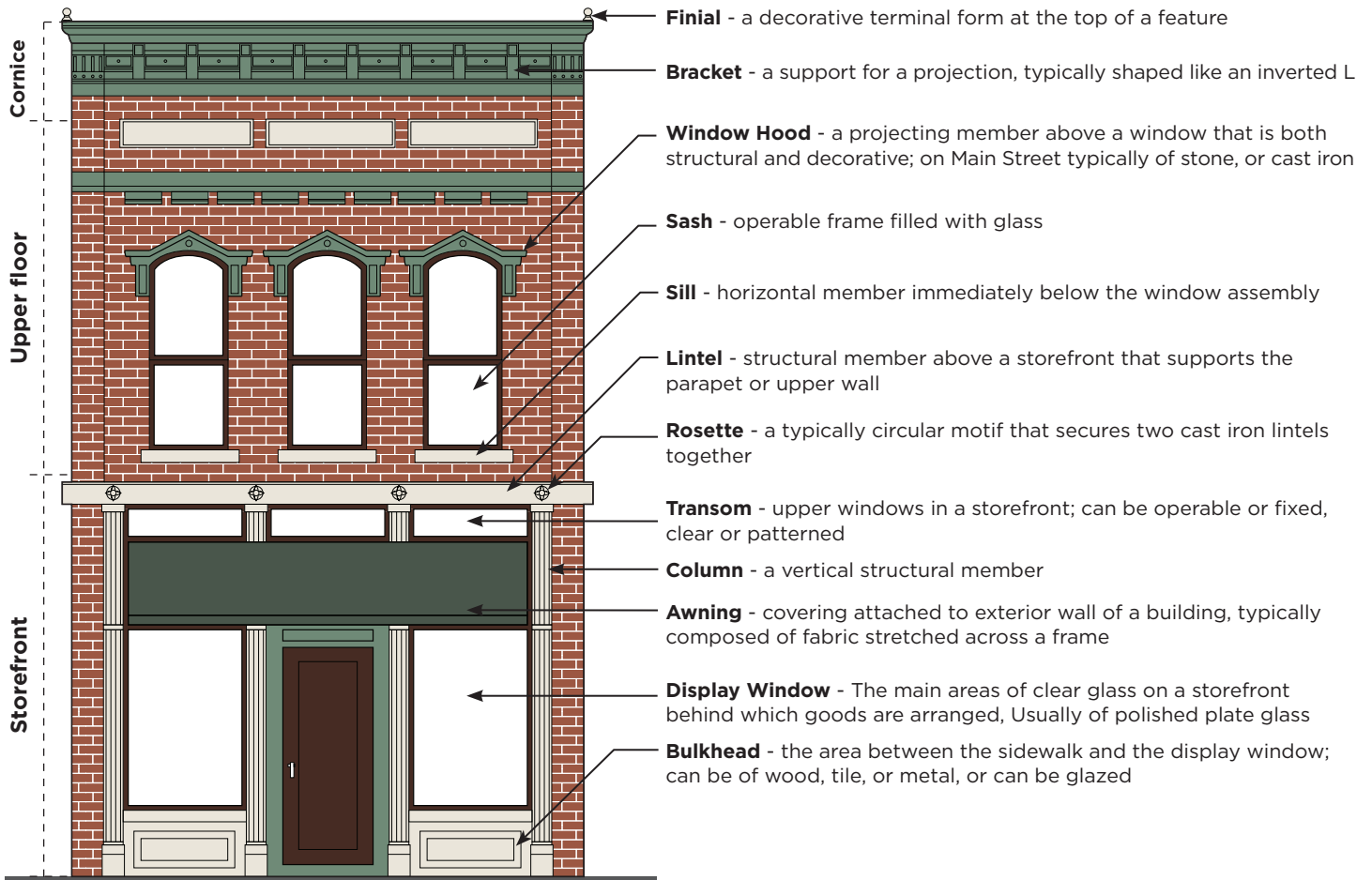


ANATOMY OF A MAIN STREET BUILDING



Design gives a community a sense of rootedness and place. The physical characteristics of a Main Street—the older and historic structures that make up the built environment, the infrastructure that facilitates the flow of people, the public spaces that serve as community gathering spots—all contribute to what attracts people to a place, inviting them to visit, set up shop, or call it home.

Although architectural styles and their elements differ from building to building, and from region to region, most buildings were originally constructed with similar elements and divided into similar segments: the storefront, the upper facade, and the cornice. These elements work together to create a total composition, providing each building with a distinct identity and contributing to the corridor's overall sense of place and character. Understanding the various elements of older and historic building facades is essential to ensuring they are properly rehabilitated and maintained.

Most commercial Main Street type buildings in Nebraska are one to two story structures constructed of brick, cement block, or clay tile. These buildings typically included mixed-use functions; first floor stores with second floor lodge halls, opera houses, offices, or hotels and apartments. Some buildings have recessed storefronts and cast iron or pressed tin facades.

Sources: National Main Street Center & Nebraska Historic Building Surveys

In general, an awning is a sloped projection supported by a frame and attached to the building façade with bolts. The awning frame is usually covered with colored canvas fabric specially treated and suitable for outdoor elements. A canopy is a flat projection supported from above by cables, chains, or pipes and anchored to the building. Sometimes a canopy can be part of the building structure itself, cantilevered out from the face of the building.

Source: National Main Street Center

