

Reflections on the Logic of Planning Guidance and Control from an Administrative Action Perspective: With a Concurrent Discussion on Mandatory and Rigid Control Specifications

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Abstract: Debates regarding mandatory content, guided content, and the distinction between rigid and flexible control have persisted in planning for decades. To improve the territorial spatial planning system, it is crucial to explore a management approach that integrates both rigidity and flexibility through mandatory and guided measures. Using logical analysis from the perspective of administrative action, this study examines the background, administrative logic, and institutional design of mandatory content. The study concludes that mandatory content and rigid control requirements reflect the logic of spatial baseline constraints and the protection of public interest, while inducement and flexible guidance reflect the logic of strategic orientation and structural guidance. Under high-level governance, planning as an administrative action should emphasize rigidity in its external dimensions, elasticity in its internal dimension, and systemic integration across dimensions. Within a "system-technology" theoretical framework, a tiered institutional design of "high structural flexibility—low planning flexibility—high content flexibility" can be adopted. Mandatory content and rigid controls can be distinguished from planning elements through binding indicators, mandatory boundaries, and rigid control requirements, while inducement content and flexible guidance can be distinguished from planning elements by anticipatory indicators, structural relationships, and adaptable guidance requirements.

Keywords: administrative action; mandatory; rigidity; inducement; flexibility

The 2019 "Several Opinions on Establishing the Territorial Spatial Planning System and Supervising Its Implementation" (hereinafter referred to as "Several Opinions") initially established the territorial spatial planning system and regulated planning "mandatory content," "binding indicators," "rigid control," "strategic guidance," and "directive requirements," strengthening horizontal integration of authority and vertical collaborative governance. In fact, debates in the planning field regarding mandatory and inductive content, as well as rigid and flexible control, have persisted for a long time [1-2]. Discussions on mandatory content and rigid control inevitably raise numerous questions: Does content other than "mandatory" require rigid control? How can inductive content serve as a basis for administrative action? What are the intrinsic connections between mandatory and rigid, and between inductive and flexible? Answering such questions requires examining the background, administrative logic, and institutional design of mandatory content and rigid control systems. Therefore, conducting logical analysis of such complex concepts and accurately defining their connotations and control logic is an objective requirement for improving the territorial spatial planning system, as well as an urgent need as general urban plans have been basically completed in major cities and detailed planning compilation is now widely underway.

"Mandatory" is defined in "Cihai" as "compelling or forcing execution," with related concepts including "compulsory" and "rigidity." Mandatory emphasizes the binding

requirements of laws, regulations, and policies, being more formal, while compulsory focuses on the binding nature of behavioral activities, both corresponding to "inductive" (inductive); rigidity is often translated as "rigid," emphasizing the authority and fixity of planning indicators and content [3], corresponding to "flexibility." In the planning and design field, "mandatory content" and "guiding content" are commonly used to distinguish the importance of planning content, while "rigid" and "flexible" distinguish differences in planning control measures [4-5]. In economics, "mandatory" and "inductive" are often used to describe institutional change [6-7]; in public administration, policy implementation means also distinguish between mandatory and inductive [8].

In the "Several Opinions," planning content uses expressions such as "mandatory content" and "binding indicators," while control points use "rigid control requirements" and "directive requirements." From the perspective of planning formulation and administrative approval efficiency, baseline and conclusive content in planning should be mandatory. As the "basic basis for various development, protection, and construction activities," planning content should be definite, specific, and capable of serving as a "basis" for rigid control in planning management. However, in an open market economy, the future is uncertain [9]; as "a guide for national spatial development and a spatial blueprint for sustainable development" and "arrangements made in space and time," planning content inevitably involves uncertain non-mandatory content that needs to be implemented through "guiding requirements." As "comprehensive deployment, specific arrangements, and implementation management of urban and rural social and economic development, land use, spatial layout, and various constructions over a certain period," planning is proactive, and non-mandatory content is equally an important component of planning intent implementation, thus possessing inductive characteristics. Correspondingly, from the perspective of planning implementation, supervision, and inspection, the strictness of planning control should also be differentiated to achieve unity of rigid and flexible control. Planning should "clarify planning binding indicators and rigid control requirements" during compilation, while also proposing "directive requirements," thereby playing the role of "strategic guidance and rigid control." Rigid control content should be binding and implemented unconditionally; while flexible control content can be conditional and directive.

This study aims to explore content at the institutional construction level of planning from an administrative action perspective. Therefore, from the ontological perspective of planning formulation, implementation, and supervision, planning content is divided into mandatory content and inductive content. From the linguistic nature of planning content under administrative action requirements, rigid and flexible control measures in planning management and implementation are distinguished. Content requiring rigid control within mandatory content mainly includes binding indicators in master plans, baseline control lines, and in detailed planning, land use, building density, height, floor area ratio, green space ratio, infrastructure and public service facility requirements, etc.; while structural layout requirements in master plans, ecosystem protection patterns, baseline element layout requirements, and discretionary agreements on plot indicators in detailed planning, although mandatory content, are mostly unquantifiable or directly unenforceable, thus possessing conditions for flexible control; there are still many matters in inductive content that require rigid control for implementation; while content such as urban nature and development goals in master plans, development and protection strategies, recommended indicators, territorial

restoration goals, key urban renewal areas and mechanisms, rural revitalization requirements, and recent action plans and guidelines are often inductive and require flexible control requirements for guidance. See Figure 1.

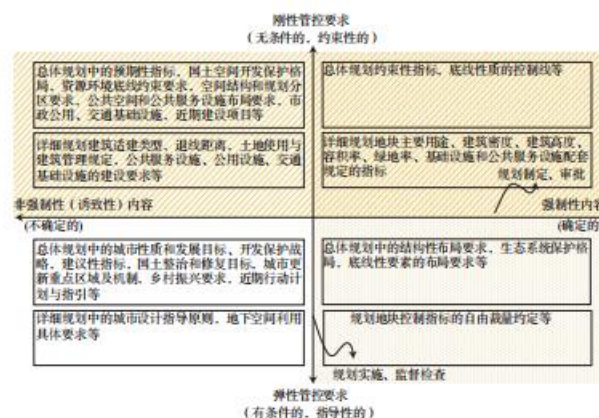


Figure 1 Logical relationship between planning mandate, inducement, rigidity, and flexibility

1 Mandatory and Rigid Elements in Planning Development

1.1Origins of Mandatory Content and Rigid Control in Planning

After the founding of New China, China established a "blueprint-style" planning system based on Soviet experience, which gradually developed into a multi-dimensional planning system integrating strategic guidance, master plan coordination, specialized deepening, detailed plan implementation, and recent planning implementation, forming a "comprehensive plan" covering urban and rural construction, economy, society, public services, ecology, and other dimensions. As urban spatial governance contradictions became more complex, planning content became increasingly huge. Considering administrative efficiency, it became necessary to appropriately differentiate planning control content to ensure transmission and implementation of planning baselines and core intentions. Simultaneously, to avoid "chaos" such as blind urban expansion, arbitrary plan modification, and misinterpretation during rapid urbanization, and to standardize planning formulation, implementation, supervision, and inspection order, the 2002 "State Council Notice on Strengthening Urban and Rural Planning Supervision" first explicitly proposed the concept and requirements of "mandatory content," followed by the competent department formulating the "Interim Provisions on Mandatory Content of Urban Planning" (hereinafter referred to as "Interim Provisions"), clearly requiring that content "involving regional coordinated development, resource utilization, environmental protection, scenic spot resource management, natural and cultural heritage protection, public interest, and public safety" must be "accurately indicated on drawings," "clearly and standardly expressed in planning texts with corresponding management measures," and "serve as basic basis for planning implementation supervision and inspection." In the same year, the "Provisions on Bidding, Auction, and Listing for Transfer of State-owned Land Use Rights" also provided an institutional outlet for mandatory content. In subsequently promulgated laws and regulations such as "Urban Planning Compilation Measures" (2006) and "Urban and Rural Planning Law" (2007), the concept of "mandatory content" was continued, and the institutional design of planning "rigid control" was strengthened. After implementation of the "Interim Provisions," Hubei, Suzhou, Hangzhou, and other regions successively issued corresponding normative documents, extending mandatory content requirements to varying

degrees. Thereafter, in master plan and detailed plan compilation processes nationwide, defining mandatory content became a focus of planning compilation and approval, serving as the main measure to strengthen planning rigid control (Figure 2).

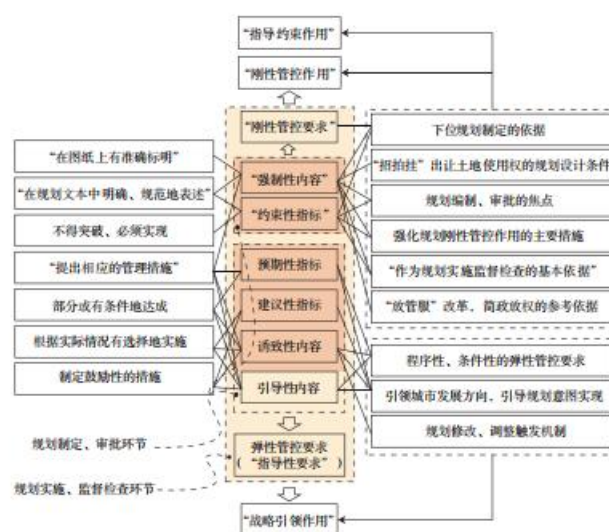


Figure 2 Current action mechanism of mandatory and guided content of planning, rigid and flexible management

Note: Content and requirements in quotation marks are mentioned in "Several Opinions"

1.2 Existing Problems

Despite long-term exploration forming a management model with "mandatory" content as the main body, "inductive" content as supplementary, and combined rigid and flexible approaches, the powerful "planning" inertia still constrains planning's ability to cope with market uncertainty [10]. Weak rigid control of "mandatory content" leads to loss of control baselines; "inductive" failure results in poor planning implementability and inaccurate goals/positioning; excessive "flexibility" undermines planning credibility [12]. Problems with planning mandatory content and rigid control requirements mainly include weak transmission of the control system [13-14], construction order loss due to rigid indicators and flexible coordinates [15], and excessive detail and quantity making planning review and supervision difficult [16-17], seriously affecting planning scientificity and seriousness and hindering improvement of the territorial spatial planning system [3].

2 Planning Experience in Western Countries

The UK's planning governance system combining planning and administrative licensing features discretionary control, where land use functions and control requirements determined by planning mostly serve as inductive materials without rigid control characteristics [18]. Planning requires negotiation, district planning committee review, and voting to influence planning permission. Transmission of public interest content in planning is mostly safeguarded through planning appealing, planning inspector, and community planner systems [19-20]. Meanwhile, national planning policy frameworks, as mandatory directives, still require rigid review through planning inspectorate and neighbourhood plan forms to take effect [21-22]. Similarly, Dutch planning decisions do not rely on top-down power transmission but rather on decentralized negotiation as a "consensus state" [23]. Municipal-level land use plans have rigid control requirements, while national and provincial level plan

implementation relies on economic investment or regional infrastructure construction, with vertical transmission of planning content relying more on planning supervision systems [24-25]. However, environmental permitting exhibits rigid implementation characteristics [26-27].

America's zoning system is representative in rigid control [28-29], with spatial form control guidelines and modification procedures both reflecting rigid control features, while also providing numerous flexible management tools [30-31]. Zoning characteristics manifest as certainty in control requirements and flexibility in special circumstance adjustment and deepening procedures [32]. Urban design implementation also features equal emphasis on rigidity and flexibility [33]. Japan's district planning specifies land use, small public facility construction, building development, and green space planning in detail, with clear mandatory content requirements, with rigidity relying on legal system support [34-35]. Germany's Spatial Planning Act (Raumordnungsrecht) regulates local spatial management through texts and drawings, with spatial planning objectives (ziel) having rigid control characteristics, while principles (grundsatz) are mostly flexible [36-37]. Sweden's area planning can serve as a basis for construction applications and can substitute for detailed planning [38-39], while area regulations mainly cover areas not covered by detailed planning, both having rigid binding effects on planning permission [40].

In summary, countries like the UK and the Netherlands have generally strengthened planning decentralization and local autonomy, with planning rigidity mainly reflected through policy frameworks, supporting regulations, and supervision systems; while countries like the US, Japan, UK, Germany, and Sweden mostly simplify planning hierarchies, implementing macro-level strategic and framework requirements at specific planning levels to reflect rigidity in planning permission. Due to different national governance systems, mandatory content and rigid control requirements in various countries are combined with their administrative system needs to formulate differentiated implementation approaches. Regarding the current stage where China's territorial spatial planning compilation, approval, implementation, supervision, regulatory policy and technical standard systems are initially established and territorial spatial development and protection systems are initially formed, in-depth study of the administrative logic of planning mandatory content and rigid control is conducive to dialectically absorbing Western governance experience and proposing reasonable planning system improvement suggestions.

3 Administrative Action Logic of Planning Content and Control Requirements

Planning administrative action refers to planning competent departments exercising administrative power to make unilateral actions regarding rights and obligations of specific citizens, legal persons, and other organizations, mainly including administrative compulsory measures, administrative rewards, administrative adjudication, administrative contracts, administrative damage compensation, administrative directives, administrative expropriation, administrative licensing, administrative confirmation and certification, and administrative disciplinary actions. Planning mandatory content and rigid control requirements reflect the subject, object, and directional requirements of administrative action. The subject derives from authorization or confirmation of planning competent departments by power organs and laws/regulations; objects include behaviors or planning elements; mandatory content points to both subjects and objects possessing subjective initiative and requiring administrative coercion to regulate planning constraints. Therefore, planning needs to define the logical relationship between mandatory content and rigid control requirements.

Elements reflect ontology—green space, cultivated land, water source protection areas, ecological red lines, public interest elements objectively exist, with varying degrees of protection and development requirements under value orientation, thus possessing behavioral activity requirements for protection, utilization, or elimination; content, based on administrative power and behavioral language, reflects development, protection, and construction activity requirements for elements, constituting the main body of administrative contracts. Determination of mandatory content and rigid control requirements should focus on elements with significant impact on urban development, that cannot achieve healthy sustainable development relying solely on market forces, and possess spatial attributes, based on legal foundations and administrative behavioral norms.

3.1 Generative Basis of Differentiated Planning Guidance and Control Requirements

From the origins of modern urban planning, planning stems from public policy for urban construction based on public interest needs, addressing environmental sanitation, housing security, and other issues brought by market-driven urban self-organization development since the Industrial Revolution, reflecting the "rigid" control gene of baseline constraints. In a market economy environment, planning manifests as macro-level regulation and guidance of socio-economic development; thus, planning compilation content often manifests as unity of negative list "mandatory" and positive list "inductive."

Regarding China, given increasingly complex planning content, unclear delineation between content and authority, weak rigid constraints, and insufficient flexible responses, the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development convened a national urban and rural planning reform symposium in 2016, proposing separation of compilation and approval for master plans to improve approval efficiency [15]. The following year, "Measures for Management of Urban Master Plan Compilation and Approval (Draft for Comment)" was released, appropriately extending mandatory content of master plans, adding urban development boundaries, binding indicators, ecological protection red lines, and ecological isolation area management requirements. Subsequently, reforms regarding "compilation-approval separation" and "hierarchical management" received widespread practice, basically focusing on hierarchical establishment of authority and mandatory content [17, 41].

Meanwhile, land use planning also gradually explored a control system of rigid indicators and flexible spatial layout, with mandatory content such as new construction land scale, total construction land scale, permanent basic farmland, cultivated land retention, and land consolidation, reclamation, and development arrangements often requiring modification to varying degrees [42]. National economic and social development plans are mostly compiled in five-year cycles with annual plans for implementation. Before the "Sixth Five-Year Plan," instruction-based planning dominated; afterward, it gradually became anticipatory, currently transforming into a development plan combining anticipatory and binding elements [43], mainly reflecting development goals and control intentions through binding indicators, requiring continuous evaluation and feedback through annual plans with strong implementation guarantee, though anticipatory indicators are mostly considered auxiliary factors [44]. The environmental planning field also formulated similar rigid control content, such as "three lines and one list" and water, air, soil, and biological environmental quality standards in environmental function zoning, with environmental impact assessment results exhibiting "one-vote veto" rigid control characteristics [2].

Thus, whether "mandatory content," "rigid" or "flexible" control requirements, or

"binding" or "anticipatory" indicators, the core lies in implementing planning intentions through differentiated control means while reserving room to cope with market "uncertainty." Institutional design in the planning field itself follows "inductive" and "mandatory" characteristics of institutional change, essentially a government "supply-leading" institutional design model [45].

3.2 Spatial Governance Logic of Planning Administrative Action

Planning mandatory content and rigid control requirements can serve as main bases for administrative action, while inductive content and flexible control requirements mostly function through administrative contracts, administrative directives, and other channels. Therefore, it is necessary to shift from the "technology-administration" unidirectional architecture, emphasizing planning as an "social contract" jointly acted upon by government, market, and public, reflecting administrative contract behavior. The relationship between rigid control and "management efficiency" should be properly handled, integrating "tactical" and "strategic" intentions stepwise into specific control measures.

Spatial planning governance logic under high-level governance orientation needs to consider external, internal, and comprehensive spatial dimensions of administrative action [46]. Among these: law-based administration, maintaining priority of rule of law thinking, constitutes the external dimension of administrative action; formal rule of law as dominant thinking with substantive rule of law as necessary supplement constitutes the internal dimension of administrative action; adhering to legality as the baseline while emphasizing behavioral justice, procedural legitimacy, and operability constitutes the comprehensive dimension. Planning spatial governance should emphasize rigidity in the external dimension, elasticity in the internal dimension, and systematicity in the comprehensive dimension. In the process of planning formulation, implementation, supervision, and inspection, rigidity in the external dimension aims to shift thinking centered on technical governance, emphasizing rule of law thinking and institutional thinking, forming a planning administrative system centered on institutional construction. Elasticity in the internal dimension aims to form a thinking framework prioritizing institutional form supplemented by institutional substance, based on characteristics of administrative action, creating value orientation where institutional thinking upholds general compliance, formal compliance, and procedural compliance as priorities. The comprehensive dimension's systematicity aims to establish a comprehensive constraint system based on institutional governance, targeting institutional substance, with institutional form as guarantee.

3.3 Control Logic of Planning Administrative Action

3.3.1 Administrative Logic of Mandatory Content and Rigid Control Requirements

Academic research on mandatory content and rigid control requirements has always focused on "usefulness" [16]. Therefore, whether planning can be smoothly implemented and whether illegal behavior can be curbed, "concerning public interest" becomes the key to whether "rigid" control is needed. In the legal planning context, reflecting "procedural justice" manifests as rigidity of "usefulness," "control," and "execution." As public policy, planning's public nature is reflected in the starting point of "intervention" and the "justice" of administrative action [47].

Mandatory content and rigid control requirements constitute the main body of planning administrative action, serving as primary bases for planning permission, management, supervision and inspection activities, key to coordinating various spatial relationships and

safeguarding public interest, reflecting baseline thinking and answering questions of "cannot do," "must do," and "how to do." Mandatory content generally appears in forms of indicators, coordinates, control lines, protection areas, etc., while rigid control requirements appear in qualitative and procedural forms, serving as basis for administrative action by planning competent departments.

Mandatory content and rigid control requirements reflect spatial baseline constraint thinking and public interest protection logic. On one hand, various natural protection areas, ecological protection red lines, permanent basic farmland, urban development boundaries, and urban blue, purple, green, and yellow lines determined in planning all belong to baseline control requirements for territorial spatial safety, health, and sustainable development, representing content that should be strictly controlled, reflecting "baseline thinking." On the other hand, planning requirements for determining various public service facility land and indicators, municipal public facility layout and road infrastructure construction requirements, various building setback lines, building density, height limits, sunlight requirements, etc., all belong to control requirements for safeguarding residents' basic public services and public interest, also requiring strict guarantee, reflecting "public interest protection" logic. See Figure 3.

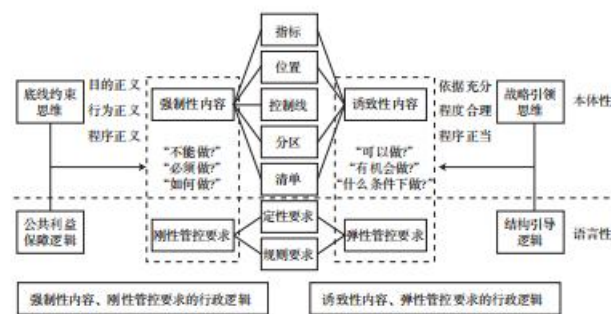


Figure 3 Administrative logic of differentiated planning and control requirements

3.3.2 Administrative Logic of Planning Inductive and Flexible Guidance Requirements

As a technical means to cope with socio-economic environmental changes, "flexibility" has received widespread practice in the planning field [1]. Examples include "grey land," "reserved land," "development reserve land," structural spatial guidance, threshold indicators, dynamic recompilation mechanisms, market reward mechanisms, and "top-down" and "bottom-up" planning system interaction mechanisms [48-49].

Inductive content and flexible control requirements serve as reference bases for planning administrative action, providing important support for smooth implementation of "mandatory" content. They reflect strategic guidance thinking, answering questions of "can do," "opportunity to do," and "under what conditions to do." Inductive content generally appears in qualitative descriptive forms, while flexible control content mostly appears in forms of goal positioning, development strategies, guideline requirements, etc., mostly serving as supplementary measures for planning intent implementation.

Inductive content and flexible control requirements reflect strategic guidance thinking and structural guidance logic. On one hand, content such as city positioning in regional competition and cooperation relationships, development direction, spatial resource utilization and transformation methods, industrial spatial layout, and urban public resource allocation all belong to strategic requirements for achieving high-quality urban development,

representing planning's core value, reflecting strategic guidance thinking. On the other hand, in a market economy environment, planning for urban spatial structure optimization, functional layout of various districts, and urban industrial structure constitutes important rules and systems supporting planning, reflecting structural guidance logic, mostly requiring emphasis on describing "structure" and "framework," avoiding concretization of spatial forms, reserving more possibilities for urban spatial evolution to guarantee structural guidance requirements for high-quality urban development. See Figure 3.

4 Planning Institutional Design Suggestions Under the "System-Technology" Two-Dimensional Framework

The possibility of technology transforming into institution derives from technology's own logical structure and the organizational structure required for technology application [50]. Transitioning from technical governance to institutional governance requires shifting "rule of man thinking" and "power thinking" in technical decision-making activities, strengthening rule awareness, elevating specific, substantive planning administrative actions and planning control measures into abstract, general behavioral norms, and strengthening construction of technology and institution's action logic and adjustment mechanisms for administrative action. Overall, the "technology-administration" unidirectional architecture should be changed, highlighting administrative action's support needs for technology; exploring abstracting some rigid and flexible control requirements into general rules for institutional transformation, providing institutional management basis for administrative action; while mandatory and inductive content in technical achievements can be transformed into technical and management basis for planning formulation, implementation, and supervision administrative actions through direct administrative action. See Figure 4.

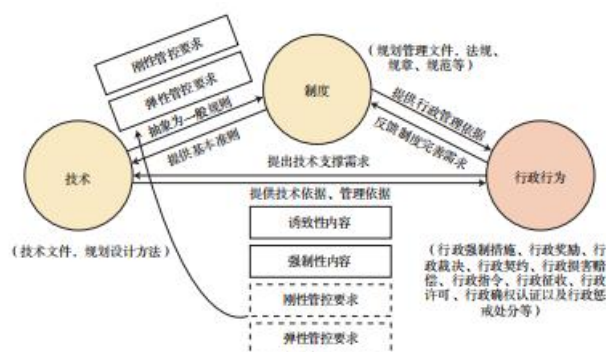


Figure 4 Technical-institutional mechanism for administrative behavior

4.1 Construction of Adjustment Mechanism in the "System-Technology" Two-Dimensional Framework

Under the "system-technology" two-dimensional framework, a tiered adjustment mechanism of "high structural flexibility—low rule flexibility—high content flexibility" can be adopted to define planning mandatory and inductive content, achieving balance of rigid and flexible control.

First, high structural flexibility adjustment. To avoid the planning governance dilemma of "control leads to stagnation" and "release leads to chaos," in areas with rich planning governance experience and capacity, implement customized institutional flexibility adjustment mechanisms, allowing activation of channels for technology-to-institution transformation under the premise of guaranteeing basic baselines, activating institutional structure while conducting strict procedural supervision. Second, low rule flexibility

adjustment. Through total quantity control, eliminating additional requirements, and softening indicators, strengthen baseline constraints of planning performance evaluation, highlight design of rules for mandatory content establishment, and emphasize documentation of technology-to-institution transformation [51]. Third, high content flexibility adjustment. Planning governance faces complexity and iterative technological environments, with new technical means and diverse technical solutions constantly emerging. Therefore, in selection of planning guidance and control content, methods and principles cannot remain unchanged; it is necessary to establish legalization mechanisms for adaptive innovation, providing more channels for institutionalization of technical governance tools.

In summary, "institutional rigidity" may strengthen and amplify technical governance, and technical governance similarly strengthens institutional rigidity; technical institutional design procedures should be strictly followed to avoid falling into the trap of "technological determinism." Therefore, it is necessary to appropriately strengthen "institutional flexibility" design, conduct customized authorization of institutional operating environments, emphasize more comprehensive and detailed institutional design and make Pareto optimal allocations. It is worth noting that "institutional flexibility" does not equal reducing institutional seriousness, nor does it only focus on top-level design and programmatic institutional design; on the contrary, institutional flexibility pays more attention to design of supporting institutional measures, emphasizing procedural rigidity.

4.2 Planning Institutional Design Suggestions Under the Spatial Planning System

As previously discussed, planning itself possesses public power attributes; distinguishing "mandatory" and "inductive" content represents technical differentiation based on administrative efficiency and behavioral choice during the planning formulation stage [42]. In the implementation process of legal planning, whether "mandatory" or "inductive" content requires discrimination through "project access" administrative licensing, making administrative actions such as prohibition or permission [52]. Mandatory and inductive content, rigid and flexible control requirements only serve as one of the bases for administrative action judgment, functioning together with relevant laws, regulations, and technical normative systems [53].

Regarding territorial spatial planning formulation, "national territorial spatial planning emphasizes strategy," "provincial territorial spatial planning emphasizes coordination," and "municipal, county, and township territorial spatial planning emphasizes implementation." In fact, as a programmatic document for municipal and county-level local governments to conduct spatial use control, municipal territorial spatial master plans objectively have strategic needs; district planning also assumes a certain coordinating function of master plans; master plans themselves represent a special planning level integrating strategy, coordination, and implementation; while detailed planning undoubtedly reflects implementation. Strategic development goals and control requirements mostly appear as rigid control content and binding indicators; while coordinative content should be based on inductive content approaches, reserving sufficient flexible control mechanisms to adapt to market economy laws and development uncertainty. Implementative content adopts a combination of mandatory content with rigid control and inductive content with flexible control, achieving collaborative governance of baselines and development opportunities. See

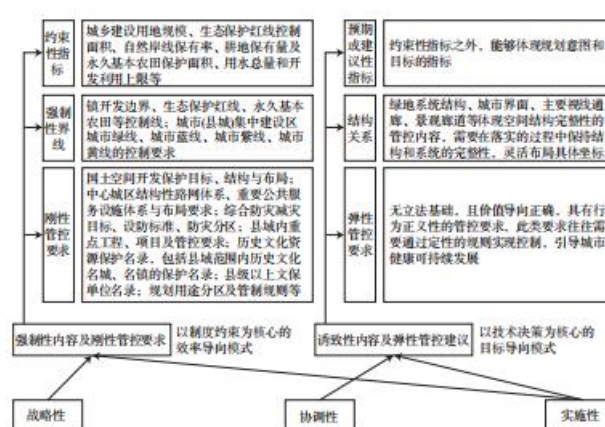
Figure 5.

Figure 5 Proposed optimization of planning guidance and control in the territorial spatial master plans

4.2.1 Mandatory Content and Rigid Control Suggestions

For territory spaces with clear boundaries reflecting core planning intentions, rigid control can be implemented, clarifying mandatory content and rigid control requirements. Taking municipal and county-level territorial spatial master plans as examples, control requirements of values, rules, control lines, zoning, positive and negative lists, and structures can be divided into three main categories: binding indicators, mandatory boundaries, and rigid control requirements.

First, binding indicators. Mainly include urban and rural construction land scale, ecological protection red line control area, natural shoreline retention rate, cultivated land retention and permanent basic farmland protection area, total water use and intensity



control, etc. Second, mandatory boundaries. Mainly include urban development boundaries, ecological protection red lines, permanent basic farmland control lines; control requirements for urban green lines, blue lines, purple lines, and yellow lines in concentrated urban construction areas. Third, rigid control requirements. Mainly include: territorial spatial development and protection goals, structure and layout; structural road network systems in central urban areas, important public service facility systems and layout requirements; comprehensive disaster prevention and reduction goals, defense standards, disaster prevention zoning; key projects and control requirements within county areas; historical and cultural resource protection directories, including protection directories of historical and cultural cities and towns within county areas; cultural protection unit directories at county level and above; planning use zoning and control rules; etc.

4.2.2 Inductive Content and Flexible Control Suggestions

For relational spaces with fuzzy boundaries that cannot be specifically quantified, flexible control can be adopted, incorporating inductive content. Taking municipal and county-level territorial spatial master plans as examples, control requirements of values, rules, control lines, zoning, positive and negative lists, and structures can be divided into three main categories: anticipatory and recommended indicators, structural relationships, and flexible control requirements.

First, anticipatory and recommended indicators. Mainly include indicators beyond binding indicators that can reflect planning intentions and goals. Some locally characteristic development requirements may conditionally be included as binding indicators for rigid

control through legal procedures. Determination of anticipatory indicators should be based on planning goals and urban development foundations, while recommended indicators should be determined based on core contradictions in local planning governance, avoiding generalization of control indicators. Second, structural relationships. Mainly include green space system structure, urban interfaces, main visual corridors, landscape corridors, and other control content reflecting spatial structure integrity, requiring maintenance of structural and systemic integrity during implementation while flexibly managing specific coordinates. Third, flexible control requirements. Mainly include control requirements without legislative basis but with correct value orientation and behavioral justice, such requirements often needing to achieve control through qualitative rules to guide healthy and sustainable urban development.

5 Conclusion

This paper employs logical analysis methods to discuss the institutional background, administrative logic, and institutional design of mandatory content and rigid control systems from an administrative action perspective, aiming to reflect on planning guidance and control logic, planning mandatory and inductive content, and administrative action logic of rigid and flexible control requirements from an administrative action perspective.

The study concludes that mandatory content and rigid control requirements constitute the main body of planning administrative action, serving as primary bases for planning formulation, implementation, supervision and inspection activities, key to coordinating various spatial relationships and safeguarding public interest, reflecting spatial baseline constraint thinking and public interest protection logic; inductive content and flexible control requirements serve as reference bases for planning administrative action, providing important support for smooth implementation of "mandatory" content, reflecting strategic guidance thinking and structural guidance logic. Spatial governance logic of planning administrative action under high-level governance orientation needs to strengthen rigidity in the external dimension, elasticity in the internal dimension, and systematicity in the comprehensive dimension of administrative action. Under the "system-technology" two-dimensional framework, a tiered institutional design of "high structural flexibility—low rule flexibility—high content flexibility" can be adopted. For territory spaces with clear boundaries reflecting core planning intentions, efficiency orientation centered on institutional constraints is highlighted through binding indicators, mandatory boundaries, and rigid control requirements; for relational spaces with fuzzy boundaries that cannot be specifically quantified, goal orientation mode centered on technical decision-making is highlighted through anticipatory indicators, structural relationships, and flexible guidance requirements.

It is worth noting that mandatory content does not necessarily mean rigid control, nor does inductive content necessarily require flexible control. Planning elements also exhibit diverse control form differences in values, rules, control lines, zoning, positive and negative lists, and structures. For specific planning elements, expression of mandatory content still needs to clarify whether it is mandatory implementation or mandatory compilation, and define its control form and strictness. For inductive content, it is also necessary to distinguish implementation differences brought by different guidance forms and focus on researching prerequisite conditions for rigid control. Regarding local territorial spatial planning governance, differences in planning governance levels and development stages and

differences in social governance contradictions objectively exist; localities still need to combine local management realities to identify mandatory content and rigid control requirements.

Notes

① Also referred to as guiding or directive; sociology and political economy fields commonly use "inductive," a relatively formal concept. Mr. Lin Yifu once pointed out that institutional change can be divided into mandatory and inductive types; this study uses "inductive" to represent guiding or directive.

② This study only discusses mandatory and inductive content and rigid and flexible control requirements in legal planning.

③ Article 19 of the 1980 "Interim Measures for Urban Planning Compilation and Approval" can be considered the earliest expression of mandatory content.

④ Explicitly stated "improve the national urban and rural planning supervisor system, focus on mandatory planning content, strengthen planning implementation supervision, and conduct pre- and mid-supervision of planning violations."

⑤ Mostly composed of local government committee members and legally designated advisory bodies of the central government.

⑥ Ecological protection red lines, environmental quality baselines, resource utilization ceilings, and environmental access negative lists.

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