

# A Study on the Approaches of Establishing Nanchong as a Leading Cultural City in the New Era

Zhou Liu

Nanchong Vocational College of Culture and Tourism, Nanchong, China

**Abstract:** *Culture is an important manifestation of a city's comprehensive strength and serves as the spiritual driving force for promoting high-quality urban development. In response to the current issues facing the cultural development of Nanchong City, we can optimize the path towards building Nanchong into a leading cultural city in the new era by focusing on six dimensions: public cultural development, protection and utilization of cultural relics and intangible cultural heritage, revitalization and improvement of the cultural industry, digital integration and development of cultural tourism, promotion of the city's spirit, and institutional guarantees for the construction of a "culturally strong city in the new era".*

**Keywords:** New era; Leading cultural city; Cultural construction; Influencing factors.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Third Plenary Session of the 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China reviewed and adopted the Decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Further Comprehensively Deepening Reform and Advancing Chinese Modernization, which provides important guidance on the "reform of cultural systems and mechanisms." It emphasizes the need to focus on building a modern socialist culture, uphold the fundamental system of Marxism's guiding role in the ideological sphere, improve the mechanisms for cultural programs and industries, promote cultural prosperity, enrich people's spiritual and cultural lives, and enhance China's cultural soft power and global influence. Additionally, the Proposal of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Formulating the 14th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development and Long-Range Objectives Through 2035 explicitly sets the goal of establishing China as a leading cultural city by 2035 and outlines three key tasks: Elevating the level of social civility, Enhancing public cultural services, and Improving the modern cultural industry system. These documents chart a new course, set new objectives, and impose new requirements for cultural development in the new era.

General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized the need to fully tap into and utilize the rich and diverse historical, cultural, and red cultural resources, and strengthen cultural construction. To make tourism a process for people to appreciate Chinese culture and enhance cultural confidence. In the "Opinions on Vigorously Developing Cultural and Tourism Economy and Accelerating the Construction of a Cultural and Tourism Strong Province", Sichuan Province proposes to accelerate the construction of a cultural and tourism strong province, and to accelerate the construction of a cultural highland and a world important tourism destination where socialist core values are widely practiced, cultural undertakings are prosperous and developed, and cultural and tourism industries are deeply integrated. The 11th Plenary Session of the 7th CPC Nanchong Municipal Committee proposed to deepen the reform of cultural system and mechanism, and build a leading cultural city in the new era; The 12th Plenary Session of the 7th CPC Nanchong Municipal Committee has made strategic arrangements to promote the high-quality development of the cultural and tourism industry and accelerate the construction of a demonstration zone for the development of Ba Shu characteristic cultural tourism. The above policies and requirements have pointed out the direction for the high-quality development and upgrading of cultural tourism industry in Nanchong City.

Nanchong, as the northern central city of the Chengdu Chongqing Economic Zone, the regional central city of the Chengdu Chongqing urban agglomeration, and an important node city in the Sichuan Shaanxi revolutionary old area, has a long history and a rich cultural heritage. It is the birthplace of Three Kingdoms culture and Spring Festival culture, where Three Kingdoms culture, Silk culture, Red culture, and Jialing River culture blend and shine, giving birth to numerous historical figures. Therefore, studying the path of building a new era leading cultural city in Nanchong in this context is of great significance for promoting the high-quality development of Nanchong city.

## **2. THE VALUE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF BUILDING NANCHONG INTO A LEADING CULTURAL CITY IN THE NEW ERA**

### **2.1 Building a "Leading Cultural City in the New Era" is an Inherent Requirement for Enhancing Nanchong's Overall Cultural Strength and Advancing the Construction of a Socialist Leading Cultural City at Both National and Provincial Levels.**

Culture is a crucial aspect of a nation's comprehensive strength. According to Marxist theory, social existence determines social consciousness, but social consciousness, in turn, reacts upon social existence. This means that culture plays a significant role in promoting economic and social development.

To this end, the Chinese government, the Sichuan Provincial Government, and the Nanchong Municipal Government have respectively proposed strategic goals to vigorously develop advanced socialist culture and build a socialist leading cultural city at the national, provincial, and municipal levels. The aim is to cultivate people through culture, enhance the overall cultural strength of the nation or region, and promote coordinated, high-quality economic and social development.

### **2.2 Building a "Leading Cultural City in the New Era" is an Inherent Requirement of Nanchong's Overall Development Positioning**

Nanchong boasts a long history and rich culture, endowed with both favorable geographical advantages and abundant cultural tourism resources. Marxism holds that development must keep pace with the times and be adapted to local conditions. This underscores the need for Nanchong to base its development on its own resource endowments, pursuing innovation and high-quality growth. Nanchong possesses distinctive cultural brands in areas such as ancient city culture, Spring Festival culture, silk culture, and fishing culture, which serve as key resources for differentiated cultural development compared to other cities. Therefore, the implementation of the "Leading Cultural City in the New Era" strategy in Nanchong is determined by its cultural resource endowments and is an inevitable requirement of the city's overall development positioning.

### **2.3 Building a "Leading Cultural City in the New Era" is a Strategic Choice for Nanchong's High-Quality Development**

High-quality development is development tailored to local conditions, where culture plays a significant counteractive role. Culture can nurture people and, on this basis, shape a city, creating a unique urban image and identity that attracts more talented young individuals to settle and thrive, thereby promoting the city's high-quality development. Many renowned cities around the world possess strong cultural influence and cultural strength, such as Paris in France, St. Petersburg in Russia, Vienna in Austria, Istanbul in Turkey, Seoul in South Korea, Samarkand in Uzbekistan, and Melbourne in Australia.

## **3. FOUNDATIONAL CONDITIONS AND INFLUENCING FACTORS FOR NANCHONG'S CONSTRUCTION AS A LEADING CULTURAL CITY IN THE NEW ERA**

### **3.1 Foundational Conditions for Nanchong's Construction as a Leading Cultural City in the New Era**

Nanchong is a renowned historical and cultural city with a history spanning over 2,200 years and abundant cultural resources. Among these, Langzhong is a nationally famous ancient city, and Zhu De is a globally celebrated founding father of the nation. These cultural resources enjoy international acclaim and possess strong cultural appeal.

In terms of population, by the end of 2024, Nanchong had a permanent population of 5.489 million [1], giving it a comparative demographic advantage over other cities in Sichuan Province. This provides robust population support for cultural development.

Geographically and in terms of transportation, Nanchong serves as the central city of northeastern Sichuan, with well-developed infrastructure including highways, railways, and an airport. This offers solid transportation conditions for building Nanchong into a leading cultural city in the new era.

Regarding industrial development, Nanchong has designated cultural tourism as a pillar industry for focused development, providing political assurance for its leading cultural city ambitions.

Transportation statistics for 2024 show a total passenger volume of 56 million, a 7.7% increase from the previous year, and passenger turnover of 3.31 billion passenger-kilometers, up 9.1%. Culturally, the city boasts: 2 art performance troupes under cultural and tourism departments, 2 art performance venues under cultural and tourism departments, 10 public libraries, 10 cultural centers, 426 comprehensive cultural stations, 1 national cultural consumption pilot city, 1 provincial-level cultural industry demonstration zone, 2 provincial-level cultural industry demonstration bases, 11 museums, 27 cultural relics protection management agencies, 19 nationally protected cultural heritage sites, 134 provincial-level protected cultural heritage sites, 525 municipal and county-level protected cultural heritage sites, 6 national-level intangible cultural heritage items, 43 provincial-level intangible cultural heritage items, 7 higher education institutions cultivating cultural tourism talents (including Nanchong Vocational College of Culture and Tourism), 23 secondary vocational education schools (excluding technical schools) [2]. These statistics demonstrate that Nanchong possesses comprehensive foundational conditions for building itself into a leading cultural city in the new era.

### **3.2 Influencing Factors for Nanchong's Construction as a Leading Cultural City in the New Era**

There are numerous factors influencing the construction of a leading cultural city in the new era, but the main ones can be categorized into five aspects:

First, the cultural development policies, systems, and mechanisms formulated by the government will positively impact the construction of a leading cultural city in the new era. This manifests specifically in the integration and promotion effects of policies, which influence people's emphasis on cultural strength development. The government's special development funds also have a leverage effect of "moving a thousand pounds with four ounces." Additionally, government investments in infrastructure construction, such as transportation needed for cultural tourism development, play a significant influencing role.

Second, as the main actors in building a leading cultural city in the new era, enterprises positively influence this construction through the cultural tourism products and commodities they provide, the consumption environment and experience convenience they create, project safety, family-friendly or youth-friendly project environments, as well as their corporate image and reputation.

Third, the growth environment for cultural tourism talents provided by educational institutions, the depth of industry-education integration, the quality of educational resources, and the image and reputation of these institutions positively impact the construction of a leading cultural city in the new era. This is specifically reflected in talent cultivation programs meeting employers' requirements for abilities and qualities, the training capacity satisfying the needs of cultural tourism enterprises and positions, and the training outcomes adapting to the needs of both employers and students.

Fourth, teachers' own knowledge and capability levels, ideological and ethical standards, as well as their image and reputation, along with the knowledge impartation, skill cultivation, and comprehensive quality shaping they provide based on these factors, positively influence the construction of a leading cultural city in the new era.

Fifth, the professional self-reliance, self-strengthening, and self-confidence of cultural tourism graduates, their ideological and moral character, personal influence, and reputation positively impact the construction of a leading cultural city in the new era.

## **4. MAJOR CHALLENGES IN NANCHONG'S CONSTRUCTION AS A LEADING CULTURAL CITY IN THE NEW ERA**

Currently, Nanchong faces six main challenges in building itself into a leading cultural city in the new era:

First, inadequate development of public culture, particularly the imbalance between hardware and software in rural public cultural construction, along with low utilization rates of urban public cultural resources.

Second, insufficient protection, development and utilization of cultural relics and intangible cultural heritage, especially the inadequate development and transformation of shadow puppetry.

Third, mediocre development of cultural industries with few representative cultural products or works.

Fourth, insufficient digital integration in cultural tourism, exemplified by Langzhong Ancient Town - one of China's four great ancient towns - lacking digital products.

Fifth, the need to strengthen the promotion of urban spirit.

Sixth, the requirement for more comprehensive institutional safeguards for building a "Leading Cultural City in the New Era".

## **5. BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR BUILDING A NEW ERA LEADING CULTURAL CITY IN NANCHONG**

One is that the construction of Nanchong City as a culturally strong city in the new era needs to be combined with the characteristics of the new era and the situation of Nanchong City, and implement national and provincial strategies. The construction of leading cultural city in Nanchong is an important measure to actively respond to the national cultural power, Sichuan cultural strong province tourism strong province, and Nanchong cultural and tourism prosperous city strategy. The key is to keep pace with the times, further explore Nanchong's relative advantages, and construct according to the characteristics of the new era and the requirements of the people.

Secondly, in order to build a leading cultural city in the new era, Nanchong City needs to adhere to the principles of innovation leadership, integration of multiple regulations, and combination of cultural carriers and cultural environment. Firstly, driven and guided by innovation, we will promote the digitalization of culture and tourism, develop digital cultural tourism, and shape new quality productivity in tourism. Secondly, we should actively integrate into the domestic and international dual circulation, further promoting the high-quality development of the cultural and tourism industry. Thirdly, accelerate the integration of cultural planning, tourism planning, overall urban planning, and transportation planning in Nanchong City. Fourthly, the construction of a leading cultural city in the new era is a comprehensive and systematic project, which requires attention to both the hardware construction of "cultural new infrastructure" and the construction of cultural soft environment, creating an environment and atmosphere that improves the quality of citizens.

## **6. OPTIMIZATION PATHWAYS FOR NANCHONG'S CONSTRUCTION AS A LEADING CULTURAL CITY IN THE NEW ERA**

To address the aforementioned challenges in building Nanchong into a leading cultural city in the new era and based on the fundamental principles, the optimization pathways can be developed across six dimensions: public cultural development, protection and utilization of cultural relics and intangible cultural heritage, revitalization and quality enhancement of cultural industries, digital integration of cultural tourism, promotion of urban spirit, and institutional safeguards for building a "Leading Cultural City in the New Era".

### **6.1 Public Cultural Development**

To address the issues of over-emphasis on hardware over software in public cultural construction and low utilization of cultural resources, the following measures can be implemented:

Party committees and governments at all levels should strengthen inspection of public cultural work, incorporating it into annual assessments of subordinate organizations and special evaluation work.

Township Party committees and governments may provide appropriate funding through service procurement to village-established performance volunteer teams and public cultural service teams.

Villages or communities with local colleges, secondary or primary schools should proactively connect with these educational institutions' cultural and talent resources to revitalize community cultural resources and enhance the cultural appreciation of the populace.

### **6.2 Protection and Utilization of Cultural Relics and Intangible Cultural Heritage**

Firstly, we need to strengthen the development and utilization of available cultural relics and intangible cultural heritage resources, especially the development and utilization of digital cultural relics resources; The second is to introduce digital technology and strengthen the digital transformation of cultural relics and intangible cultural heritage resources. During the transformation process, attention should be paid to both the essence of cultural relics and intangible cultural heritage resources and a certain degree of exploration and innovation; The third is to strengthen the promotion of the above-mentioned resources or projects, promote a large number of cultural and tourism projects such as digital museums and digital tourism, enhance the awareness and popularity of cultural resources, and promote the formation and development of urban cultural brands.

### **6.3 Revitalization and Quality Improvement of Cultural Industry**

One is to strengthen policy and financial support for the cultural industry, and leverage a small amount of government funds to stimulate large-scale private investment in the cultural and tourism industry; The second is to promote the integrated development of "industry, agriculture, culture, tourism, commerce, sports, health and wellness", and achieve the integration of "culture and tourism" with "100 industries" and "100 industries" with "culture and tourism", such as upgrading current rural tourism, enriching traditional Chinese medicine health preservation and tourism projects; The third is to build a cultural and creative industry park, guide enterprises to focus on developing cultural business cards and products in Nanchong City, and cultivate innovative and technology-based cultural enterprise incubators.

### **6.4 Digital Integration Development of Cultural Tourism**

One is to improve the infrastructure for the digital integration of cultural and tourism development, such as systematically building a smart cultural and tourism network system, constructing a cultural and tourism data sharing platform centered on tourists, and providing personalized and accurate tourism solutions for tourists; The second is to enhance the digitalization level of cultural and tourism services. Currently, the digitalization level of cultural and tourism services in major scenic spots in Nanchong City is generally not high, and the immersive guide experience for tourists is not sufficient. Therefore, it is recommended to develop an intelligent navigation system using technologies such as XR, AR, VR, etc; The third is to promote digital innovation of cultural and tourism products, develop new formats such as smart study tours, and promote the digital integration of cultural and tourism development.

### **6.5 Promoting the Spirit of the City**

One is to increase the promotion of urban spirit and enhance awareness. In terms of population, it is important to highlight the leading and driving role of primary, secondary, and tertiary students, other youth groups, and government officials; In the media matrix, it is necessary to achieve linkage between the media matrix and promote the formation of synergy between traditional media and self media; In terms of methods, we can encourage primary, secondary, and tertiary students to produce promotional videos with the theme of "Nanchong Spirit Micro Stories". It can also be combined with local hot events and good deeds in Nanchong for publicity and reporting, to concretize the urban spirit and achieve the goal of influencing "surrounding people" through "people around"; The second is infiltration in public places. Set up promotional windows and sculptures incorporating urban spirit keywords in public areas such as bus stops, parks, and squares, subtly influencing citizens to inherit and promote urban spirit. The third is online interactive communication. Mobilize citizens to participate in activities such as "I endorse the spirit of the city", produce daily scene videos of citizens practicing the spirit of the city, upload them online, and enhance citizen participation through awards, participation in lucky draws, video exhibitions, and other forms. Fourthly, we will carry out a series of activities such as "practicing the urban spirit and striving to be civilized citizens", innovate the establishment of "smiling service posts", and promote practitioners in various industries to practice the urban spirit. The fifth is to rely on local universities and cultural tourism enterprises to develop and design literary and artistic works based on local culture, such as innovative development of Ba Xiang Drum Dance, Langyuan Legend, Zhu De's Struggle, and so on.

### **6.6 Institutional Guarantee**

The system is the fundamental guarantee for the development of things, and the construction of a new era leading cultural city in Nanchong is no exception, which requires organizational, policy, institutional mechanism, and talent construction guarantees. Firstly, establish a leading group for the construction of a "New Era Leading Cultural City" in Nanchong City, establish a joint meeting system, and unify the leadership, organization, and

coordination of the construction work of a "New Era Leading Cultural City"; Secondly, improve the cultural evaluation system, guide various construction forces to gather and form a joint force; Thirdly, improve policies for the development of the cultural tourism industry, especially by establishing a cultural tourism industry development fund; Fourth, improve fiscal and social security policies to enable cultural and tourism enterprises to conveniently and quickly enjoy policy support; Fifth, innovate investment and financing mechanisms to reduce the operating costs of cultural and tourism enterprises; Sixth, establish a comprehensive marketing and publicity mechanism to mobilize all social forces to promote the "Beautiful Nanchong"; Seventh, improve the talent work mechanism, attract more cultural and tourism talents to root in Nanchong for entrepreneurial development, and bring more business opportunities.

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