Research on Strategic Pathways and Countermeasures for the "International Shenyang" City IP Development

-- Positioning as an International Hub City in Northeast Asia

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Abstract. Based on Shenyang's strategic goal of building itself into an international hub city in Northeast Asia, this study addresses the systematic need to shape the "International Shenyang" city IP by integrating international urban development theory with Shenyang's practical context. By examining Shenyang's strengths in industrial foundation, open platforms, and cultural tourism resources, the study identifies key shortcomings such as an unclear urban identity, insufficient industrial transformation, weak appeal to young talent, and lagging supporting services. It proposes a four-pronged strategy: building a core identity integrating "technology + manufacturing," deepening immersive "culture + scenario" experiences, strengthening international exchange networks, innovating digital communication strategies, and improving functional infrastructure. Additionally, a coordinated implementation mechanism involving organizational support, policy innovation, talent attraction and cultivation, and dynamic evaluation is designed. The study provides a theoretical framework and practical pathway for enhancing Shenyang's global competitiveness through city IP development, offering insights for the international transformation of cities in Northeast China.

Keywords: International Shenyang; City IP; International Hub City; Revitalization of Northeast China; Cultural Communication.

1. Introduction: The Era Mission and Strategic Significance of Urban Internationalization Development

At present, Shenyang is in the critical stage of comprehensive revitalization and new breakthrough, and shoulders the national strategic orientation of building "an international central city in Northeast Asia". In October, 2024, the State Council officially approved the Master Plan of Shenyang's Land and Space (2021-2035), which made it clear for the first time that Shenyang was an international central city in Northeast Asia, marking the development of Shenyang and even the whole Northeast China entering a new stage of internationalization. The "Action Program for Shenyang to Build an Internationalized Central City in Northeast Asia (2025-2035)" issued in early 2025 further puts forward the strategic framework of "one highland, one hub and four centers", which draws a clear road map for the internationalization of the city[1]. In this context, the shaping of "international Shen" city IP has become the key to implement the national strategy and improve the urban energy level[2].

Based on the reality of Shenyang's development and combined with the experience of IP construction in international cities, this study puts forward the construction path and implementation strategy of IP in "international Shenyang" cities, and provides intellectual support for Shenyang's three-year decisive action.

2. Shenyang International Construction Status Evaluation: Basic Advantages and Key Bottlenecks

2.1 The Basic Advantages of Shenyang's International Development

In the dimension of economy and industry, Shenyang has formed a strong advantage of advanced manufacturing cluster. In 2024, the regional GDP exceeded 900 billion yuan, reaching 902.71 billion yuan, a year-on-year increase of 5.2%, and the growth rate was higher than the national average for

three consecutive years. The industrial structure has been continuously optimized. The high-end equipment manufacturing industry accounts for more than 40% of the equipment industry, and emerging industries such as aerospace, integrated circuits and new energy have achieved explosive growth, with growth rates of 19.6%, 45.9% and 130% respectively. Intelligent manufacturing cluster composed of automobile industry cluster led by BMW Brilliance and Xinsong Robot has laid a solid foundation for Shenyang to participate in the global industrial chain division. The scale of ten key industrial clusters has exceeded one trillion yuan, and five of them have reached 100 billion levels, forming a gradient industrial echelon. In the dimension of economy and industry, Shenyang has formed a strong advantage of advanced manufacturing cluster. In 2024, the regional GDP exceeded 900 billion yuan, reaching 902.71 billion yuan, a year-on-year increase of 5.2%, and the growth rate was higher than the national average for three consecutive years. The industrial structure has been continuously optimized. The high-end equipment manufacturing industry accounts for more than 40% of the equipment industry, and emerging industries such as aerospace, integrated circuits and new energy have achieved explosive growth, with growth rates of 19.6%, 45.9% and 130% respectively. Intelligent manufacturing cluster composed of automobile industry cluster led by BMW Brilliance and Xinsong Robot has laid a solid foundation for Shenyang to participate in the global industrial chain division. The scale of ten key industrial clusters has exceeded one trillion yuan, and five of them have reached 100 billion levels, forming a gradient industrial echelon.

In terms of open platform construction, Shenyang has built a multi-level international cooperation system. In 2025, it is planned to introduce more than 100 international cooperation projects. The channel network construction has achieved remarkable results. The scale of China-Europe train (Shenyang) ranks first in Northeast China, with 26 international passenger and cargo routes, and the number of cross-border e-commerce orders has exceeded 9 million, initially forming a three-dimensional open channel system of "air, land and sea network". In terms of open platform construction, Shenyang has built a multi-level international cooperation system. In 2025, it is planned to introduce more than 100 international cooperation projects. The channel network construction has achieved remarkable results. The scale of China-Europe train (Shenyang) ranks first in Northeast China, with 26 international passenger and cargo routes, and the number of cross-border e-commerce orders has exceeded 9 million, initially forming a three-dimensional open channel system of "air, land and sea network".

In the field of cultural tourism integration, Shenyang has shown strong cultural consumption vitality. In 2024, the cultural tourism industry achieved a historic breakthrough: the number of tourists received exceeded 200 million for the first time in the whole year, and the tourism consumption reached 200 billion yuan, and it won five national honors such as "Top Ten Cities with National Tourist Satisfaction". "Night Economy" has become a characteristic business card, and night consumption accounts for 42% of the total tourism revenue. The characteristic IP year of "Ice and Snow+Hot Springs+Bathing" attracts more than 30 million tourists. Dongzhong Street Joy City and other cultural, business and travel integration projects have become a gathering place for youth trends. In 2024, the sales reached 3.6 billion yuan, up 39% year-on-year, and the passenger flow exceeded 33 million. Its positioning as a "secondary cultural highland" attracted Z generation groups.

2.2 "International Shen" IP Shaping the Key Shortcomings

Despite its obvious basic advantages, Shenyang still faces four bottlenecks in shaping the internationalization of urban IP:

Unclear city identity: Compared with the distinctive city IP such as Chengdu "Panda Capital" and Xi 'an "Tang Wenhua", Shenyang has not yet formed a core cultural symbol with global recognition. The connotation of "international Shen" still stays at the conceptual level, lacking concrete carrier and differentiated expression, which leads to vague cognition in international communication.

The chain of industrial transformation is broken: the advantages of manufacturing industry have not been effectively transformed into cultural export capacity. Insufficient IP development of industrial culture, insufficient activation and utilization of historical heritage of equipment

manufacturing, and lack of international narrative packaging for technical stories of enterprises such as Shen Fei and Xinsong Robot. The spread of innovative stories in the transition from "Made in Shenyang" to "Created in Shenyang" is weak, which weakens the industrial support of urban IP.

Insufficient gravitational field of youth: the cultivation system of international youth community is not perfect. Although the attraction of Generation Z has improved (for example, Joy City in Dongzhong Street accounts for 50% of the customers aged 19-34), the scenes of immersive technology experience, cross-cultural social space and international art activities are scarce, which leads to the lack of continuous vitality injection into urban IP.

There is a gap in service packages: there are obvious shortcomings in international public services. Although the 144-hour transit visa-free policy has been implemented in 54 countries, the degree of payment facilitation is insufficient (the coverage rate of wild card POS machines is low), which hinders the word-of-mouth spread of urban IP.

3. "International Shen" City IP Construction System Countermeasures

3.1 Build a "Technology+Manufacturing" IP Core to Build a Science and Technology Hub in Northeast Asia

Based on the industrial base of Shenyang, strengthen the two-wheel drive of technology empowerment and manufacturing upgrading, and shape the IP of "hard core Shenyang" city;

Building IP matrix of advanced manufacturing: implementing the global promotion plan of "Shenyang Zhizhi". Focus on three national advanced manufacturing clusters, namely, robots and intelligent manufacturing, aviation and industrial machine tools, and build three industrial cultural IP's, namely, Xinsong Robot, Shen Fei Fighter and i5 Intelligent Machine Tool. Build a digital twin platform for industrial museums, develop VR experience "the journey of the birth of great powers", and make it an international demonstration zone for industrial tourism. Support leading enterprises such as northern heavy industries and Xinsong to build international research bases, and develop a series of documentaries "From Tiexi to the World" to tell the story of Shenyang Manufacturing's participation in global super projects.

Strengthening international links of scientific and technological innovation: building a hub of scientific and technological cooperation in Northeast Asia. Relying on platforms such as Liaoning Materials Laboratory and Liaohe Laboratory, we will set up a special fund for international joint research and development to attract top scientific research teams in the world.

Cultivate future industrial landmarks: seize the commanding heights of green and low-carbon economy. Accelerate the construction of "energy storage capital" and "northern hydrogen capital", promote the construction of Shenyang green fuel base and other major projects by Zhongneng, and strive to make the installed capacity of renewable energy exceed 50%. Plan a zero-carbon international demonstration zone in Hunnan Science and Technology City. Hold the "Northeast Asia Carbon Neutralization Forum" to strengthen the IP of urban sustainable development.

3.2 Deepen the "Culture+Scene" Immersion Experience and Build an International Cultural Tourism Consumption Highland.

Taking culture as the soul and scene as the body, we will build a full-time and global cultural tourism experience ecology and release the attraction of "vibrant Shenyang";

Shaping "Double Capital" Consumer Business Cards: Strengthening the International Marketing of Characteristic Labels. Upgrade the IP of "China Bathing and Leisure Capital", design the international experience route of "Shenshui Muyang", integrate Xita Korean massage, traditional Chinese medicine physiotherapy and modern spa technology, and develop high-end customized health care packages; Build a digital museum of bath culture and declare the national intangible cultural heritage. The Shenyang International Beer Festival was held in series with the Old Snowflake Beer Museum, Tiexi DreamWorks Beer Workshop and Hunnan Fine Brewing Block[3].

Constructing the gravity field of all-season fashion: innovative cultural and sports travel fusion scene. Continue the brand system of "Four Seasons Tour" (Spring is in full bloom, Summer is full of sunshine, Autumn is ginkgo season, and Winter is ice and snow festival), and implant international elements. Focus on the development of "two races and one shadow": improve the level of Shenyang International Rowing Open and Shenyang Marathon, and attract top international players to participate; Strengthen China (Shenyang) Comedy Film Week and set up "Northeast Asia Humor Culture Forum"; Develop world-class cultural heritage corridors such as Shengjing Imperial City and Zhongshan Road Historic District, and launch cross-border products of "immersive drama+travel shooting".

Activating the youth's tidal play ecology: building a Z generation international community. Drawing on the experience of Joy City in Dongzhong Street as the source of youth trend culture, the International Youth Innovation Corridor will be set up on both sides of Hunhe River and Puhe River to gather e-sports halls, secondary markets, AI art spaces and other formats. Set up "024 International Youth Day" and hold K-POP Global Challenge, International Graffiti Art Week, Metacosmic Fashion Show and other activities. Construction of social landmarks such as "Shencheng Expansion Wall" to promote cultural exchanges between Chinese and foreign youth.

3.3 Strengthen the "Foreign Affairs+International Communication" Network and Enhance the Global Resource Link Level

Build a multi-level international communication system, expand Shenyang's global "circle of friends" and enhance the city's international influence;

Implement the "sister city upgrade 2.0" plan: promote international sister city cooperation to improve quality and efficiency. Select 20 pairs from the existing 88 pairs of sister cities for in-depth strategic cooperation, and establish a "one city, one chain" industrial docking mechanism (such as Munich-automotive technology, Kawasaki-robot, Busan-cross-border e-commerce). Set up the "International Friendship Mayor Exchange Day" and hold the Northeast Asia Mayor Forum in turn. Innovatively carry out the "Shenyang Tour of Embassies and Consulates" and invite the diplomatic envoys in China to participate in the "International Shen" brand activities.

Construction of "Overseas Shenyang" Communication Node: Layout of Global Promotion Network. Set up the "Window of Shenyang" comprehensive exhibition center, set up the "International Shen" overseas promotion officer team, and attract overseas Shenyang scholars, entrepreneurs and international friends (such as Lu Rongzhi-style cultural celebrities) as communication messengers. Implement the "Red Trace Shenyang" international communication project, conduct thematic interviews with the central media, and tell the story of Shenyang's transformation.

3.4 Innovate the "Digital+Youth" Communication Strategy and Build a Global International Communication System

Facing the characteristics of Z-generation audience, using digital means to realize the accurate reach and interactive communication of urban IP;

Developing immersive digital IP products: using technology to activate cultural resources. Build a digital twin platform of "Yuan Universe Prospering Beijing", restore the style of Shenyang City in Qing Dynasty, and support NFT digital collection transaction. The interactive experience of "Made in Shenyang VR Epic" was launched, allowing users to participate in industrial scenes such as fighter assembly and shield tunneling online. Cooperate with Tencent and Netease to develop the urban theme game of "Yang of Shen Shui", which is embedded in scenes and tasks such as the Forbidden City and Shuaifu to attract young people to explore urban culture[4].

Planning youth communication events: creating global hot topics. Launch the "ShenyangStyle" global challenge to encourage creative short video creation (such as industrial street dance and acrobatics on ice). Design "Yangyang", the cartoon ambassador of "International Shen" (integrating sunbird and equipment elements), and develop a series of expression packs and blind boxes. Hold

"International Summer Camp for Chinese and Foreign Teenagers" and "Shenyang Family Reception Day" to cultivate young word-of-mouth communicators.

4. Implementation Guarantee: Building a "Four in One" Promotion Mechanism

In order to ensure the effective implementation of IP construction in "international Shen" cities, it is necessary to establish a systematic guarantee mechanism:

Organizational guarantee mechanism: set up a leading group for IP construction of "International Shenyang" cities, with the main leaders of the municipal party committee and municipal government as the double leaders to co-ordinate the resources of foreign affairs office, propaganda department, cultural tourism bureau, commerce bureau and other departments. Establish an urban IP expert advisory Committee to attract experts in the fields of international communication, urban planning and cultural industry. Establish an IP activity co-ordination mechanism of "one theme in January, one explosion in one season" to avoid resource fragmentation.

Policy innovation mechanism: Formulate the Regulations on the Promotion of IP Development in "International Shen" Cities, and clarify the rules of IP creation, application and protection. Set up a special fund for urban IP, with an initial scale of 500 million yuan, and support key projects by means of "free funding+equity investment". Pilot the "cultural bonded" policy in the free trade zone to reduce the import cost of international cultural equipment.

Talent education and introduction mechanism: implement the "International Shen" creative talent plan and introduce internationally renowned curators, designers and communication experts. Joint Lu Xun Academy of Fine Arts and Northeastern University to set up a master's degree in urban IP design.

Dynamic evaluation mechanism: Build an "International IP Impact Index" evaluation system, covering media exposure, social media interaction, foreigners' satisfaction, international activities and other indicators. Entrust a third-party organization to carry out annual evaluation and publish the Blue Book of Shenyang City Internationalization. According to the evaluation results, the strategy is dynamically adjusted to ensure the same frequency resonance between IP construction and urban development.

5. Conclusion: Towards an International Central City in Northeast Asia

Calling "International Shen" city IP is the strategic fulcrum for Shenyang to build an international central city in Northeast Asia. Rebuild the industrial image of "hard core Shenyang" through technological empowerment, create a consumption scene of "vibrant Shenyang" through cultural innovation, and interpret the urban narrative of "youthful Shenyang" through digital communication. Shenyang is embarking on a characteristic development path of "establishing IP by production, enriching IP by culture, strengthening IP by opening up, and prospering IP by youth". "The comprehensive revitalization of Northeast China requires a strong vanguard team" Shenyang should take the role of "the vanguard", take the city IP as the link, chain the global resources, and write a brilliant chapter in the practice of Chinese modernization in Shenyang.

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