

# Empowering Low-Efficiency Spaces Through Interim Planning Permission: Spatial Value-Enhancement Pathways from the Perspective of Explicit Institutions

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**Abstract:** As a flexible approach to planning, construction, and management, interim planning permission emphasizes transforming underutilized spaces into vibrant ones and thereby realizing spatial value increments. Countries such as Germany and the Netherlands have incorporated interim planning permission into normalized land-planning management frameworks, but it has not yet been widely applied in China's urban renewal field. This study addresses the relationship between long-term planning control and short-term land use, comprehensively analyzes local regulations on temporary construction permission and completed cases across China, and considers current development demands, risks, and challenges. Focusing on two application scenarios, livelihood security and industrial cultivation, it proposes a three-step closed-loop management mechanism composed of demand matching and access refinement, process supervision and benefit feedback, and system integration and formalization. The aim is to provide explicit and transparent pathway options for urban renewal, enabling decision-makers to select appropriate approaches according to regional characteristics and the actual conditions of low-efficiency spaces, thereby stimulating spatial value increments. The study further looks ahead to incorporating interim strategies into a compliance-based management system for urban renewal, so as to strengthen the leading role of planning.

**Keywords:** temporary use; transitional use; urban renewal

## 1 Concept Definition and Policy Analysis

### 1.1 Conceptual Evolution of Temporary Planning

Temporary use of space has become a common phenomenon in modern urban development and is increasingly treated as an important method for urban regeneration and renewal [1]. Conceptually, temporary use emphasizes use rather than ownership. It seeks to transform urban development depressions into vibrant spaces through effective measures. For unused land and buildings whose future development demand is uncertain, temporary use often introduces short-term, spontaneous, informal, and creative activities lasting five to ten years or longer, generating long-term positive effects such as land-value appreciation and exploration of site transformation directions [2]. International experience shows that temporary planning has evolved through citizen-led spontaneous exploration, government-led organized promotion, and developer-led planned experimentation. If temporary use is treated only as a development method, its legitimacy is insufficient and social equity problems may arise. Government-led temporary use, because of its more comprehensive value considerations, is more suitable as a formal and sustainable tool for urban renewal and regeneration [3]. As a low-cost and individualized renewal approach, temporary planning can achieve micro-renewal, soft renewal, and rapid renewal of stock space through context-specific means [4], helping keep the urban organism in a healthy state [5].

### 1.2 Temporary Land Use and Interim Planning Permission

Germany and the Netherlands have incorporated temporary land use into regular land-planning management frameworks. Germany encourages flexible and diverse temporary renewal functions, including catering and entertainment, greening and parks, art and culture, and other types of temporary renewal, and explores suitable development paths through spatial experimentation. The Netherlands allows temporary planning and

construction permission to deviate from regulatory plans for up to ten years, and also establishes a transition-stage target of up to ten years in newly prepared plans, after which control is applied according to the final planning target [1].

China's Urban and Rural Planning Law establishes planning-permission procedures for construction projects in urban and town planning areas under different land-supply modes, and stipulates that temporary construction in such areas should be approved by the planning authority. In practice, temporary land use and temporary construction permission are connected with but not equivalent to interim planning permission. Temporary land use mainly concerns the short-term use of land before final development, while temporary planning permission provides a more explicit institutional arrangement for construction, function conversion, and operation during a transition period. It can therefore become a bridge between long-term planning control and short-term use demand.

|                                                                                         |                                                                                                                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 实践中，临时用地多发生在城市规划区内，未取得规划许可或用地审批的临时用地建设，属违法用地或违法建设，面临责令整改、拆除、罚款等处罚；超期使用或复垦不到位将追究法律与经济责任。 | 《自然资源部关于规范临时建设工程规划许可证》和《临时乡村建设规划许可证》的有效期不超过2年，期满需要延续的，申请人应当在期限届满30日前向规划和自然资源管理部门提出申请，经批准可以延续。每次期限不得超过1年”，进一步明确了操作流程与规则。但 |
| 对比国外，我国的临时用地使用周期较短，且要求与既有规划功能的一致性较高，其管控属性强于发展引导属性。                                      |                                                                                                                          |

表 1 临时用地与临时规划许可核心定义对比分析

Tab.1 Comparative analysis of the core definitions of temporary land use and temporary planning permission

Tab. 1 Representative practices of temporary land use and temporary planning permission.

1.3 Application of Interim Planning Permission in Chinese Local Systems

Local rules in China have gradually explored temporary construction permission, temporary land use, and related management measures. These rules usually specify applicable objects, approval authorities, use periods, extension conditions, demolition or withdrawal requirements, and responsibility allocation. The general period is often one to two years, while infrastructure and other special cases may allow a longer period. Some cities connect temporary permission with public interest, emergency service, industrial cultivation, and inefficient land renewal. However, the system remains fragmented. Temporary permission is often understood as a construction-management procedure, and its role in urban renewal and low-efficiency space activation is not sufficiently institutionalized.

|            |                                               |                                 |                                  |
|------------|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 临时用地       | 建设项目施工、地质勘查等临时使用, 不建永久性建(构)筑物, 使用后可复垦恢复原地类的土地 | 《土地管理法》第 57 条、《土地管理法实施条例》第 20 条 | 用地权属、复垦责任、使用期限(一般≤2 年, 特殊基建≤4 年) |
| 临时建设用地规划许可 | 城市/镇规划区内临时用地的位置、面积、用途等规划许可                    | 《城乡规划法》第 44 条                   | 核定用地符合国土空间规划与用途管制                |
| 临时建设工程规划许可 | 临时用地上建(构)筑物的设计、规模、布局等工程许可                     | 《城乡规划法》第 44 条                   | 管控临时建设不影响规划实施与公共利益               |

表 2 部分城市城乡规划条例中关于临时建设许可的有关要求梳理

Tab.2 Review of requirements concerning interim construction permission in urban and rural planning regulations of selected cities

| 名称        | 条文要求                                                                                           | 要义提炼                        |
|-----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 北京市城乡规划条例 | 临时建设用地批准文件和临时建设工程规划许可证的有效期不超过 2 年, 期满需要延续的, 应当在期限届满前向规划和自然资源主管部门提出申请, 经批准可以延续, 每次期限不得超过 1 年    | 不超过 2 年, 可延期, 明确“每次”不超过 1 年 |
| 上海市城乡规划条例 | 临时建设工程规划许可证的有效期不超过 2 年, 可以申请延期 1 次, 但延期不超过 1 年。涉及临时建设用地的, 临时建设工程规划许可证的有效期应当与临时建设用地批准文件的期限一致    | 不超过 2 年, 可延期 1 次, 且不超过 1 年  |
| 广州市城乡规划条例 | 城乡规划主管部门在批准临时建设工程时应当明确使用期限, 使用期限届满后一律不得延期。临时建设者应当在使用期限届满前自行拆除, 恢复土地原状                          | 按约定的期限, 不能延期                |
| 深圳市城市规划条例 | 临时建设用地使用期限为 2 年, 期满确需延期的可以申请延期 1 次, 但是延长期限不得超过 1 年。使用期满用地者负责拆除一切临时建筑物、构筑物                      | 不超过 2 年, 可延期 1 次, 且不超过 1 年  |
| 天津市城乡规划条例 | 临时用地的使用期限不得超过 2 年。确需延长使用期限的, 应当按照原审批程序办理延期审批手续, 延长使用期限不得超过 1 年。因城市建设需要终止临时用地时, 建设单位或者个人应当无条件腾迁 | 不超过 2 年, 可延期, 不超过 1 年       |

Tab. 2 Selected local rules on temporary planning permission in China.

### 1.4 Defining Low-Efficiency Space

Low-efficiency space refers to existing urban land and buildings whose current functional output, social value, spatial vitality, or public-service contribution is significantly lower than their potential value. It may include idle industrial land, vacant buildings, underused commercial facilities, old factories, marginal public spaces, or transition spaces awaiting long-term redevelopment. These spaces are often constrained by unclear ownership, high redevelopment cost, immature market demand, or mismatches between existing use and planned future function. Their inefficiency is therefore not only a physical or economic problem, but also an institutional problem created by the gap between rigid planning control and flexible short-term demand.

### 1.5 Explicit Institutional Advantages

The value of interim planning permission lies in making a temporary renewal path explicit, transparent, and rule-based. Compared with informal renewal, it reduces uncertainty and institutional transaction costs [6-7]. Compared with immediate formal redevelopment, it allows low-efficiency spaces to be activated before final planning and development conditions are mature. It can also strengthen public trust, clarify rights and obligations, and provide a mechanism for supervision and withdrawal. From the perspective of urban renewal

finance and public-value capture, it creates an interim path through which idle resources can generate social, economic, and spatial benefits before long-term redevelopment [8-12].

2 Interim Planning Permission in Addressing Urban Renewal Difficulties

2.1 Dilemmas of Urban Renewal

Urban renewal in China increasingly faces the contradiction between long-term transformation objectives and short-term social demand. Many low-efficiency spaces are locked by ownership disputes, unclear planning conditions, high demolition and reconstruction costs, and uncertain market returns. In some cases, formal renewal requires long approval cycles, large capital investment, and complex interest coordination. This makes it difficult to respond quickly to livelihood needs, innovation spaces, community services, and small-scale industrial cultivation. Existing studies have emphasized value restructuring, public-interest capture, and action planning in urban renewal [13-21], but the mechanism for activating low-efficiency spaces before formal renewal is still insufficient.

2.2 Applicable Scenarios of Interim Planning Permission

Interim planning permission is particularly suitable for two types of scenarios. The first is livelihood security. Temporary activation can provide affordable housing, community services, cultural facilities, sports spaces, childcare and elderly-care facilities, and other public functions in areas where formal renewal is not yet ready. Hong Kong's temporary transitional housing practice offers useful lessons for using interim strategies to address urgent social needs [14]. The second is industrial cultivation. Old factories, idle warehouses, low-efficiency industrial land, and vacant buildings can be temporarily transformed into innovation offices, cultural and creative spaces, maker spaces, community commerce, or experimental industry carriers. Such uses can test market demand, accumulate vitality, and provide evidence for later formal planning and development [15-17].

公共价值的提升和注入。构建更为清晰、

明确的显性制度，降低制度性交易成本，

不断改善营商环境，是实施创新驱动发

展战略的前提和基础<sup>[7]</sup>。尤其当前城市更

新工作还处在摸索阶段，及时总结推出

施工过程的附属设施建设。部分城市利

用这种途径为城市中特定空间的及时改

造与升级提供了法定支撑。通过临时用

地及建设规划许可，在不改变土地权属

表3 更新领域显性制度与隐性制度对比  
Tab.3 Comparison of formal and informal institutions

| 对比维度 | 显性制度(城市更新领域)                | 隐性制度(城市更新领域)        |
|------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| 约束力  | 强制力强,但执行流程相对繁琐,易导致市场主体积极性降低 | 无强制力支撑,依赖参与者自觉,易被突破 |
| 灵活性  | 规则固化调整滞后,难适配动态需求            | 边界模糊无明确条文,不同主体理解差异大 |

Tab. 3 Application scenarios of interim planning permission in urban renewal.

3 Value Deconstruction of Interim Planning Permission

3.1 Spatial Value Increment Based on Interim Planning Permission

Interim planning permission can generate spatial value increments by improving land-use efficiency, enhancing social services, and reducing vacancy. It converts idle or inefficient spaces into usable and visible urban assets. In the short term, it can create rental income, employment opportunities, neighborhood services, and public

activity spaces. In the medium term, it can test functional suitability, attract market actors, and reduce uncertainty in formal renewal. In the long term, it can provide planning evidence for regular transformation and help public authorities judge which functions should be retained, adjusted, or formalized. Case comparisons show that temporary activation may produce measurable improvements in space use, economic output, and public benefits (Tab. 4; Fig. 1; Fig. 2).

表4 首钢四合院公共空间及临时建筑活动开展情况统计（2024年1月至12月）

Tab.4 Statistics on activities held in public spaces and temporary buildings in Shougang Park ( January – December 2024 )

| 活动类型  | 活动数量 / 次 | 带动客流 / 万人次 |
|-------|----------|------------|
| 会展类活动 | 20       | 216.9      |
| 文化类活动 | 90       | 163.0      |
| 科技类活动 | 14       | 77.9       |
| 体育类活动 | 15       | 13.4       |

Tab. 4 Comparison of spatial value before and after temporary conversion.



Fig. 1 Example of temporary activation of a low-efficiency space.

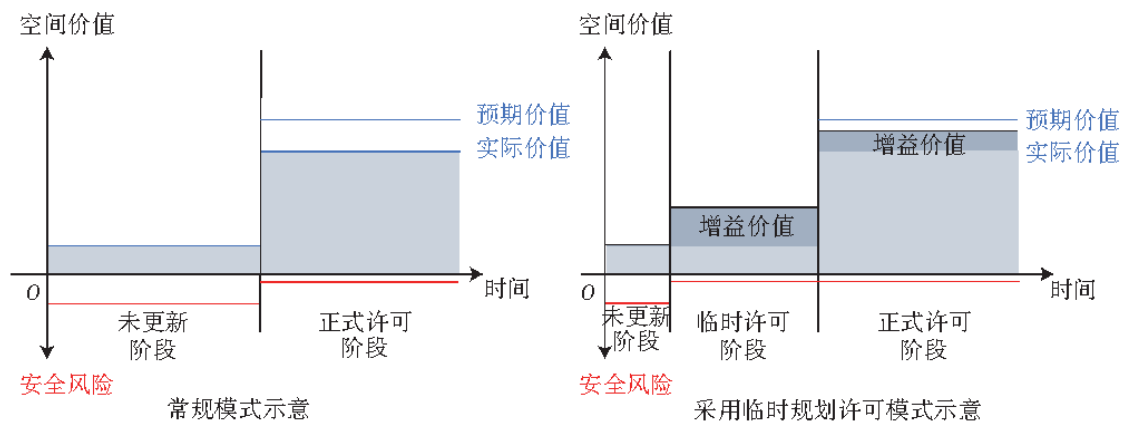


图2 通过临时功能安排实现空间价值增益示意

Fig.2 Schematic diagram of spatial value enhancement through interim functional arrangements

Fig. 2 Comparison of value increments before and after interim use.

### 3.2 Potential Risks and Problems

The application of interim planning permission also contains risks. First, temporary use may become a disguised way to bypass formal planning controls if access conditions are unclear. Second, temporary projects may generate externalities such as traffic pressure, noise, fire-safety risks, and conflicts with surrounding residents. Third, if benefit feedback is insufficient, value increments generated by public institutional flexibility may be captured only by private actors. Fourth, the boundary between temporary and permanent uses may become blurred, making withdrawal difficult. These risks require explicit rules on access, duration, supervision, benefit return, withdrawal, and formal transition.

### 4 Specific Mechanisms for the Use of Interim Planning Permission

The application of interim planning permission should follow a three-step closed-loop mechanism: demand matching and access refinement, process supervision and benefit feedback, and system integration and formalization (Fig. 3). This mechanism seeks to make temporary renewal explicit, controllable, and convertible.

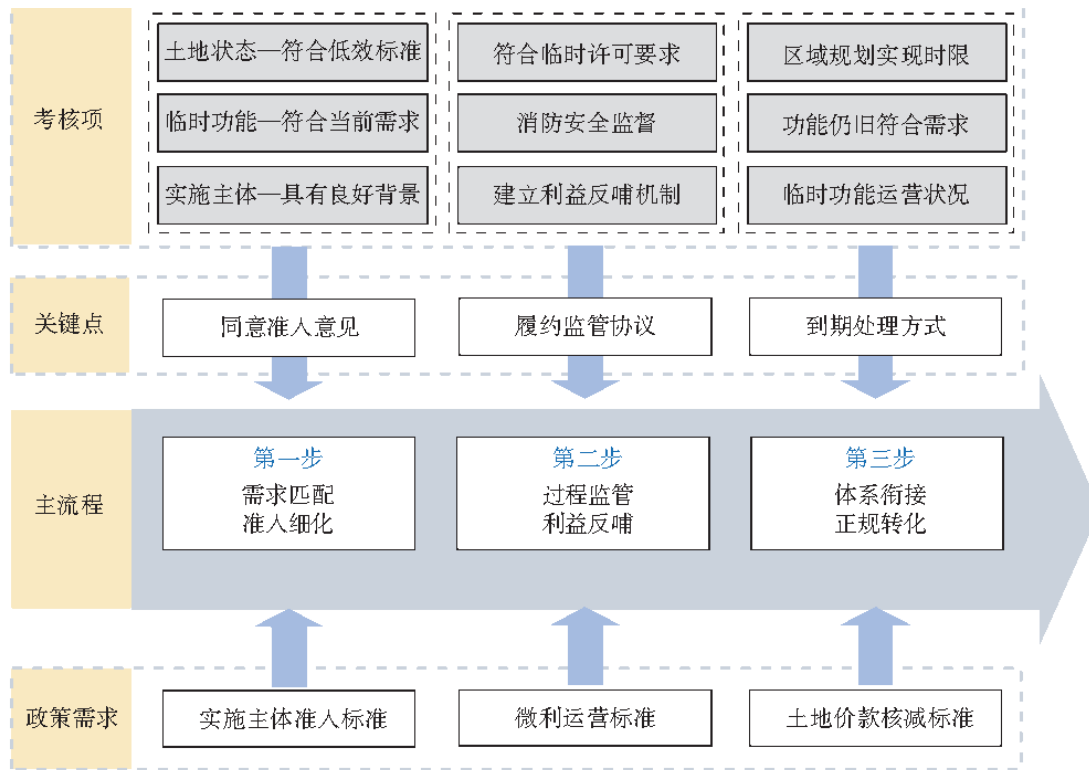


图3 “三步走”模式示意  
Fig.3 Schematic diagram of the "three-step" model

Fig. 3 Three-step closed-loop management mechanism for interim planning permission.

#### 4.1 Demand Matching and Refined Access

Access should be based on accurate matching between regional demand and space conditions. Public authorities should identify low-efficiency spaces, clarify ownership and safety conditions, and evaluate whether temporary use can respond to livelihood security, industrial cultivation, public service supply, or community needs. Access lists can specify encouraged, permitted, restricted, and prohibited temporary uses. Projects involving safety, environment, heritage, or major public interests should be subject to stricter review. The access mechanism should also define duration, extension conditions, withdrawal obligations, and responsibilities of project operators.

#### 4.2 Process Supervision and Benefit Feedback

During implementation, process supervision should cover construction safety, fire safety, environmental impacts, use changes, operation quality, and public complaints. A digital supervision platform can integrate planning permission, land use, construction management, and operation data. Benefit feedback should ensure that the value increments generated by temporary institutional flexibility return partly to public interests. Possible mechanisms include public-service contribution, facility provision, rent discount for livelihood functions, community participation, and negotiated sharing of revenues. This can prevent temporary use from becoming a purely private profit-seeking tool.

#### 4.3 System Integration and Formal Transition

Interim planning permission should connect with formal planning systems. After the temporary period, projects should be evaluated according to public benefit, operational performance, externality control, and consistency with long-term planning. Projects with good effects and compatible functions may be incorporated into detailed planning, urban renewal implementation plans, or formal land-use conversion procedures. Projects that fail to meet requirements should exit according to the agreed mechanism. Through this transition, temporary strategies can become part of a compliance-based renewal management system.

## **5 Conclusion and Prospects**

Interim planning permission provides a flexible and explicit institutional path for activating low-efficiency spaces. It can connect long-term planning control with short-term land-use demand, respond to livelihood security and industrial cultivation, and promote spatial value increments. Its effective operation depends on refined access, process supervision, benefit feedback, and formal transition. Future work should incorporate interim strategies into a compliance-based urban renewal management system, strengthen planning guidance, improve local regulatory tools, and build evaluation methods for measuring spatial value increments and public benefits.

## **Notes**

- (1) The Urban and Rural Planning Law of the People's Republic of China was adopted at the 30th meeting of the Standing Committee of the Tenth National People's Congress on October 28, 2007, and was subsequently amended in 2015 and 2019.
- (2) One opinion and two permits refers to the preliminary land-use and site-selection opinion for a construction project, the construction land planning permit, and the construction project planning permit.
- (3) To standardize and strictly manage temporary land use and strengthen cultivated-land protection, the Ministry of Natural Resources issued the Notice on Standardizing Temporary Land-Use Management in 2021. It emphasizes that if, in annual statistics, temporary land within a county or city that has been overdue for more than one year without completing land reclamation reaches more than 20% of the area that should be reclaimed, the provincial natural-resources department should require that county or city to suspend approval of new temporary land use and resume approval according to the rectification situation.
- (4) The Beijing Municipal Commission of Planning and Natural Resources issued the Opinions on Standardizing and Strengthening Temporary Land-Use Management in 2020, specifying that temporary land-use entities may not alter the approved use of temporary land and may not transfer, lease, mortgage, or otherwise provide the site or above-ground buildings and structures for use by others.
- (5) Open-price sale refers to the primary development model.
- (6) Use first and pay later refers to a transition-period model in urban renewal.
- (7) The Central Economic Work Conference held in December 2025 proposed that economic potential must be fully tapped, policy support and reform innovation must be pursued together, and policy should both release vitality and ensure sound management.
- (8) Based on the statistical analysis in the National Analysis Report on the Production Time of Domestic Enterprises (2023) issued by the State Administration for Industry and Commerce.
- (9) Beijing's strategic reserve land refers to spatial resources reserved for future urban development needs. In principle, it may not be activated before 2035. In current territorial spatial plans at all levels, no clear planned functions are assigned to these lands, and they are relatively large and concentrated in distribution.

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AI-assisted translation