its unique forms, materials, and functions.

1. Late Qing Dynasty: "Indigenous Form Construction" Fostered by Trade Culture

Based on the survey of all buildings in the district, along with historical literature, the narrative clues of the constructed buildings in the area are derived in chronological order (see Figure 4-3). The primary narrative clues from the Qing Dynasty are concentrated in the traditional bamboo houses located in the northeast of the site, while the Xiguan mansion represents an architectural form developed from the trade culture of Xiguan, with the ground floor primarily used for commercial activities and the upper floors for residence. The prosperity of Xiguan's commerce during the Qing Dynasty gave rise to mixed-use buildings represented by "bamboo houses" and "Xiguan Mansion" (e.g., 120-124 Duobao Road, 6 Duobao South 6-2), forming the spatial framework of the early district (Figure 4-3, Table 4-3).

2. Republican Era: A Blend of Styles Introduced by Trade Culture

By the Republican period, the original site of Liu Garden was sold to the government for residential development, attracting many famous Cantonese opera performers and military-political figures to reside there due to convenient transportation and commerce. At the same time, the rapid development of water trade in Xiguan introduced new architectural forms, such as Western-style buildings and independent garden residences, resulting in a mixed architectural style. In the later period, collective housing also appeared, forming a diverse pattern where

"garden villas," "arcade buildings," and "collective housing" coexisted. For instance, garden villas, which are elite residences blending Chinese and Western styles, emerged along Changhua Street, influenced by military-political leaders and famous Cantonese opera performers (e.g., No. 26 Changhua Street, He Xian's former residence, Mo Xiuying's former residence). (Figure 4-3, Table 4-3). Their typical feature is a compromise style of "external Western, internal Chinese": the main structure uses a reinforced concrete frame with Western-style arches on the facade, complemented by an entrance garden.

3. Contemporary Era: "Heritage and Modern Adaptation" in Functional Transformation

After the founding of the country, the accelerated industrialization process led to the emergence of factories and high-rise residential buildings, while the waterways became polluted and covered, gradually causing the original water trade of Xiguan to disappear. Industrialization and urbanization prompted the reconstruction of building functions, as seen in the community labor stations (Changhua East Street Community Service Center) and nursing homes (Zhongsheng Pharmaceutical Factory renovation project) that reflect functional transformation. The architectural forms of the entire district have remained stable (Figure 4-3, Table 4-3).

From the "blue brick and stone foot" mixed-use buildings of the Qing Dynasty to the "reinforced concrete arches" of garden villas in the Republican period and then to the "steel-structured residences" of contemporary renewal practices, the architectural lineage of Changhua Street presents a clear evolution of technology and functional iteration.

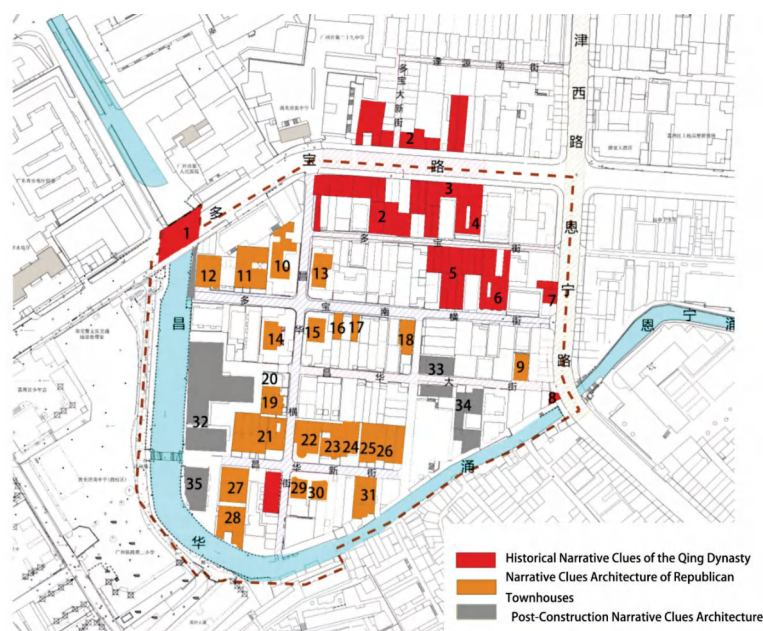


Figure 4-3 Architectural Narrative Clues (Source: Self-drawn)

Table 4-3 Architectural Narrative Clues (Source: Self-drawn)

Number	Name	Current Status & Protection Level	Floors	Narrative Clue
1	Shimin Bridge	Historically Protected Bridge	—	Important bridge over Changhua Stream, serving as a hydraulic system and a water-land transport node.
2	Bamboo Tube House	Historic Building	2-3 Floors	"Front Shop, Back Warehouse," reflecting integration of merchants and residents.
3	No. 120-124 Duobao Road	Historic Building	2-3 Floors	A series of three continuous bamboo houses, with ground floor market structures, evidence the early commercial density of the street.
5-6	No.6 and 6-2 Duobao south	Historic Building	2-3 Floors	Contains the remains of a pharmacy on ground floor, upper floor serving as a residence
7-8	No 14 and 30 Enning Road	Historic Building	2-3 Floors	Granite Columns and Colored Windows. Served as a hub for theaters and tea houses.
9	Sigelishi Studio	Historic Building	2 Floors	Early Private School Buildings in Xiguan have been lost
10	He Xian's Former Residence	District-Registered Protected Cultural Relic Unit	3 Floors	combination of Corinthian columns and Lingnan roof, reflecting the blend of Eastern and Western lifestyle
11	Chen Yue's Former Residence	District-Registered Protected Cultural Relic Unit	3 Floors	courtyard features a yellow-skinned tree planted by wife contributed to Cantonese opera
12	Gu Jiahui's Residence	Historic Building	2 Floors	European-style villa with an ancient banyan tree
13	Mo Xiuying's Residence	District-Registered Protected Cultural Unit	2 Floors	Eastern-Western building fusion, serving as living space.

Table 4-3 Architectural Narrative Clues (Continued) (Source: Self-drawn)

Number	Name	Current Status & Protection Level	Floors	Narrative Clue
14	He Chi Chang's Former Residence	District-Registered Protected Cultural Relic Unit	3 Floors	Eastern-Western building fusion, serving as living space.
15	Sun Ke's Residence	Historic Building	3 Floors	Eastern-Western building fusion, serving as living space.
16-18	He Zhaoxuan's Residence	Historic Building	3 Floors	Eastern-Western building fusion, serving as living space.
19-20	Changhua Cottage	Historic Building	2 Floors	a Republican-era villa, now serving as a historical architecture research studio
21	Chen Shuren's Former Residence	Immovable Cultural Heritage Protection Clue	3 Floors	One of the "Three Masters of Lingnan Painting," chosen as a place for retirement
22	Chen Yaozu's Residence	District-Registered Protected Relic Unit	3 Floors	Eastern-Western building fusion, serving as living space.
23-27 29-30	Officials' Residences	Historic Building	2-3 Floors	Eastern-Western building fusion, serving as living space.
28	Liang Shaojia's Former Residence	District-Level Cultural Relic Protection Unit	3 Floors	Cantonese opera artists like Hong Xian Nv serve as an important hub for Cantonese opera.
31	Yuan Family's Former Residence	Historic Building	4 Floors	Yuan family, owners of the Yuan Jilin cooling tea in the Republic of China period.
32	Zhongsheng Pharmaceutical Factory	Historic Building	7 Floors	Produced Baoji pills, witnessing the early development of modern industry in Xiguan.
33	Mill Dormitory Site	Historic Building	5 Floors	site of a private enterprise's residential units.
34	Community Labor Station	Modern Building	3 Floors	The first batch of labour service stations in the Xiguan

These buildings are not only carriers of material heritage but also witnesses to social change. The sliding doors of the bamboo houses from the Qing Dynasty narrate stories of urban commerce. The garden landscapes of the Western-style buildings from the Republic of China reflect the lifestyles of the elite. The service stations of contemporary community hubs connect the dialogue between history and reality. Through the analysis of architectural elements, the spatial narrative trajectory of Changhua Street from a "commercial settlement" to a "residential community" can be clearly delineated.

4.1.3 Analysis of Streets and Alleys Clue

1. Qing Dynasty: The waterway-oriented texture of commercial streets and alleys

Most of the area of Changhua Street was once the site of Liu Garden. The "Complete Map of Guangdong Province" from the 14th year of the Guangxu reign of the Qing Dynasty shows that Liu Garden was owned by wealthy merchants in Guangzhou at that time. Between 1887 and 1888, after Liu Xuexun returned to Guangzhou from Beijing, he built Changhua Garden here, which nearly encompassed all parts of the riverbank at the western and southern corners. This resulted in a layout where a waterway garden coexists with the streets (Figure 4-4).

The Xiguan area during the Qing Dynasty, due to its low terrain and dense waterways, formed a street pattern characterized by "streets built along waterways, with commercial and residential coexistence." The width of the streets and alleys generally ranged from 3 to 5 meters, extending linearly in an east-west direction, following the planning logic of "built along the waterways" (e.g., Duobao Street, Baoyuan Main Street). This formed a three-tiered network of "street–canal–waterway" with the tributaries of the Changhua River. The pavement was constructed with closely laid transverse hemp stone slabs. The street-facing buildings followed the "shop in front, warehouse in back" model, with shops on the ground floor and living spaces on the second floor, creating a vertical functional division of "commercial below, residential above" (Figure 4-5).

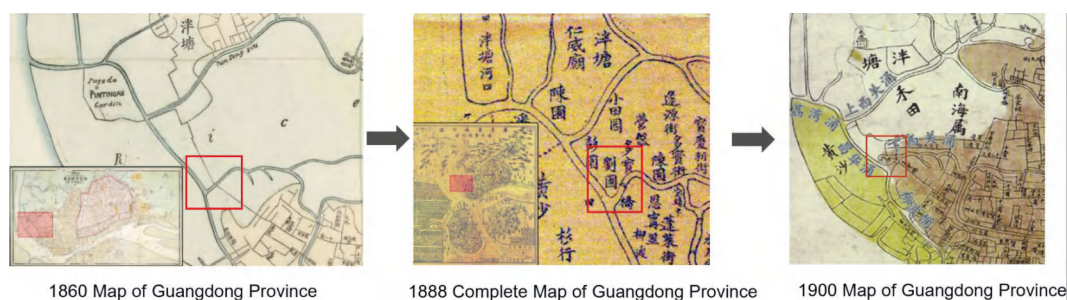


Figure 4-4 Map of Structural Development in the Qing Dynasty (Source: Self-drawn)



Figure 4-5 Narrative Clues of Qing Dynasty Streets (Source: Self-drawn)

2. Republic of China: The Expansion of Roads under the Impact of Modernity

With the municipal reforms of "demolishing city walls and building roads" and the introduction of automobile traffic, the street and alley system of Changhua Street underwent a dual transformation in scale and function. The main roads (such as Duobao Road and Enning Road) were widened to 10 to 12 meters, while the major streets and alleys (such as Changhua Heng Street, Duobao South Cross Street, and Changhua New Street) maintained a width of 5 to 7 meters. This created a grid-like block structure (Figure 4-6).

At this time, the streets and alleys expanded to the west and south, and since most of the residents were wealthy merchants and political figures, the width of the streets and alleys significantly increased. Duobao South Cross Street, extending west from the intersection of Changhua East Street, was a product of the development period of the Changhua community. The road width naturally adhered to new regulations, abandoning the use of hemp stone pavement and introducing automobiles, with setbacks on both sides of the streets and alleys, creating small courtyards. At this time, the streets and alleys served as a narrative thread for the peak of commercial development during the Republic of China (Figure 4-7).



Figure 4-6 Map of Structural Development during the Republic of China (Source: Self-drawn)



Figure 4-7 Narrative clues in the streets of the Republic of China (Source: Self-drawn)

3. Contemporary: Revitalization of Waterfront Walkways under High Density

In response to the challenges of high-density urbanization, contemporary Changhua Street has revitalized its street space through the "Uncovering and Restoring Waterways" project (implemented before the 2010 Asian Games) and the construction of a multi-level transportation network. The waterfront walkways have been revitalized by restoring the waterways and reconstructing Duobao Square and Shimin Square to establish a multi-level pedestrian network.

This has transformed the long-neglected, damp waterfront space into an open area shared by the public (Figure 4-8).



Figure 4-8 Map of contemporary structural development (Source: Self-drawn)

The Lychee Bay waterfront renovation project, an ancient tributary of the Pearl River, employs systematic measures—restoring eroded revetments, strategically optimizing greenery with native and exotic plants, and integrating a slow-traffic system with pedestrian paths and bike lanes—to revive its historic water-town ambience, echoing the classical verse "A bay of green creek water, and red lychees on both banks."

The waterfront walkway is linked to the streets and alleys via steps, forming a visual

corridor of "strolling in the streets and alleys—viewing the creek by the waterfront." This project has created a waterfront narrative public space accessible for both residents and tourists, fully reflecting the integration of water town culture and the needs of modern communities (Figure 4-9).



Figure 4-9 Map of contemporary structural clue (Source: Self-drawn)

4.1.4 Analysis of the Natural Landscape Clue

Excavating and showcasing ancient trees, story-laden trees, and distinctive plants along the path can enhance the narrative atmosphere. The primary distinction between plant landscape elements and other landscape elements lies in the dynamic spatial forms of plant landscapes, which evolve over time, fully reflecting the accumulation of temporal essence.

1. Before the Qing Dynasty: The Rural Foundation Nurtured by Water Networks.

Changhua River, as the core waterway of the southern branch of Liwan Stream, along with surrounding waterways (such as Fengqing Stream and Duobao Square Stream), forms the water town landscape of "Liji Fish Pond." The record in "Guangdong New Words," stating "smoky waters stretch for over twenty miles, with households planting lotus," depicts the pastoral scene of early dense water networks bordered by lychee trees. Within Changhua Street, there is a historically protected ancient banyan tree at the river entrance, serving as the starting point for waterborne commerce; as the largest banyan tree in the area, it has witnessed various life events in the neighbourhood. This banyan tree embodies regional culture and specific meanings, and its utilization can transform the plant landscape into an object of public aesthetic appreciation and a carrier of significance (Figure 4-10).

2. Republic of China: Ornamental Planting of "Garden Villas."

During the Republic of China period, many residents enjoyed planting trees in their

courtyards, resulting in the preservation of ancient trees in the neighbourhood gardens, such as the yellow-skinned tree planted by Chen Yue's wife in memory of her husband. Additionally, there are plants cultivated by residents along the streets, serving as one of the narrative elements (Figure 4-10). The natural landscape of Changhua Street is not a static backdrop but a narrative protagonist that deeply interacts with human activities, reflecting the functional transformation from productive planting to aesthetic and ecological planting. When residents listen to West Side nursery rhymes under the ancient banyan tree and touch lychee-picking tools beneath the lychee trees, the natural landscape becomes a "living narrator" that is readable, experiential, and transmittable. The main narrative thread consists of the preserved Qing Dynasty lychee trees along Changhua Stream, the historical trees of notable figures left from the prevalence of garden villas during the Republic of China period, and the community banyan trees preserved beneath the darkened waterways, forming a complete narrative of the stream's development.



Figure 4-10 Natural Landscape Narrative Clues (Source: Self-drawn)

4.2 Integration of Narrative Elements

4.2.1 Integration of Narrative Element Characteristics

Integrating narrative elements and characteristics allows for a deeper analysis of the relationships and organizational structures among material and intangible elements, spatial representations, and their value connotations in historical districts. Thus, these districts can be conceptualized as "spatial texts" that convey historical information. By examining historical events, architectural forms, street spaces, and natural landscapes, the regional cultural characteristics of Changhua Street can be unveiled. Employing narrative techniques enhances the site's authenticity and historical significance. Summarizing the narrative characteristics by

synthesizing elements from various periods.

1. Narrative Vocabulary Elements of the Qing Dynasty

During the Republic of China period (1912–1949), the rising influence of Western architecture spurred the proliferation of foreign-style houses, marked by evolving formal complexity. These structures integrated distinct Eurocentric elements: protruding balconies with ornate cast-iron railings (often styled in Art Nouveau or Neo-Classical motifs) added three-dimensional depth to facades, while decorative cornices inspired by classical moldings accented rooflines. Iron-framed doors and windows featuring geometric lattice patterns, and balanced ventilation with aesthetic appeal. Construction materials embraced both local and imported resources: lime-based paints in hues like brick exteriors, while advanced masonry techniques—such as herringbone-laid bricks for walls and corbeled arches for openings—introduced textural variety to roofs and facades. (Table 4-4).

In the lower West Side River area, a free linear development and interconnected narrative structure formed along the colonnades and the Lychee Bay water system. The Qing Dynasty's implementation of the "single port trade" policy stimulated rapid commercial development in the West Side, transforming the land from plains into residential areas. The Thirteen Factories, located at the confluence of multiple waterways, required the transportation of silk products to the Pearl River, making Changhua Garden an important stop. The narrative characteristics of this period are mainly reflected in thriving commerce, the blending of Chinese and Western cultures, and the initial formation of street frameworks.

2. Narrative Vocabulary Elements of the Republic of China Period

Entering the Republic of China period, the influence of Western architectural styles gradually became evident, with foreign-style houses becoming increasingly popular. At this time, architectural components became more complex, featuring protruding balconies, decorative cornices, and iron doors and windows. The primary building materials were paint and brick, with more diverse colors and masonry methods for walls and roofs. Meanwhile, streets were widened to accommodate traffic demands, but public activity spaces relatively decreased (Table 4-4) The main narrative elements included garden residences and water transport commercial factories.

The concept of "improving the city" in the late 19th century gave rise to the idea of "improving streets." Coupled with the influence of roadism" in the 1930s' "Guangzhou Public Works Implementation Plan," gardens near the riverbanks were extensively sold off for the construction of Western-style residential buildings, leading to the area being called "Little Dongshan." The narrative characteristics of this stage are reflected in the demolition of city

walls, the construction of roads, and the transformation of gardens into residences.

3. Narrative Vocabulary Elements of the Contemporary Period

After the founding of the People's Republic of China, as residents' demand for residential space grew, there was a gradual increase in collective housing and modern residential options. Additionally, the gradual improvement of public service facilities significantly enhanced the quality of community life, with labor stations and community canteens becoming important narrative nodes in the district. These material and spatial changes collectively constructed the historical narrative system of Changhua Street, showcasing the narrative development characteristics of different periods (Table 4-4).

During its development, the banks of the Lychee Bay River housed industrial facilities like the Taisheng Dye Factory and chemical plants. Their operations released pollutants, leading to severe environmental pollution, and other waterways were regrettably converted into underground channels. In 2010, in thorough preparation for the Guangzhou Asian Games, the government, with great determination, initiated a large - scale river restoration project for Lychee Bay to comprehensively enhance the surrounding environment. The narrative characteristics of this period, with new infrastructure and cleaner water, reflect a stabilization of the commercial - residential landscape, bringing a new lease of life to the area.

Table 4-4 Narrative Discourse Integration (Source: Self-drawn)

	building layout	Bamboo House,	Xiguan Mansion	Garden house, detached house	Assembly house, modern house
Instance	Photo				
plan	function	commercial-cum-housing complex	Primarily for residential purposes	living residence	Public services, nursing homes, kindergartens
facade	Street facade feature	Bamboo house in the late Qing Dynasty	Alley Style of Houses in Late Qing Dynasty	Republic of China Garden House Elevation Feature	Modern architectural features
	roofing	Double Slope, Slope Flat Roof	Cantonese style Roof	Yellow paint, red masonry	concrete
	door	Manchurian	translucent tiles	Staircase Window,	Aluminum

		window, barred door	and high - set windows	Art Nouveau Iron Window	Windows and doors
wall	structure	masonry	Mainly wooden	framework	framework
	roof	Blue-saturated canopies changed to water-brushed stone	Initially traditional timber - framed structure, then modified	Ambrosia balustrade, hilltop, curved balcony, columnar	rooftop garden
	wall material	Blue brick walls	Made of blue bricks, with wood-carved decorations inside	Yellow paint, water-brushed stone, red masonry, etc.	brick
	Foundation wall	Blue brick stone	Blue - brick base with stone feet	Water Brush Stone, Tarzan Tile	—
street	material	Mashiban Street	Mashiban Street	Stone Street	Stone Street
	scale	3—5m	3—5m	5—7m	5—7m

4.3 Analysis of Narrative Themes

4.3.1 Relationship Between Narrative Themes and Narrative Elements

The core narrative theme of Changhua Street relies on the collaborative support of four key elements: natural landscape, architecture, streets and alleys, and events. These elements are interconnected in a logical hierarchy of "material foundation - spatial carrier - spatial framework - narrative core," collectively constructing the narrative theme of Changhua Street.

Natural landscape element: the Changhua River serves as the core natural carrier, with its water network evolution (dense in the Ming and Qing dynasties, filled during the Republic, and restored in contemporary times) forming the ecological foundation for commercial activities, directly influencing the iteration of trade models, and serving as the "material foundation" of the theme.

Architectural element: The "front shop and back warehouse" of bamboo houses from the Ming and Qing dynasties, the commercial facades of arcade buildings from the Republic, and contemporary waterfront stations reflect the development of commercial culture through the forms and functions of buildings from different periods, serving as the "spatial carrier" of the theme.

Streets and alleys element: Commercial streets built along the water in the Ming and Qing

dynasties, land-based commercial streets expanded during the Republic, and the contemporary network of streets and alleys all evolved around the river structure, forming the "spatial framework" of the theme.

Events element: Events such as waterborne freight in the Ming and Qing dynasties, factory production during the Republic, and contemporary waterfront commercial activities connect the timeline of commercial culture, imbuing the theme with historical depth and human warmth, serving as the "narrative core" of the theme.

The four elements are interrelated, collectively supporting the theme of "Changhua River Commercial Culture" from natural, spatial, and cultural dimensions, making it a multidimensional narrative core that integrates history, space, and culture.

4.3.2 Summary of Narrative Themes

The spatial narrative of historical districts requires a systematic sorting of the four key elements, events, architecture, streets and alleys, and nature, to extract a core theme that encompasses the whole and avoids fragmented expression. In the research of Changhua Street, through the analysis of the temporal and spatial relationships among the elements, the core theme of "Changhua River Commercial Culture" is ultimately crystallized.

Summarizing the previous text, it is distilled that "Changhua River Commercial Culture" is the core theme of the historical context of Changhua Street, reflecting environmental and social changes during the urbanization process. As an important waterway in the Liwan District of Guangzhou, the development of the Changhua River has gone through multiple stages.

During the Ming and Qing dynasties, the Changhua River was part of the Liwan River system, with a dense water network supporting fisheries and waterborne transportation, where trade and residential life on both banks relied on the waterways, forming a unique water town commercial pattern. In the Republic period, industrialization accelerated, population growth and land demand led to the filling of the river, deteriorating water quality and damaging the ecological environment. From the 1950s to the 1970s, factory construction further exacerbated pollution, gradually eroding the natural functions of the Changhua River and altering the urban spatial pattern.

Entering the 21st century, environmental protection policies promoted the restoration of the Liwan River, and before the 2010 Guangzhou Asian Games, a project to uncover and restore the river was initiated, improving the waterways and ecological environment. Today, the Changhua River and its surroundings have become important venues for leisure and cultural activities for citizens, reflecting the balance between ecological restoration and the inheritance

of historical culture during the urbanization process (Figure 4-11).

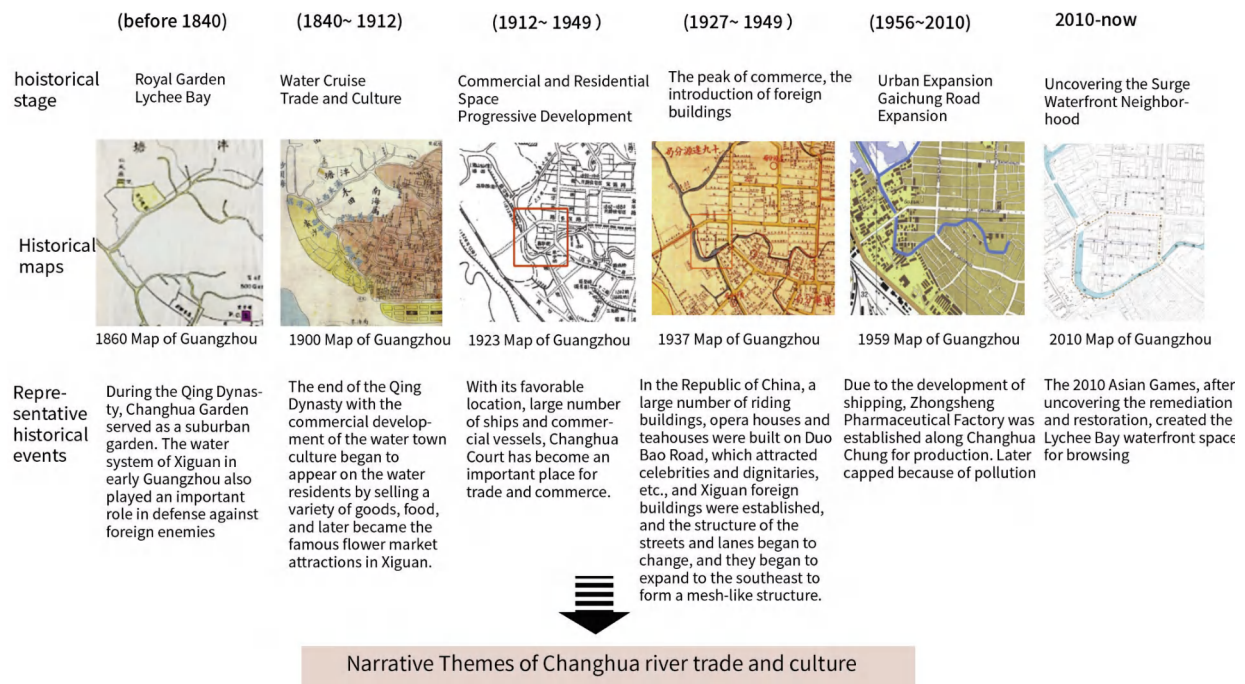


Figure 4-11 Narrative Theme of Commercial Development of Changhua River (Source: Self-drawn)

4.4 Construction of Narrative Structure

4.4.1 Extraction of Narrative Nodes

Throughout the long development of historical districts, different events have shaped various material spaces, which in turn have sparked new events and stories. However, some historical elements have gradually faded or been forgotten over time, and the process of modernization has accelerated this dissolution. Therefore, in reproducing the spatial narrative of the spirit of historical districts, it is necessary to base it on the temporal context of historical events, integrating architecture, streets and alleys, and natural landscapes to summarize and construct a clear narrative structure.

This research selects eight core narrative nodes from the four elements of nature, architecture, streets and alleys, and events based on the narrative themes and the current scene described in Chapter 3. Among these, the narrative nodes along the Changhua River mainly revolve around the natural landscape, including preserved ancient banyan trees, waterfront gardens, and covered walking paths along the river, emphasizing the continuity of ecological and cultural memory. The internal narrative nodes of the district encompass spatial characteristics from different historical periods, including stone-paved streets from the late Qing dynasty, residential buildings from the Republic era, and community service facilities established after the founding of the nation.

These narrative nodes collectively form the spatial narrative framework of Changhua Street, providing a historical basis and design guidance for the protection and renewal of the district (Figure 4-12).

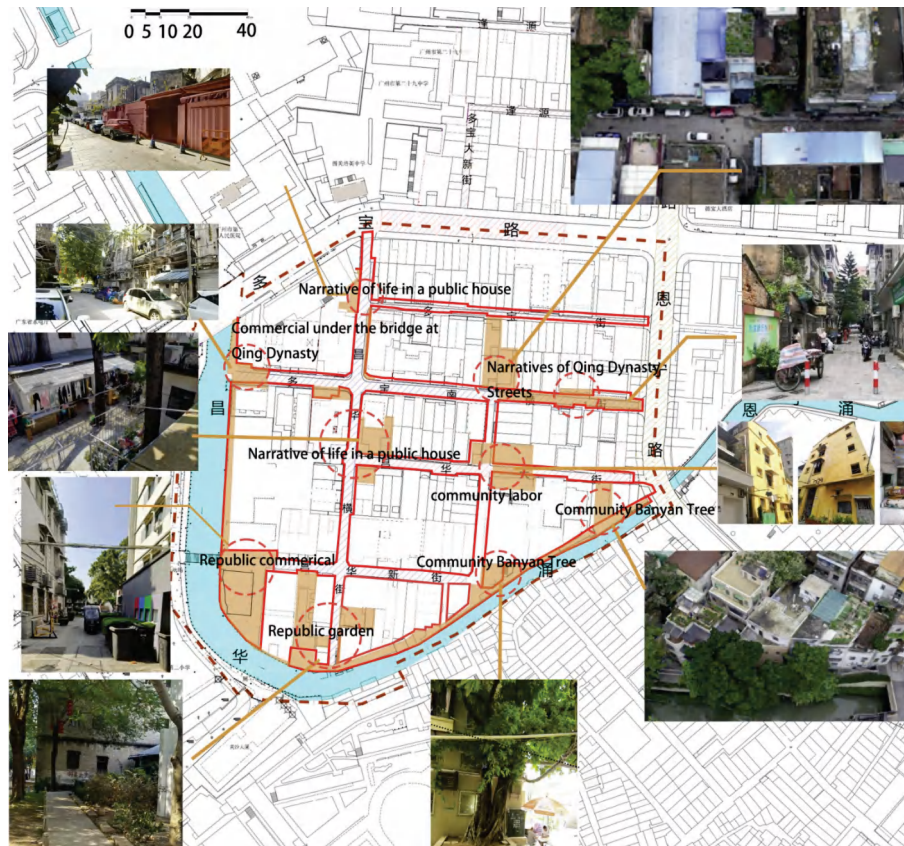


Figure 4-12 Spatial identification of narrative nodes (Source: Self-drawn)

4.4.2 Generation of Narrative Structure

In organizing the spatial narrative structure of Changhua Street, a composite structure of "waterfront narrative belt - street and alley narrative network" is constructed based on node extraction (Figure 4-13), with Changhua River as the temporal main axis and the street network as the spatial secondary axis, forming a narrative system of "mainline connectivity, branch line penetration, and node anchoring." This distills a "belt-network" narrative system, using the Changhua River as the "belt" while constructing a network structure with the framework of streets and alleys, showcasing the development trajectory of the Changhua River from the late Qing dynasty to the present.

This structure emphasizes the "readability" of the district's stories, enhancing the narrative's guidance and rhythm through the organic connection between historical events and space, deepening people's understanding and memory of the narrative content, thereby enhancing their sense of place identity.

In terms of specific narrative methods, starting from temporal and causal logic and

combining "sequential narrative" with "parallel narrative structure," a primary and secondary narrative structure is formed, including the main storyline of waterborne trade along the Changhua River and the secondary storyline of residential memories, connecting various narrative nodes and spatial areas to create a complete narrative environment that fosters a rich historical atmosphere in the district experience.

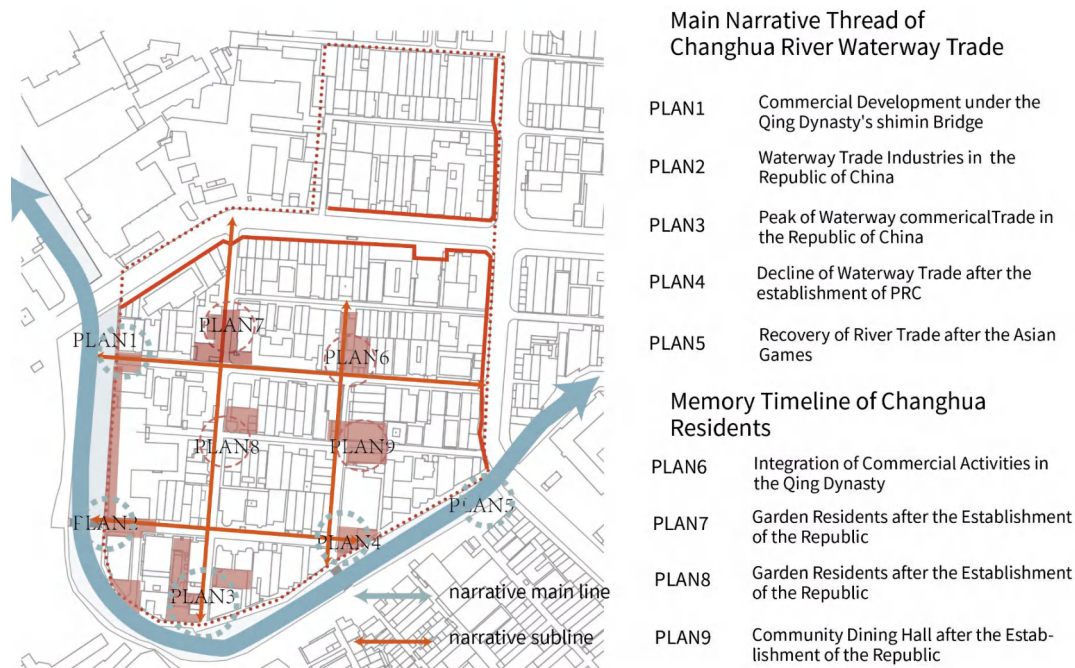


Figure 4-13 Overall Narrative Structure (Source: Self-drawn)

4.5 Summary

This chapter systematically organizes the narrative elements of Changhua Street, meticulously focusing on the selection, classification, and temporal evolution of event elements. Event elements are rigorously screened to ensure they possess public significance, uniqueness, and irreplaceability. A detailed investigation method is adopted, involving field visits, interviews with local elders, and in - depth study of historical archives to collect event elements comprehensively. Events are comprehensively categorized into urban natural, historical, and cultural types, and further subdivided into political, warfare, construction, commerce, culture, and folklore categories. Through a chronological tracing of historical events, the trade culture of Changhua River is firmly established as the main narrative theme. From the prosperous water town commerce in the Ming and Qing dynasties, to the influence of Western architecture during the Republican era, and the urban development after 1949, the narrative features are precisely defined, thereby forming a hierarchical narrative structure. By analyzing the spatial distribution of these event - related elements, their relationships with existing architectural and public spaces are clarified, which paves the way for subsequent

renewal and transformation narrative strategies, providing a solid foundation for the revitalization of Changhua Street.

Chapter 5 Renewal Strategies for Narrative Space of the Changhua District

5.1 Goals and Principles of Narrative Space Renewal

Spatial narrative in historical block renewal aims to craft spaces with narrative features, allowing visitors to grasp their significance and foster a sense of place. Drawing on case studies of diverse spatial narrative models, we've defined design principles and methods for enhancing traditional block environments. Based on prior spatial narrative theory research, this chapter offers targeted strategies for site - specific issues. The goals of historical block spatial narrative renewal are multi - faceted and in line with Guangzhou's historical and cultural protection policies. Aligned with Guangzhou's urban - rural cultural heritage preservation system, renewal must safeguard the authenticity of historical blocks, preserving both physical elements (buildings, street layouts) and intangible aspects (traditional crafts, folk activities) to let visitors experience history authentically.

5.1.1 Creating Narrative Scenes and Arranging Narrative Stories

Narrative scene creation is crucial for spatial narrativity. Changhua Street, once the site of Southern Han's Changhua Garden, boasts rich history. The "Protection, Activation, and Utilization Plan" emphasizes restoring historical elements. By analyzing material assets (late Qing bamboo - tube houses, Xiguan houses) and intangible heritage (Cantonese opera culture tied to famous performers' former homes), we use these as narrative carriers. Through conservation and adaptive reuse, we build spaces imbued with local character.

We propose adopting the BOT model. Partnering with cultural - tourism investors, they can fund facilities like an "Evolution of Guangzhou Residential Buildings" immersive hall. Leveraging VR/AR, it showcases historical scenes, such as the opulence of Changhua Garden and celebrities' lives, in an interactive format.

5.1.2 Historical Node Conservation and Innovating Narrative Expression

Changhua Street's narrative nodes are vital urban memory carriers. The area's protection plan has a tiered system. High - value sites, like the former residences of Cantonese opera star Qian Lijun and actor Zhang Yi, receive authenticity - based protection to maintain their original forms. For ordinary buildings, adaptive reuse, such as converting idle public houses into community centers, preserves exteriors while adding modern functions.

Innovative narrative approaches differ from traditional conservation: activate scenes through community events, install interactive devices for public engagement, and create a space

- time dialogue to juxtapose historical architectural styles and intensify narrative impact

5.1.3 Strengthening Urban Memory and Enhancing Participant Experience

Historical block renewal should prioritize residents while catering to tourists. In spatial design, we focus on: 1) Adapting spaces to residents' daily routines and upgrading community facilities via micro - renewal; 2) Designing tiered tourist experiences, guiding visitors through perception, cognition, and finally, cultural identification.

For memory preservation, we balance material and intangible heritage protection. Oral history archives and handicraft revival transform historical events into tangible narratives. Festival events and community building initiatives foster public - participation networks, turning the block into a vibrant cultural memory hub.^[90]

5.2 Narrative Strategy Proposed

Based on the framework of spatial narrative theory, optimization strategies for the Changhua Street district can be approached from four aspects. First, narrative vocabulary integration involves sorting and restoring the historical, cultural elements of the district, selecting necessary narrative elements, clarifying thematic spaces and atmospheres, and enhancing cultural recognition. Second, narrative context optimization utilizes landmark buildings and public art to strengthen spatial memory points as catalytic points, incorporating functions needed by residents and arranging narrative spaces. Third, narrative scene restoration involves recreating important historical events through historical building restoration and scene recreation to create an immersive cultural atmosphere. Finally, narrative path organization optimizes walking routes and touring paths to improve spatial accessibility and experiential quality, making the district's narrative more coherent and layered.

5.2.1 Narrative Themes Optimization: Clarifying Spatial Themes

(1) Clarifying Narrative Theme Spaces

Narrative is a method through which people form experiential summaries and understand the stories of spaces. Through research and analysis of Changhua Street, narrative elements within the site have been deeply explored. Over the years, Changhua Street has developed numerous unique narrative theme spaces. The focus is on grasping the core content of events by emphasizing key moments, places, and figures to present the events throughout the design scope.

The determination of narrative themes for Changhua Street is derived from the current spatial conditions and the historical events embedded within the site. It is established by

organizing the vocabulary of existing elements to determine story themes. In spatial narrative theory, the spatiality of historical structures is emphasized over temporality.

The development of history cannot be summarized by a linear timeline but is instead composed of numerous secondary narratives forming a spatial structure. In the spatial narrative design of Changhua Street, this is reflected in the development of multiple sub-narrative theme spaces under the core thematic narrative thread, enriching the core theme. Taking the commercial culture of Changhua River as the main chronological line, it overlays thematic modules such as Qing Dynasty commercial-residential culture and Republic-era western-style mansion culture, forming a spatial narrative structure of "main line + secondary lines." (Figure 5-1).

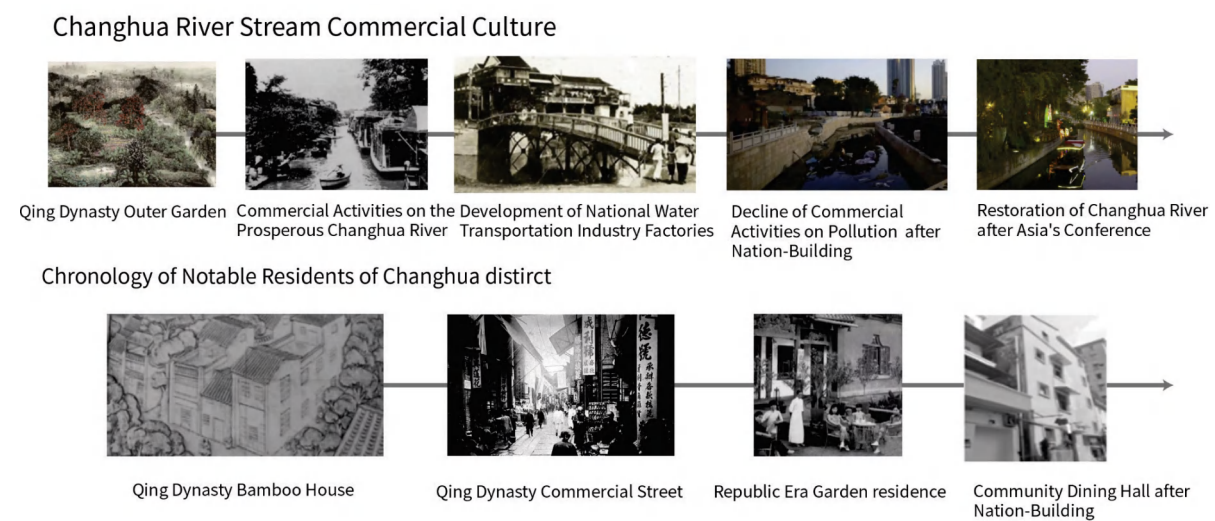


Figure 5-1 Narrative Theme Structure (Source: Self-Drawn)

(2) Narrative Vocabulary Optimization

A well-designed public narrative environment is crucial for enhancing the perceptual experience of street spaces. Jan Gehl, in his work "Life Between Buildings," points out that high-quality outdoor spaces can extend the time people spend lingering, resting, and engaging, even if the frequency of necessary activities remains unchanged. This effectively promotes spontaneous activities and activates historical spaces.

To activate the public narrative environment of Changhua Street, two main approaches can be taken:

First, Optimize Accessible Courtyard Spaces within Changhua District: By restoring the historical texture of courtyards and incorporating landscaping elements such as greenery and sculptures, the streets can be adorned to attract crowds and stimulate their interest in exploring the alleys. These measures aim to enhance the appeal of courtyard spaces, encouraging people

to linger and engage.

Second, to create distinctive public spaces. Given that nearly half of the historical buildings in Changhua District are located within enclosed areas or courtyards targeted thematic renovations can be implemented based on the functional attributes of these historical buildings. By adding elements of interest or functional facilities to the courtyard spaces, these areas can attract more activity from the public (Figure 5-2).

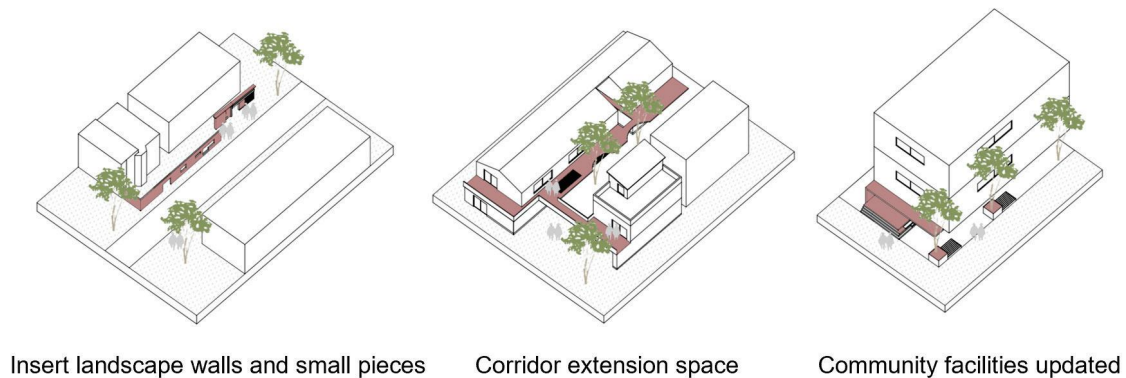


Figure 5-2 Narrative Vocabulary Enrichment (Source: Self-drawn)

5.2.2 Narrative Context Optimization: Enhancing Humanistic Elements

(1) Historical Function Replacement

Historical districts were originally residential areas for ordinary citizens, featuring a mixed layout of public spaces such as academies, shops, and theatres. The traditional life atmosphere of Luojing, represented by elements like wooden doors, blue tile roofs, old teahouses, and the Kuixing Pavilion, is embodied in the Ming and Qing dynasty streets. Old restaurants, shops, tea tables, and bamboo chairs continually reflect the most common lifestyle along Changhua Street. Therefore, guided by protective urban design strategies, the historical district is positioned primarily as a living and community cultural area.

However, Changhua Street faces the issue of a singular function. Apart from basic residential spaces, it is challenging to meet the diverse needs of visitors and residents, hindering the creation of a sense of identity through interaction and dialogue within the historical district. One approach to address this is by repurposing the interiors of historical buildings to provide new functions that align with contemporary needs, such as transforming them into art galleries, bookstores, and cafes. Additionally, designing open and flexible public spaces can facilitate cultural performances and community activities, enhancing people's experience of the historical district's cultural atmosphere and promoting interaction between people and places. This, in turn, can invigorate the historical district, improve spatial quality, and convey historical culture

and humanistic care.

Based on interviews and surveys conducted with local residents, different narrative subjects have varying functional needs that can be integrated into the historical narrative of the area. For instance, the old Xianfeng Primary School in the Xianfeng Community is centrally located and serves as a cross-generational hub, housing the community committee and acting as a center for residents' recreational activities. This site captures collective memories from the Wenfeng Xie Ancestral Hall, Xianfeng Primary School, to the community committee. By incorporating open and highly display-oriented public service functions, we can extend the memory of the site (Figure 5-3).



Figure 5-3 Comparison of Xianfeng Community Primary School Renovation (Source: Reference^[91])

(2) Narrative Space Arrangement

In the construction of spatial narratives within historical districts, it is essential to adhere to a systematic arrangement logic that organically integrates narrative nodes with spatial sequences to form a cohesive narrative structure. This structure should consider the dual dimensions of time and space, employing a composite model of linear and collage narratives. Linear narratives connect historical events through a clear timeline, establishing a rhythmic sense of narration, while collage narratives juxtapose cultural symbols from different times and spaces to create a multi-threaded dialogue.

In terms of spatial morphology design, it is crucial to transcend traditional linear pathways and construct a networked narrative carrier. For instance, taking Changhua Street as an example, three different scales of spatial renovation can be employed to maintain the readability of the historical district. At the macro scale, the preservation of the cross-shaped street layout serves as a spatial metaphor for historical continuity

at the meso scale, narrative pocket squares can be established as narrative nodes, utilizing paving materials and landscape facilities to enhance scene memory

At the micro-scale, the activation of riverside spaces and street facilities transforms them

into dynamic narrative media. Through this multi-scaled nested spatial form, not only is the readability of the historical district enhanced, but it also provides residents and visitors with a unique living and narrative experience (Figure 5-4).

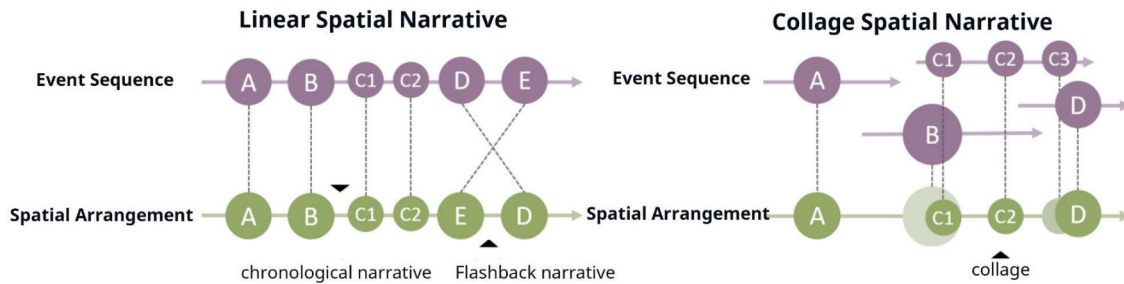


Figure 5-4 Narrative Space Arrangement (Source: Self-drawn)

5.2.3 Narrative Scene Recreation: Reconstructing Historical Events

The core of narrative spatial design lies in activating cognitive resonance among participants through the systematic integration of elements and visual representation. It is not merely a simple reenactment of historical events but rather constructs a spatial narrative with logical coherence through the composite overlay of temporal and spatial dimensions. Within this space, the linear chronological fabric of historical events intertwines with the dynamic chronological trajectories formed by people's perceptual experiences^[93] (Figure 5-5).

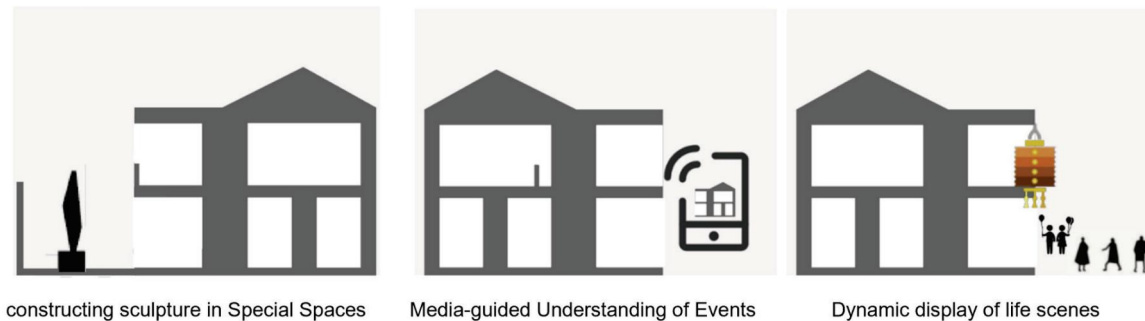


Figure 5-5 Historical scene reenactment (Source: Self-drawn)

(1) Narrative Technique: Historical Scene Recreation

Utilizing scene recreation of historical events has become an effective method aimed at helping participants intuitively perceive and deeply understand the historical development context within a district. The "Great Tang Night City" is a successful case in point. It features a series of carefully designed scenes, such as the "Miss Xiguan," portraying the elegance of Tang dynasty ladies, Li Bai exchanging verses while distributing steamed buns to promote poetic art, and the "Tang Dynasty Mystery Box," which reenacts historical anecdotes in a talk-show format. This successfully integrates history with modernity, attracting a large number of tourists

and becoming a newly emerging phenomenon (Figure 5-6).

The design of these scenes relies on the clever use of sculptures, art installations, and scene-building props. These elements serve as "props" in the multidimensional narrative space design, creating an immersive historical experience environment. Guided by these "props," visitors seem to traverse time and space, engaging in a cross-temporal dialogue with the past.



scene of Li Bai's inscription

scene of the roly - poly

scene of the Zhenguan Reign

Figure 5-6 Recreation of scenes from the Great Tang Dynasty's Night City (Source: Reference^[93])

The use of rhetorical techniques in literary narratives can significantly enhance narrative effectiveness, thereby increasing the charm and emotional impact of a work. Similarly, in spatial narratives, borrowing literary and rhetorical devices such as metaphor, symbolism, blank space, and exaggeration can enrich the "vocabulary" of the narrative. This rhetorical arrangement aims to improve the expression of narrative themes and the effectiveness of conveying narrative meanings, making spatial narratives easier to understand and interpret allowing participants to grasp the significance of the narrative more clearly.

1. Metaphor and Symbolism: As rhetorical devices in literary narratives, these terms originally refer to using language to represent things that differ from their literal meanings. In spatial narratives, this primarily involves transforming abstract meanings into tangible, perceptible material forms, emphasizing the concept of "embodying meaning in objects." It establishes a connection between material forms and human emotions, achieving a sensory consensus through individuals' existing cognitive and emotional frameworks. This relationship fosters a subtle experience, allowing spirit and emotion to resonate within people's hearts.

A typical example is the Vietnam Veterans Memorial designed by Maya Lin. The V-shaped earth formation metaphorically represents the unhealable scars left by the Vietnam War and the pain it inflicted (Figure 5-7). One wall of the memorial points toward the Washington Monument, while the other points toward the Lincoln Memorial, intersecting at an angle of 125 degrees and 12 minutes, symbolizing the historical context of the war. The names of the fallen are engraved on two black marble walls, inviting visitors to pay their respects. Through this

metaphorical approach, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial integrates the sorrow and remembrance of war into its environment, prompting profound reflection and drawing people to honour the fallen heroes and contemplate the meaning of life.

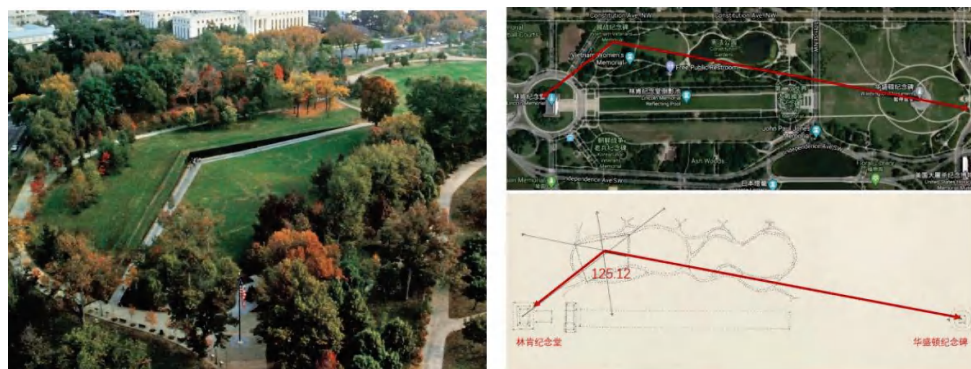


Figure 5-7 Application of metaphorical techniques (Source: Reference^[98])

2. Contrast and repetition have long been traditional techniques in both Eastern and Western cultures to enhance the orderly sequence of space. Taking the Sacred Way of the Ming Xiaoling Mausoleum as an example, the repeated arrangement of stone statues and cypress trees along the central axis not only reinforces the guiding function of the pathway but also creates a rhythmic spatial pattern (Figure 5-8). A similar principle can be observed in the gardens of the Palace of Versailles, designed by French landscape architect André Le Nôtre, where the arrangement of trees symbolizes the highest authority of military power. The dramatic contrast between the vertically emphasized tree clusters and the horizontally intricate embroidered flower beds reflects the designer's meticulous narrative strategy.

In historical sites, the layout of roads can also utilize repetition to strengthen the spatial framework. At key landscape nodes, thematic consistency can be achieved through the repeated use of homogeneous elements, while contrasting techniques can highlight differences between various categories.



Figure 5-8 Use of repetition and contrast (Source: Reference^[94])

3. Negative space is a rhetorical technique rich in Chinese characteristics, particularly prominent in Chinese painting, known as "Negative Space as Black." The negative space in a

painting can evoke images of the sky or a body of water, and although the artist does not depict these elements with brushwork, it achieves the state of "not a word is written, yet all the charm is captured." The significance of negative space in the spatial narrative is more complex than "Negative Space as Black." It is not merely an expressive method but a profound way of thinking, embodying the aesthetic concept of "less is more."

In spatial narrative, the technique of negative space mainly manifests as a deliberate disruption of linear continuity and intentional gaps, as well as a high-level abstraction of structural forms and thematic suggestions. This design creates a sense of visual emptiness and cognitive leaps, thereby enhancing the depth of meaning and constructing a space for imaginative extension, stimulating the participants' sense of engagement.

For instance, in the Da Jiao historical district, a square remains with only remnants of walls, broken tiles, and old objects, which condense into precious cultural symbols. The designer utilizes the existing space's negative space to integrate the ground display area, the square, the elevated visual corridor, and the upper mirrored viewing platform. The materials for the ground display space are sourced entirely from the site and personally selected by the designer, who arranges the old objects for exhibition as a display of historical traces. The water feature square is closely connected to the corridor space, providing a gathering function for the flow of people (Figure 5-9).

Through this technique of negative space, the space not only conveys the weight of history and the depth of culture but also offers visitors a rich opportunity for reflection and emotional resonance, prompting them to engage in a more profound, imaginative, and experiential journey within this environment.

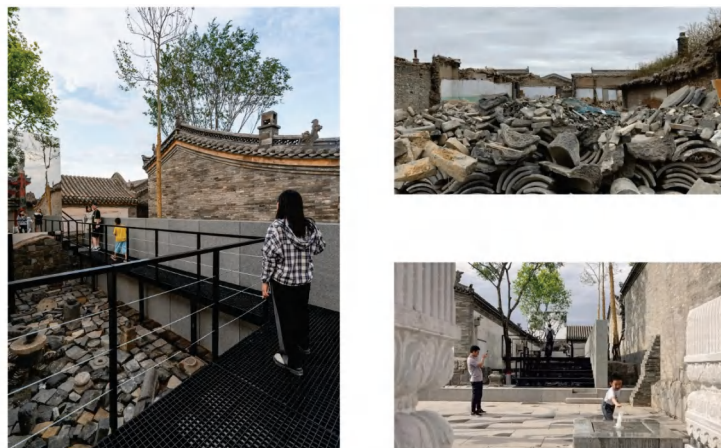


Figure 5-9 Square Renovation in Tai Miu Kok Historic District (Source: Reference^[95])

(2) Inclusion of Festivals and Events

To enhance the memory of spatial scenes and strengthen local cultural identity, a series of events can be organized, including themed festivals, artistic exhibitions, celebratory performances, craft displays, and folk activities. For instance, the "Shangsi Spring Return and Beidi Birthday" event in Liwan District lasts for three days and encompasses various activities such as the Shangsi outing custom, the Beidi birthday folk celebration, unique folk activities in puntoon wuyue village, long-table banquets, and cultural art exhibitions. This event cleverly integrates Guangzhou's traditional folk culture with the distinctive charm of the Xiguan area of Guangfu (Figure 5-10).



Figure 5-10 Xiguan ministry activities (Source: Reference^[85])

Additionally, event displays are adopting new formats. For example, the Italian Chocolate Festival in Turin employs pop-up markets to quickly attract residents and tourists to temporary venues. These spaces are often flexible in size and shape, frequently appearing in squares, parks, and other public areas.

The pop-up model provides a recognizable spatial identity for the district, allowing for rapid design and construction while enabling repeated use. This approach meets various situational needs and recreates festive scenes while also introducing interactive activities. As a result, it facilitates the reproduction of celebratory spaces, enhancing engagement and participation in the event (Figure 5-11).

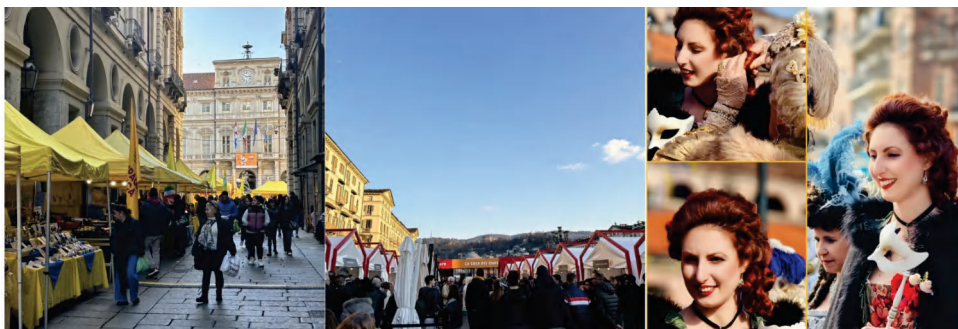


Figure 5-11 Pop-up chocolate festival (Source: Self-drawn)

5.2.4 Narrative Pathway Organization

(1) Optimizing Accessibility of Narrative Spaces

In Changhua Street, narrative scenes from storytelling remain scattered, lacking systematic connections. Linking narrative elements to restore organic relationships can guide visitor routes, create immersive experiences via historical clues, and form complete narrative logic for clearer cultural understanding.

However, Not all narrative spaces require high accessibility. Commercial areas, event venues, and exhibition halls demand stronger accessibility as central nodes in movement networks, while residential-oriented social spaces—concealed and private—function as extensions of homes, needing no special accessibility enhancements and playing secondary roles in circulation.

For example, the Campo Carleo walkway reconstructs an original urban route traversing a square, connecting it to the ancient Roman slums of Rione Monti or Suburra while providing accessible pathways into the site. The adjacent commemorative wall holds unique and significant archaeological value. Although the walkway runs alongside the ancient wall, it remains spatially separate. Designed as a folded strip, it embraces the wall to establish an intimate yet subtle relationship with the monument. This design contrasts sharply with the surrounding ruins and distinguishes itself from the ancient wall in material, structure, and form, functioning as an independent contemporary element. The new flooring aligns with the original wooden floor constructed during the Flavian Period, integrating with surrounding existing structures and providing access to service corridors, entrances, and passageways (Figure 5-12).



Figure 5-12 Construction of a new pedestrian corridor in the Roman Colosseum (Source: Reference^[96])

(2) Guide System Implementation

In Changhua Street, narrative scenes created by storytelling techniques often lack systematic coherence. This study addresses this by introducing the "Memory Path" wayfinding system—a thematic narrative pathway using red sandstone markers to organically connect narrative elements.

Through a thoughtfully designed wayfinding system, not only are the connections between narrative elements re-established, but it also effectively guides visitors in their exploration sequence and routes. This system actively engages visitors, allowing them to immerse themselves in the historical narrative (Figure 5-13), thereby forming a relatively complete and easily perceptible narrative logic and order.

In the renovation and revitalization of Changhua Street, wayfinding models and signage can be used to define narrative pathways. Integrated into the urban environment, these elements boost the district's narrative quality and enliven its cultural ambiance. As a result, visitors can understand the "stories" the space tells, fostering a deeper appreciation of its cultural value.

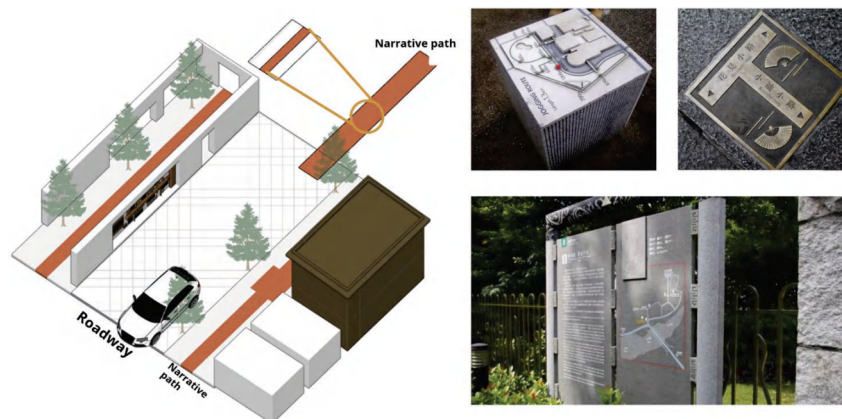


Figure 5-13 Guidance system (Source: Reference redrawn^[97])

5.3 Summary

This chapter examines narrative space renewal strategies for the historical district of Changhua Street, establishing clear objectives and guiding principles—including optimizing public environments, safeguarding key nodes, and reinforcing urban memory—as a framework for proposed strategies. The chapter outlines four core narrative strategies: (1) optimizing narrative themes by identifying core historical and cultural themes to enhance engagement for residents and visitors; (2) revitalizing narrative contexts through integrating modern elements with historical narratives to improve relatability and accessibility; (3) restoring narrative scenes via physical restoration of key historical sites to preserve ambiance and foster tangible connections to the past; and (4) strengthening narrative pathways by designing navigable routes with clear wayfinding and signage to enhance narrative coherence. These strategies aim to integrate spatial narrative elements, amplify historical atmosphere, and elevate cultural appeal, enabling the district to showcase unique charm, promote heritage, and achieve revitalization. The chapter provides a foundation for applying these strategies in subsequent sections to ensure purposeful and effective renewal of Changhua Street.

Chapter 6 Application of Narrative Spatial Renewal in the Changhua District

6.1 Design Framework

Based on the previous diagnosis of site issues, this research proposes enhancement strategies for narrative pathways through spatial structure optimization. By integrating narrative vocabulary, weaving narrative networks, reshaping narrative scenes, and constructing a sustainable systemic narrative pathway, a composite narrative system characterized by diversity, continuity, interactivity, and sustainability is developed. Changhua Street possesses rich historical narrative resources that should be showcased through clear themes and multidimensional layers. The narrative context can be optimized by linking temporal and spatial cues and activating scene nodes to reproduce narrative experiences. Additionally, accessibility and wayfinding systems are improved in historical narrative spaces to enhance spatial adaptability. This strategy aims to elevate spatial quality, cultural vitality, and dynamic adaptability, promoting the effective application of narrative strategies within the district. (Figure 6-1).

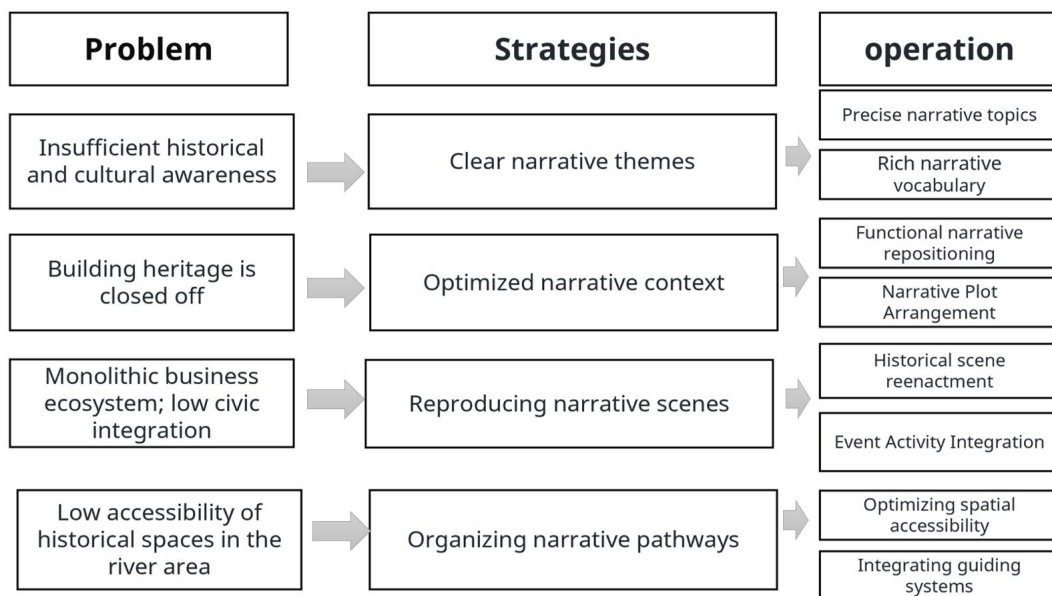


Figure 6-1 Narrative Strategy Framework Diagram (Source: Self-drawn)

6.2 Overall Design

Based on the sorting out of the overall narrative structure, the structures that need to be renovated are determined. Through the renewal of buildings, streets, public spaces and functions, the narrative roads within the block are reorganized to connect the narrative nodes. At the same time, according to the potential narrative buildings, alleys and natural landscape

clues screened out in Chapter 4, they are renovated. Finally, the narrative theme of the commercial and trade culture of Changhua Yong is sorted out. Under the guidance of the planning documents, it is concluded that the buildings in the core area for reconstruction should not exceed 12 meters, and the compatible buildings should be properly utilized for the organization of narrative streets. Through building renewal and public space organization, the overall planning structure is determined (Figure 6-2, Figure 6-3).

The master plan for the preservation and regeneration of the Changhua historical district (Figure 6-4, Figure 6-5), as well as the effect of the overall transformation of the demonstration (Figure 6-6). The following sections will demonstrate the application of the four strategies outlined in Chapter Five.

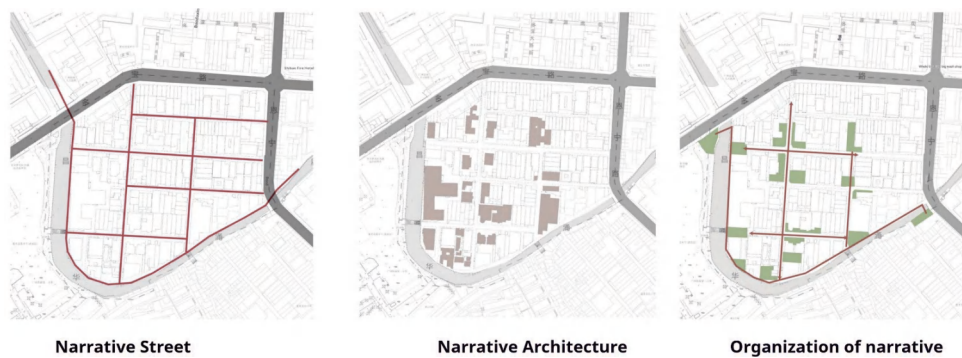


Figure 6-2 Organization of the narrative structure of Changhua historical district (Source: Self-drawn)

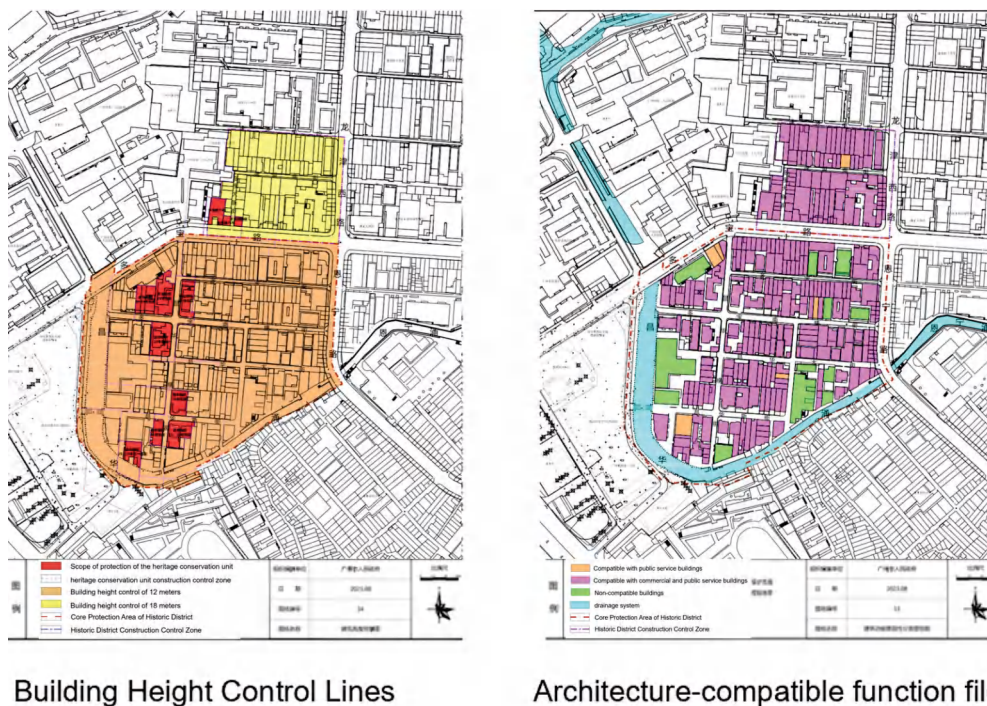


Figure 6-3 Planning Control Documents (Source: Planning Documents)



Figure 6-4 Site status before renovation (Source: Self-drawn)

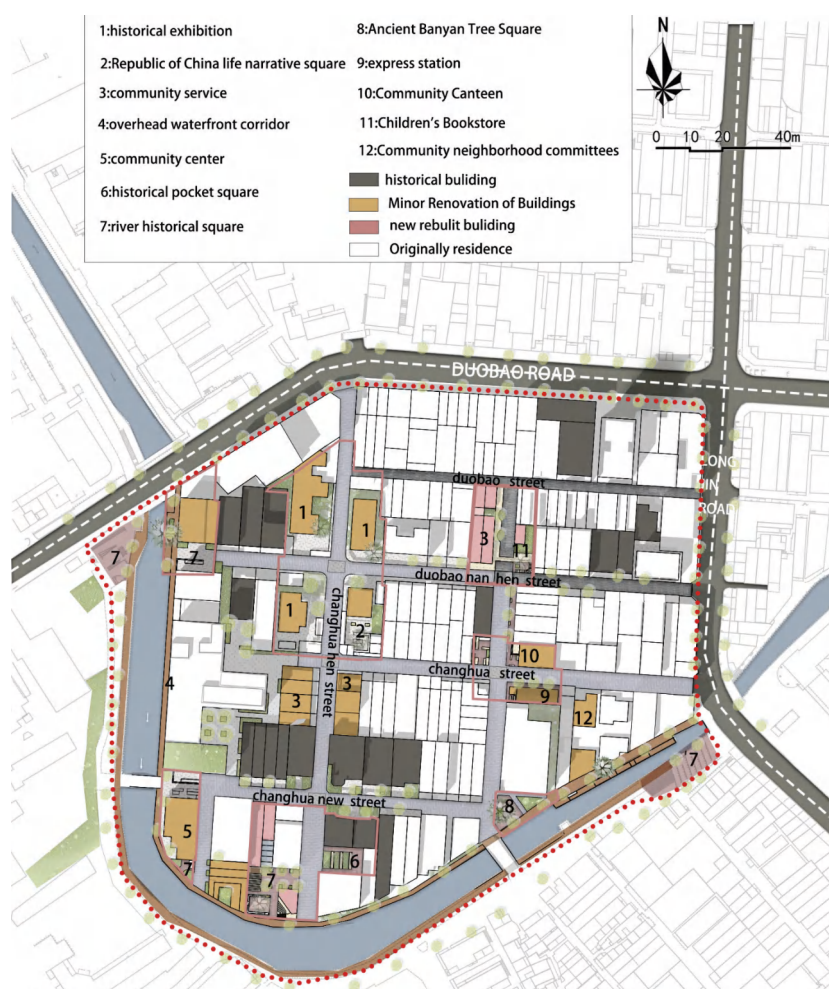


Figure 6-5 General plan after remodeling (Source: Self-drawn)



Figure 6-6 Axonometric rendering (Source: Self-drawn)

6.3 Application of Narrative Strategies

6.3.1 Narrative Themes Optimization

(1) Clarifying Distribution of Narrative Themes

The themes of Changhua Street need to be determined during the integration of historical and cultural connotations with spatial resources. A comprehensive analysis of the existing historical context and spatial resources will help to refine the narrative themes. Ultimately, the core theme will be established as the commercial and cultural heritage of Changhua, combined with site characteristics and spatial forms. Given that the river features a linear spatial characteristic, the overall narrative will primarily present the river display area, with commercial and residential culture and garden mansions serving as secondary narrative threads. (Figure 6-7).

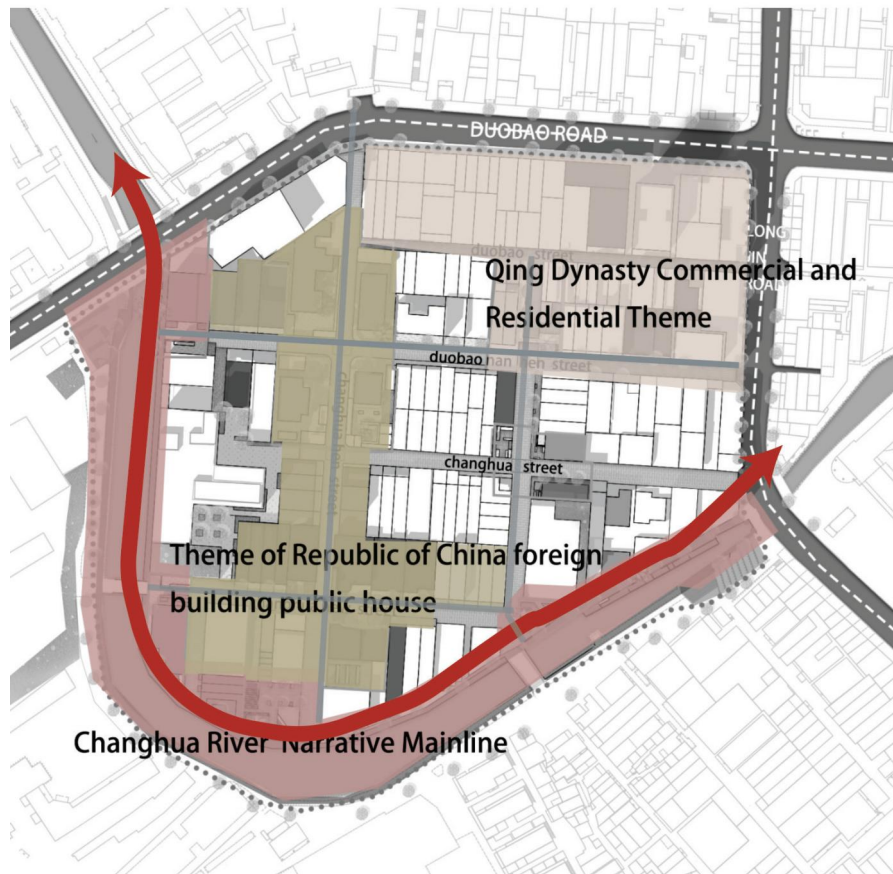


Figure 6-7 Spatial distribution of narrative themes (Source: Self-drawn)

(2) Narrative Vocabulary Optimization

The weak historical perception of Changhua Street is also attributable to its monotonous vocabulary. Specifically, the basic infrastructure like signs, benches, and trash bins, which should offer comfortable resting havens and social interaction chances, fails to evoke historical resonance. Although these elements meet functional requirements, they lack the capacity to function as narrative vocabulary. Through a more deliberate choice of materials, harmonious colours, and evocative symbols in their design, they could better blend with the overall historical environment. Moreover, the addition of elements such as pergolas, small installations, and feature walls can vividly narrate the unique themes of the district. For example, within the district, there are existing yet under-utilized historical walls, neglected pocket squares, and poorly maintained trash stations that could be transformed into integral parts of the historical narrative. (Figure 6-8).

Sculptures and small installations can be used to recreate historical figures and the events associated with them, while feature walls can display cultural and background information related to historical stories. Enriching the narrative vocabulary is beneficial for recounting events and utilizing space to showcase them, enhancing the experience for residents and

visitors. This allows for a more direct understanding of the historical district's essence and lays the foundation for creating a unique narrative atmosphere (Figure 6-9).



Figure 6-8 State of the Narrative Environment (Source: Self-drawn)

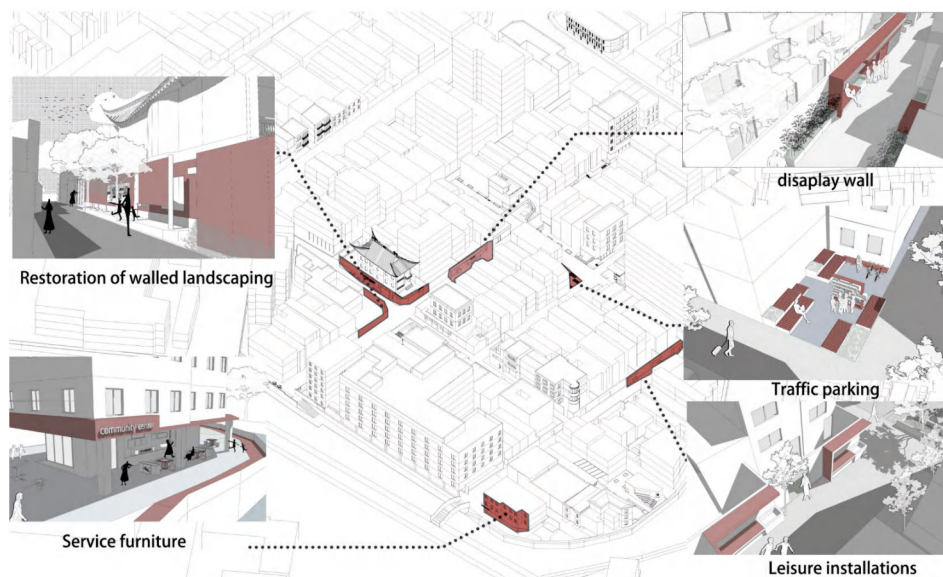


Figure 6-9 Narrative discourse rich (Source: Self-drawn)

Similarly, the pavement serves as an important interface in the urban landscape and influences people's overall narrative perception of Changhua Street. Currently, four different

types of pavements have been identified: cobblestone, concrete, and brick roads, which lack a unified narrative coherence. By conducting a historical image survey, we can standardize the narrative pathways for pavement materials, dividing them into three types: Qing Dynasty cobblestone, Republican-era modern stone paving, and ecological natural paving along the lake with brick roads. This approach aims to achieve harmony between old and new elements (Figure 6-10).



Figure 6-10 Narrative paving after remodeling (Source: Self-drawn)

6.3.2 Narrative Context Optimization

(1) Historical function replacement

The narrative subjects of Changhua Street are local residents. It faces issues such as a single internal function and severe homogeneity. There is a lack of public service functions and various life service functions, and most public space nodes are idle. According to the previous investigations and interviews of the historical block, it is known that the block mainly lacks cultural exhibition and community service functions. According to the planning and protection documents, the lower part near the river is the core area, and the red - marked buildings are cultural relics protection structures whose forms cannot be renovated (Figure 6-11).

Research and interviews conducted within the historical district reveal a notable deficiency in cultural exhibition and community service functions. To address this gap, it is essential to integrate cultural exhibition capabilities into the renovation of historical and cultural heritage buildings. This could involve the incorporation of digital exhibition halls and cultural experience spaces that present history and culture in innovative and engaging ways, thereby enriching the overall visitor experience.

The functional areas of Changhua Street can be divided into three main sections: the historical Xiguan living narrative area to the west, the waterfront leisure area along the lake,

and the community living narrative area to the northeast. Through careful planning, we can identify corresponding narrative nodes within each area, facilitating connections among the zones. This approach not only enhances the vibrancy of Changhua Street but also strengthens the community's cultural identity, ensuring that the narratives of local residents are preserved and celebrated.

During the renewal process, it is of utmost importance to meticulously enhance the construction of supporting service functions. From a tourist perspective, well - equipped public service facilities such as modern tourist service centers, state of the art mobile exhibition discussion rooms, neatly arranged convenience stores, inviting community lounges, and clean public restrooms should be thoughtfully introduced to significantly improve the visitor experience. Simultaneously, from the community residents' perspective, essential facilities such as spacious community activity centers, affordable community canteens, well - stocked community libraries, lively open - air historical activity squares, and cozy chess and card rooms should be carefully added to comprehensively meet the daily activities and rich cultural needs of residents. This dual approach will not only strongly support the sustainable development of the historical district but also actively foster a warm and vibrant community atmosphere that benefits all (Figure 6-12, Figure 6-13).



Figure 6-11 Changhua historical district protection line (Source: planning documents)

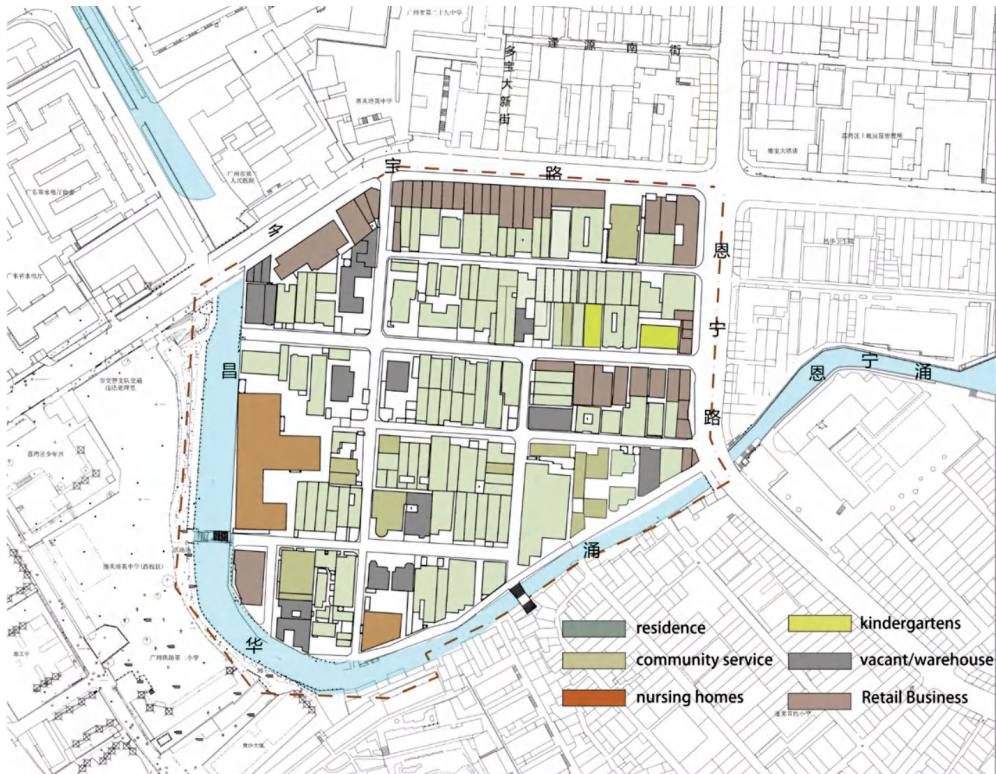


Figure 6-12 Narrative Function Modification before (Source: Self-drawn)

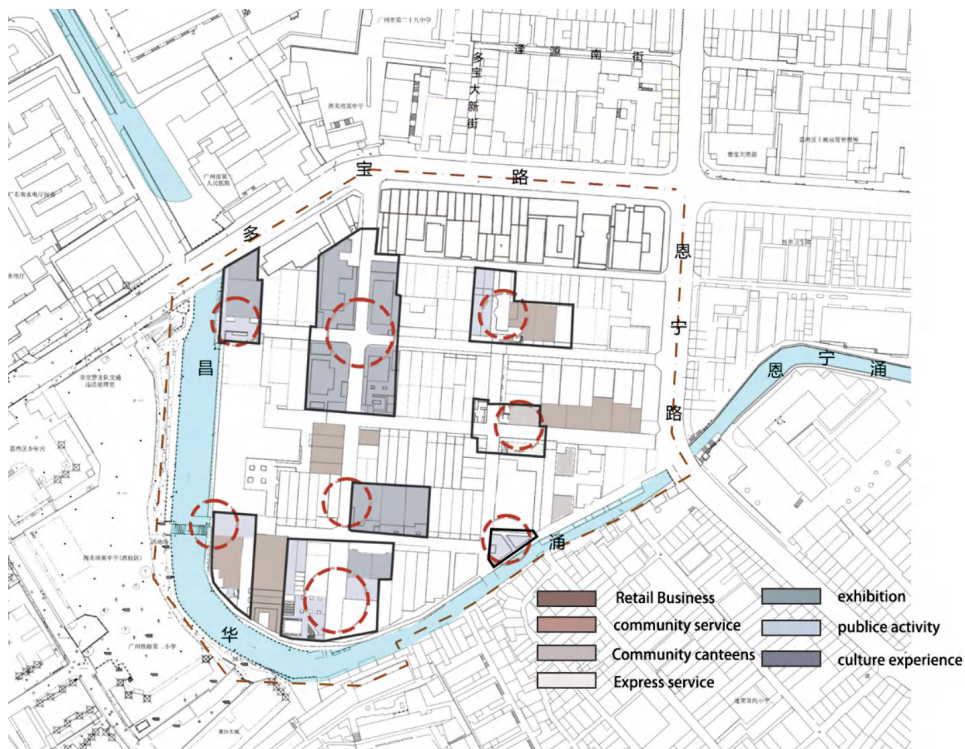


Figure 6-13 Narrative Function Modification (Source: Self-drawn)

(2) Narrative Structure Arrangement

In the urban renewal of Changhua Street, it is vital to preserve the narrative imagery structure developed over a century in the Changhua yuan community. Achieving this requires

adjusting urban spatial elements and selecting activities that guide development. The disappearance of certain elements has weakened the public perception of the city's cultural context, making the restoration of lost memory landscapes—such as cobblestone paths, waterways, and commercial routes—essential for enhancing the district's narrative.

To improve the riverfront narrative axis, enhancing the continuity and identity of its landscape is crucial. While the lakeside square attracts many visitors, historical heritage spaces with "urban living room" functions remain underutilized and need development. Creating open spaces that blend cultural characteristics with gathering and leisure functions is important. Utilizing traditional materials and craftsmanship alongside modern features can enhance these areas. Key nodes can serve as landmarks, incorporating sculptures of literary figures and installations to strengthen connections within the district and foster a sense of historical belonging among residents. (Figure 6-14).



Figure 6-14 Narrative context weaving (Source: Self-drawn)

1. Main Narrative Line Arrangement: Based on functional renovations and narrative theme sorting, the main narrative line is set as the Changhua River Trade and Water Transport Narrative. It starts at Shimin Bridge, a key to the river's commercial history. Shimin Bridge isn't just a structure; it holds historical significance, having seen important events. It witnessed busy underwater commerce and the founding of nearby educational institutions. Lychee trees on the banks symbolize prosperity, and historical residences along the waterfront add depth. These elements form the thematic base of the starting space, laying the groundwork for exploring the

area's commercial and cultural development.

Subsequently, the story transitions naturally through the elevated waterfront living space to narrate the development history of riverfront factories. As the plot progresses, the narrative reaches its climax—showcasing the prosperity of the waterfront space. Then, using the community banyan tree square as a transition, the narrative ultimately arrives at the modern Duobao Living Square, completing the overall process of the Changhua River water transport commercial narrative (Figure 6-15).

2. The secondary narrative line: using a networked, timeline - based structure centered on daily life. It starts with Qing - Dynasty cobblestone street events, where commerce boomed and alleys were linked. In the Republican era, it focuses on the living scenes in famous figures' residences. Post - founding, via alley connections, it tells of the community elder dining hall, showing community life changes. Finally, the narrative ends at the community banyan tree square, a place for daily exchanges and residents' memories, symbolizing life's continuity (Figure 6-16)

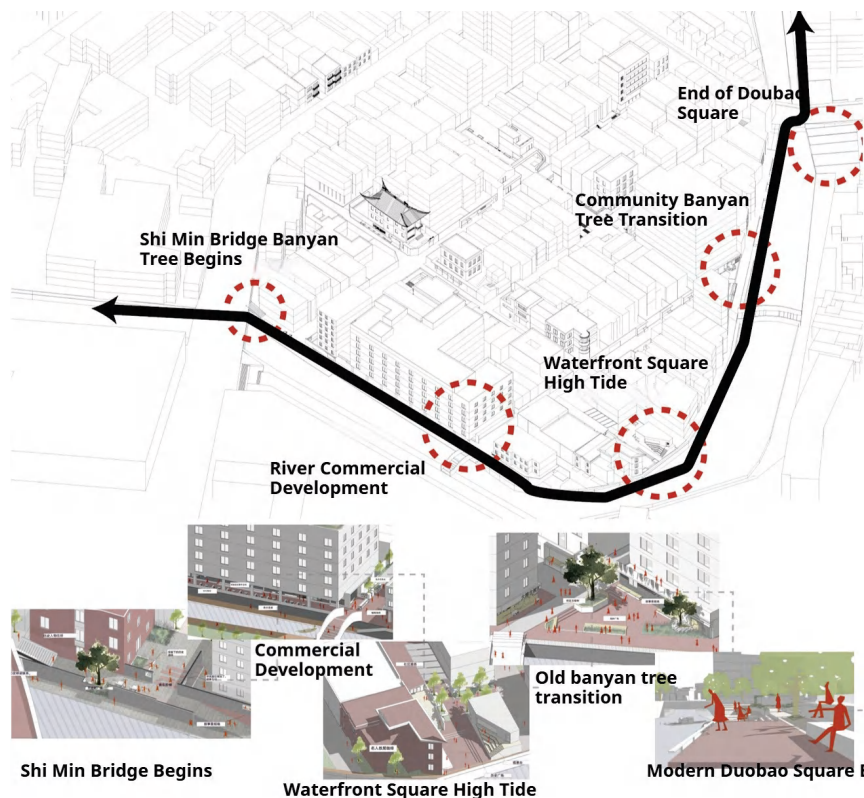


Figure 6-15 Changhua River Water Transport Commercial Culture Main Line (Source: Self-drawn)

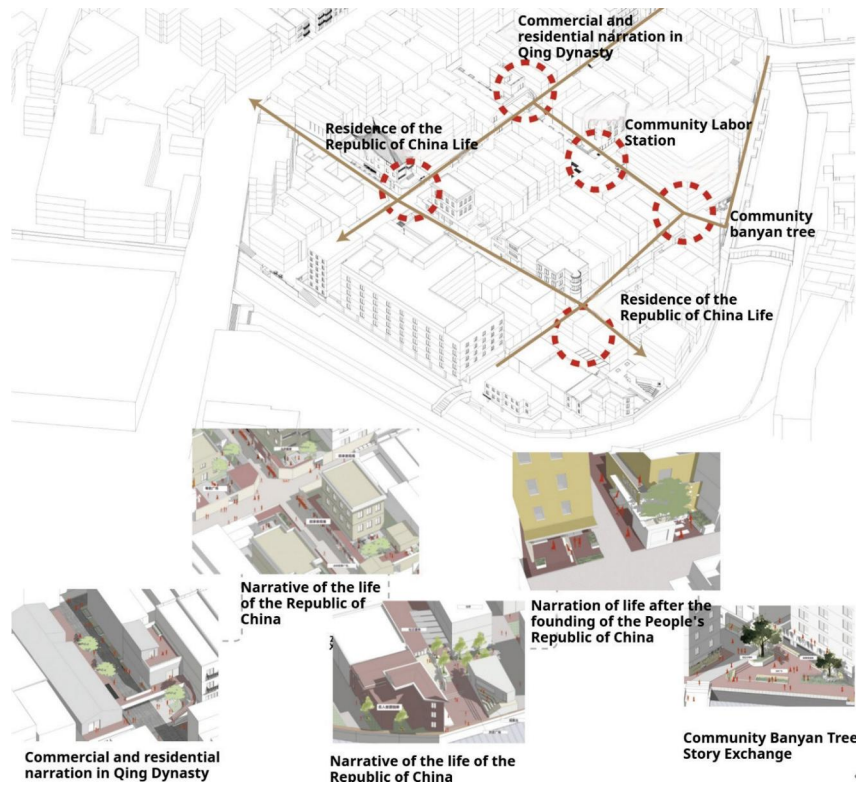


Figure 6-16 Residents' Daily Life Narrative Subline (Source: Self-drawn)

6.3.3 Narrative Scene Creation

The reproduction of narrative scenarios involves presenting intangible event memories through materialized means, condensing them into concentrated "scenes" within spatial settings. These scenes serve to imply narrative texts within the district. The process of narrative spatial design aims to awaken the audience's awareness and visually interpret stories through the organization and design of spatial elements. Its core lies in superimposing two dimensions of time to convey narratives. As a historical and cultural district, Changhua Street is subject to protection zoning and construction control requirements. In accordance with the Regulations on the Protection of Famous Historical and Cultural Cities, Towns, and Villages and local protection plans, the renovation of historical buildings must adhere to the principle of "prioritizing protection and rational utilization." Transforming Gu Jiahui's former residence into a music memorial hall aligns with policy guidelines for the (active utilization) of historical buildings, as it preserves the original architectural structure and style while reasonably adjusting internal functions, thus demonstrating policy feasibility.

The design of narrative spaces has a crucial role. It aims to jolt the audience from passivity and awaken awareness. By arranging architecture, signage, etc., it visually interprets stories, like using wall murals to spotlight significant moments.

(1) Narrative Techniques for Creating Narrative Scenes

1. Symbolism: The ancient banyan tree symbolizes the beginning of the Lychee Bay narrative. Based on the narrative nodes summarized above, the narrative strategy is presented in more detail. Firstly, at the entrance of the Changhua River, the ancient tree square environment is rather chaotic, with dilapidated and long - abandoned buildings. Overall, there is a conspicuous lack of unity and recognizability. The square features historical elements such as ancient banyan trees, the former residence of Gu Jiahui, Changhua River, and Shimin Bridge, yet the connections between these elements are tenuous, failing to form a cohesive historical narrative (Figure 6-17, Figure 6-18).



Figure 6-17 Status of space along the lake (Source: Self-drawn)

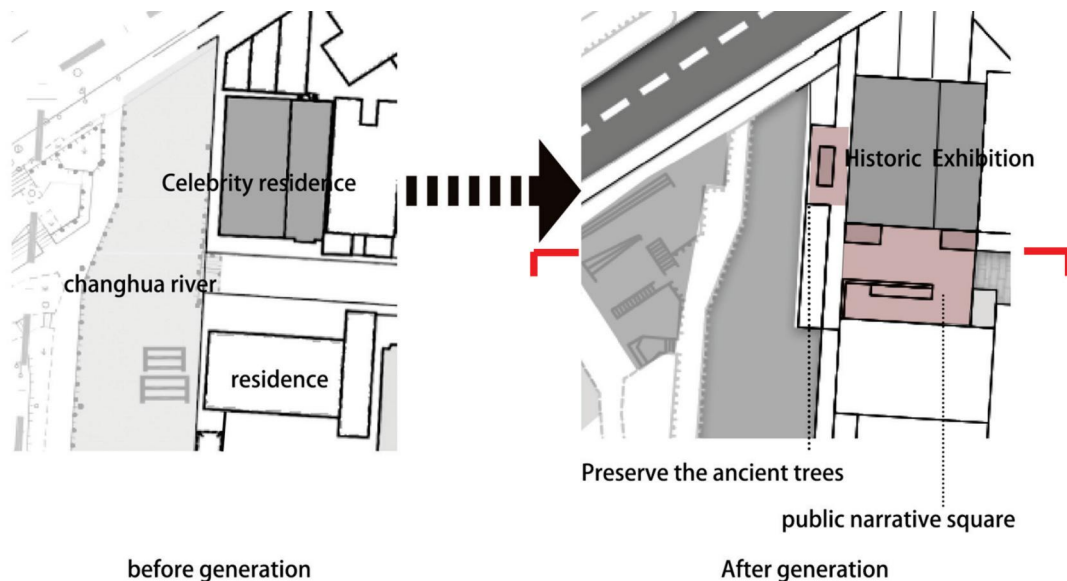


Figure 6-18 Before and after renovation plan of the space along the lake (Source: Self-drawn)

Therefore, during the site renewal, a comprehensive transformation plan is in place for the area. The former residence of Gu Jiahui, with its rich historical significance, will be meticulously converted into the Gu Jiahui Music Memorial Hall, preserving and highlighting the cultural legacy associated with the place. Around the ancient trees, comfortable leisure seating will be artfully arranged. These ancient trees, standing as silent witnesses to history,

when combined with the seating, will vividly symbolize the prosperous commercial scene that once thrived along the banks of the Changhua River. Moreover, a spacious and inviting leisure waterfront platform will be constructed. This platform will not only enhance interaction among visitors, allowing them to engage in conversations and enjoy the scenery, but also form a crucial link to Shimin Bridge. By creating narrative nodes along the lakeside promenade, it will serve as the perfect starting point for recreating the bustling scenes of the Changhua River dock, subtly hinting at the commencement of the long - standing waterborne trade story of the Changhua River (Figure 6-19).

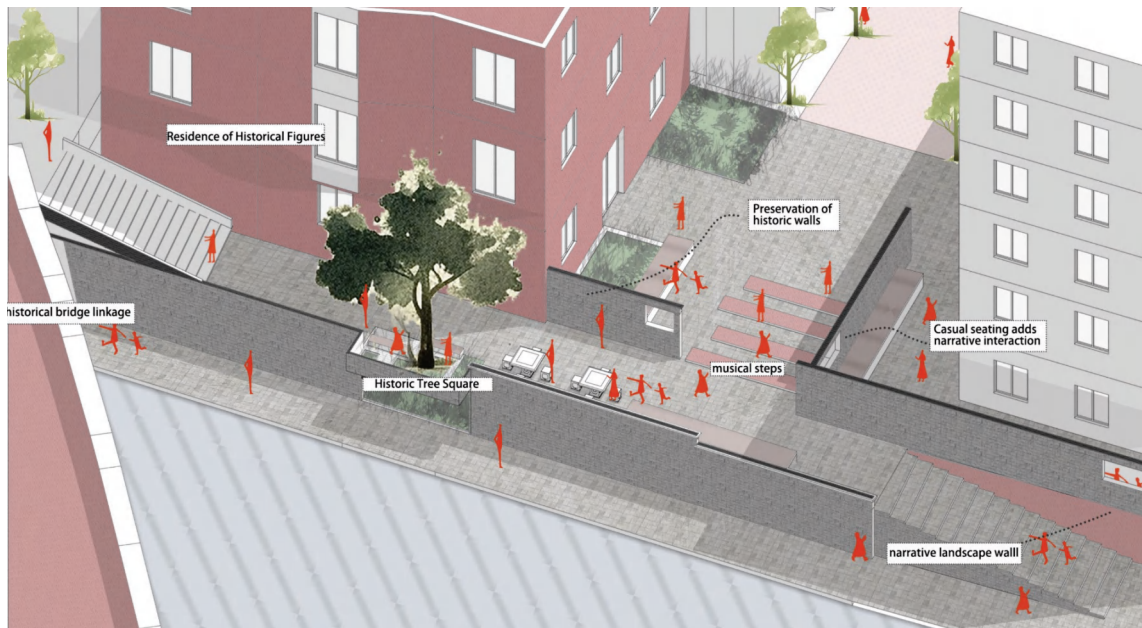


Figure 6-19 Waterfront Exhibition Narrative square (Source: Self-drawn)

From the perspective of the waterfront square's cross-section, the line of sight converges toward the riverbank, framed by the ancient banyan tree, which serves as a focal point. The narrative elements related to Shimin Bridge are closely interconnected, creating a cohesive flow from beneath the bridge to above it. Additionally, the waterfront walkway enhances interaction with pleasure boats, emphasizing the area's historical significance. Overall, this narrative environment serves as a metaphor for the beginnings of waterborne commerce during the late Qing Dynasty, illustrating the interplay between natural and built elements in shaping the region's cultural identity (Figure 6-20).

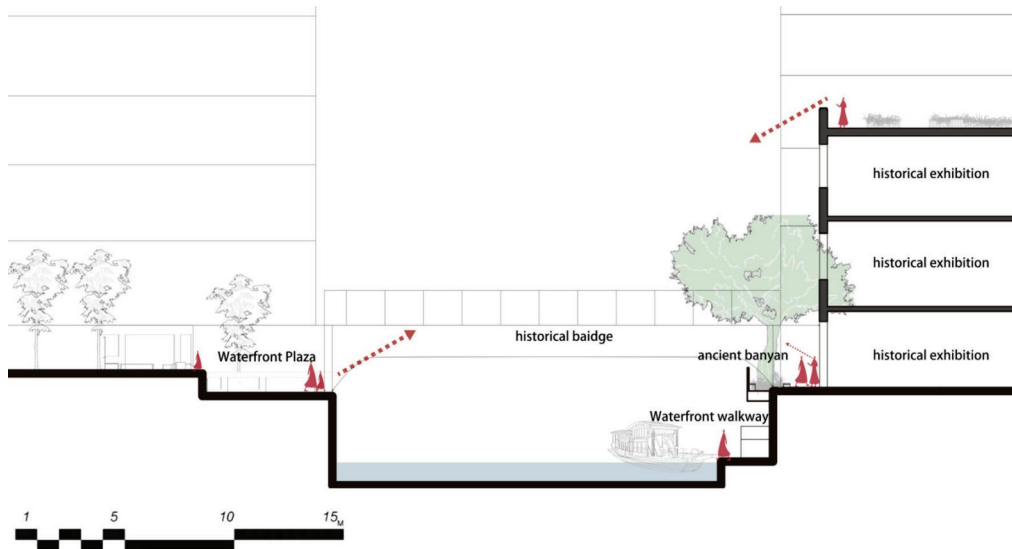


Figure 6-20 Waterfront Exhibition Narrative Square Section (Source: Self-drawn)

2. Metaphor: The Elevated Space Along the Riverbank as a Narrative Development

No. 32 Changhua Street, the Li Zhongsheng Hall Manufacturing Factory operated during the Republic of China period, renowned for producing Baoji Pills created by Li Zhaoji. In 1956, it merged with He Mingxing Hall and seven other traditional Chinese medicine manufacturers to form the "Public-Private Joint Li Zhongsheng Pharmaceutical Factory," known as the "Thirteenth Base." By 1966, it was renamed "Guangzhou Traditional Chinese Medicine Factory No. 3." The area, benefiting from convenient water transport via Changhua River, became a hub for enterprises. However, the existing buildings have since been converted into nursing house, leading to the gradual disappearance of historical relics and the fading of the events once associated with them. (Figure 6-21).

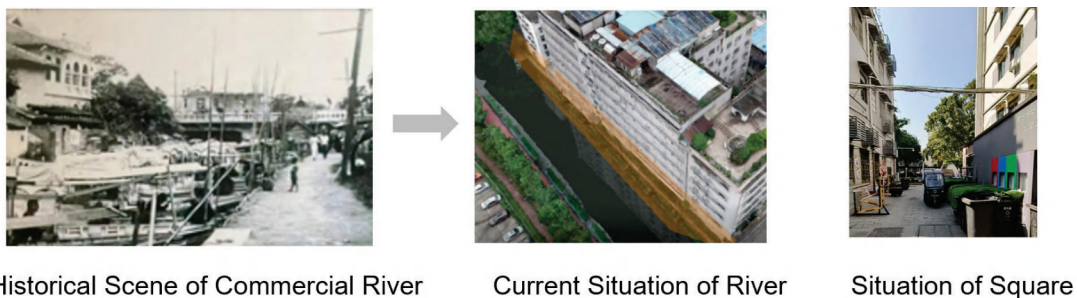


Figure 6-21 Current status of space at Zongsheng Pharmaceuticals (Source: Self-drawn)

The current functional use of the building is disconnected from its historical context (pharmaceutical factory to nursing home). Through functional replacement with a "living narrative square + waterfront exhibition space," the site's memory can be activated, addressing residents' needs for cultural display and public activities. The Living Narrative Square is designed with the daily needs of local residents in mind, featuring durable paving, semi-

enclosed flower beds, and leisure pavilions to create a multifunctional space for fitness, board games, and community interaction. The Waterfront Square employs narrative elements such as sculptural features along the embankment and waterfront platforms to recreate historical scenes of cargo handling and merchant ship traffic during the peak of Changhua River's maritime trade (Figure 6-22).

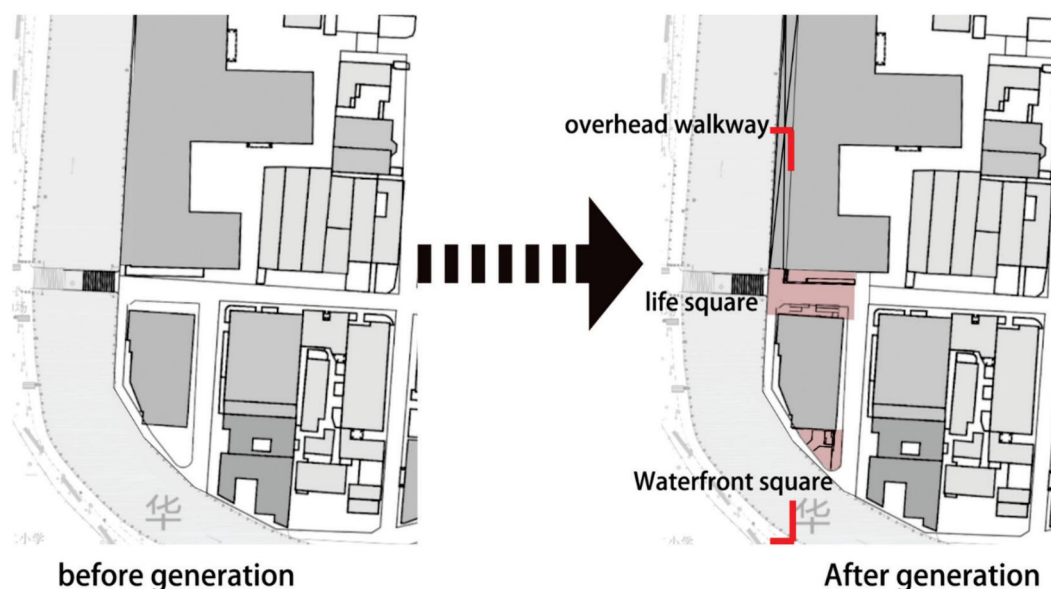


Figure 6-22 Narrative Node of li Zongsheng Pharmaceuticals (Source: Self-drawn)

In urban renewal practices, coupling spatial narrative with functional activation creates an organic unity of historical context and place experience through a multi-layered framework. Utilizing the geographical features and historical context of the Changhua River basin, the design repurposes existing buildings as narrative carriers. A visual corridor connects the northern Puntoun Wuyue Village and the eastern Yongqing Block, forming a narrative spatial network linked by water systems, reflecting the region's water transport development (Figure 6-23).

The waterfront layout is designed to enhance both narrative experience and local services, with an elevated activity platform crafting semi-open spaces for residents. Here, outdoor activities like board games thrive, meeting community needs and activating the waterfront's public vibe through "low intervention." Across from it, a narrative exhibition wall employs a linear display of images and text, transforming water transport heritage and local memories into a tangible visual language that visitors can easily grasp, seamlessly blending cultural storytelling with everyday interaction. (Figure 6-24).

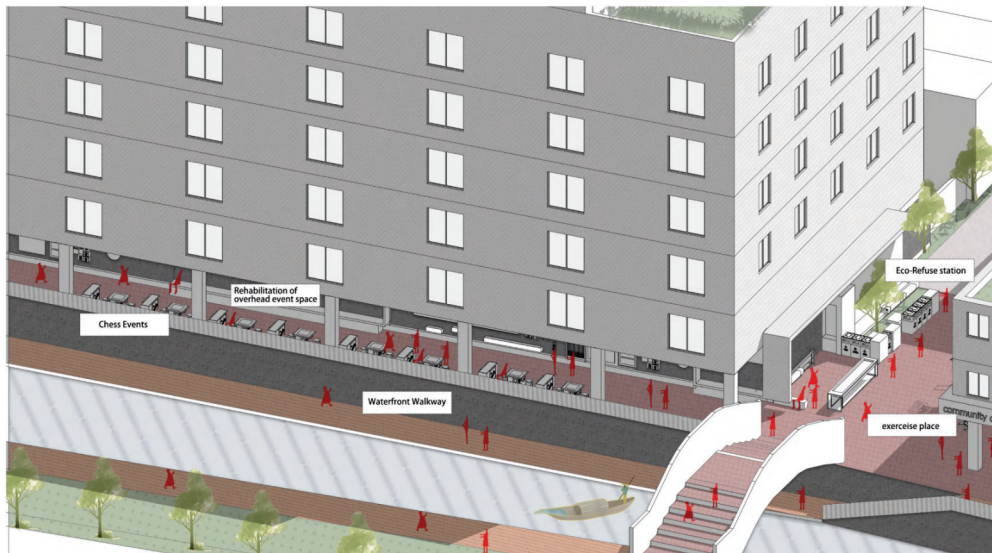


Figure 6-23 Zongsheng Pharmaceuticals Renovation Intentions (Source: Self-drawn)

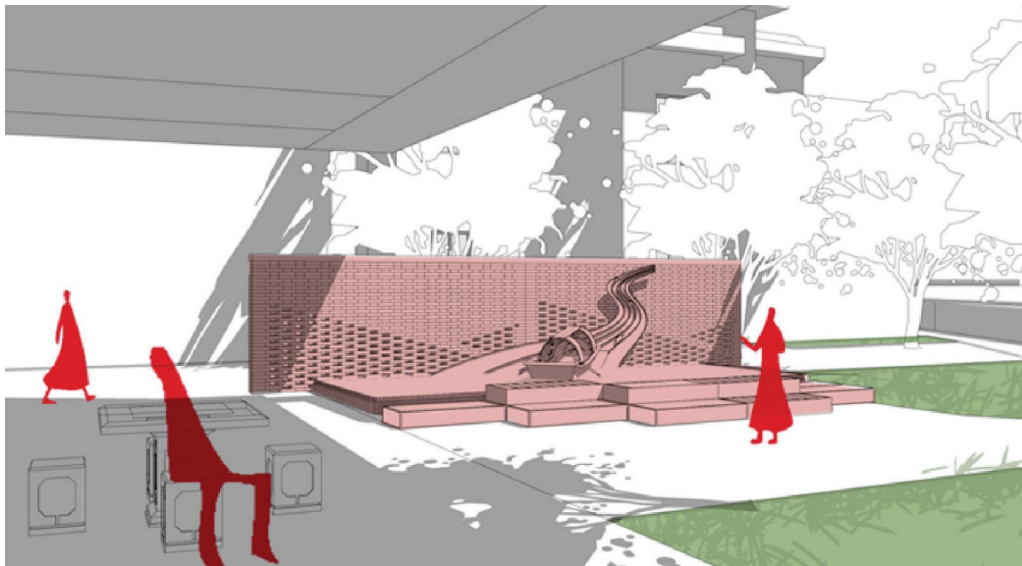


Figure 6-24 Waterfront Square Intended Transformation (Source: Self-drawn)

From the analysis of the spatial layers in the section view, it is evident that the Living Fitness Square and Waterfront Square are connected in a three-dimensional manner through an elevated community service station. This structure not only serves public functions but also maintains a transparent, open design at the lower level, allowing for uninterrupted north-south sightlines (Figure 6-25). In terms of spatial sequence organization, a progressive approach of "open—converge—reopen" is employed. Through variations in elevation, the opening and closing of interfaces, and the organic integration of functional elements, a progression is established from everyday activity spaces to historical narrative spaces and then to natural landscape spaces.

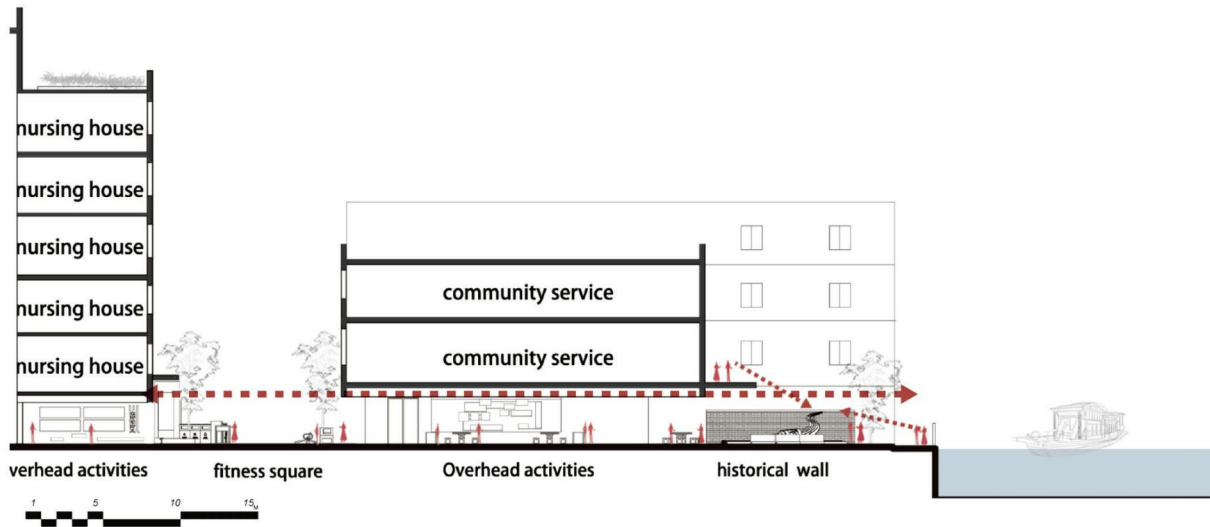


Figure 6-25 Waterfront Narrative overhead space section (Source: Self-drawn)

3. Negative space- The Climax of the Republic Garden Narrative

In the historical context of the waterfront garden's spatial nodes, this area has long functioned as a suburban garden cluster, predating the Qing Dynasty. Historical records indicate that the rulers of the Southern Han Dynasty undertook significant construction projects, establishing palatial gardens and pavilions from Liuhua Bridge to Lychee Bay. These activities profoundly influenced the early spatial layout of gardens in the region.

The existing Liang Shaojia residence, located adjacent to the river, was once the home of a notable Cantonese opera figure. While it embodies specific cultural memories, its current state of neglect hampers its ability to establish an effective historical narrative connection. Restoring this residence is essential for reconnecting it to the broader historical context of the waterfront garden area, thereby enhancing appreciation for its cultural significance (Figure 6-26).



Figure 6-26 Status of Waterfront Gardens (Source: Self-drawn)

Based on the historical context and current issues of the waterfront garden node, narrative space is reimagined through architectural function replacement and site structure optimization. Firstly, for the vacant Liang Shaojia residence, a transformation is proposed to convert it into a

Cantonese opera cultural café and exhibition hall while preserving the building's original appearance. In terms of optimizing the site's texture, addressing the coordination issues between post-establishment self-built houses and the historical environment involves creating open pathways to integrate a continuous waterfront square space. Through the network of "water system axis + historical nodes", fragmented heritage sites (such as Lizhongsheng Hall and Liang Shaojia's former residence) are integrated into a coherent narrative chain, addressing the current deficiency of "having buildings without stories". (Figure 6-27)

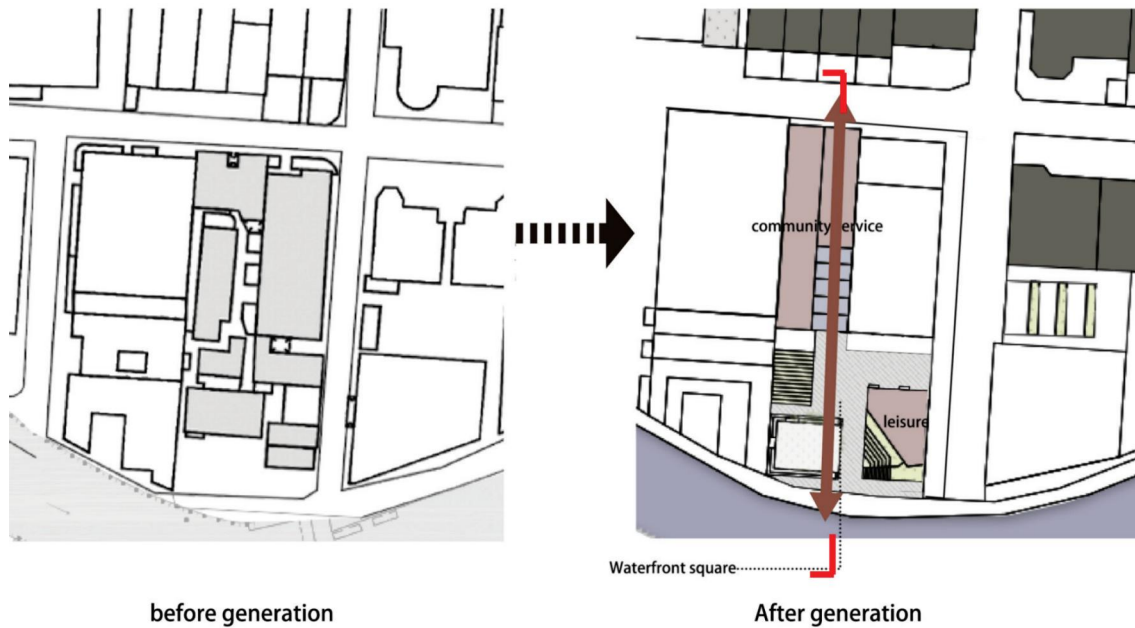


Figure 6-27 Waterfront Garden Renovation Plan (Source: Self-drawn)

To enhance the narrative quality and identity of the place, a blank waterfront square is created. When residents rest on the platform, gather in the square, or communicate in the activity center, the variations in step heights, dynamic life scenes, and historical architectural symbols collectively create a multidimensional narrative medium. This transforms the "prosperous scenery of Changhua Garden" from documented records into an engaging and perceptible spatial experience. This design approach, which integrates community service facilities into narrative scenes, not only fills functional gaps but also activates the site's social attributes and cultural memories through the pathways of "service space contextualization and historical narrative embodiment." (Figure 6-28).

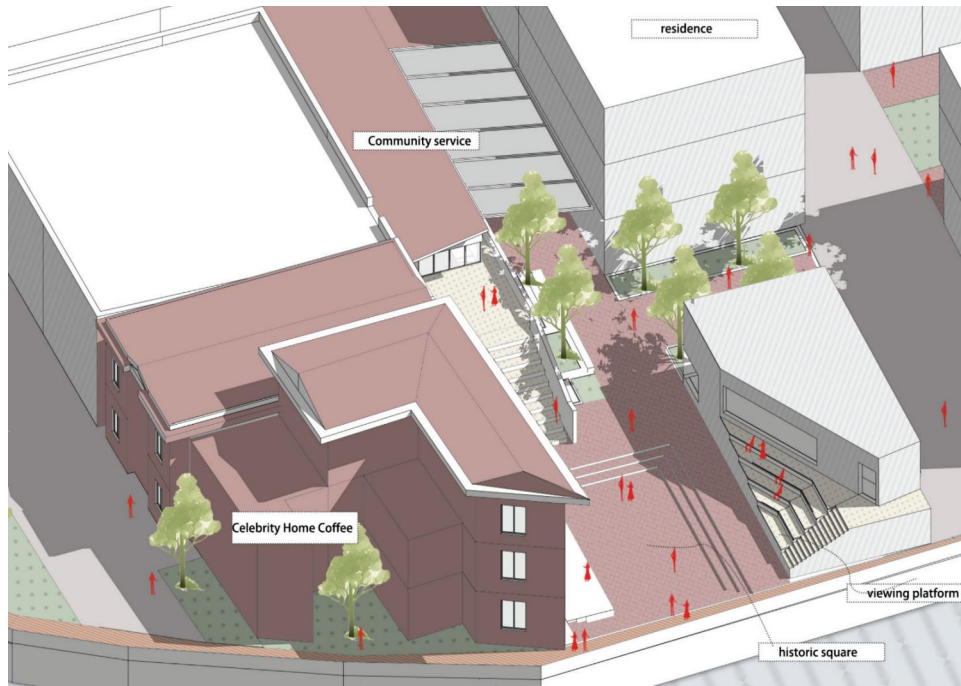


Figure 6-28 Waterfront Garden renovation intentions (Source: Self-drawn)

An analysis of the spatial layers in the section drawing reveals that the stepped platform and the sunken square are spatially connected through the elevation differences of the terrace. This staggered layout not only establishes a continuous walking system but also enhances the layered experience of river viewing through the gradual variation in the openness of interfaces. The stepped platform features a setback greening design integrated with seating (Figure 6-29). This transforms the narrative of waterborne commerce along the Changhua River into an experiential visual sequence: descending gradually from the community's living square through the stepped platform to the sunken square, culminating in a spatial convergence that ultimately releases at the viewing platform.

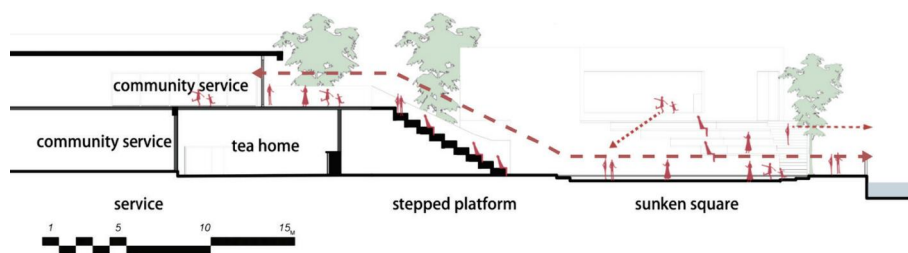


Figure 6-29 Waterfront Garden section (Source: Self-drawn)

4. Negative Space - Community Banyan Tree Storytelling Hub

Lychee Bay, as a collective term for the Xiguan River (including the Upper and Lower Xiguan Rivers) and the rivers and channels of Lychee Bay, serves as an important spatial carrier of Lingnan Cantonese culture. It integrates cultural elements such as Xiguan mansions, Xiguan folk customs, and Cantonese opera, embodying the profound connotations of regional cultural

identity. However, during the industrialization process after the establishment of the nation, the construction of industrial buildings along the coast led to water pollution, and some rivers were covered and turned into underground channels, resulting in a disconnection between natural water systems and urban space. The existing old banyan trees along the shore serve as living historical carriers that document changes in the regional environment and have become a public core for residents to rest and socialize. Their form and the shaded characteristics of the space create a living scene imbued with collective memory attributes. Meanwhile, the original high-rise residential buildings between the two banks of the river create visual pressure, which is unfavorable for the unfolding of narrative activities (Figure 6-30).

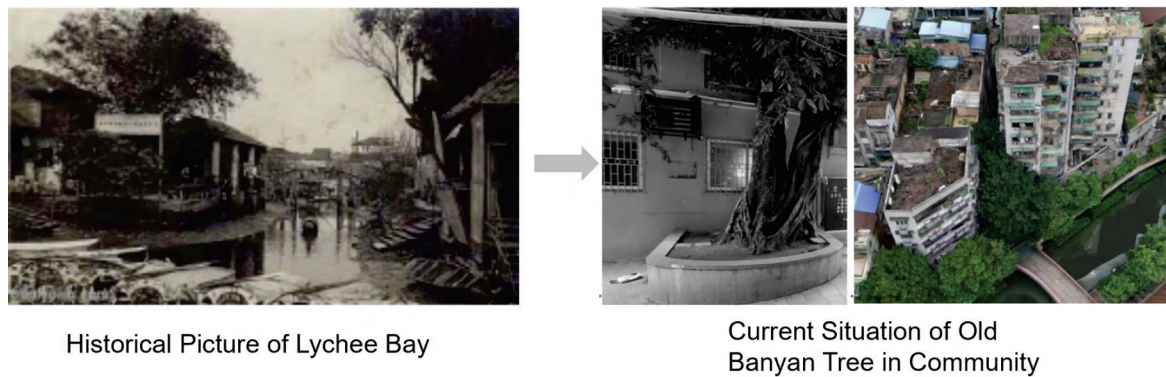


Figure 6-30 Status of the Banyan Square site (Source: Self-drawn)

To address the issues of spatial oppression and narrative disconnection caused by high-density buildings on both banks of Lizhi Bay, the design employs the strategies of leaving blank spaces and reconstructing the site. Selectively demolishing some of the high-rise buildings on the west side of the river, which creates a strong sense of oppression, will release a continuous waterfront interface of 12-15 meters wide. This will create a "Banyan Tree Community Living Square" centered around a century-old banyan tree. Circular stone benches and tree planters will be arranged around the trunk, transforming the naturally grown banyan tree roots into a tangible historical timeline. This design will continue the narrative scenes of collective memory for residents, such as "storytelling under the banyan tree" and "Cantonese opera gatherings under the tree." (Figure 6-31).

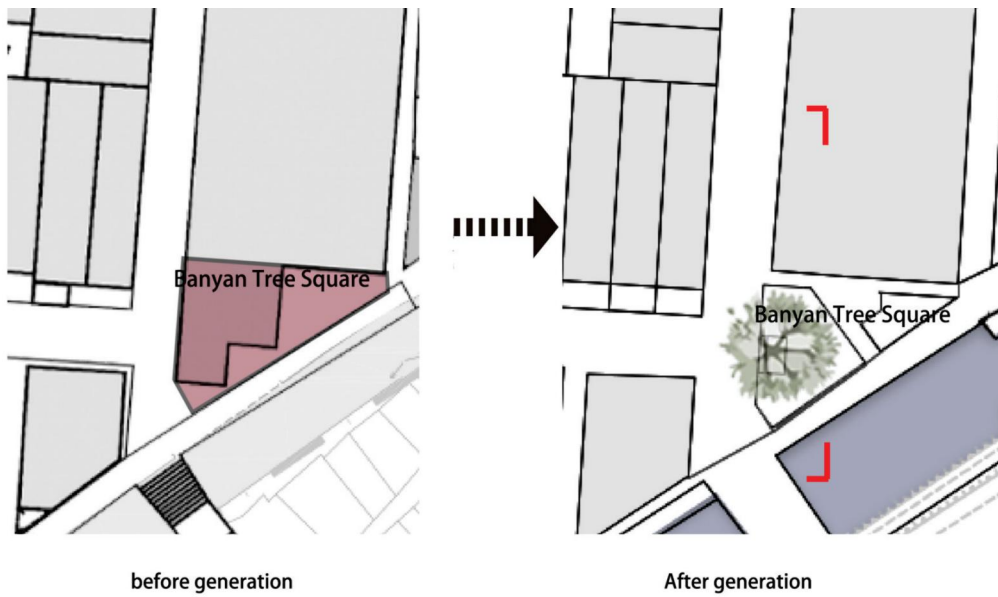


Figure 6-31 Banyan Tree Square Plan Renovation (Source: Self-drawn)

Therefore, the design of the square reconstructs the waterfront space using the technique of "leaving blank spaces." The incorporation of narrative landscape elements enhances the temporal dimension of the place: the scenic wall displays historical photos, cargo lists, and oral history texts in segments, focusing on the process of how industrial pollution after the 1950s led to the transformation of river functions and the decline of commercial activities. At the same time, a composite carrier of "banyan tree + sunken square + narrative installations" is used, transforming the historical narrative of the decline of waterway commerce after the establishment of the nation into a tangible and readable spatial experience. This will make the place a narrative hub that connects collective memory with contemporary life (Figure 6-32).



Figure 6-32 Axonometric drawing of Banyan Tree square renovation (Source: Self-drawn)

From the analysis of the spatial layers in the section view, it is evident that the century-old

banyan tree is the core element of the design. A 15-meter-wide open interface is created by selectively demolishing certain buildings which previously obstructed views and access.

In this newly formed area, tree planters, benches, and recreational facilities are arranged in an enclosed layout along the projection area of the tree canopy, creating a naturally sheltered resting space. The landscape narrative wall on the side defines the spatial boundaries, displaying segmented historical images of the rise and fall of the Changhua River waterway. This wall serves as a narrative interface that is "readable at eye level," inviting visitors to engage with the history of the area.

Additionally, the moon bridge connects to the steps leading to the mid-level square, forming a vertical visual corridor "near the water — viewing the wall — gazing at the tree." This pathway enhances movement through the space, fostering a connection between the community and its heritage (Figure 6-33).



Figure 6-33 Section of Banyan Square (Source: Self-drawn)

5. Recreating the Living Scenes of the Republic of China

In the context of the preservation and renewal of the Changhua Garden historical area, the development trajectory during the Republic of China period forms a unique spatial narrative. Due to the water resource advantages and trade convenience provided by the nearby Changhua Stream, this area became a gathering place for social elites, including political and business figures, as well as famous Cantonese opera performers. Various garden-style independent

residences were built along the main crossroads.

However, due to historical changes and property rights issues, the internal courtyards and building spaces of these residences have long remained idle. Some courtyards have been encroached upon by illegal constructions, leading to structural ageing and the peeling of decorative elements due to a lack of maintenance. Although the facades of these buildings are listed for protection, the idleness of their internal functions has resulted in a serious disconnect between their historical value and practical use (Figure 6-34).



Figure 6-34 Status of the Garden House Historic Residence (Source: Self-drawn)

In the context of the geographical and hydrological characteristics intertwined with the residential culture of the Xiguan area, the region has historically been frequently affected by floods and typhoon storm surges. Against this backdrop, the wooden clogs, as a representative of traditional rain gear in Lingnan, along with the bluestone pavement, form a part of the daily walking memory of Xiguan residents.

Documents from the Republic of China period, such as "Guangzhou Bamboo Branch Songs," indicate that the popularity of wooden clogs in Xiguan is directly related to the frequent waterlogging: their 2 to 3 cm high wooden soles help prevent shoes from getting wet, while the clog bodies made of pine, soaked in tung oil, possess both moisture resistance and lightweight properties, making them particularly suitable for children playing in the rain-soaked alleys.

During the 1950s to 1970s, the streets of Xiguan created a unique auditory landscape. This sound memory, constructed through material carriers (wooden clogs), spatial interfaces (bluestone), and climate adaptation (waterproofing), became an important event memory for the local community's regional identity (Figure 6-35).



Figure 6-35 Historical scenes of life in Xiguan (Source: Self-drawn)

In the design of the Changhua Garden villa complex, a thematic functional replacement approach is employed, activating courtyard spaces and weaving narrative elements to transform the four Republic of China garden-style residences into a "readable architectural narrative." Based on their original usage attributes and historical connections, each building is assigned a differentiated exhibition theme:

The former warlord residence is transformed into a "Modern Political and Business Lifestyle Restoration Museum," preserving Western elements such as arches and glass conservatories and combining historical photographs and furniture to recreate social scenes of the Republic of China elite.

The former home of a famous Cantonese opera performer is renovated into a "Cantonese Opera Arts Heritage Museum," with the interior exhibition hall displaying costumes, scripts, and vinyl records, while the courtyard features an outdoor stage, creating a three-dimensional narrative space that integrates "indoor exhibitions" with "outdoor performances." (Figure 6-36).

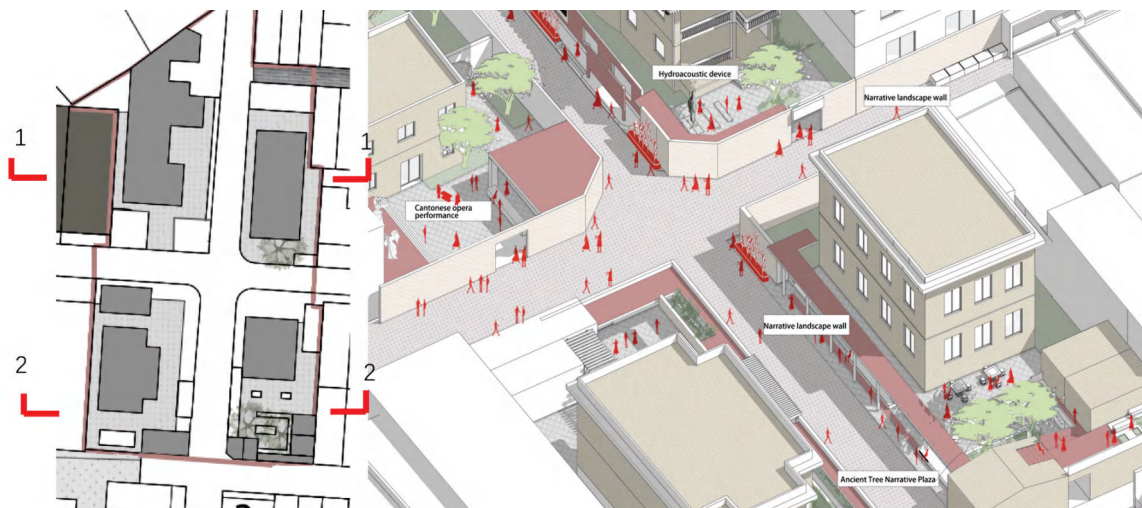


Figure 6-36 Scenes of life in the Republic of China (Source: Self-drawn)

From Section 1, the design utilizes the retained courtyard walls (with partial openings for Windows) as a unifying spatial element. A linear exhibition corridor is set along the inner side

of the walls, featuring graphic panels and physical installations (such as old wooden clogs and fragments of bluestone) that narrate the history of water management and trade in Changhua Garden, as well as the wisdom in coping with flooding.

At the corners of the walls, thematic sculptures are embedded—such as the "Wooden Clogs on Stone" installation—which dynamically captures a scene of children playing in wooden clogs on the water-covered bluestone pavement. The base of the sculpture is paved with real bluestone and includes a misting device, creating a multi-sensory experience through "sound, touch, and vision" that recreates the unique rainy alley memories of Xiguan (Figure 6-37)

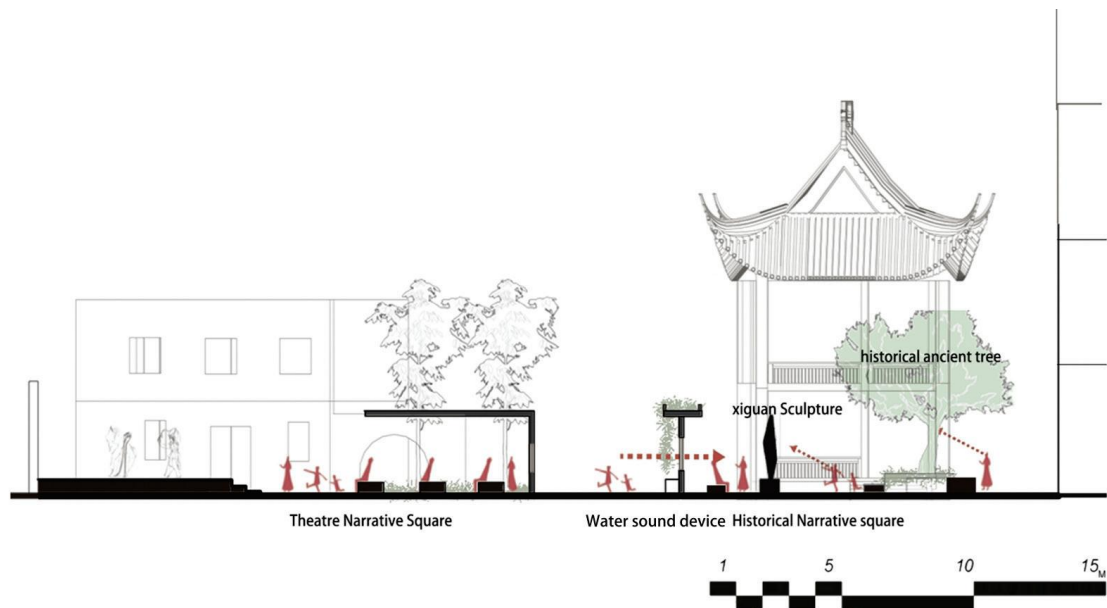


Figure 6-37 Profile of life in the Republic of China 1 (Source: Self-drawn)

From the analysis of the vertical spatial organization and interface relationships in Section 2, it is evident that the design centers around two ancient banyan trees within the courtyard. By employing a "surrounding staircase + transparent corridor" three-dimensional connection, the previously private sunroom is transformed into a public activity space. This design creates a multi-layered narrative environment that integrates "indoor exhibitions," "courtyard landscapes," and "external plazas."

The retained courtyard walls serve not only as physical boundaries but also as "memory cues" that link the four thematic museums. Their weathered texture engages in a dialogue with the newly added narrative installations, highlighting the functional transformation of Changhua Garden from private residences to vibrant public cultural spaces. This interplay between old and new fosters a deeper connection to the area's historical significance while enhancing its role as a community hub (Figure 6-38).

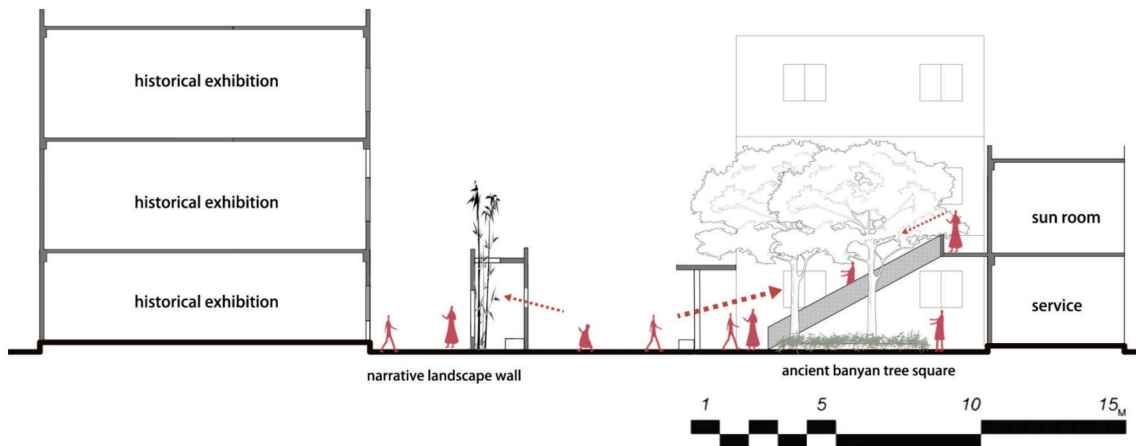


Figure 6-38 Profile of life in the Republic of China 2 (Source: Self-drawn)

6. Historic District life narrative Symbolism

In Xiguan, the late Qing - Dynasty granite stone streets are crucial narrative elements linked to the hydrological environment. Ancient Guangzhou's rivers influenced inner - street design, with "stone - covered open channels" (documented in "Yuehai Customs Records") creating a "walk - on - top, drain - below" system. Granite slabs were laid perpendicularly to drainage channels for stability and orientation. But post - establishment, self - built housing has disrupted the continuity of key granite streets like "Duobao South Cross" and "Duobao Street," severed by makeshift structures. Restoring these connections is vital for cultural narrative preservation and improved accessibility. (Figure 6-39).

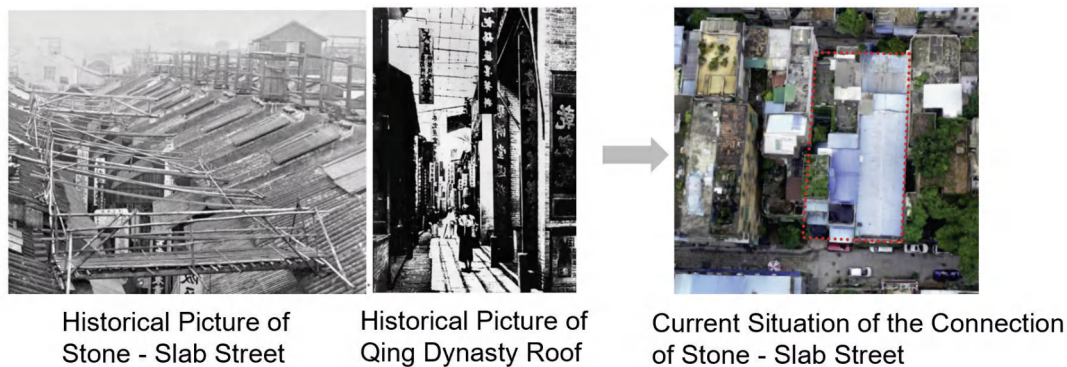


Figure 6-39 The current state of the masonry streets and alleys (Source: Self-drawn)

Therefore, by restoring the originally connected streets and alleys, demolishing the illegally constructed houses, unifying the architectural styles, and reinstating the original granite stone pathways, we can enhance the area. On the right side of this street, there are two kindergartens funded by overseas Chinese, providing activity spaces for residents and children.

By incorporating public services and spaces for children's reading, we can make full use of the existing banyan tree resources. Wooden stairs can be constructed around the banyan trees,

creating exhibition spaces that center around these natural elements. (Figure 6-40).

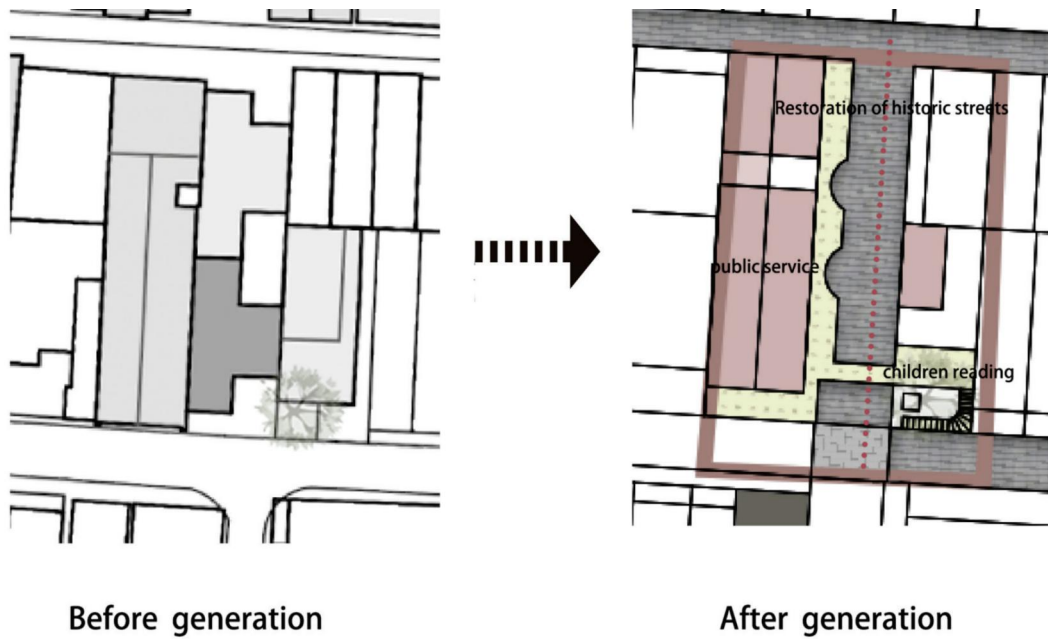


Figure 6-40 Qing Dynasty street node renovation plan (Source: Self-drawn)

In the design process, we focus on extracting and modernizing the corridor elements that historically connected the roofs of Qing Dynasty bamboo tube houses. These elevated corridors emerged as a practical solution to navigate the densely constructed environment of the bamboo tube houses, effectively spanning narrow streets and facilitating convenient passageways for residents.

In this project, we aim to remove the redundant warehouse structures that currently occupy the space. By incorporating the historical corridor elements, we will reestablish the connections between the buildings on either side. This integration not only honors the architectural heritage of the bamboo tube houses but also enhances the overall spatial experience. The revitalized corridors will serve as functional and aesthetic links, fostering a sense of continuity and community while bridging the past and present in a modern context (Figure 6-41).

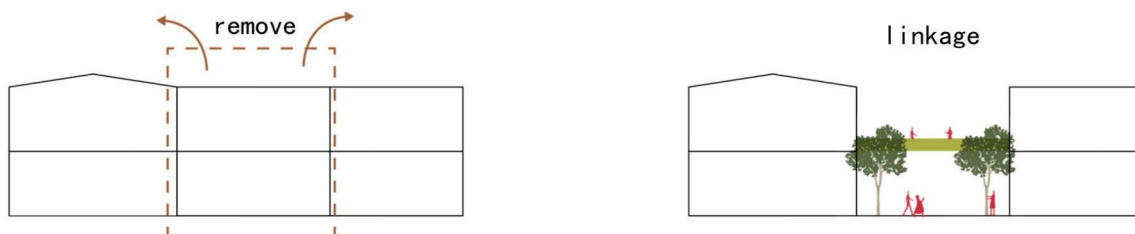


Figure 6-41 Restoration of the Qing Dynasty Street Narrative Scene (Source: Self-drawn)

In the revitalization design of the street corner nodes along the granite stone streets, community service functions will be seamlessly integrated into these junctions. At the

intersection, a "Granite Memory Station" will be established to serve as a focal point for both residents and visitors. The first floor will offer convenient services, featuring comfortable resting seats and shaded corridors to encourage social interaction and relaxation.

The second floor will connect to an urban reading room via a staircase that winds around an ancient tree, creating a unique and inviting atmosphere. Additionally, the first floor will incorporate a landscape wall that utilizes the street space for embedded bookshelves, showcasing documents related to the hydrological history of Xiguan and the construction techniques of granite streets.

This design will create a composite functional unit that combines "services + exhibitions," fostering community engagement and cultural appreciation. By integrating educational elements with practical amenities, the "Granite Memory Station" will enhance the neighbourhood's cultural narrative while providing a welcoming space for the community to gather and learn (Figure 6-42, Figure 6-43).



Figure 6-42 Narrative axonometric map of hemp slate street (Source: Self-drawn)

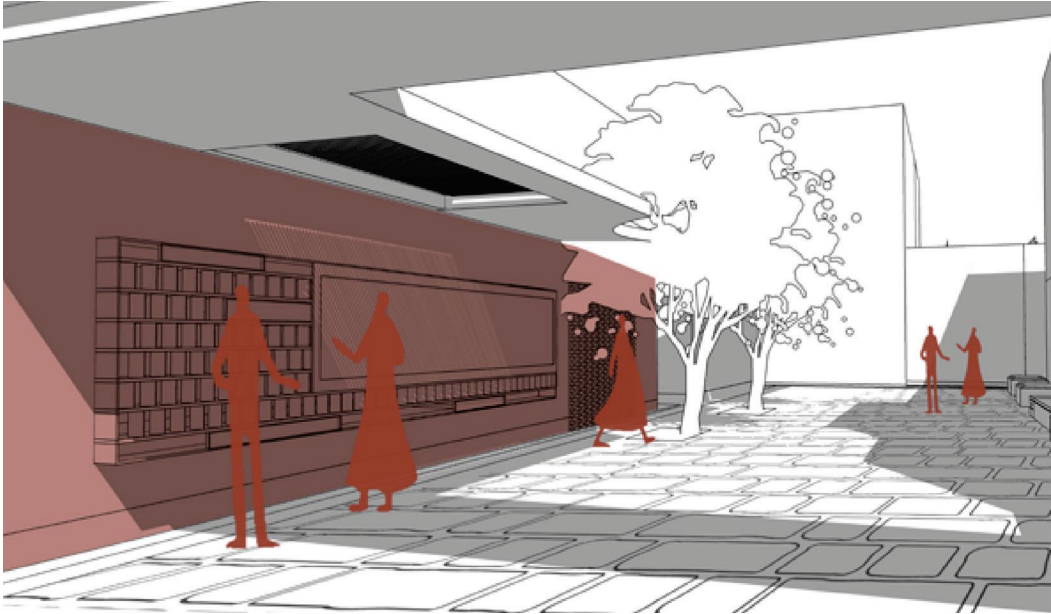


Figure 6-43 Nodal Map of Narrative Nodes in Granite Stone Streets (Source: Self-drawn)

(2) Festivals and Events

The flower market originated from "Huadu Tou," with its formation traceable to the Ming Dynasty or even earlier. Flower farmers along the Pearl River transported annual flowers by boat.

In the 1920s and 1930s, the Litchi Bay area continued to produce a large number of litchis, and a leisure activity known as "You He" (river cruising) became popular. Tourists would take various boats, such as Zhidong boats, congee boats, flower boats, and Hengshui ferries, to enjoy the riverside scenery. This activity of "You He" has persisted throughout history, becoming particularly prevalent during the Republic of China period, and it became an important part of local cultural life. The flower market not only served as a place for trade but also as a space for social interaction and cultural exchange, carrying rich historical and emotional significance. (Figure 6-44).



Figure 6-44 History of the Water Flower Market (Source: Reference^[85])

Meanwhile, the neighbourhood has seen numerous experimental practices of pop-up events. As early as 2020, Guangzhou's renowned themed market, Mahua Xu, collaborated with

the Changhua Street Community Comprehensive Service Center to host a weekend market (Figure 6-45). This event revitalized the ancient historical buildings, attracting many young people and enthusiasts from the cultural and creative sectors.

In the era of social media, participants' sharing and interactions significantly amplified the event's outreach. Currently, the historical building serves as a temporary warehouse for the community, but plans are underway to lease it for projects related to intangible cultural heritage and cultural creativity.



Figure 6-45 Weekend market (Source: Reference^[99])

Here, the pop-up module is used to incorporate traditional activities of the Xiguan neighbourhood, activating the space through various spatial scenarios. This will enhance the interaction and engagement between people and the buildings, strengthening their perception of architecture.

The image below illustrates a series of activities that can be organized, such as historical exhibitions, music interaction squares, and pop-up flower markets. By participating in these functions, individuals can gain a more comprehensive understanding of the historical spaces along Changhua Street. (Figure 6-46).

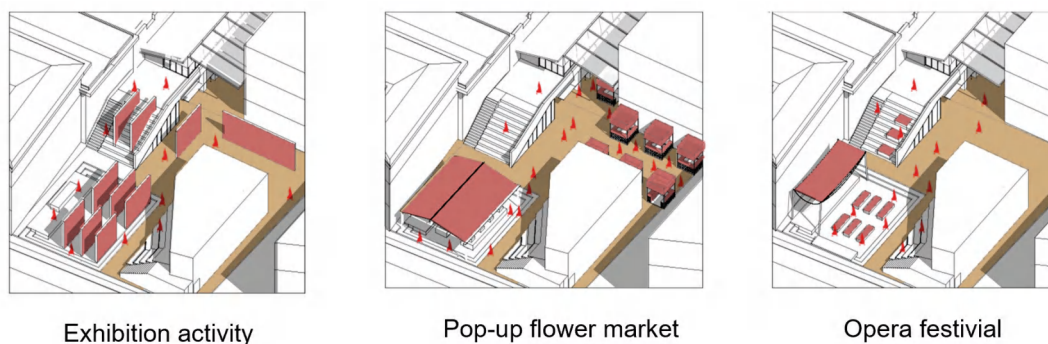


Figure 6-46 Festival placement (Source: Self-drawn)

6.3.4 Narrative Pathway Organization

(1) Optimizing Narrative Spatial Accessibility

Path organization optimization strategies involve two parts: accessibility and narrative logic. Accessibility optimization boosts spatial scene access, strengthens street - waterway

links, and improves visual communication. Narrative logic optimization enhances narrative experience via clue - based immersion. Aggregated district spaces are vibrant, host key rituals, and carry rich narrative. The Liwan water system, core of Lingnan water - town culture, links waterways, integrates waterfronts, and embeds history. It constructs an internal narrative network along Changhua Street, a "waterways - as - chains, nodes - as - pearls" framework, connecting four historical districts: puntoon wuyue village, Fengyuan Street, Changhua Street, and Yongqing Block. (Figure 6-47).



Figure 6-47 Aquatic Narrative Route (Source: Self-drawn)

The enhancement of narrative efficacy in the spatial scenes of historical districts relies on the systematic optimization of path dynamics and increased accessibility. In the renovation practice of Changhua Street, efforts are made to address the fragmentation of internal narrative spaces caused by the separation of courtyards and buildings, striving to connect various narrative nodes. For Changhua Street, the key lies in linking the waterfront areas to establish a complete narrative path of the Xiguan water system. (Figure 6-48).



Figure 6-48 Open Space Accessibility Node (Source: Self-drawn)

Therefore, four main methods are employed to enhance the accessibility of narrative spaces: spatial retreat, time-sharing spaces, rooftop gardens, and mixed-use. Spatial retreat: releasing boundaries to create open narrative interfaces. By demolishing inefficient self-built housing in the waterfront area, the space transforms from a closed private boundary into a public narrative interface. Time-sharing: enabling flexibility to activate dynamic narrative scenes. The underutilized internal courtyards are opened at different times, serving as exhibition spaces for visitors during the day and transforming into community squares for residents at night. Mixed-use: layering functions to shape diverse narrative carriers. The museum cluster formed by the renovation of historical residences restores indoor scenes, integrating convenience services with community activities. This allows visitors to naturally transition through the narrative scenes by engaging in "indoor reading, courtyard experiences, and plaza participation." Rooftop gardens: three-dimensional connections that create multi-angle close views of courtyard details through elevation changes. These strategies collectively enhance the accessibility of narrative nodes (Figure 6-49).

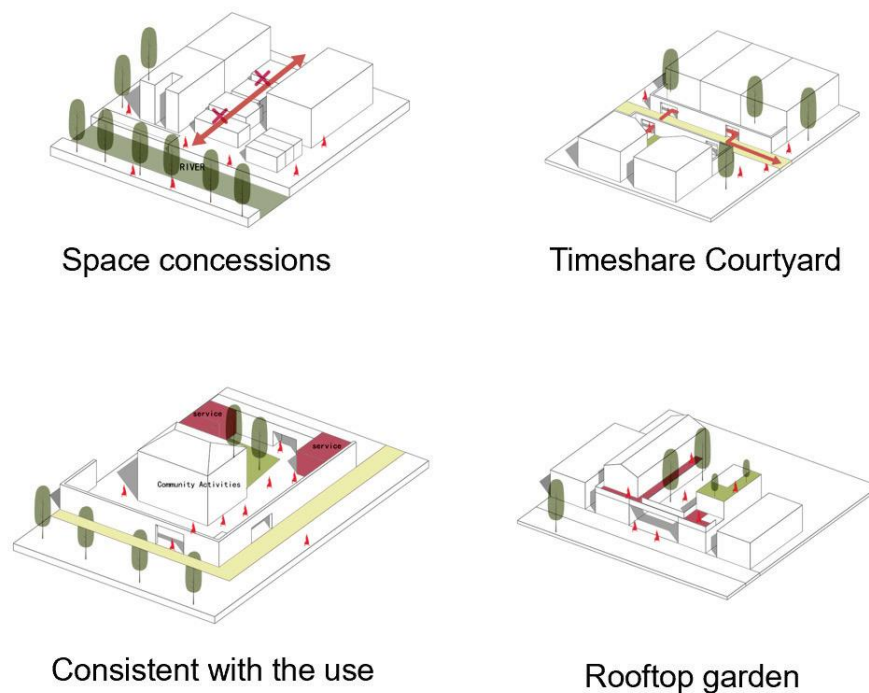


Figure 6-49 Narrative Space Accessibility Enhancement (Source: Self-drawn)

(2) Integration of guiding system

The wayfinding system in historical districts serves not only as a spatial orientation tool but also as an important carrier that connects narrative scenes and strengthens cultural identity. In the renewal of Changhua Street, the wayfinding system is integrated into a unified narrative framework, employing methods such as "material translation, colour coding, and path weaving"

to construct a system that is both functional and narrative. This transforms directional signs into "spatial punctuation" of historical memory, effectively enhancing the sense of direction and depth of experience for both visitors and residents. Overall, the signs create a narrative pathway (Figure 6-50).

Additionally, the historical narrative pathways within the streets are strongly guided by walls. By transforming these walls into landscape features, a narrative path is designed that connects the narrative nodes of life during the Republic of China era, the waterfront gardens, the Qing Dynasty stone-paved street nodes, community life nodes, and the banyan tree gathering points, forming a cohesive narrative spatial pathway.



Figure 6-50 Narrative Path Linking Narrative Nodes (Source: Self-drawn)

For example, along the waterfront promenade and the stone-paved streets, a wayfinding system can be established. Embedded wayfinding signs can be placed at intervals, with the front side providing directional guidance and depicting historical figures or events related to the buildings. For instance, "This was the former residence of the Cantonese opera star Hong Xian Nu, who premiered 'Li Zhi Song' here in 1950." The back of the signs can feature a standardized "Xiguan Tour QR Code," linking to the district's digital archive.

On the riverbank promenade, the semi-open area was once a crucial node for waterborne trade, connecting various events within the water system. Currently, only a nursing home

records the history of Zhongsheng Medicine Hall. The design could include additional signage while preserving the existing structures, as well as incorporating a water-themed commercial sculpture. This approach would link diverse events while reflecting the water system elements embedded in the riverbank theme (Figure 6-51).

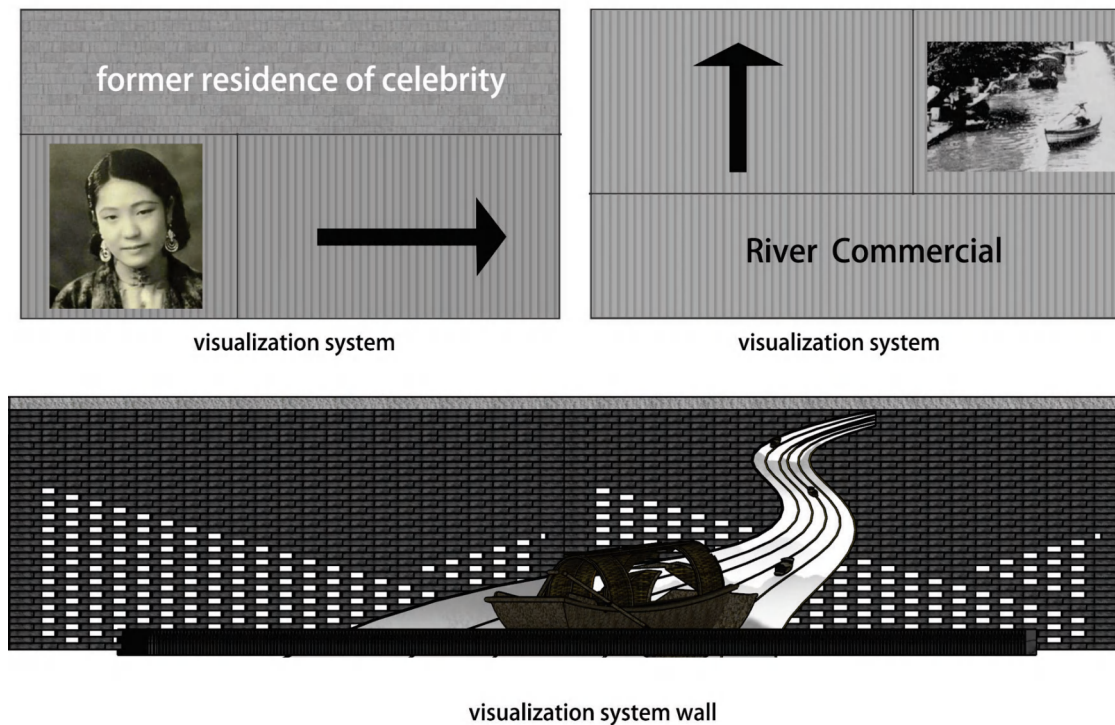


Figure 6-51 Narrative Guidance Building Blocks (Source: Self-drawn)

Through the integration of the wayfinding system and narrative pathways, Changhua Street has achieved three significant enhancements. First, the overall visibility and recognizability of the space have been notably improved, allowing visitors to navigate more easily. Second, the wayfinding system acts as a "hidden tour guide," enabling visitors to naturally absorb historical information as they walk through the area, which creates a more coherent narrative experience. Lastly, local residents have the opportunity to co-create the content of the wayfinding system—such as providing old photographs and oral histories—strengthening community identity. This collaborative approach transforms the wayfinding system into a cultural bridge that connects local memories with external experiences. By localizing materials and arranging scenes, the wayfinding signs and identification systems not only guide direction but also serve as carriers of historical stories, extending the narrative symbols throughout the area (Figure 6-52).

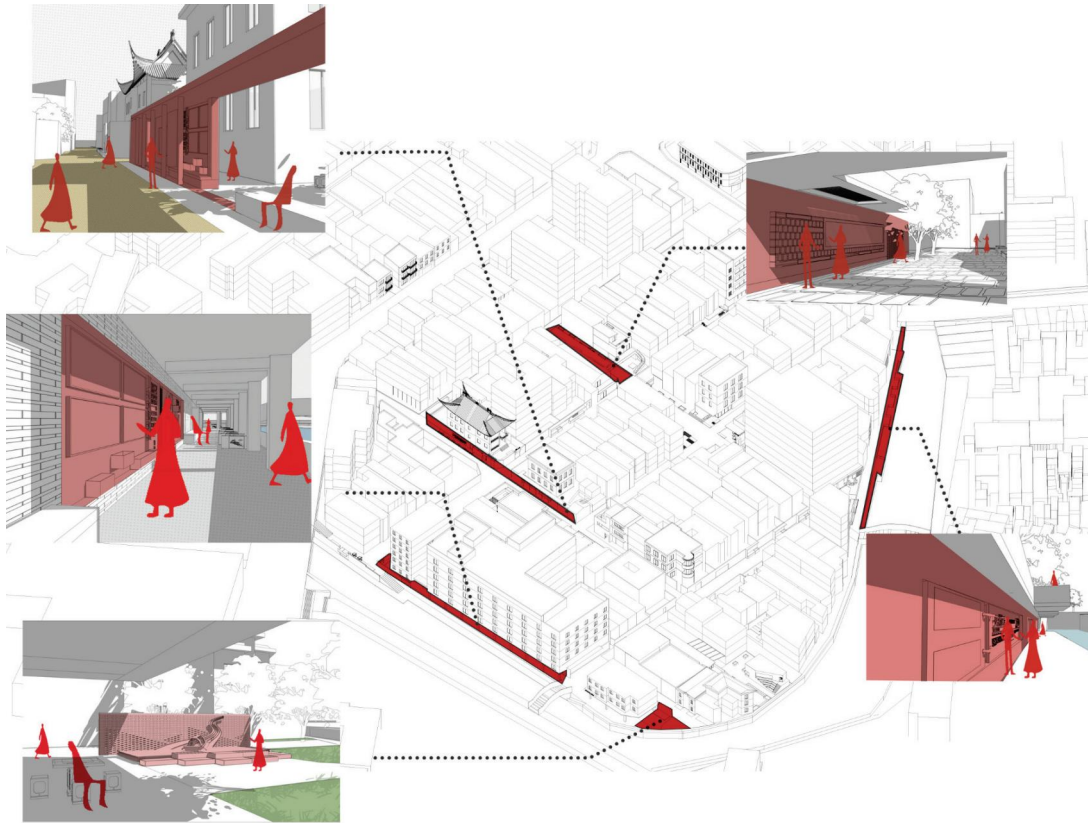


Figure 6-52 Narrative path guide (Source: Self-drawn)

6.4 Summary

This chapter focuses on narrative space renewal strategies for the historical district of Changhua Street. Based on site diagnosis, it proposes enhancement strategies for the narrative path through spatial structure optimization. By integrating narrative themes, optimizing contexts, reproducing scenes, and organizing paths, a composite narrative system is created.

Efforts are made to enrich narrative vocabulary and optimize aesthetic character. For instance, recognizing the site's commercial culture leads to the establishment of primary and secondary narrative themes. The optimization of narrative contexts involves replacing historical functions and arranging narrative plots. Narrative nodes are extracted, and resident needs are incorporated based on site research and interviews, organizing plot development with temporal cues.

The reproduction of narrative scenes utilizes symbolism, metaphor, and white space to present diverse historical scenes, integrating events to realize historical narratives through various methods. The organization of narrative paths focuses on optimizing accessibility and incorporating a wayfinding system.

These strategies aim to enhance spatial quality, cultural vitality, and dynamic adaptability, promoting the inheritance and revitalization of the district's culture.

Conclusion and Prospects

1. Conclusion

Historical districts serve as important carriers of urban historical memory, showcasing the unique spirit of a city. Currently, compared to the "urban machine" constructed from concrete jungles, people yearn for a spiritual refuge that can hold memories. However, the rapid advancement of urban construction and the neglect of intangible elements have severed the historical threads of many cities, leading to a homogenization of urban landscapes, a gradual fading of unique characteristics, and the disappearance of specific places in the memories of citizens. Therefore, historical districts need a fresh perspective to reconnect the fragmented material spaces with their cultural connotations.

This paper explores the topic from the perspective of spatial narrative, shifting away from the traditional focus on merely updating and protecting physical spaces in historical district renewal. It advocates for the inclusion of "material elements," "intangible elements," and "people" in the consideration. By deeply analyzing the relationship between spatial narrative theory and research on historical districts, as well as the connection between spatial narrative theory and cultural connotations, it integrates "urban stories" and "spatial perception" into the narrative process. This leads to the proposal of a spatial narrative path for historical districts that utilizes storytelling to convey historical narratives and extend the cultural context of the site, ultimately presenting the core argument of this paper: using narrative to articulate the cultural significance of historical districts.

Subsequently, by drawing on spatial narrative structures, this research achieves an organic unity between the material representations and value connotations of historical districts, viewing them as "spatial texts" and constructing an analytical model for spatial narrative. It proposes three progressive narrative analysis steps: "sorting narrative elements," "clarifying narrative themes," and "proposing narrative structures." Through foundational research on spatial narrative theory, combined with case analysis and summaries, corresponding narrative expression strategies are suggested.

Finally, the historical district of Changhua Street in Guangzhou is taken as the design practice research object. The narrative elements of the site are deeply explored, and the narrative theme regarding the commercial development of the Changhua River is distilled. Utilizing the narrative strategies summarized earlier, spatial scenes are arranged into a readable and meaningful narrative text that tells the history, fostering a sense of cultural identity and spatial belonging among people through personal experience.

2. Innovation

The main innovations of this research are as follows:

1. The systematic application of narrative theory in historical site preservation. This research establishes a dynamic correlation mechanism between narrative elements and spatial characteristics through empirical investigation, revealing the interactive patterns of material carriers such as architectural forms and street textures with intangible elements like commercial traditions and historical events over time. This breaks through traditional spatial analysis's limitations that focus on material forms, providing theoretical support for constructing narrative environments in historical districts.

2. Methodologically, this research further optimizes and enhances existing research on urban narrative spaces in China, extending the research content within the framework of urban narrative space under historical environments. Current research on urban narrative spaces in historical contexts primarily focuses on phenomenological interpretation. While such studies have achieved a certain level of completeness, they are limited to researching spatial material forms. This paper approaches the topic from the event dimension, constructing an event-space analytical framework, and aims to provide a more objective explanation of data sources and selection through detailed sorting of ancient maps and historical documents. Ultimately, a complete narrative framework system is established, with strategies proposed in response to site issues.

3. Prospects

In researching urban space at the scale of Guangzhou's historical districts, this paper provides a new perspective on the cultural connotations of urban space through the lens of "narrative." Research on Guangzhou's historical districts has primarily focused on historical studies and analyses of material, spatial aspects such as urban morphology and overall patterns. This paper, however, approaches the research of historical districts from the perspective of intangible cultural elements like emotions and memories, supplementing existing theoretical and empirical findings and offering an alternative approach to the inheritance of local culture in Guangzhou.

As spatial narrative emerges as an organic perspective that combines spatial form with social cognition, merging material entities with spiritual connotations, its relevance is increasingly recognized, and its application context is continuously expanding. This paper employs various quantitative and qualitative methods for research, but there are still limitations in the research perspectives and content concerning the entire district and urban planning fields.

1. Optimization of basic data acquisition means

The organization of ancient maps, literature, and historical documents mainly relies on human eyes and computer scanning. However, there are obvious disadvantages in this way, as there are more interfering factors of subjective judgment, and the quality of the pictures largely limits the accuracy. In addition, it is difficult to read and analyze the literary and historical materials, which takes a lot of time. In the follow-up research, if professionals with a background in literature and history can be introduced to participate in it, and a story resource library can be constructed so that computerized quantitative analysis can be realized, then the analysis of urban narrative space will be more scientific and precise.

2. The deepening of the urban narrative research system in historical cities

The research object of this research is mainly a Historic District in the Xiguan Area, mainly focusing on the smaller scale of the spatial scene of the Historic District, mostly focusing on the small scale of the creation of the strategy for the overall scale of the block is less involved in the overall scale of the area, and lack of urban scale to view and analyze the problem, these issues can be continued to discuss.

References

- [1] 赵中枢, 兰伟杰. 历史文化名城保护体系相关概念的形成与演变[J]. 城市规划, 2022, 46(S2): 20-26
- [2] 张楠. 城市故事论——一种后现代城市设计的建构性思维[J]. 城市发展研究, 2004, (05): 8-12
- [3] 赵红红, 唐源琦. 当代“空间叙事”理论研究的演进概述——叙事学下空间的认知转变与实践[J]. 广西社会科学, 2021, (03): 74-81
- [4] 张寅德. 叙事学研究[M]. 北京: 社会科学文献出版社, 1989
- [5] 张楠, 刘乃芳, 石国栋. 叙事空间设计解读[J]. 城市发展研究, 2009, 16(09): 136-137
- [6] 龙迪勇. 空间叙事学:叙事学研究的新领域[J]. 天津师范大学学报(社会科学版), 2008(06): 54-60
- [7] Starr D A. Recuperating cosmopolitan Alexandria: Circulation of narratives and narratives of circulation[J]. Cities, 2005, 22(3): 217-228
- [8] 程锡麟. 叙事理论的空间转向——叙事空间理论概述[J]. 江西社会科学, 2007, (11): 25-35
- [9] Encyclopedia of contemporary literary theory: approaches, scholars, terms[M]. University of Toronto Press, 1993
- [10] Penz F. The architectural promenade as narrative device: practice based research in architecture and the moving image[J]. Digital creativity, 2004, 15(1): 39-51
- [11] Gregory D. Geographical Imaginations[M]. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1994
- [12] Laws G. Women's Life Courses, Spatial Mobility, and Policies[M]. New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 1997
- [13] Penz F, Lu A. Urban cinematics: Understanding urban phenomena through the moving image[J]. Intellect, 2011: 7-20
- [14] Azaryahu M, Foote K E. Historical Space as Narrative Medium: On the Configuration of Spatial Narratives of Time at Historical Sites[J]. GeoJournal, 2008, 73: 179-194
- [15] Beurskens K, Bruns B, Kirndörfer E, et al. A union in distress: Contested spatial imaginations, narratives and practices of European (dis) integration[J]. European Urban and Regional Studies, 2024, 31(1): 4-13
- [16] Pfose A. Narratives of peripheralisation: Place, agency and generational cohorts in post-industrial Estonia[J]. European Urban and Regional Studies, 2018, 25(4): 391-404
- [17] Potteiger M, Purinton J. Landscape narratives: Design practices for telling stories[M].

John Wiley & Sons, 1998

- [18] Diao J, Lu S. A narrative-led approach for the revitalization of places of memory: a case study of Haiyan moat waterfront (Zhejiang, China)[J]. URBAN DESIGN International, 2024: 1-21
- [19] 陆邵明. 当代建筑叙事学的本体建构——叙事视野下的空间特征、方法及其对创新教育的启示[J]. 建筑学报, 2010, (04): 1-7
- [20] 吴凯晴. 广州历史城区叙事性意象研究[D]. 华南理工大学, 2018
- [21] 王晶, 赵志庆, 李彦凝. 空间叙事在我国城市空间研究领域的演进与展望[J]. 城乡规划, 2023, (02): 52-59
- [22] 张清海, 张雨馨. 基于视觉感受的纪念性景观空间序列研究——以南京雨花台烈士陵园为例[J]. 中国园林, 2019, 35(08): 55-60
- [23] 肖竞, 曹珂. 叙述历史的空间——叙事手法在名城保护空间规划中的应用[J]. 规划师, 2013, 29 (12): 98-103
- [24] 张楠, 张平, 王英姿, 等. 历史城区叙事环境系统的量化研究[J]. 南方建筑, 2013, (02): 28-31
- [25] 何韶颖, 杨爽, 汤众. 传统信仰场所的空间叙事——以潮州古城为例[J]. 现代城市研究, 2016, (08): 17-23
- [26] 许雯, 刘韩昕, 刘宁, 等. 空间叙事理论下城市物质文化遗产价值评估与保护策略——以大运河国家文化公园(苏州段)为例[J]. 规划师, 2024, 40 (05): 83-90
- [27] 范希嘉, 邹一了. 基于叙事的城市公共空间体验设计[J]. 包装工程, 2018, 39 (04): 31-37
- [28] 王淑芬, 王瑶, 黄思齐. 景观叙事视角下老旧社区公共空间更新研究——以北京朱家坟社区为例[J]. 中国勘察设计, 2020, (08): 38-42
- [29] 乔治, 米鑫茹, 薛艳敏. 基于空间叙事视角下半坡国际艺术区工业遗产设施更新设计研究[J]. 包装工程, 2025, 46 (08): 294-307
- [30] CIAM. Charter of Athens[R]. 1933
- [31] 黄勇, 石亚灵. 国内外历史街区保护更新规划与实践评述及启示[J]. 规划师, 2015, 31 (04): 98-104
- [32] ICOMOS. The Valletta principles for the safeguarding and management of historic cities, Towns and Urban Areas[R]. 2011
- [33] 肖竞, 曹珂. 历史街区保护研究评述、技术方法与关键问题[J]. 城市规划学刊,

2017, (03): 110-118

- [34] Adám A. New architecture in historic context[C]//Proceedings of the ICOMOS 15th General Assembly and Scientific Symposium. Volume 2. 2005: p. 534-536
- [35] Wang Y. Urban Design of Historic Districts Based on Action Planning[J]. Open House International, 2018, 43(3): 43-51
- [36] Beck D, Brooks S. Social enterprise and the development of cultural heritage assets as catalysts for urban placemaking[J] ICalabrò F., Della Spina L., Bevilacqua C. (eds) New Metropolitan Perspectives, 2018: 308-315
- [37] 汪子茗, 朱捷. 城市开放空间景观触媒效应量化评价研究——以重庆市为例[J]. 中国园林, 2024, 40 (09): 77-83
- [38] Fang Y N, Tian J, Namaiti A, et al. Visual aesthetic quality assessment of the streetscape from the perspective of landscape-perception coupling[J]. Environmental Impact Assessment Review, 2024, 106: 107535
- [39] 廖开怀, 刘利雄, 朱雪梅, 等. 历史文化街区微改造与活化利用的策略研究——以广州市为例[J]. 城市发展研究, 2022, 29 (05): 1-7
- [40] 曾昭璇. 广州历史地理[M]. 广州: 广东人民出版社, 1991
- [41] 黄佛颐. 广州城坊志[M]. 广州: 广东人民出版社, 1994
- [42] 广州市城市建设档案馆编. 图说城市文脉——广州古今地图集[M]. 广州: 广东省地图出版社, 2010
- [43] 徐怡芳, 王健, 谭侃. 广州市荔湾区城际民居聚居形态的保护、利用和发展[J]. 建筑史论文集, 2000, 12 (01): 195-204+232
- [44] 黎松. 谈广州历史建筑周边环境的改造[J]. 南方建筑, 2004, (5): 27-29
- [45] 吴敏. 广州旧城更新与保护研究——西关传统街区与荔湾风情保护[D]. 上海: 同济大学, 2008
- [46] 朱雪梅, 王国光, 林壶广. 传统城区保护更新的适应性分析——以广州西关地区城市设计为例[J]. 四川建筑科学研究, 2011, 37(4): 253-255
- [47] 乔硕, 张擎. 广州传统风貌型社区包容性发展的环境微改造[J]. 规划师, 2017, 33(9): 29-34
- [48] 王霖. 广州历史文化街区保护与活化研究[D]. 华南理工大学, 2017
- [49] 李向北, 杨星莹. “慈云老街”传统历史文化街区规划设计——一个基于城市形态类型学方法的实践探索[J]. 城市发展研究, 2019, 26(04): 12-16+21

- [50] 刘亚琪, 郭谦, 肖磊. 触媒理论引导下的历史街区保护更新研究——以泮溪酒家改造为例[J]. 南方建筑, 2021, (04): 90-96
- [51] 肖竞, 李和平, 曹珂. 价值导引的历史文化街区保护与发展[J]. 城市发展研究, 2019, 26(04): 87-94+2+37
- [52] 邓巍, 胡贝贝. 市镇型历史文化街区价值特征及保护策略研究[J]. 现代城市研究, 2024, (03): 8-13+30
- [53] 朱知麟, 田银生. 量化分析方法在康泽恩城市形态学中的运用探索——以广州传统街区为例[J]. 南方建筑, 2022, (09): 8-18
- [54] 黄慧明. 1949 年以来广州旧城的形态演变特征与机制研究[D]. 华南理工大学, 2013
- [55] 夏雪莹, 吴小根, 陈婉怡, 等. 历史文化街区商业适宜性的游憩者感知研究——以南京夫子庙为例[J]. 现代城市研究, 2022, (02): 83-89
- [56] 谢涤湘, 吴家权. 基于网络文本分析的历史文化街区游客感知意象研究——以广州恩宁路永庆坊为例[J]. 现代城市研究, 2023, (01): 64-71
- [57] Bruner, Jerome. The narrative construction of reality[J]. Critical Inquiry, 1991: 18
- [58] Gabriel Zoran. Towards a Theory of Space in Narrative[J]. Poetics Today, 1984(05): 2
- [59] 阿尔多·罗西. 城市建筑学[M]. (意) 罗西, 著: 中国建筑工业出版社, 2006
- [60] 刘乃芳, 张楠. 多样性城市事件视角的城市记忆保护[J]. 城市发展研究, 2016, 23(11): 45-49
- [61] 刘乃芳, 张楠. 多样性城市事件及事件空间研究——以南宁历史城区为例[J]. 国际城市规划, 2012, 27 (03): 75-79
- [62] 刘炜. 从波士顿自由足迹看美国城市遗产保护的演进与经验[J]. 建筑学报, 2015, (05): 44-49
- [63] 华高莱斯. 怎样的城市漫步环境, 才能迎合 City walk 的兴起? [EB/OL]. https://www.therearch.cn/newsDetail_forward_24109654, 2023-08-04
- [64] 严艺薰. 从威尼斯看历史城市的保护与发展[J]. 建筑与文化, 2016, (01): 170-172
- [65] 意国之家. 威尼斯节事活动[EB/OL]. <https://ithome.altervista.org/archives/31144>, 2024-03-19
- [66] 杭州发布. 南宋御街主题地图[EB/OL]. <https://news.qq.com/rain/a/20221002A028FK00>, 2024-04-25
- [67] 李福金. 论叙事蒙太奇在历史街区改造中的应用[D]. 中南大学, 2013
- [68] 澎湃新闻. 南宋御街 | 流动的历史,鲜活的记忆[EB/OL].

- https://www.thepaper.cn/newsDetail_forward_7455308, 2020-05-19
- [69] 武义融媒. 南宋御街活动再现[EB/OL].
<https://www.163.com/dy/article/JRDI6UDJ05509Q86.html>, 2025-03-24
- [70] 段宇阳, 张贝璇, 牛茜, 等. 空间叙事理论视角下的文化主题商业街情景化设计策略研究——以大唐不夜城为例[J]. 上海包装, 2023, (09): 172-174
- [71] 项秉仁,程翌. 古城西安的“文化大殿”——西安大唐不夜城文化交流中心建筑和室内设计[J]. 建筑学报, 2010, (02): 50-55
- [72] 程瑞. 西安大唐不夜城空间模式与运行状况调查[D]. 西安建筑科技大学, 2013
- [73] 中合文旅. 大唐不夜城[EB/OL]. https://www.sohu.com/a/416843146_120298896, 2020-09-07
- [74] 侍非, 高才驰, 孟璐, 蒋志杰. 空间叙事方法缘起及在城市研究中的应用[J]. 国际城市规划, 2014, 29(06): 99-103+125
- [75] 岑虹萱. 基于产权视角的昌华大街历史文化街区保护更新策略研究[D]. 华南理工大学, 2023
- [76] 孙穗萍. 空间句法下珠三角传统村镇活化利用使用后评价[D]. 华南理工大学, 2021
- [77] 彭长歆, 周晓娟. 从田园到都市——广州昌华街的空间生产与建筑演进[J]. 城市建筑, 2018, (01): 38-45
- [78] 林芮欣, 张春阳. 西关传统住区交往行为与空间的关联性研究——以昌华苑为例[J]. 住区, 2024, (03): 6-11
- [79] 李晓东, 张烨. 透视城市空间——从卡尔维诺和《看不见的城市》说起[J]. 世界建筑, 2009, (03): 89-93
- [80] 广东省博物馆. 广州百年沧桑[M]. 花城出版社, 2003
- [81] 广州市荔湾区政协学习和文史资料委员会. 荔湾文史, 第七辑[M]. 广州市荔湾区政协学习和文史资料委员会, 2007
- [82] 广州越秀区政协. 商海千年说越秀[M]. 广州:花城出版社.2009
- [83] 广州文史研究馆. 广州的故事 第一集[M]. 花城出版社, 2003
- [84] 苏泽群, 关振东. 广州的故事.第二集[M]. 花城出版社, 2005
- [85] 广州市文史研究馆. 广州的故事. 第三集[M]. 花城出版社, 2009
- [86] 广州博物馆. 广州旧影[M]. 北京: 人民美术出版社, 1998
- [87] 刘卫. 广州古城水系与城市发展关系研究[D]. 华南理工大学, 2015

- [88] 冯江. 广州变形记:从晚清省城到民国第一座现代城市[J]. 城市与区域规划研究, 2013, 6(01): 107-128
- [89] 周霞. 广州城市形态演进[M]. 北京: 中国建筑工业出版社, 2005
- [90] 刘乃芳, 张楠. 叙事视角下的空间设计研究综述[J]. 华中建筑, 2015, 33 (10): 23-26
- [91] 扬·盖尔. 交往与空间[M]. 何人可, 译. 北京: 中国建筑工业出版社, 2002
- [92] 李博超. 记忆的接续: 广州先锋社区微改造[EB/OL].
<https://www.archiposition.com/items/20230425065144>, 2023.04.28
- [93] 戴天晨. 空间叙事[D]. 东南大学, 2019
- [94] 飙马商业地产. 解码西安大唐不夜城: 用做乐园、做秀场的思路来打造商业街区[EB/OL]. <http://www.sydcch.com/a/shangyedichan/buxingjiequ/2020/1030/4574.html>, 2020-10-30
- [95] 搜狐. 明孝陵神道[EB/OL]. https://www.sohu.com/a/396569240_709072, 2020-05-21
- [96] 园林景观. 大庙角历史街区[EB/OL]. <https://bbs.co188.com/thread-10458890-1-1.html>, 2023-08-23
- [97] Carlos Castanheira Architects. 罗马竞技场新步行廊道[EB/OL].
<https://moool.com/the-canopy-walkway-in-serralves-by-carlos-castanheira-architects.html>, 2025-04-10
- [98] 雨润传媒. 导视系统[EB/OL]. https://www.sohu.com/a/303654202_100257223, 2019-03-25
- [99] 于腾飞. 再现历史街区场所精神的空间叙事构建研究[D]. 重庆大学, 2023
- [100] 张婧驰. 周末集市[EB/OL]. https://www.sohu.com/a/445471300_99897603, 2021-01-19

Appendix

Appendix 1 Questionnaire on Spatial Narrative of Changhua Street Historic District

This survey aims to understand public perceptions of Changhua Street's historical and cultural heritage. All responses will remain anonymous and used solely for academic research. Thank you for your participation!

1. **Age Group** (Single-choice)

- ☐ Under 16
- ☐ 16-23
- ☐ 24-35
- ☐ 36-45
- ☐ 46-64
- ☐ 65+

2. **Gender** (Single-choice)

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

3. **Occupation** (Single-choice)

- ☐ Student
- ☐ Government Employee
- ☐ Teacher
- ☐ Freelancer
- ☐ Retired

4. **Knowledge of Changhua Street's History** (Single-choice)

- ☐ Completely unfamiliar
- ☐ Unfamiliar
- ☐ Moderate
- ☐ Fairly familiar
- ☐ Extremely familiar

5. **Sources of Historical Information** (Multiple-choice)

- ☐ Internet
- ☐ Tour guide
- ☐ On-site signs
- ☐ Friends/family

☐ Other: _____

6. Purpose of Visiting (Multiple-choice)

- ☐ Architecture: Experience Xiguan historic residences
- ☐ Events: Attend local cultural activities
- ☐ Photography: Take photos of heritage buildings
- ☐ History: Learn about Xiguan culture
- ☐ Atmosphere: Immerse in historical ambiance
- ☐ Leisure: Relax by lychee Bay

7. Evaluation of Historical Promotion (Single-choice)

- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Average
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Excellent

8. Understanding of Key Narrative Spaces (Matrix single-choice)

Space/Event	Can recount in detail	Fairly familiar	Somewhat familiar	Heard of it	Unaware
Origins of Changhua Garden	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Historical Events of Shimin Bridge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
History of Changhua River	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Qing Dynasty Commercial Residences	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Republican-era Western-style Houses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lizhongsheng Hall Baoji Pills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Republican-era Road Construction Movement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Water-based Commerce on Changhua River	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Industrial Pollution on	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Changhua River					
Establishment of Community Labor Stations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Uncovering of Changhua River	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community Banyan Tree Incident	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Riverfront Renovation for Asian Games	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

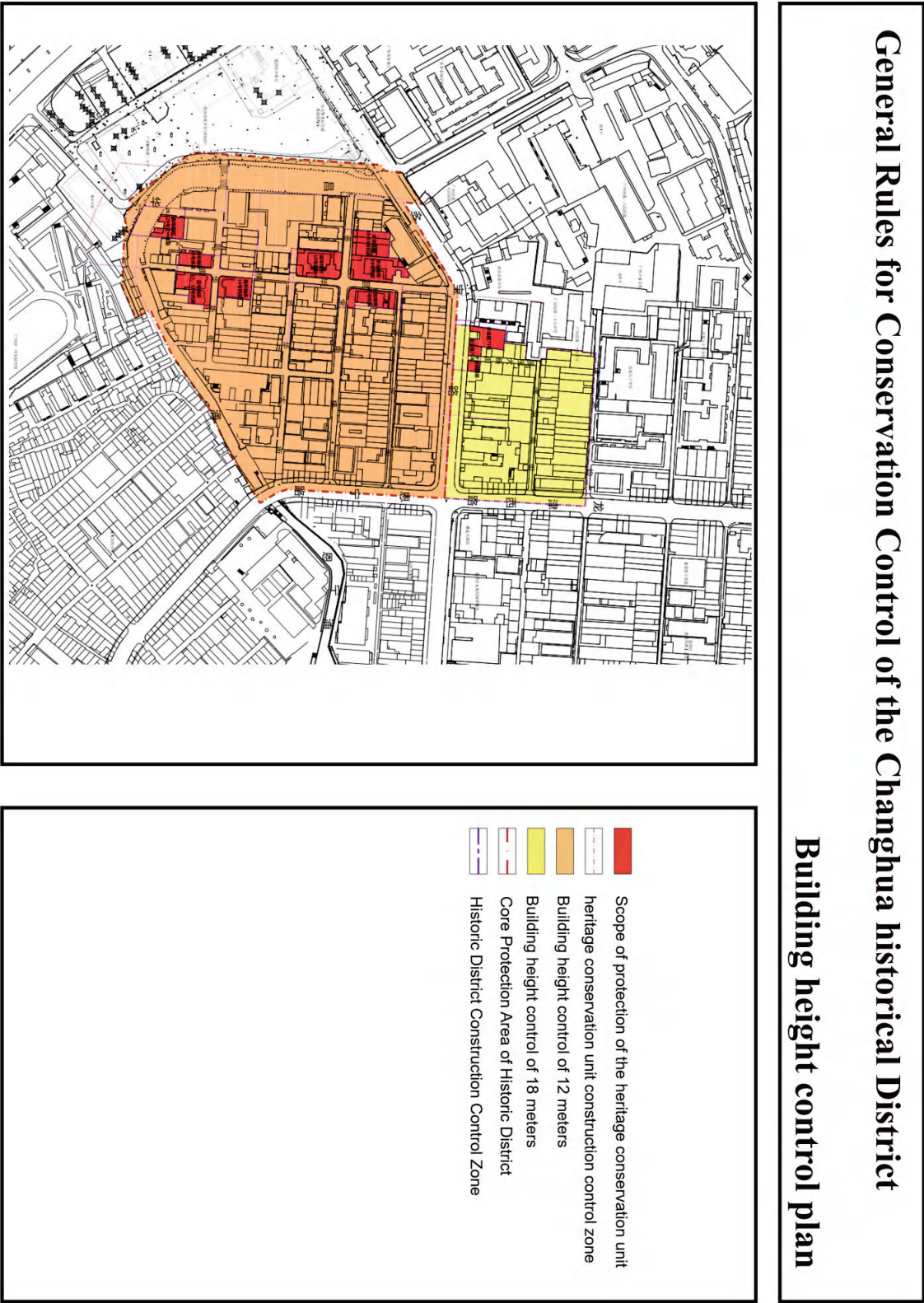
9. Current Issues in the District (Multiple-choice)

- ☐ Inadequate infrastructure
- ☐ Poor transportation accessibility/parking
- ☐ Dilapidated building facades
- ☐ Youth outflow/hollowing
- ☐ Safety concerns
- ☐ Poor sanitation
- ☐ Lack of historical interpretation
- ☐ Aging alleyways

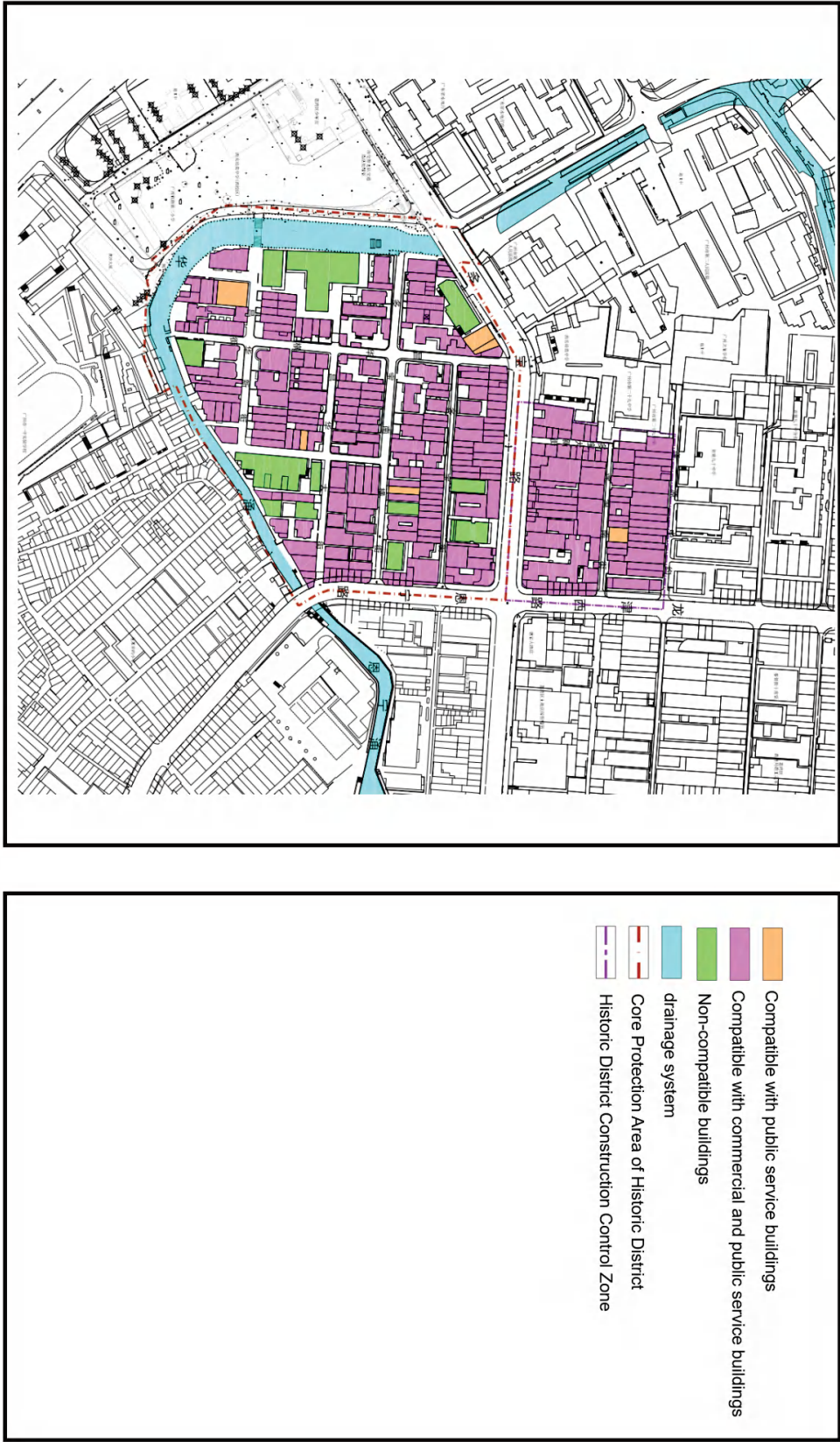
10. Desired Improvements (Multiple-choice)

- ☐ Increase traditional folk activities
- ☐ Enhance historical ambiance
- ☐ Modernize facilities
- ☐ Upgrade infrastructure/sanitation
- ☐ Expand commercial/recreational options
- ☐ Add historical signage/interpretation
- ☐ Improve residential environments
- ☐ Create more public gathering spaces

Appendix 2 Narrative design drawings



General Rules for Conservation Control of the Changhua historical District
Building Functional Compatibility
Categorization Control Chart



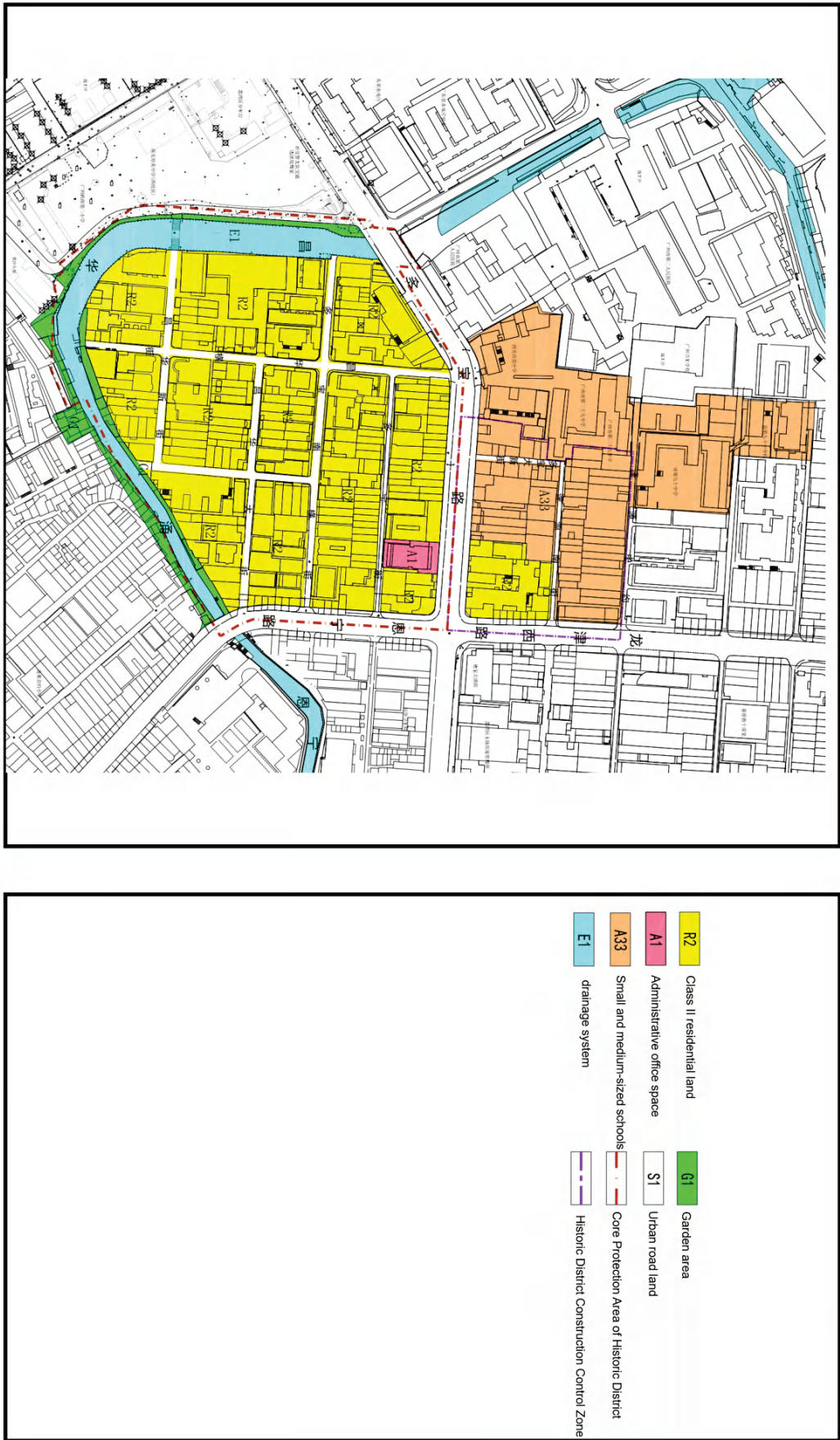
General Rules for Conservation Control of the Changhua historical District

Architectural Heritage Conservation Map



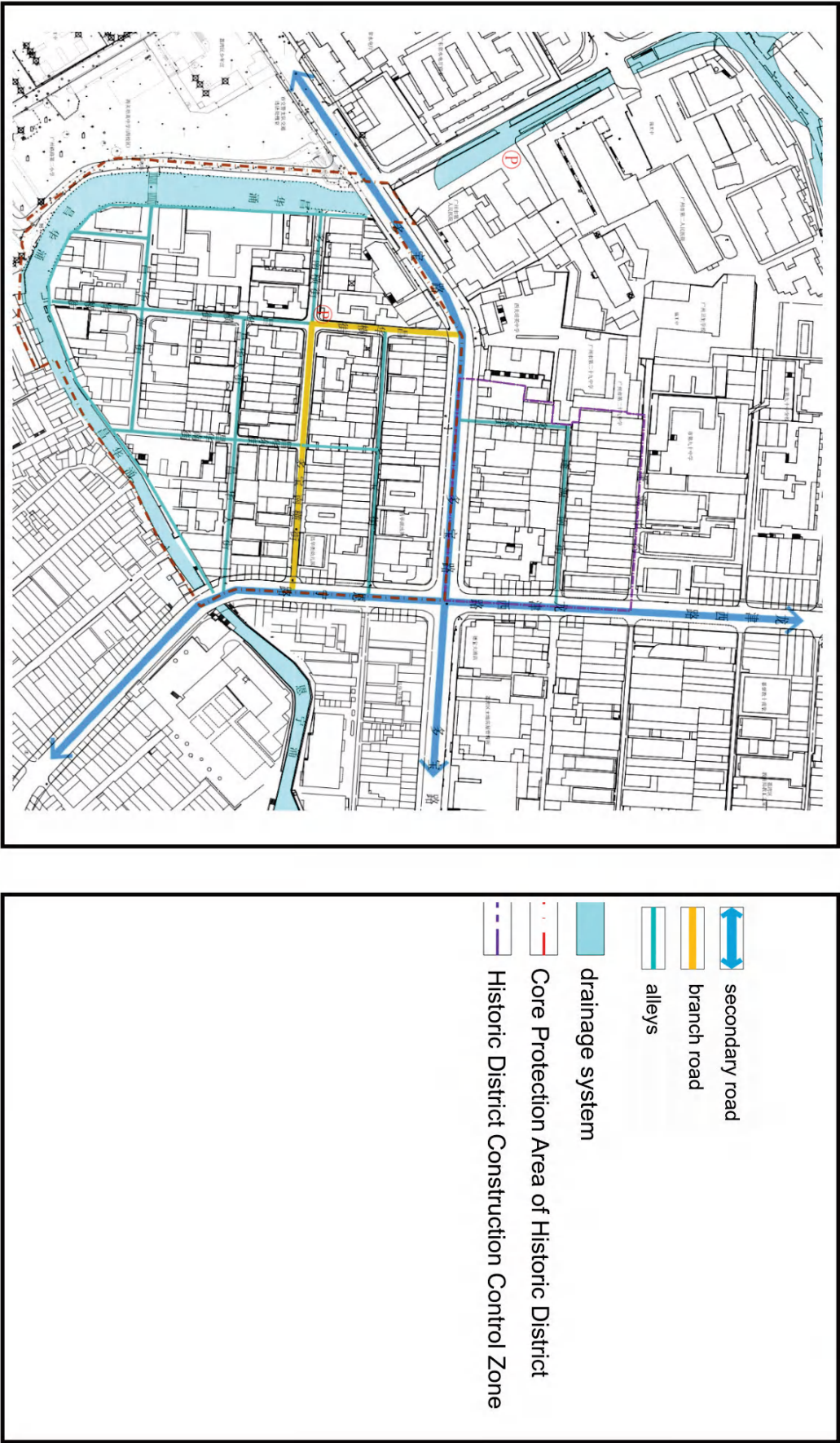
General Rules for Conservation Control of the Changhua historical District









Land Use and Planning Control Map



General Rules for Conservation Control of the Changhua historical District

Road traffic plan



key constituent	Control guidance requirements	icon
floor covering	<p>① Ground pavement materials and colors should match street style and spatial scale, using stone slab, blue brick or strip stone roads.</p> <p>② For characteristic streets suitable as cultural exploration routes, restore historical road surfaces where possible.</p> <p>③ Minimize municipal manhole covers and storm drains on streets, using simple styles matching pavement; conceal them if feasible.</p>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
Municipal Boxes	<p>① Municipal utility boxes in streets should be installed inside buildings or courtyards where possible; if not, place them in hidden locations that do not affect traffic or resident safety.</p> <p>② Exposed utility boxes should be concealed with simulated greenery, surface films, or covers to match the historical district's traditional style. Covers should be simple, low-key, and fit tightly to avoid extra space use.</p>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

Guidance for visualization system in changhua Historic District

key constituent	Control guidance requirements	icon
Landscaping	<p>① Protect ancient and famous trees in streets as a priority.</p> <p>② Street greening should match the surrounding environment and spatial scale. Use scattered, multi-point, small-scale layouts to add greenery in corner/temporary spaces, encourage vertical greening, and install flower racks or plant local climbing plants on walls where possible</p>	<p>in historic and cultural districts, incorporate paving, landscape facilities, public art, and urban furniture</p> <p>Actively encourage and reasonably guide residents along streets to carry out landscape</p>
Signs and Plaques	<p>① Doorplates and street signs should be uniformly positioned for visibility (one per location). Doorplates on upper left door lintels; street signs on exterior walls at entrances. Sizes, styles, colors, and materials match the traditional district. Use clear, standardized text/graphics with accurate content.</p> <p>② Uniformly plan and install historical and cultural resource signs in readable spots. They can be wall-mounted, ground-embedded, or freestanding, without harming streetscape or safety</p> <p>② Design signs uniformly for readability. Vary styles, specs, colors, and materials by location and function, with a simple, elegant look showcasing Yangzhou street features.</p>	<p>Narrative Guidance System</p> <p>Signs describing historic and cultural resources that are more compatible with traditional features</p>
Signs size	<p>① Height Adaptation to Scenes</p> <p>Small standing signs (1.6–2m) for narrow streets/alleys, medium signs (2–3m) for main intersections/squares, and large signs (3–6m) for block entrances/open areas.</p> <p>② Font Size Matching Viewing Distance</p> <p>Use ≥2–3-inch fonts for signs visible from 10 meters (e.g., entrance signs) and 1–2-inch fonts for those within 5 meters (e.g., narrow street signs) to ensure clarity and readability.</p> <p>② Integrate space, architecture & info: large signs for open areas (squares), small/wall-mounted for alleys; match sign size to building scale (bigger for tall structures, smaller for low-rise), use ≥1.2×0.8m for rich/critical content (maps, core attractions), 0.6×0.4m for simple info (dining)</p>	<p>Narrative Guidance System</p> <p>Size of the guide device</p>

Overall Plan



Changes in the Plan



Planning Structure

Under the guidance of the planning document, it is determined that the buildings in the core area undergoing reconstruction should not exceed 12 meters. At the same time, the compatible buildings should be appropriately utilized for the organization of narrative streets, building renovation, and the organization of public spaces, and the overall planning structure should be determined.

key constituent	Control guidance requirements
Functional Layout	Changhua Street: 3 functional zones (historical, waterfront, community) with linked nodes. Heritage renovation includes cultural exhibition, Tourist and resident facilities added for sustainability and vibrancy
Block fabric	Combining the messy and disorganized fabric of the current situation, and reconstructing it by integrating the traditional architectural space organization method of Wanzi Street to form a new architectural layout.
street node	Protect and integrate nodes, revive micro - spaces. Place furniture and greenery at key points. Reshape distinctive nodes, let them penetrate blocks. Expand historic nodes, recreate landscapes, and build an open public space system for Changhua Street's narrative



Narrative Street

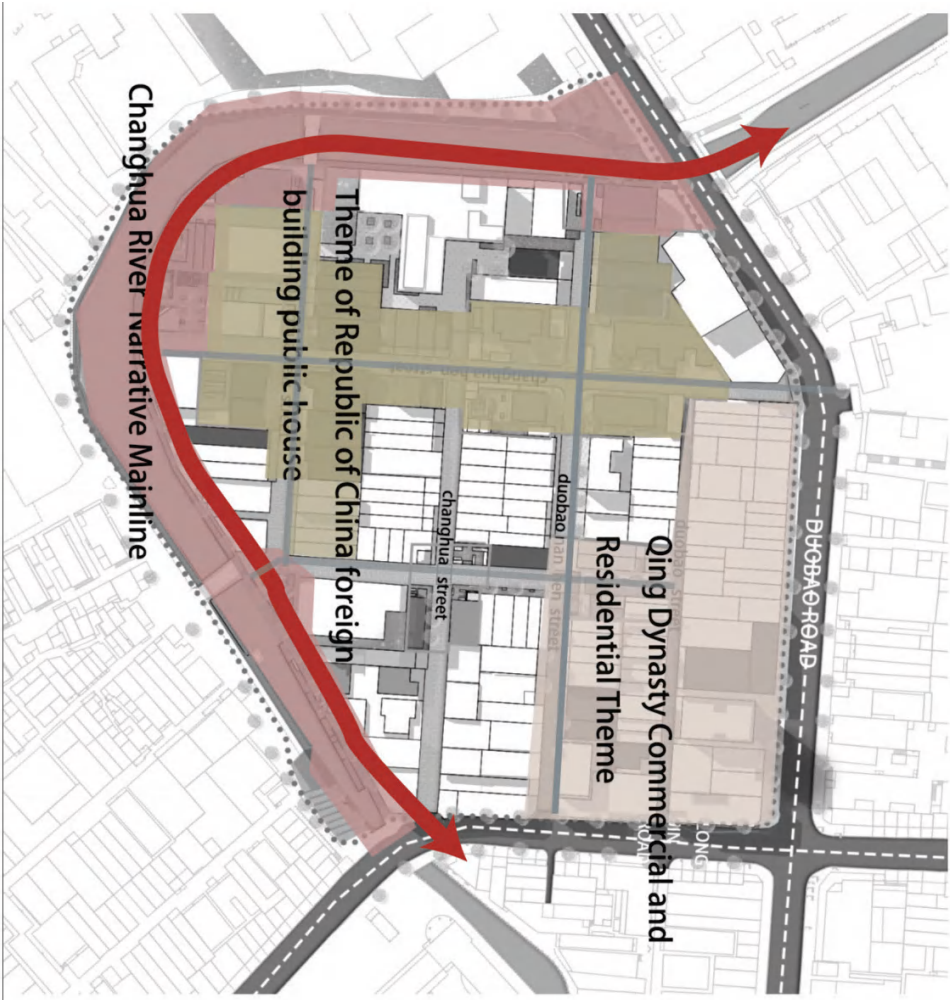


Narrative Architecture



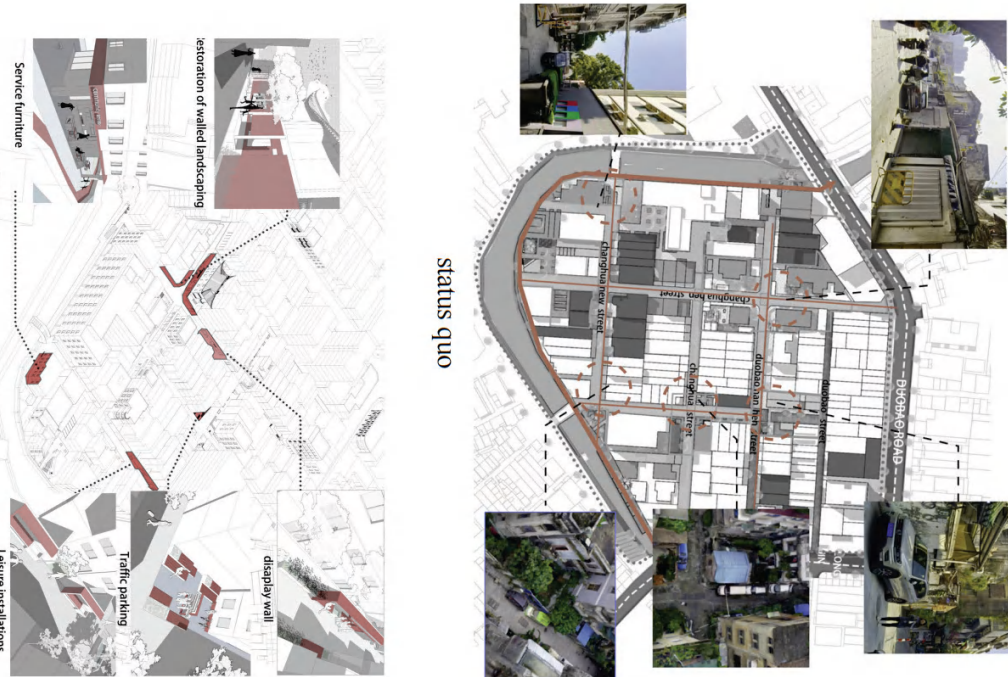
Organization of narrative

narrative theme



narrative theme clarification

status quo

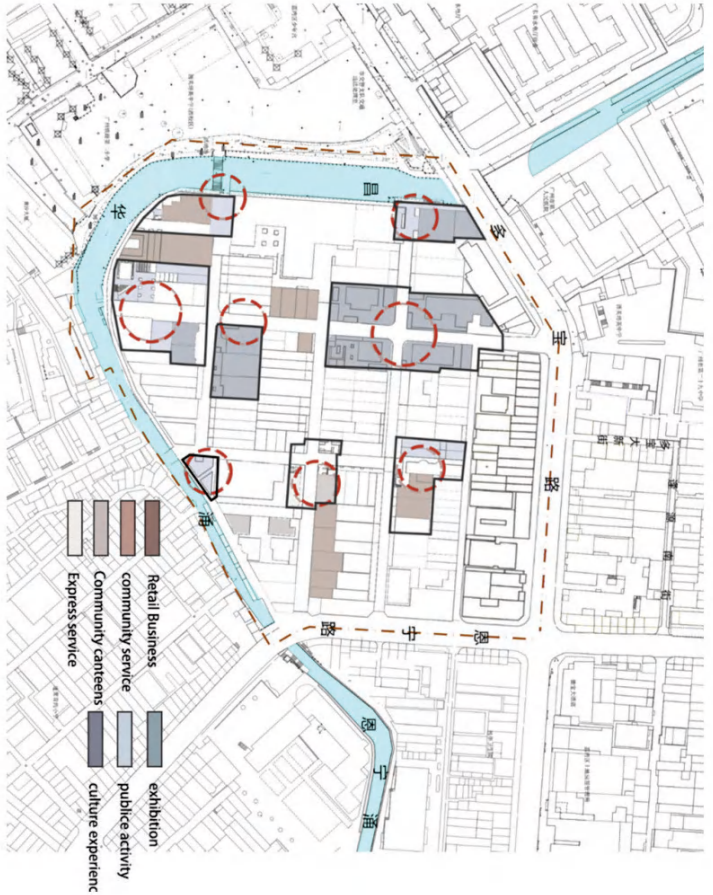


narrative function

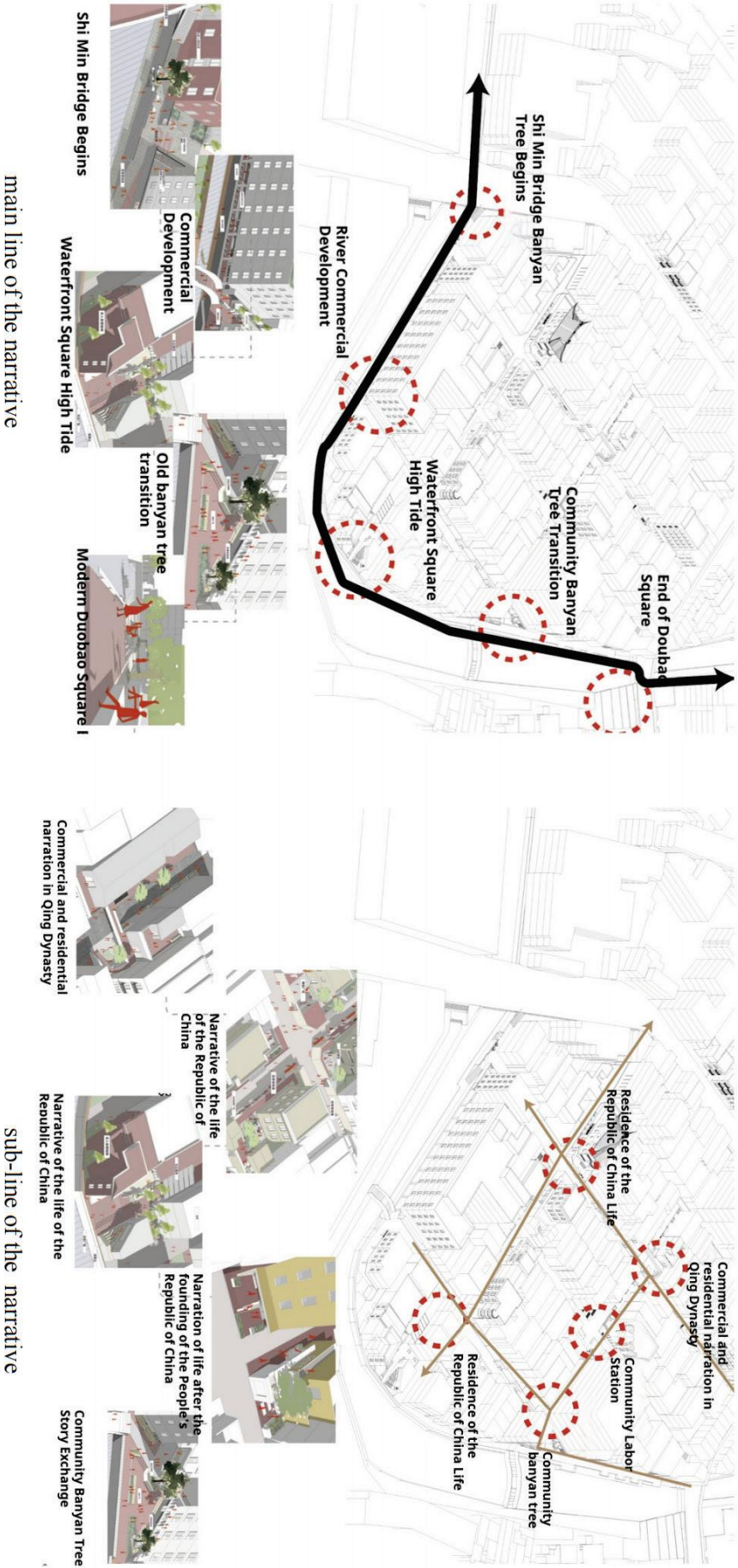
Before



After



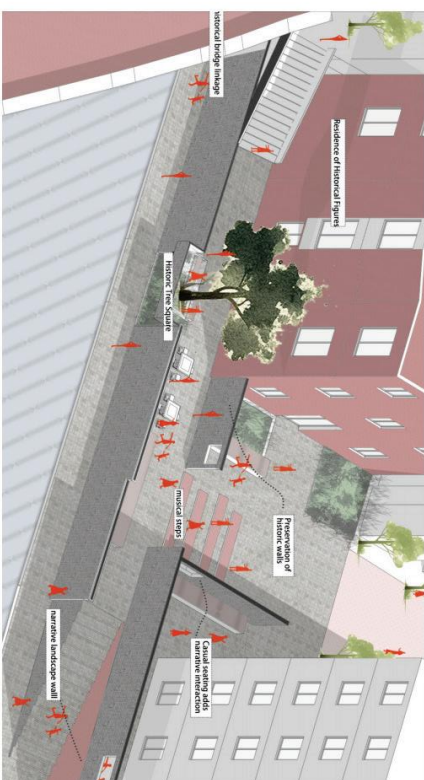
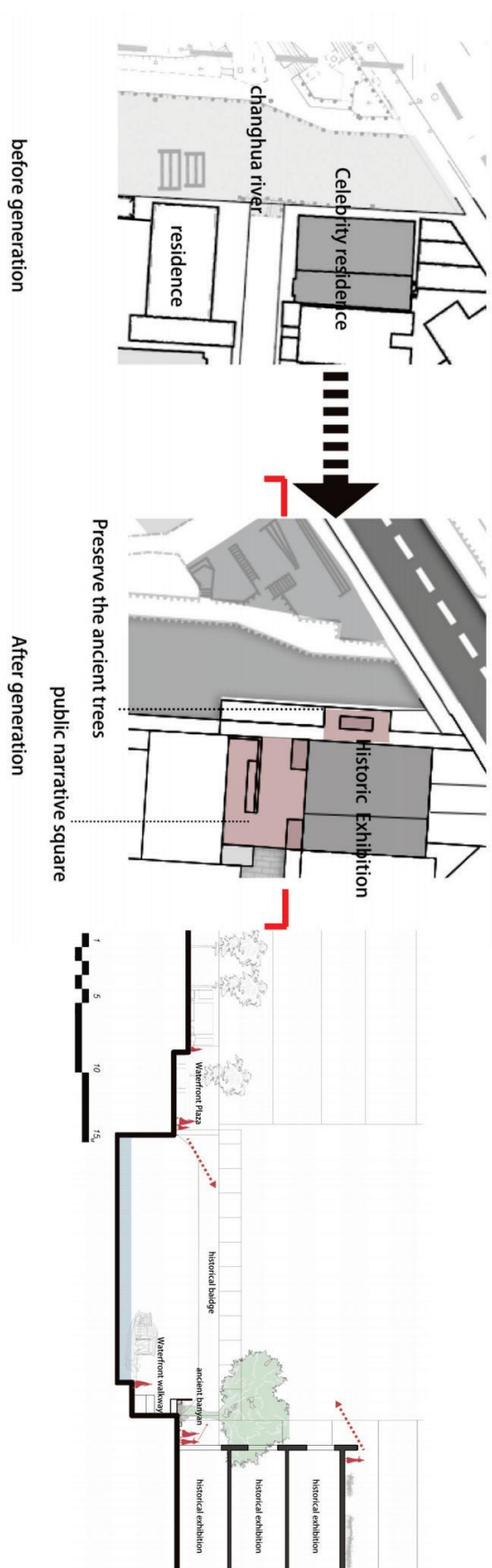
narrative thread





Situation of Residential Houses

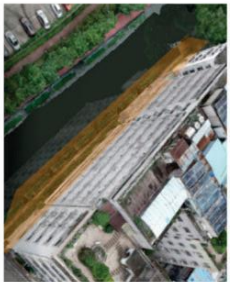
Historic Square: A Metaphor for the Prosperity Under the Tokimimbashi Bridge



narrative scene creation



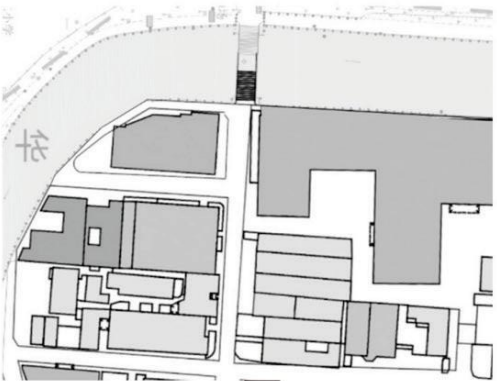
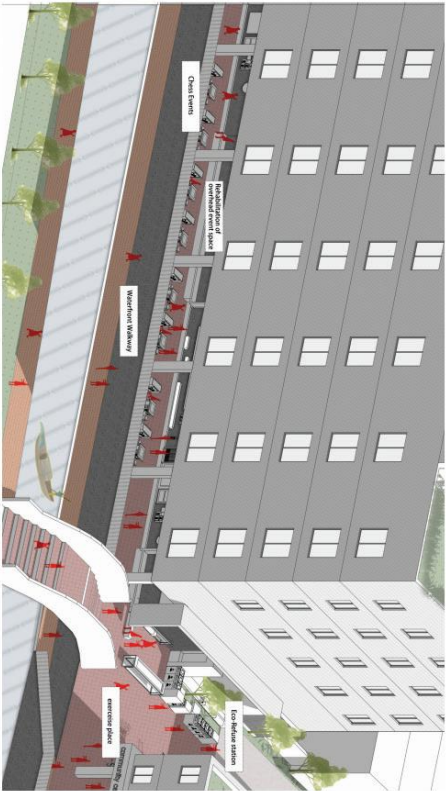
Historical Scene of Commercial River



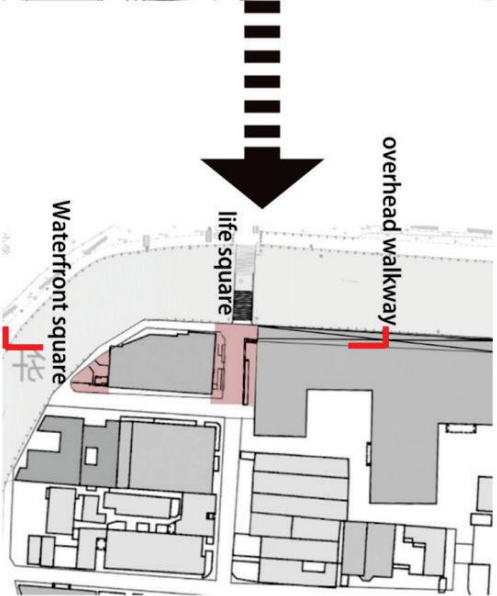
Current Situation of River



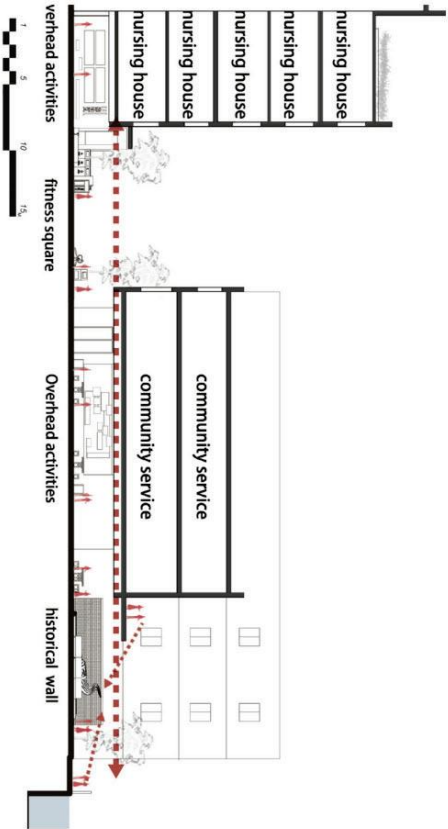
Situation of Square



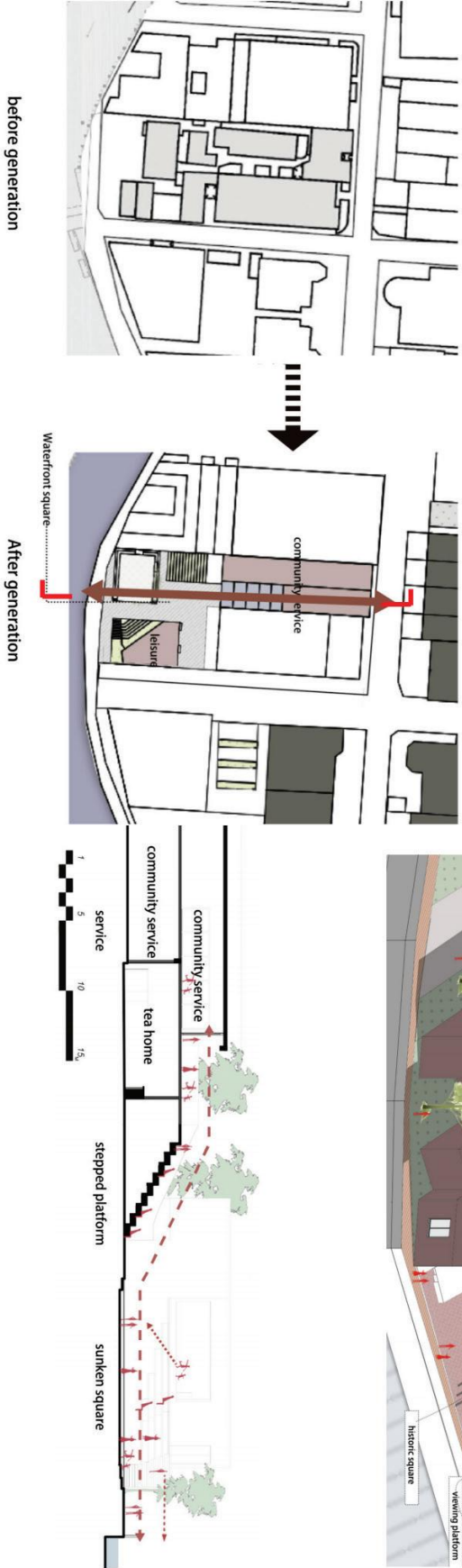
before regeneration



After regeneration



narrative scene creation



narrative scene creation



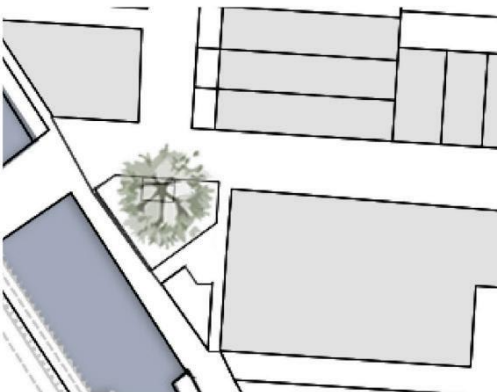
Historical Picture of Lychee Bay



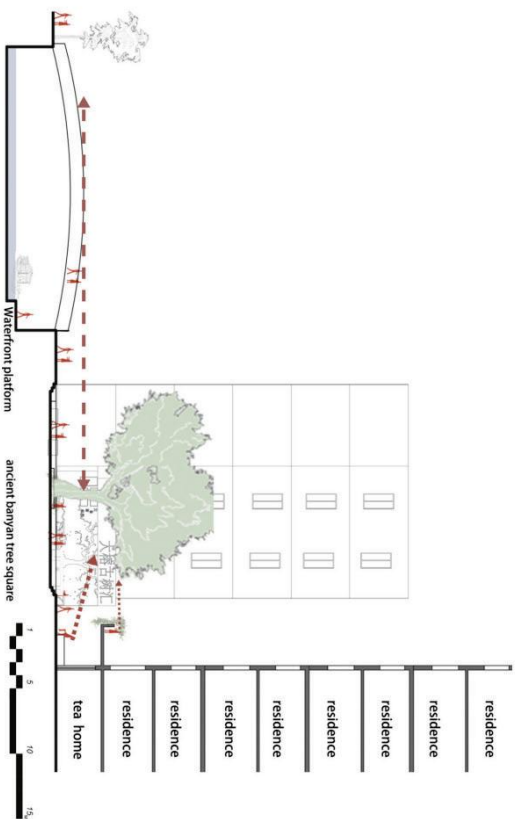
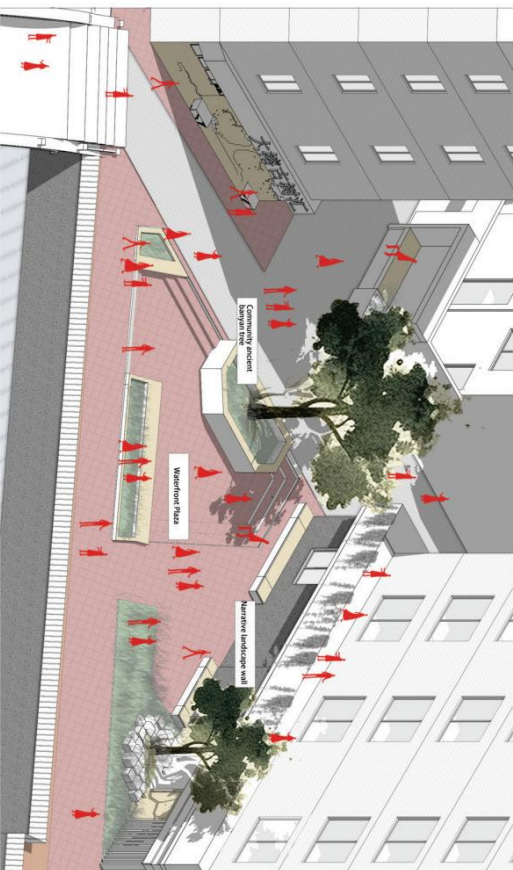
Current Situation of Old Banyan Tree in Community



Before generation



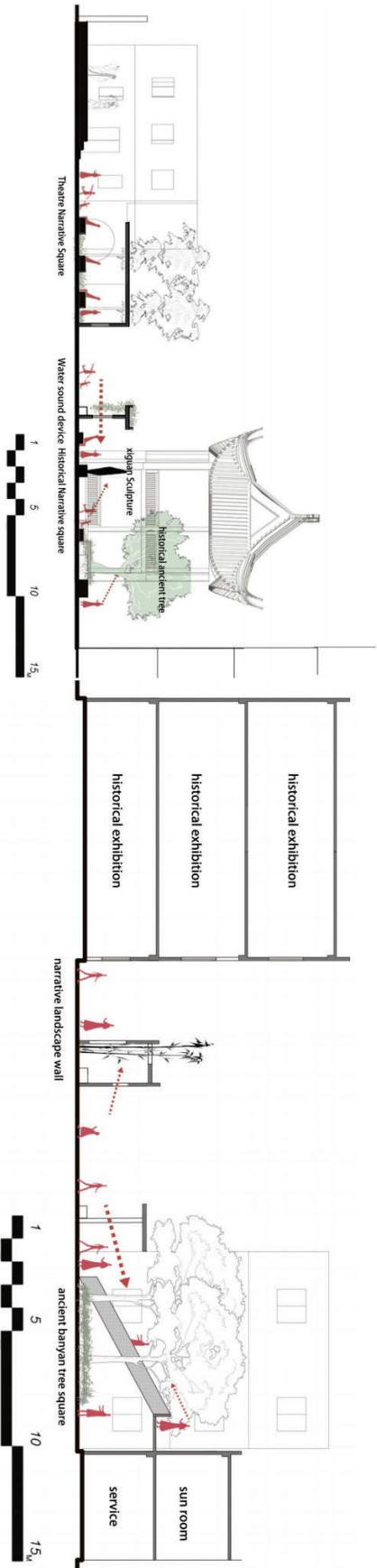
After generation



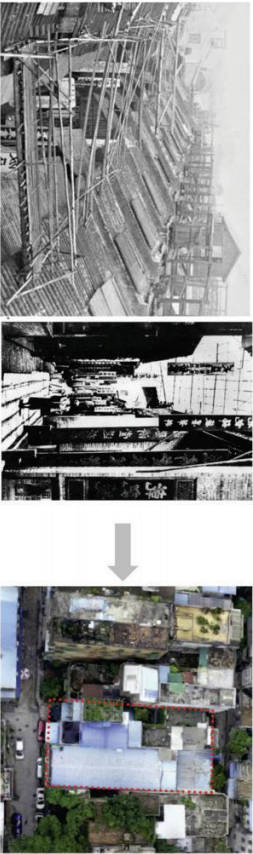
narrative scene creation



gilly' nebras2 to amae2 aili' qniboo7i to enuicq' lsaonolaiH agbo2 nebowow to enuicq' lsaonolaiH agbo2 nebowow



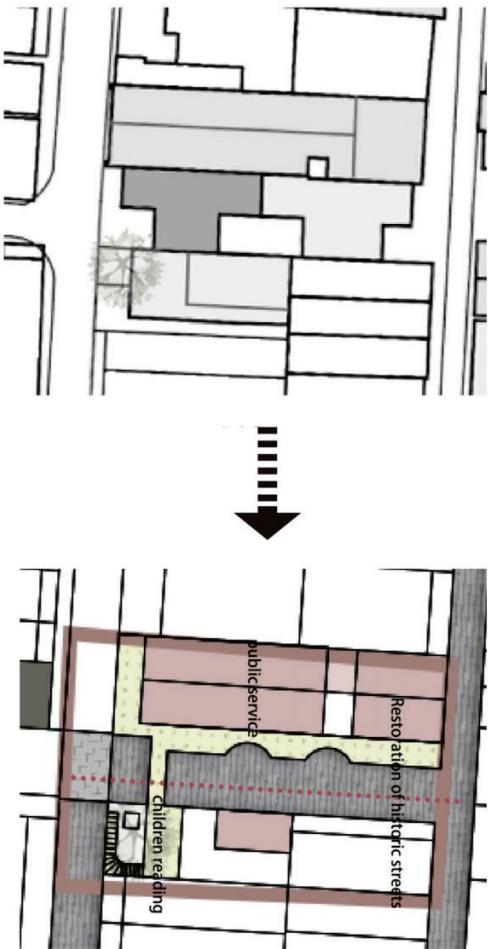
narrative scene creation



Historical Picture of
Stone - Slab Street

Historical Picture of
Qing Dynasty Roof

Current Situation of the Connection
of Stone - Slab Street



Before generation

After generation



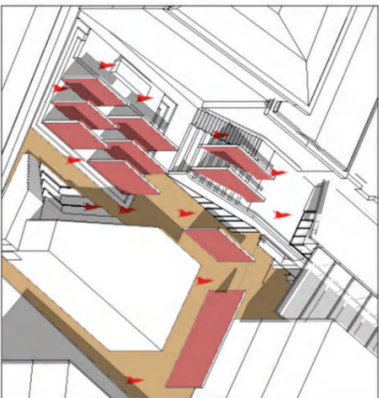
Festivals and events inserted



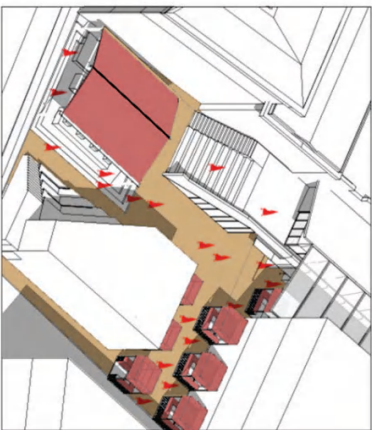
Lychée Bay still has abundant lychée production. The "river tour" tradition and prosperous flower market on both sides formed the Lychée Bay Flower Market.



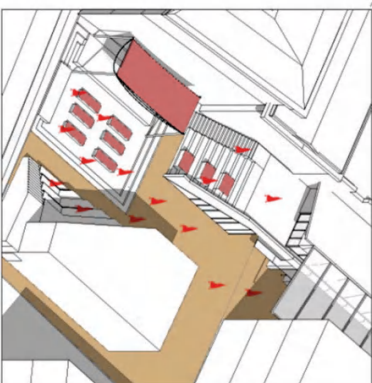
In 2020, Guangzhou's renowned themed bazaar, Twist Market, will join hands with the Changhua Street Integrated Community Service Center to organize a weekend flash market.



Exhibition activity

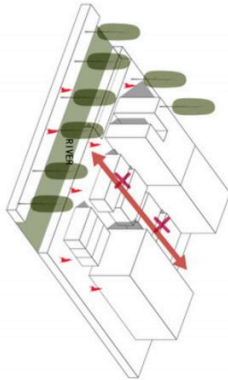


Pop-up flower market

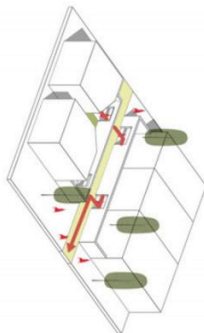


opera festival

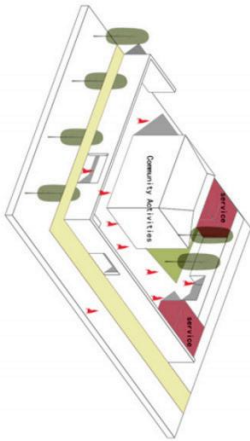
Festivals and events inserted



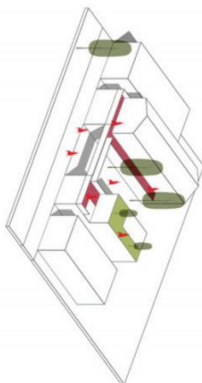
Space concessions



Timeshare Courtyard



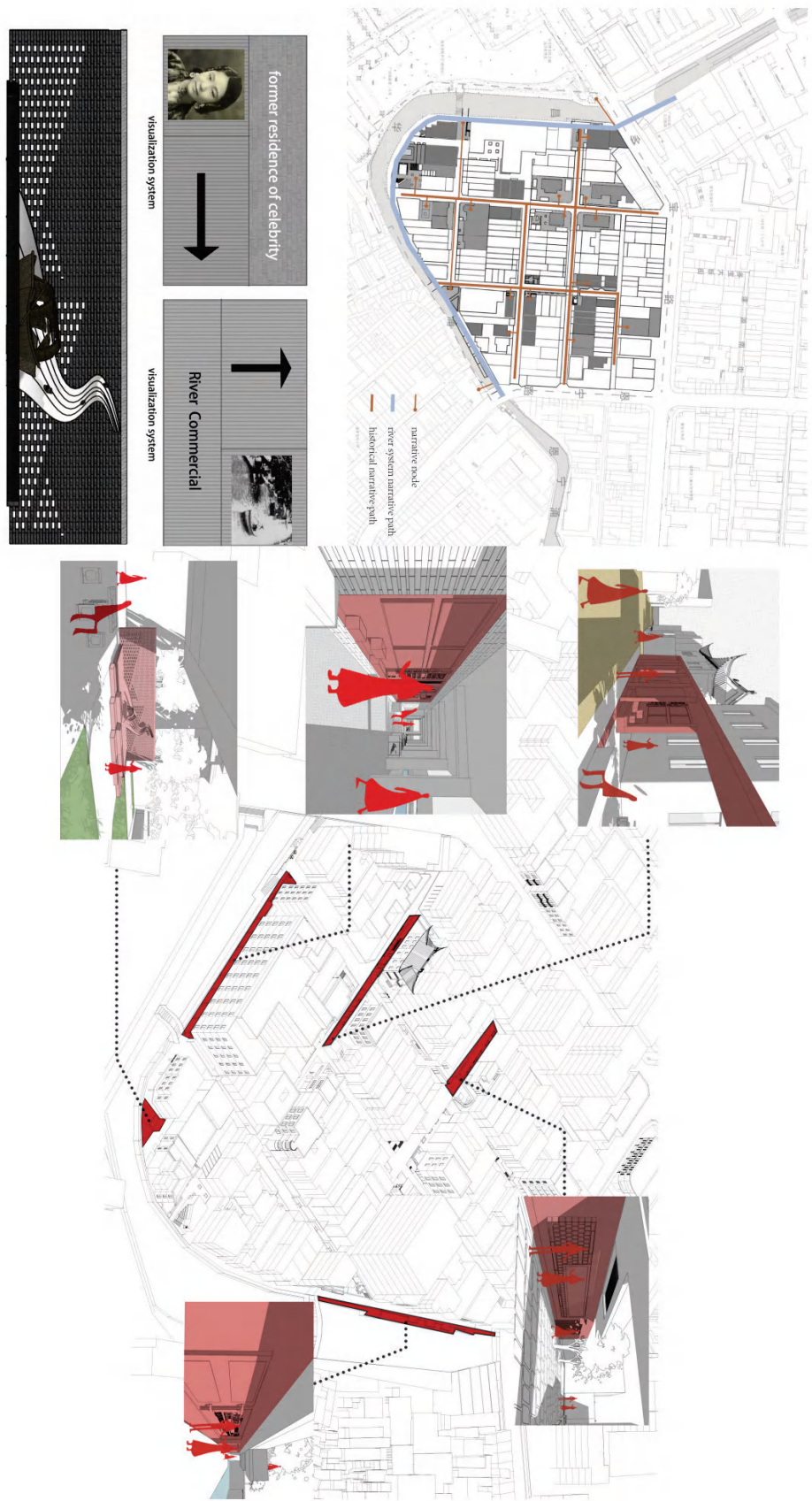
Consistent with the use



Rooftop garden

Improve the accessibility of the spatial scene of the neighborhood, strengthen the connection between the street and the river, strengthen the line of sight communication, etc.; the optimization of the narrative logic aims to enhance the experience of the spatial plot

Guidelines for Narrative Signage Systems

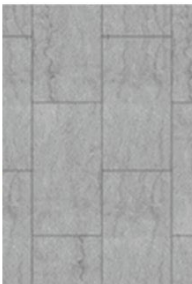


Material Guidelines for Narrative Signage Systems

Material Guidelines for Narrative Signage Systems



mashstone roda
Lapis lazuli is preferred



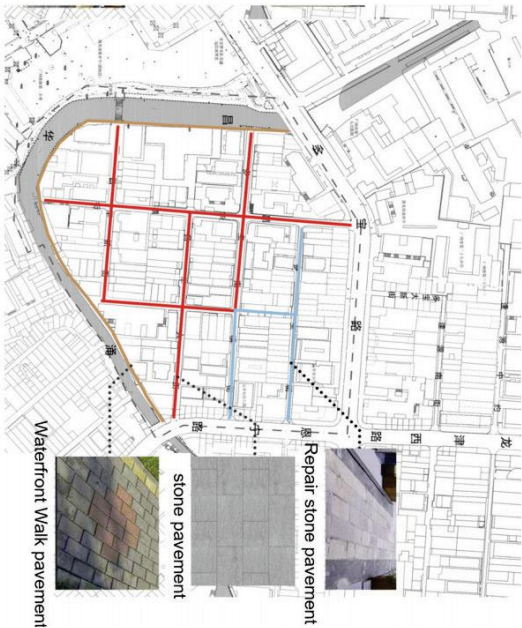
inner street Slate
roads are preferred



waterfront road signature
road is preferred



Historical and cultural relics with conservation value, such as floor tiles, stones and steps, should be preserved and restored to preserve historical and cultural information.

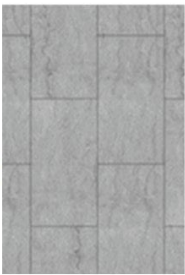


Material Guidelines for Narrative Signage Systems

Material Guidelines for Narrative Signage Systems



mashistone roda
Lapis lazuli is
preferred



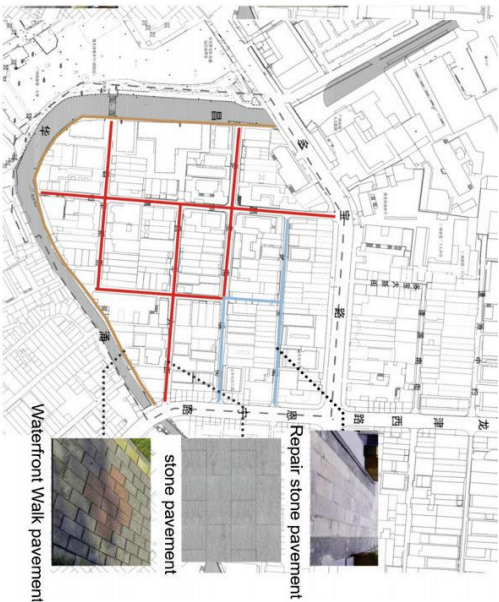
inner street State
roads are preferred



waterfront road signature
road is preferred



Historical and cultural relics with conservation value, such as floor tiles, stones and steps, should be preserved and restored to preserve historical and cultural information.



Acknowledgements

During my undergraduate studies, I approached my academics with rigor, and my habitual way of thinking shaped my understanding of architecture. During my graduate studies, I was fortunate to receive a European education: studying abroad in Europe and traveling across countries, which reconstructed my cognitive dimensions of the world through cultural collisions. Today, I have a new understanding of architecture and urban design.

In the process of writing this thesis, I am extremely grateful to Professor Wang Shifu, Professor Liu Zheng, Professor Chen Changyong, and Professor Wei Zongcai for their patient guidance and advice. They helped me identify key points in my thesis writing and continuously corrected my direction. I would like to express my sincerest gratitude and respect to them. I also thank my good friends who continuously encouraged me during the thesis-writing period. Whenever I felt down, they earnestly listened to my troubles. Finally, I am deeply grateful to all the classmates in the professional master's program. Interacting with a group of open-minded, serious, and rigorous peers has greatly benefited me in group research.

As someone who is not eloquent, I now most want to express my gratitude to my parents. They have always conveyed unconditional support and encouragement in a silent, nurturing way. While I focused on my academic growth, they built a stable harbor for my life through their hard work, giving me the freedom and confidence to make choices. Thank you for being the strongest support in my life.

Looking back on these more than twenty years of study, I have experienced emotions such as harvest, loss, and anxiety. In the days to come, I will continue to learn and live a good life.