

ANATOMY OF A MAIN STREET BUILDING

Preserving Historic Places
Conference 2023





MAIN STREET, ALGONA, IOWA.

AGENDA



History of Main Street buildings



What features make up a traditional main street building



Mid-century changes



How to conduct a building survey

HISTORY



White Elephant Building

2021 - **BEAUTY EDIT**

2016 - MOVED 1010 3RD ST. SE-1305 3RD ST. SE

2008 - 2016 - **VACANT**

1936 - 2008 - **WHITE ELEPHANT SHOP**

1929 - **FRANK TAGGERT** - RESIDENT

1926 - **JOSEPH SPINKA** - RESIDENT

1913 - 1920 - **PARLOR CITY LAUNDRY**

1909 - 1913 - **MISS EDITH SAVEL**

1909 - **JOHN VAVRA** - RESIDENT

1903 - **FRANK SUCHY**

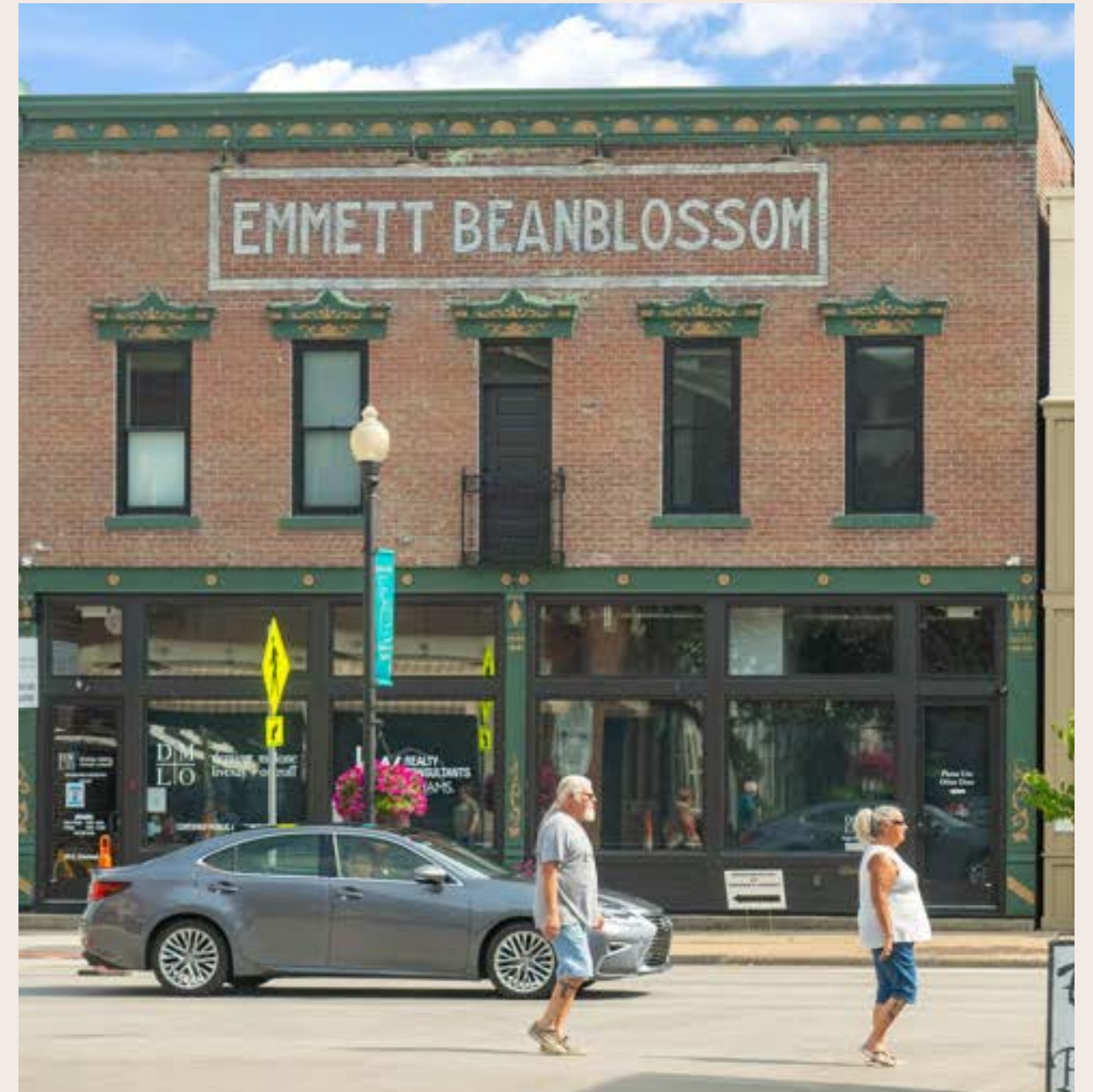
1898 - **LEDYARD STODDARD+FAMILY**: RESIDENT

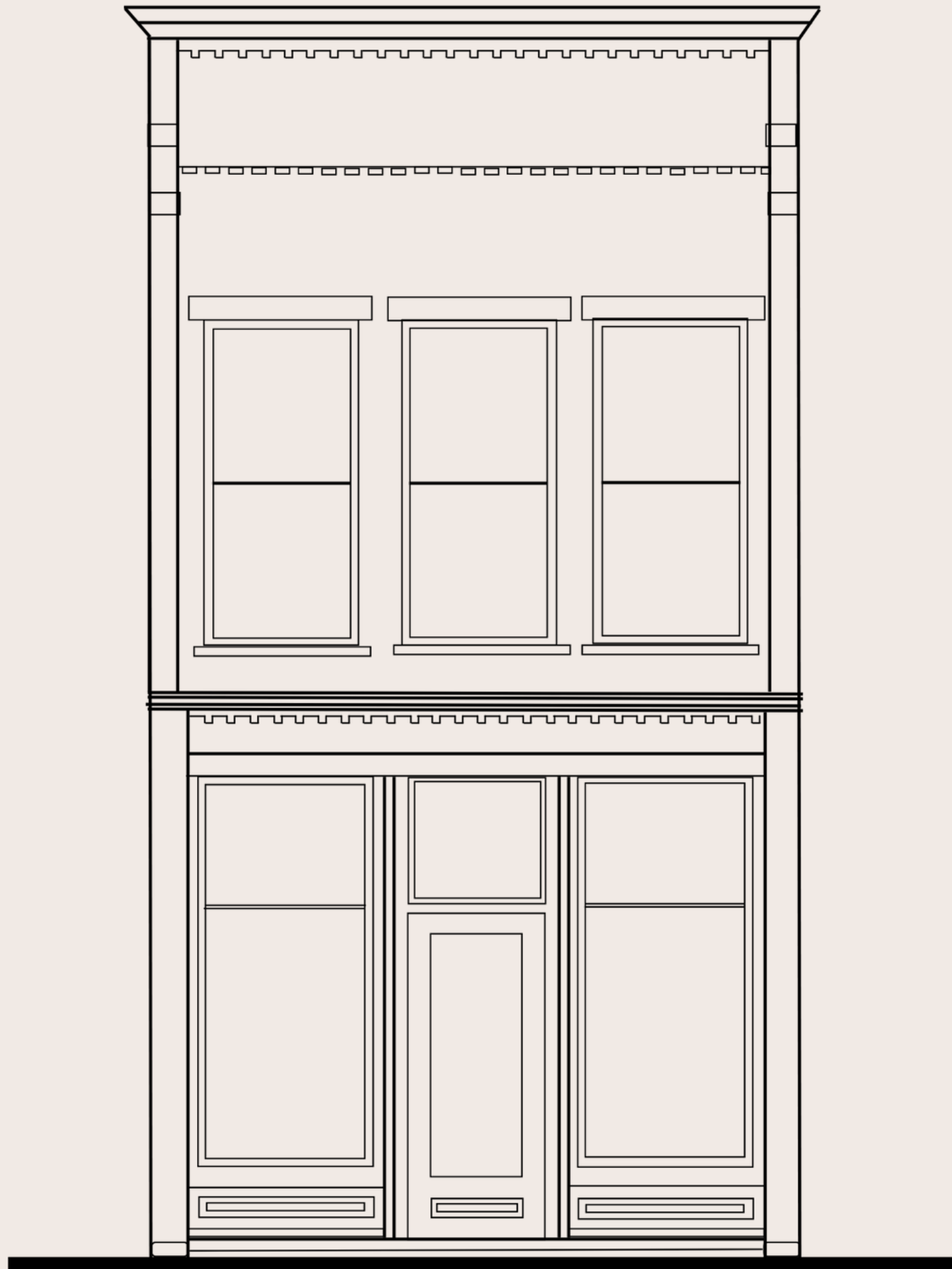
1895 - **SHOES & BOOTS SALES**: **ANTON JENISTA**

1895 - **KATE SAVEL** - RESIDENT

- As small towns began to develop across America, a central business district was established where merchants built stores for their retail businesses.
- Traditional downtowns were formed as business owners built their shops one after another in a row along one main street. The “main street” was the primary road through town and as more businesses sprung up it became the main hub for the social activities of the community.

HISTORY OF STOREFRONTS IN INDIANA

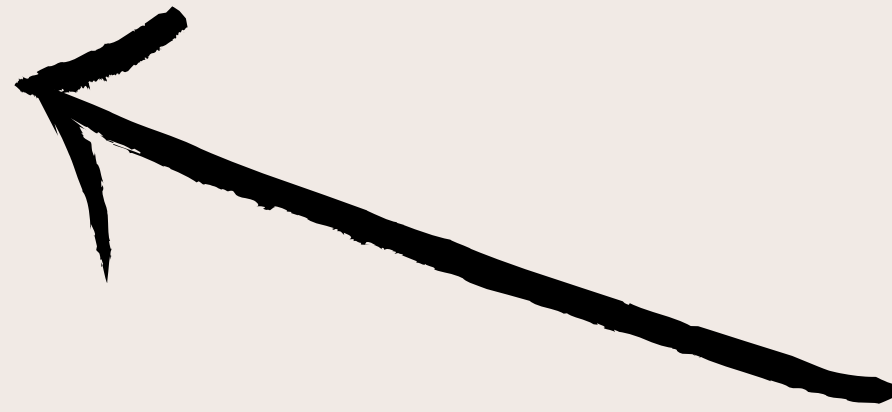
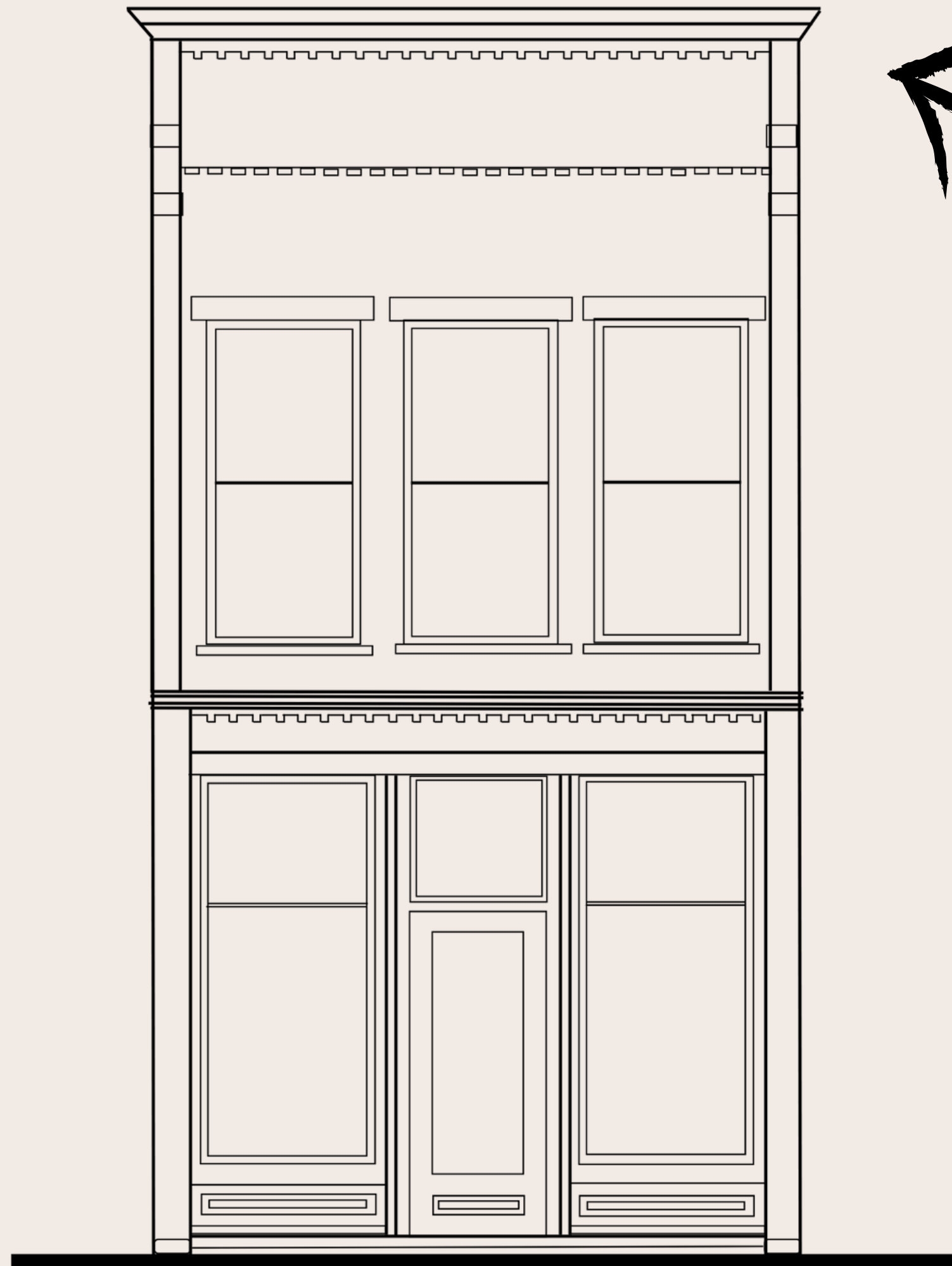




ANTATOMY OF A BUILDING

Grab your building form and
follow along



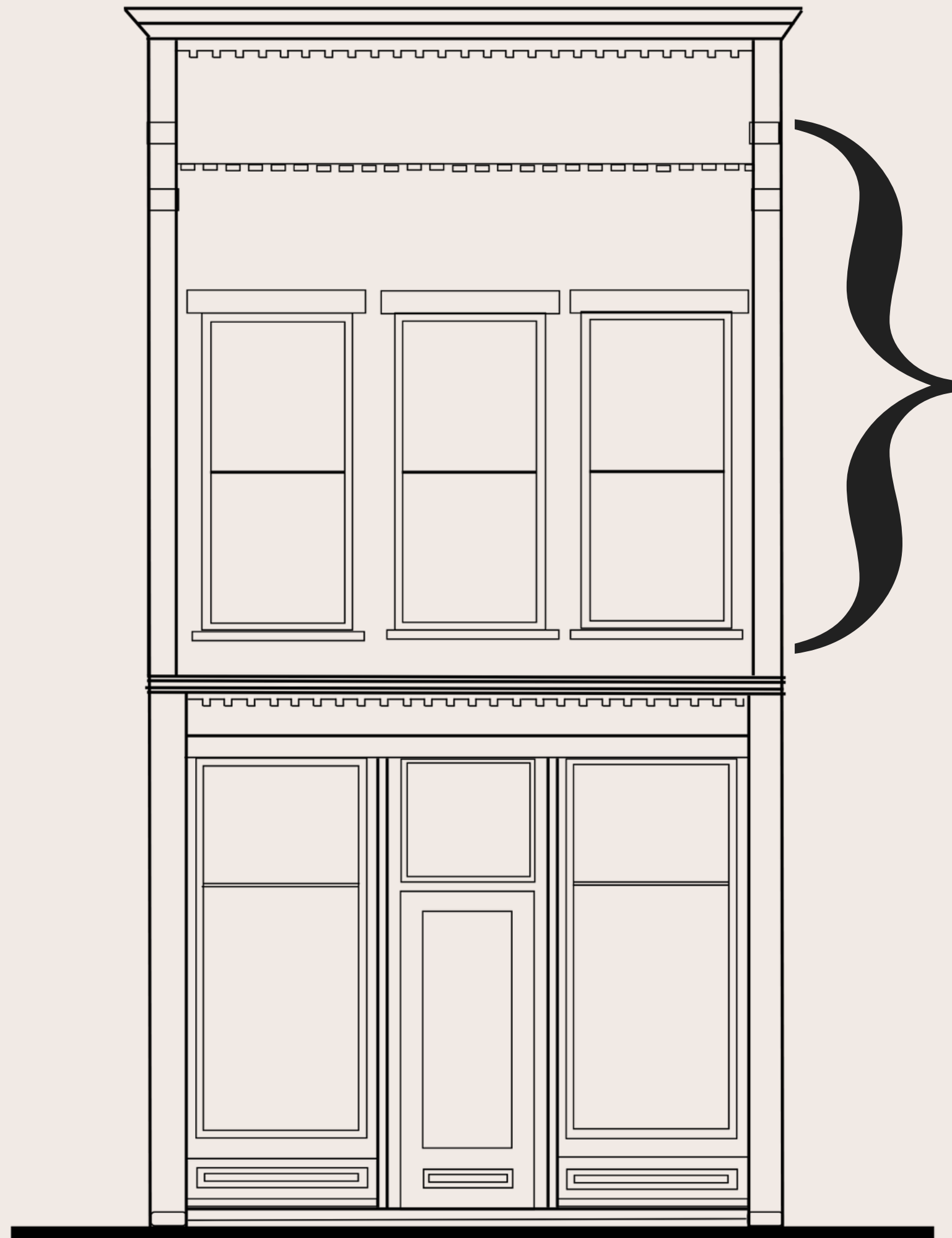


CORNICE

The decorated projection at the top of a wall provided to protect the wall face or to ornament and finish the eaves.

CORNICE EXAMPLES





UPPER FLOOR OR UPPER FACADE

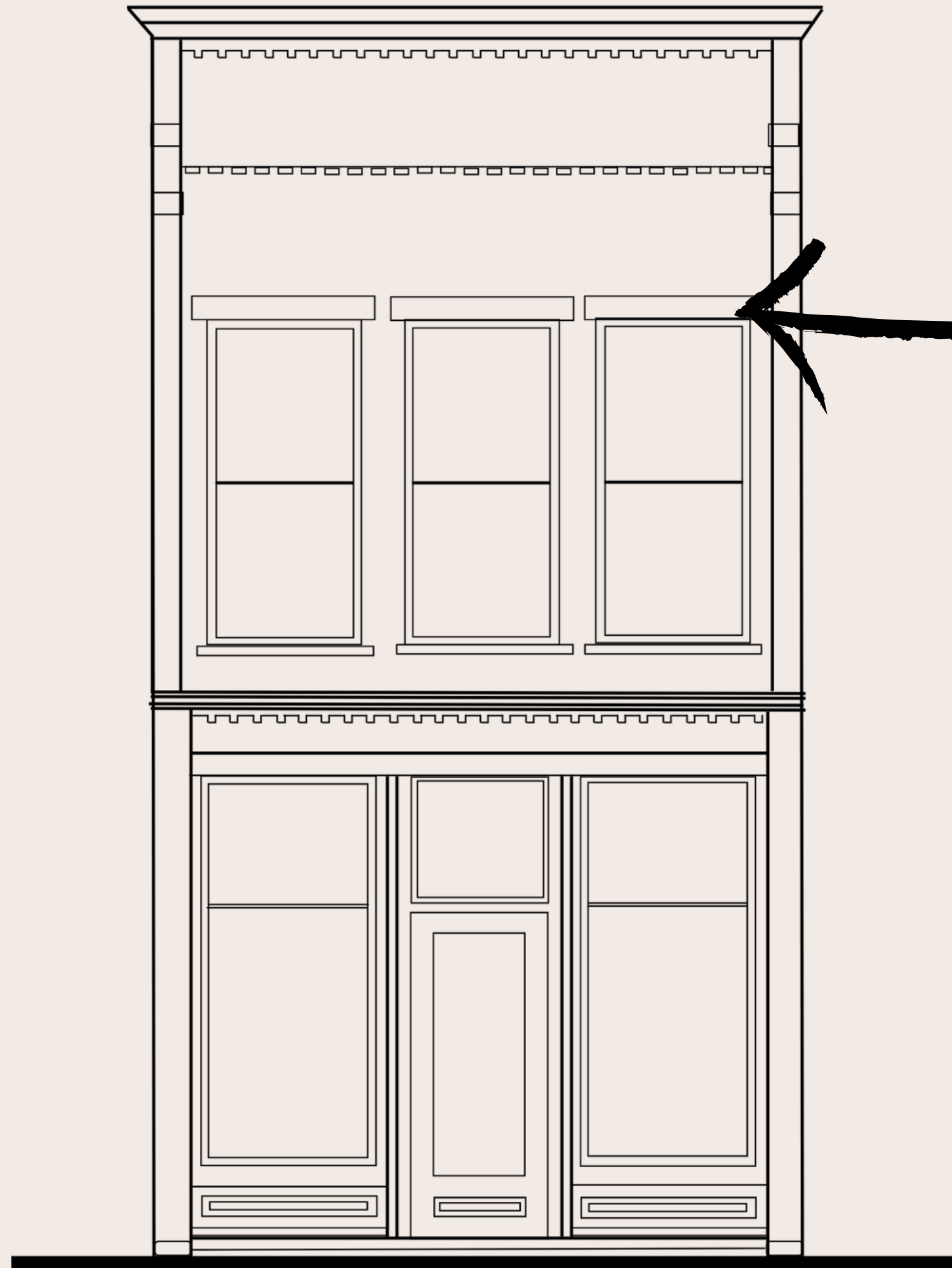
The typically non-retail space above the retail ground floor; multistory Main Street buildings are typically between two and four floors.

UPPER FLOOR EXAMPLES

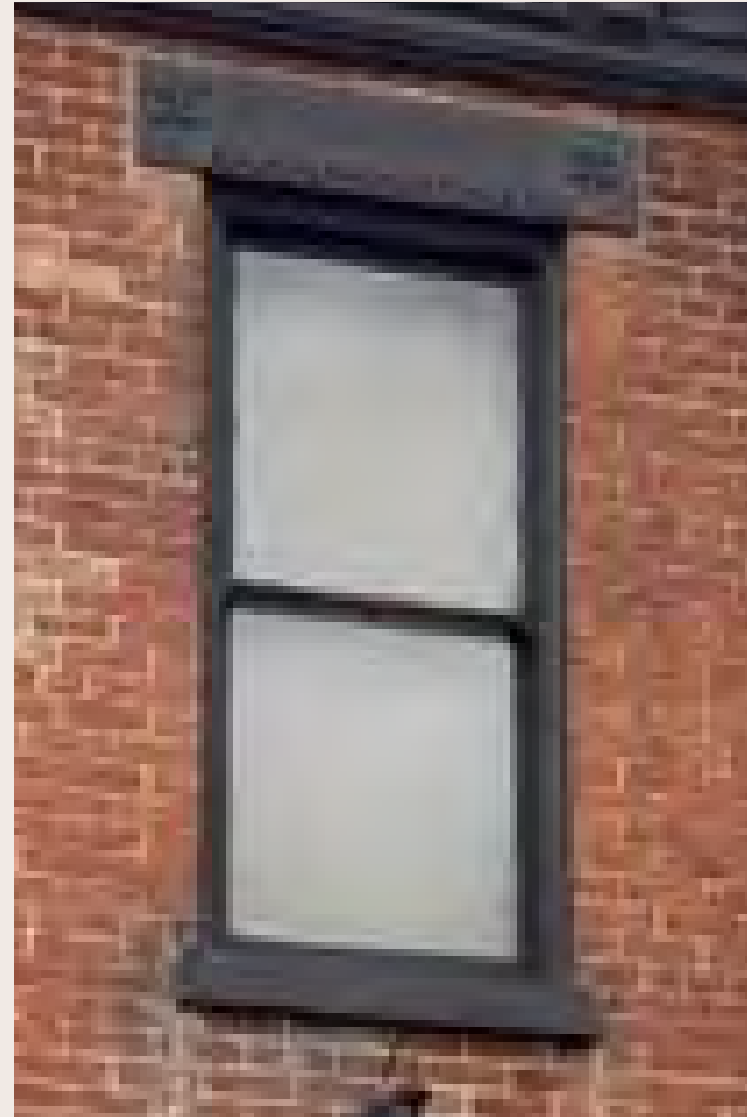
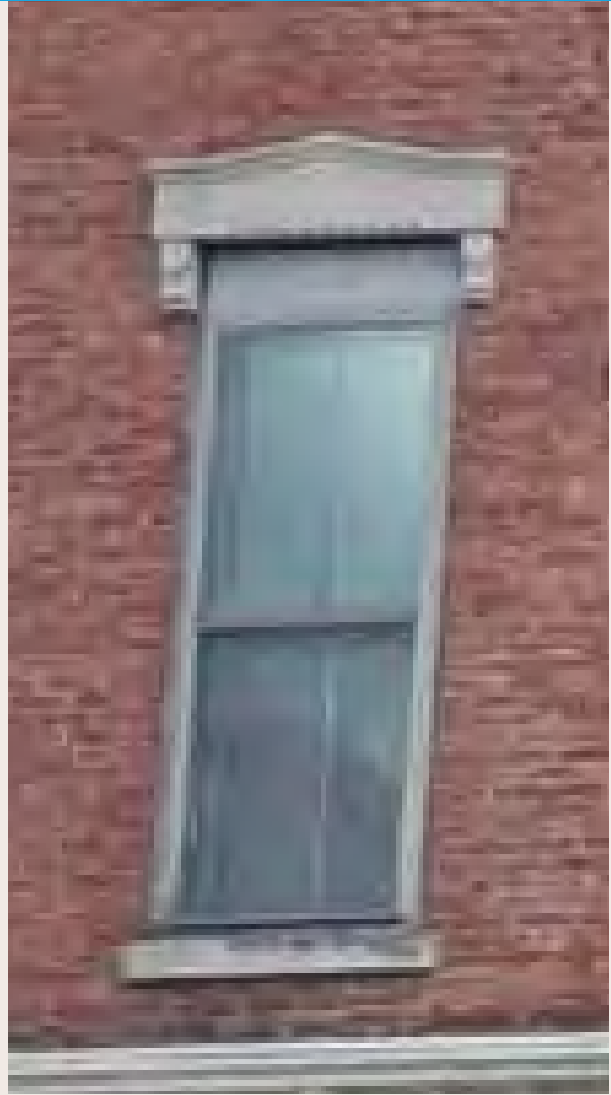


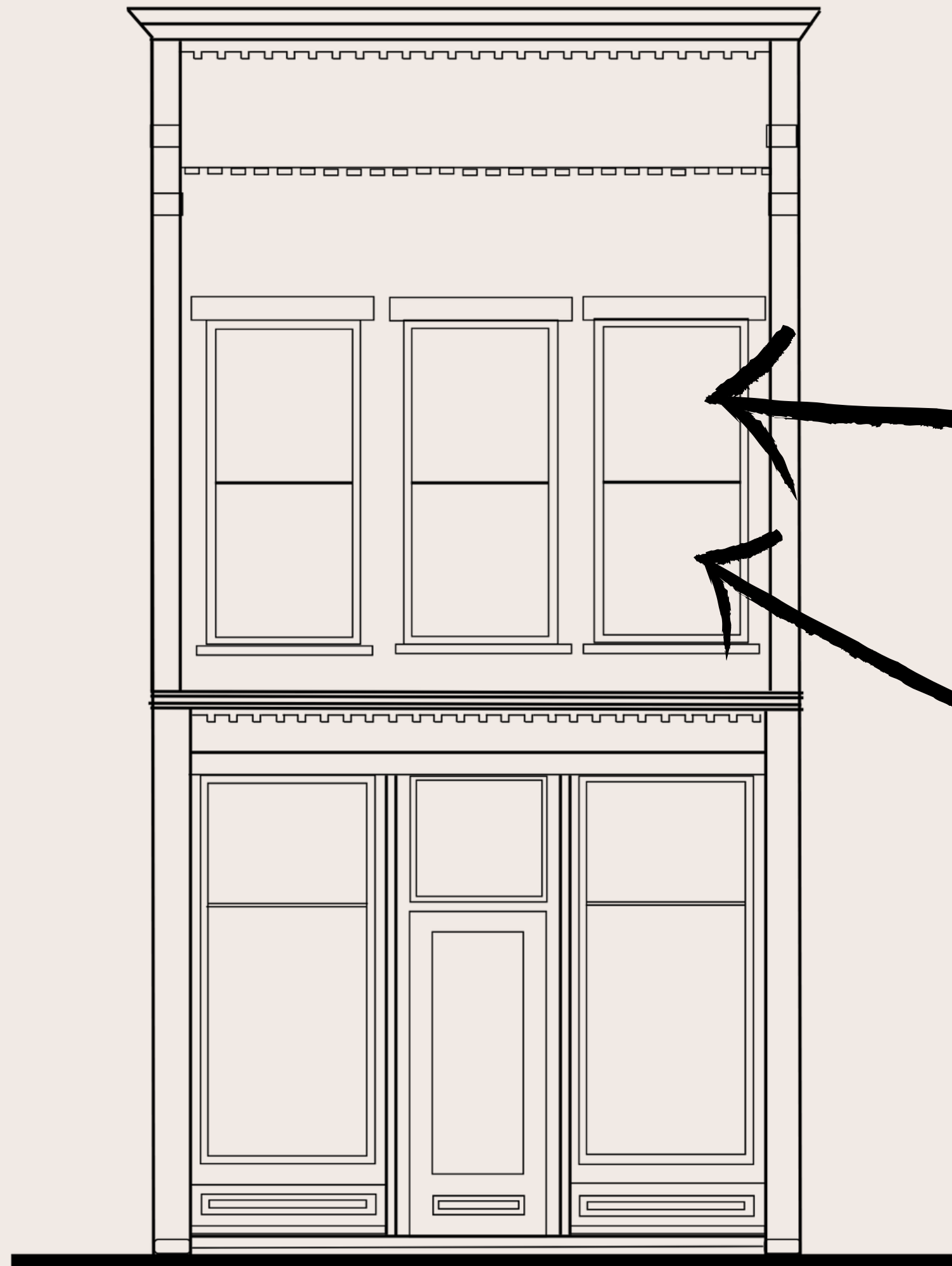
WINDOW HOOD

A projecting member above a window that is both structural and decorative; on Main Street typically of stone or cast iron.



WINDOW HOOD EXAMPLES





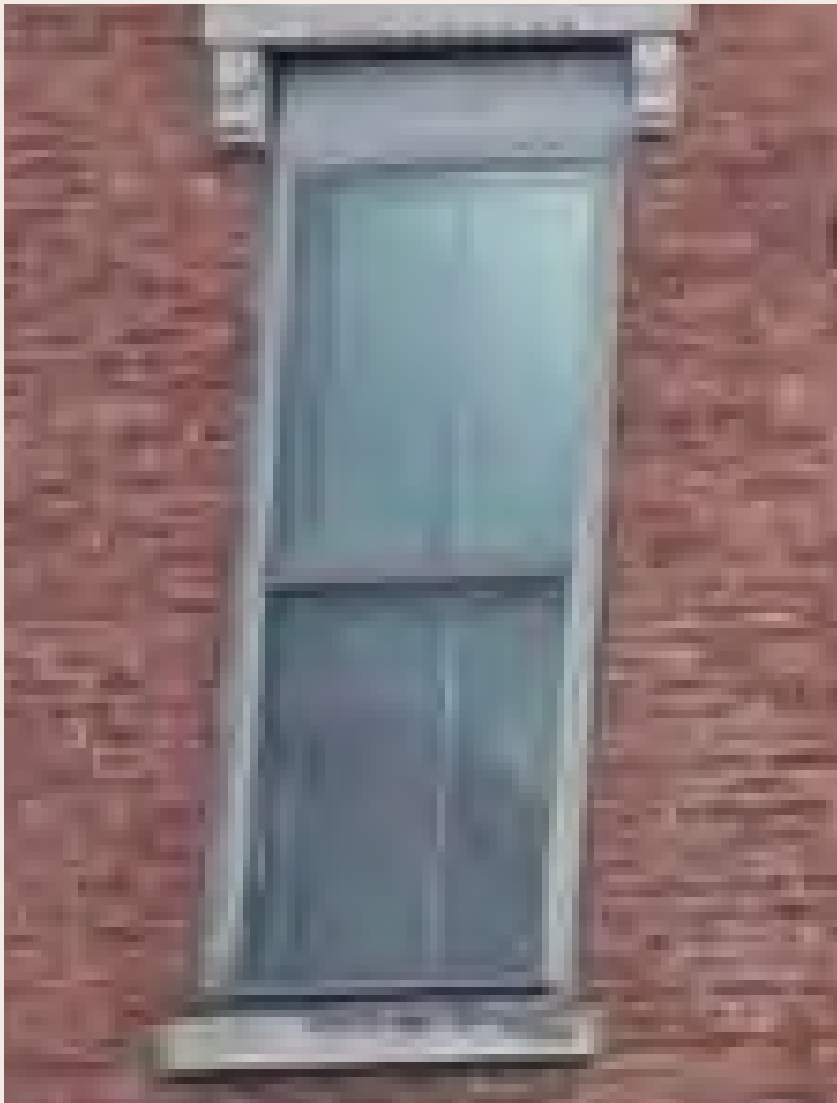
WINDOW SASH

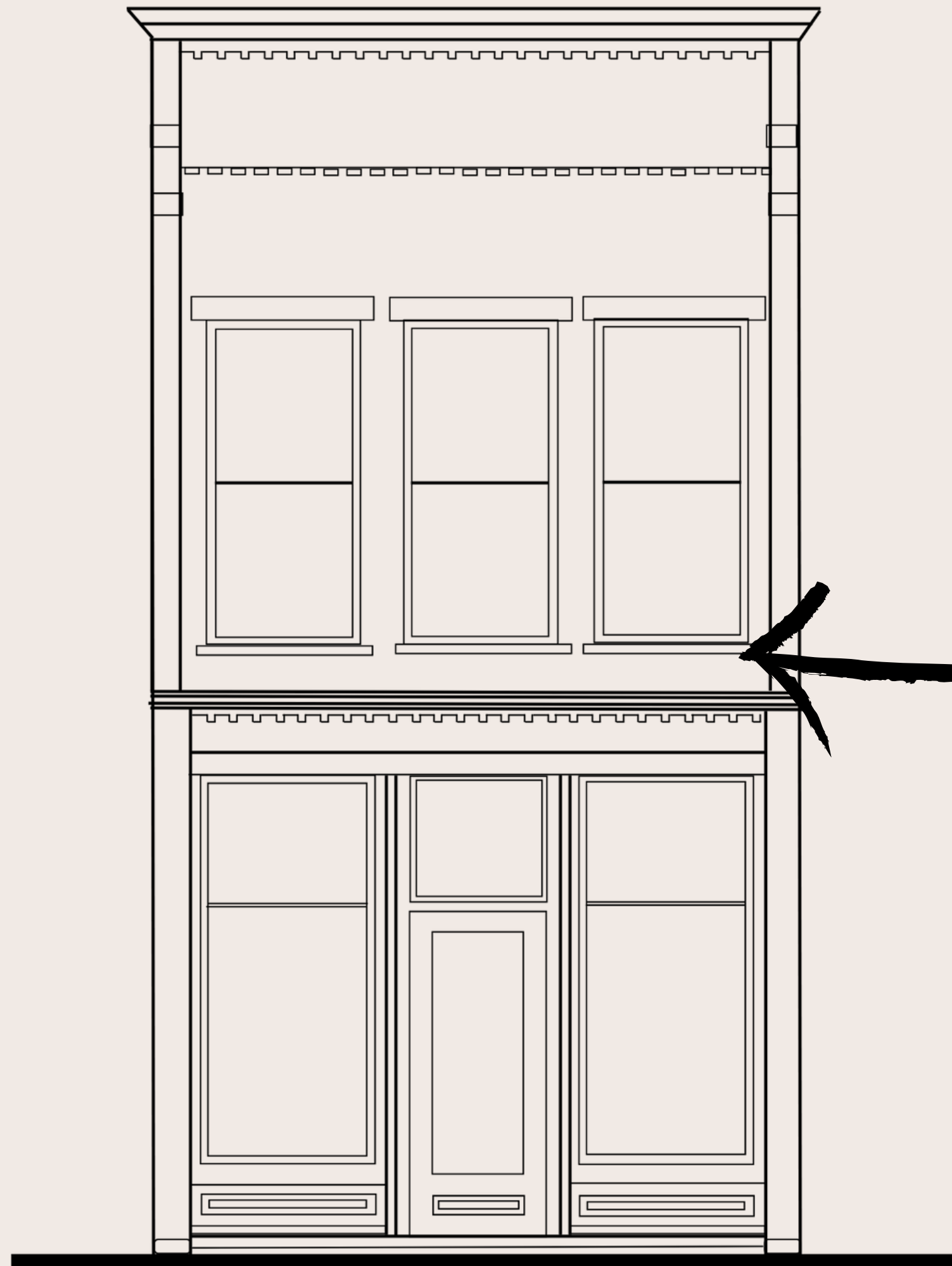
The moveable part of a window made up of the vertical and horizontal frame that holds the glass.

WINDOW PANE

Also called a lite, a sheet of glass for glazing a window. After installation, the pane is referred to as a "lite" or "window lite."

WINDOW SASH & PANE EXAMPLES

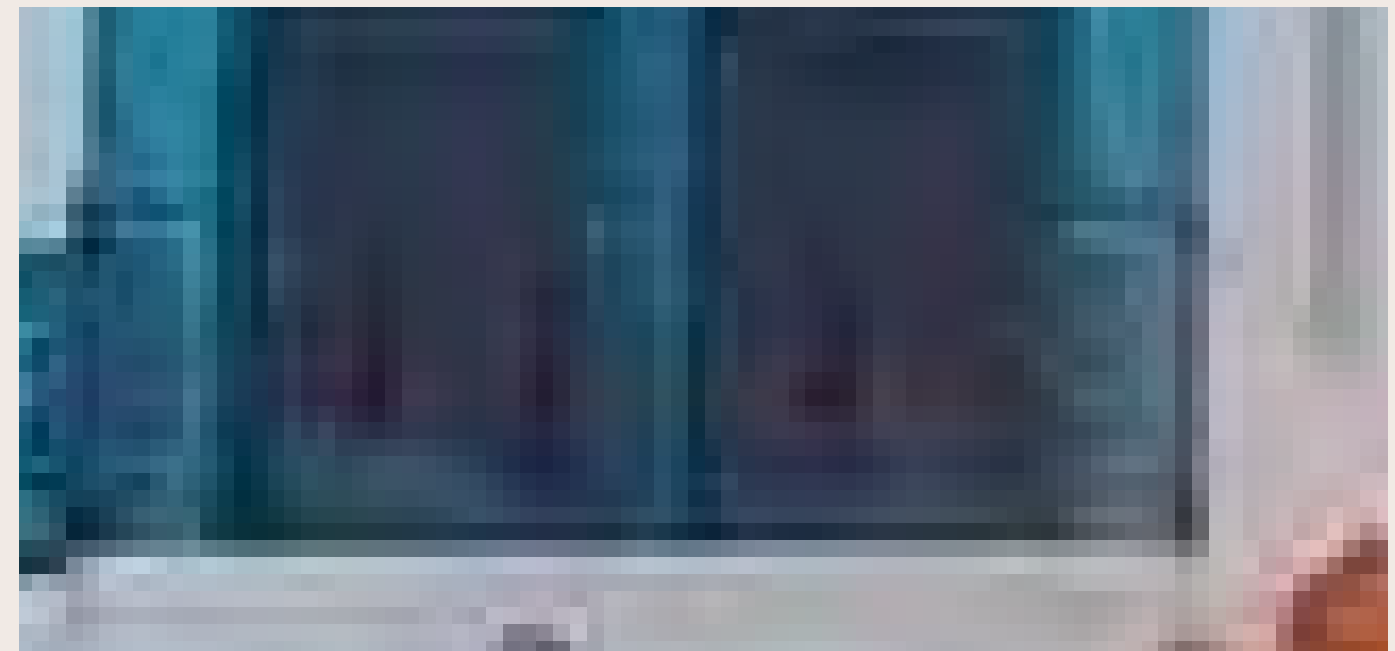


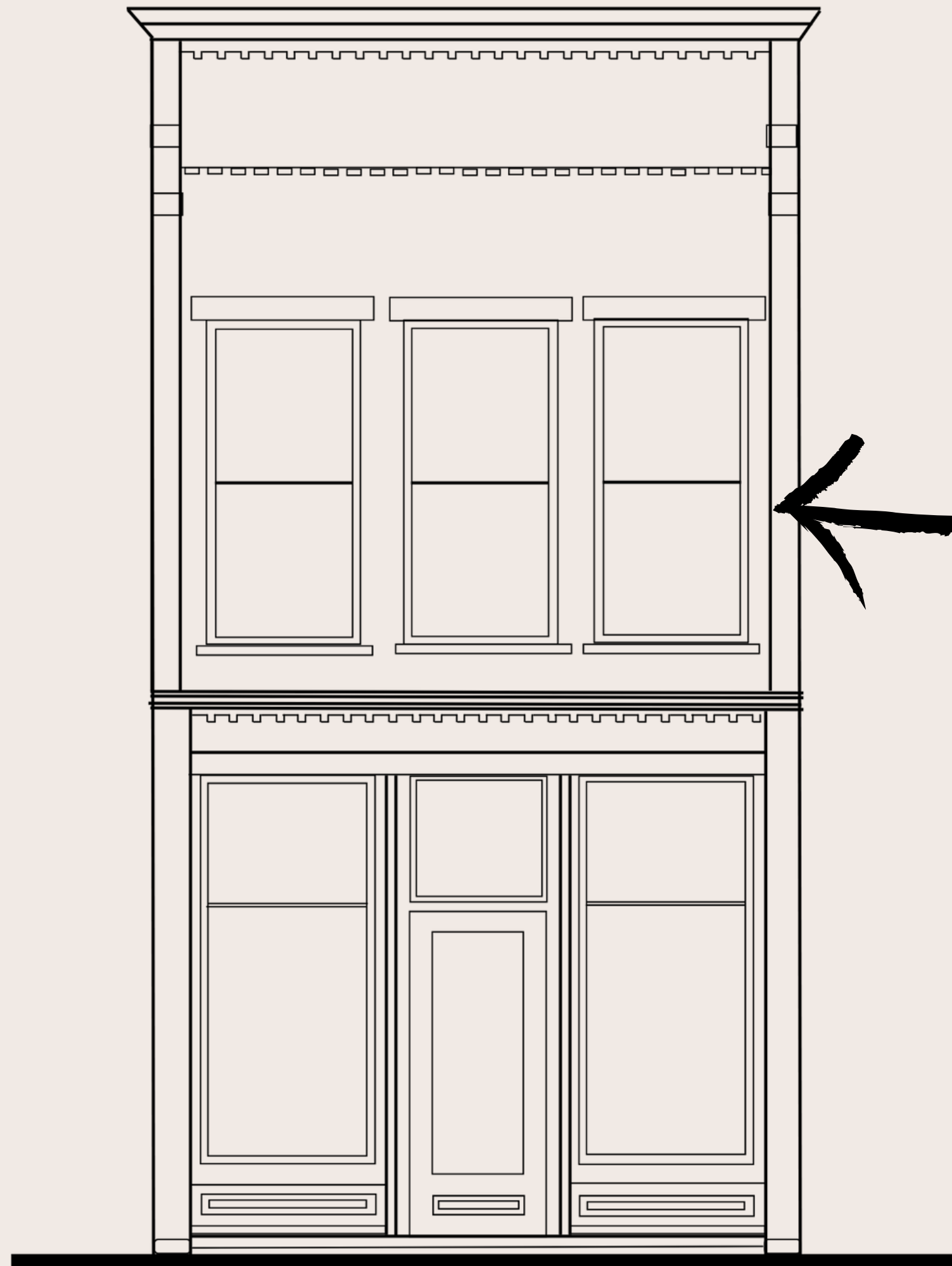


WINDOW SILL

Located at the very bottom of the window, the sill is usually sloped to allow water to run off the bottom of the window in rain or during cleaning.

WINDOW SASH & PANE EXAMPLES



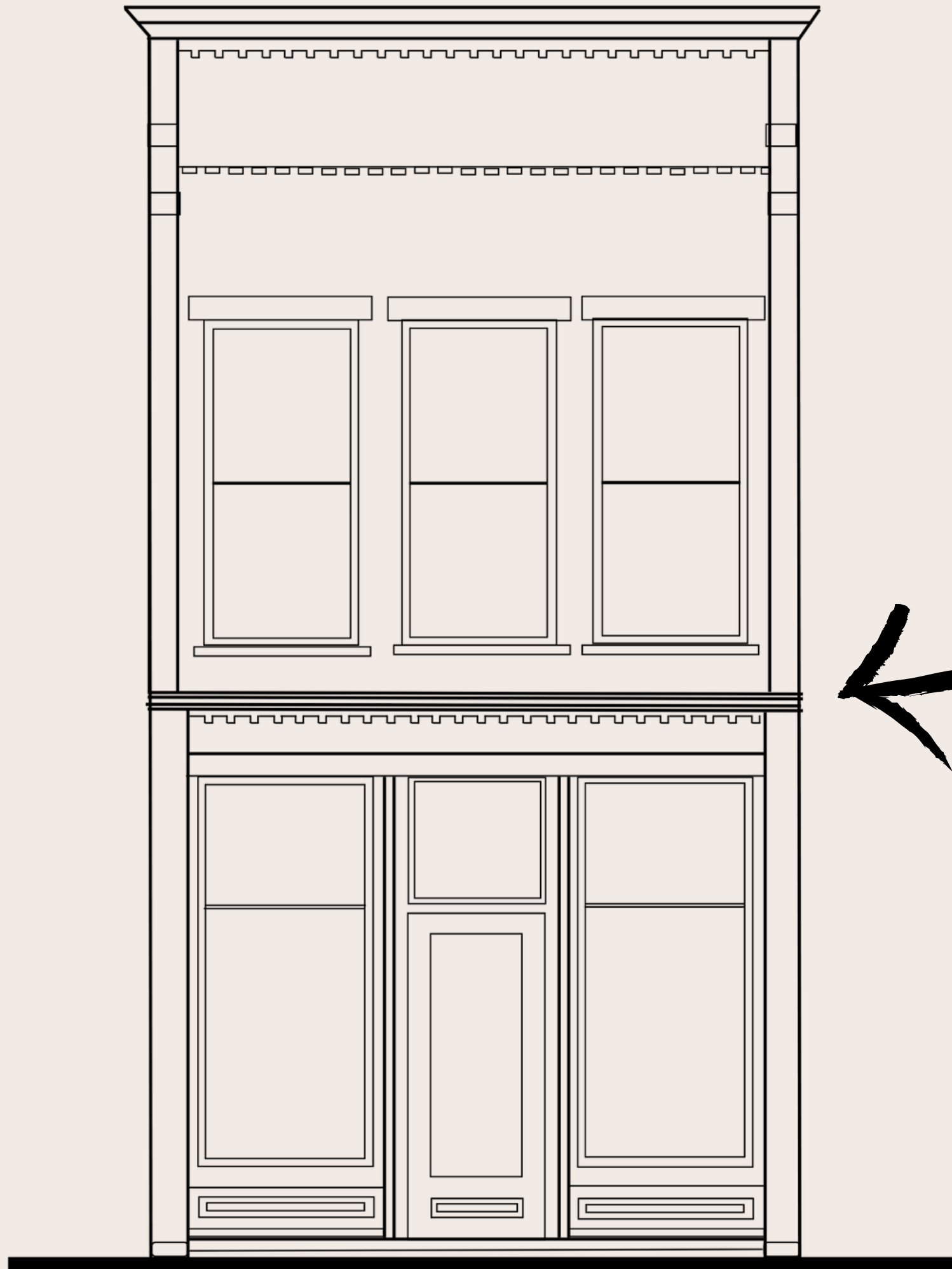


REGULAR SPACED WINDOWS

Windows on upper stories are spaced in a symmetrical way.

REGULARY SPACED WINDOWS EXAMPLES



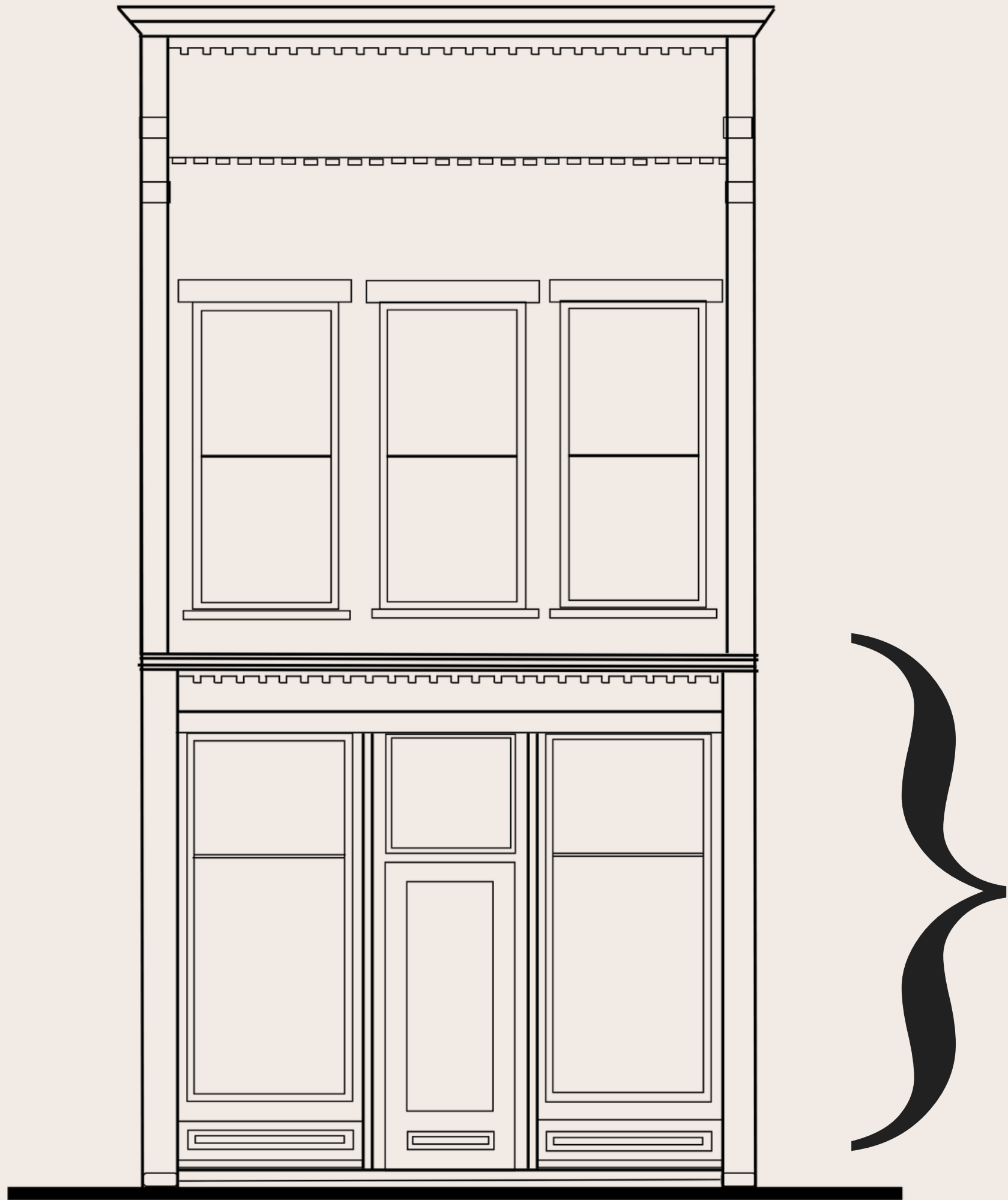


LINTEL

Structural member above a storefront that supports the upper floor.

LINTEL EXAMPLES



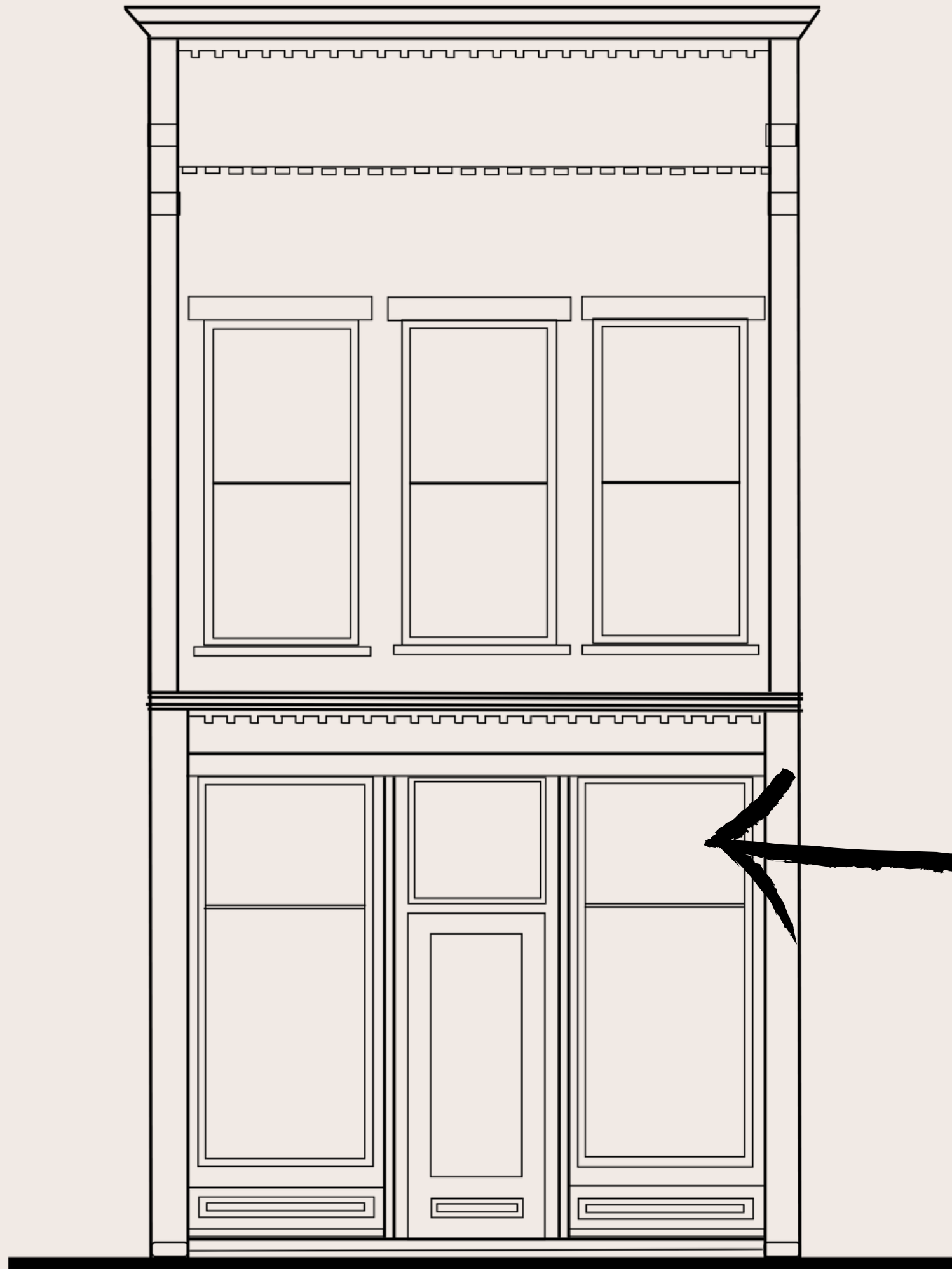


STOREFRONT

The front exterior wall of commercial space, typically with large areas of glass.

STOREFRONT EXAMPLES



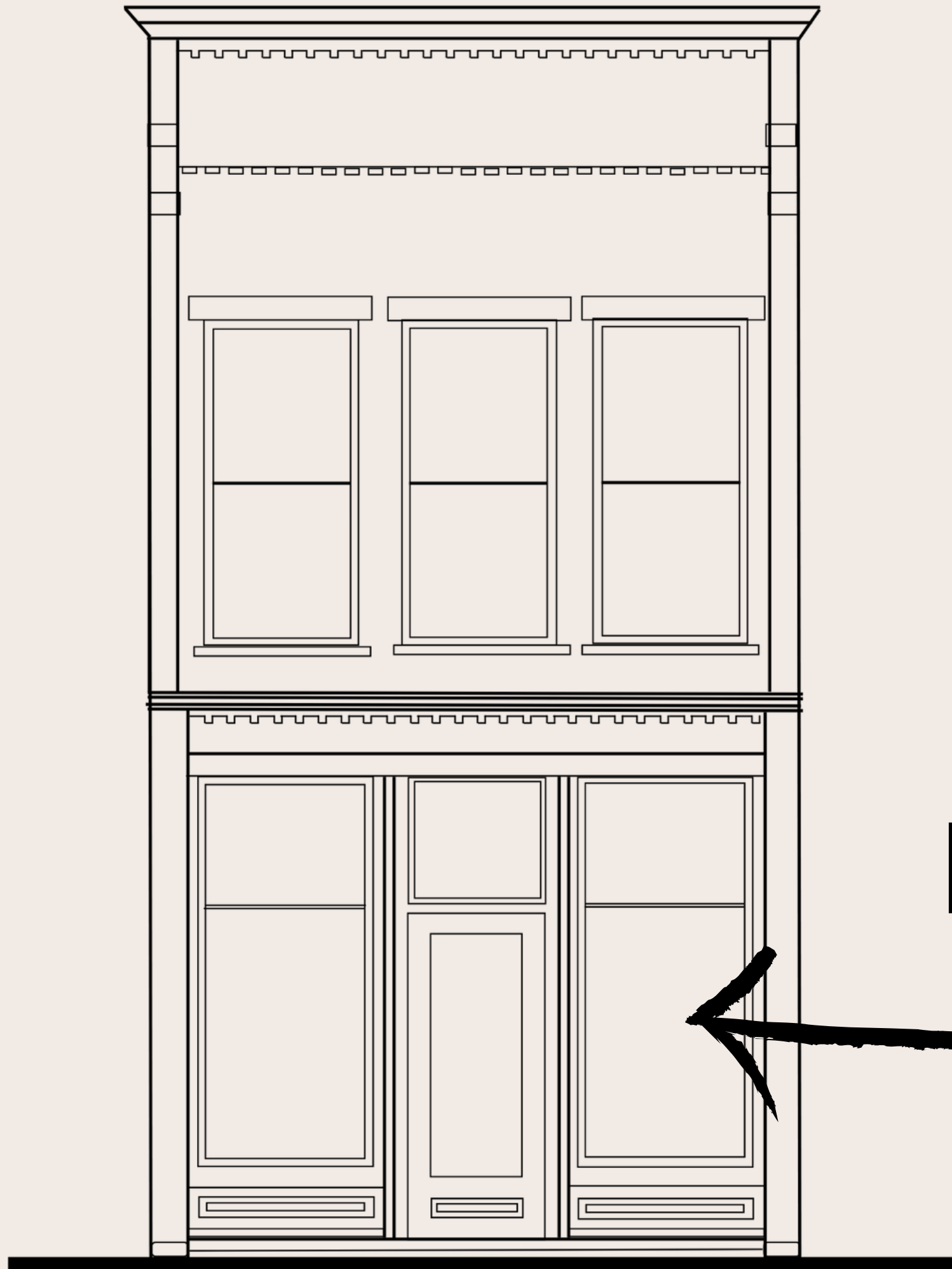


TRANSOM

Upper windows in a storefront;
can be operable or fixed, clear or
patterned.

TRANSOM EXAMPLES



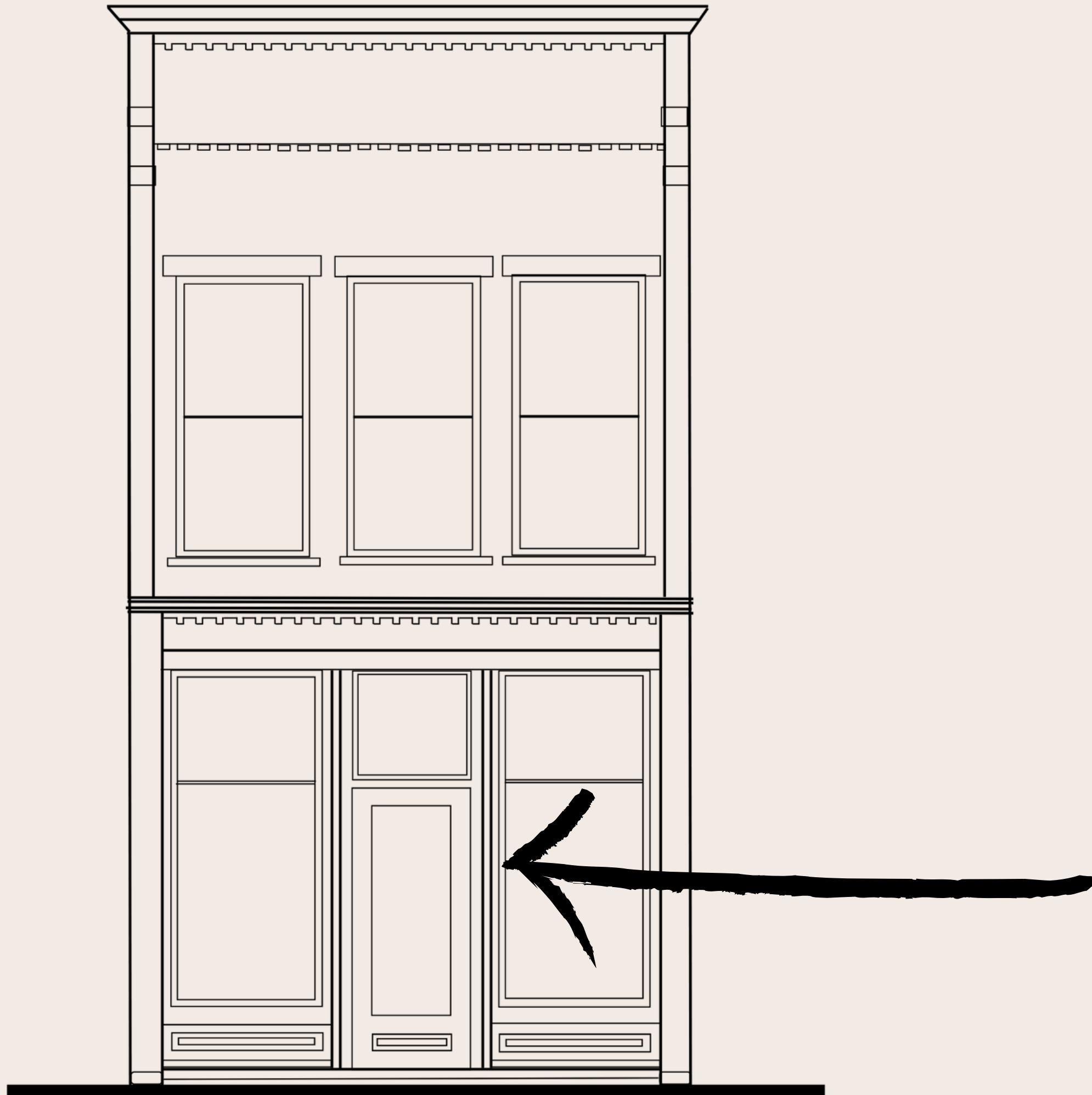


DISPLAY WINDOW

The main areas of clear glass on a storefront behind which goods are arranged.

DISPLAY WINDOW EXAMPLES





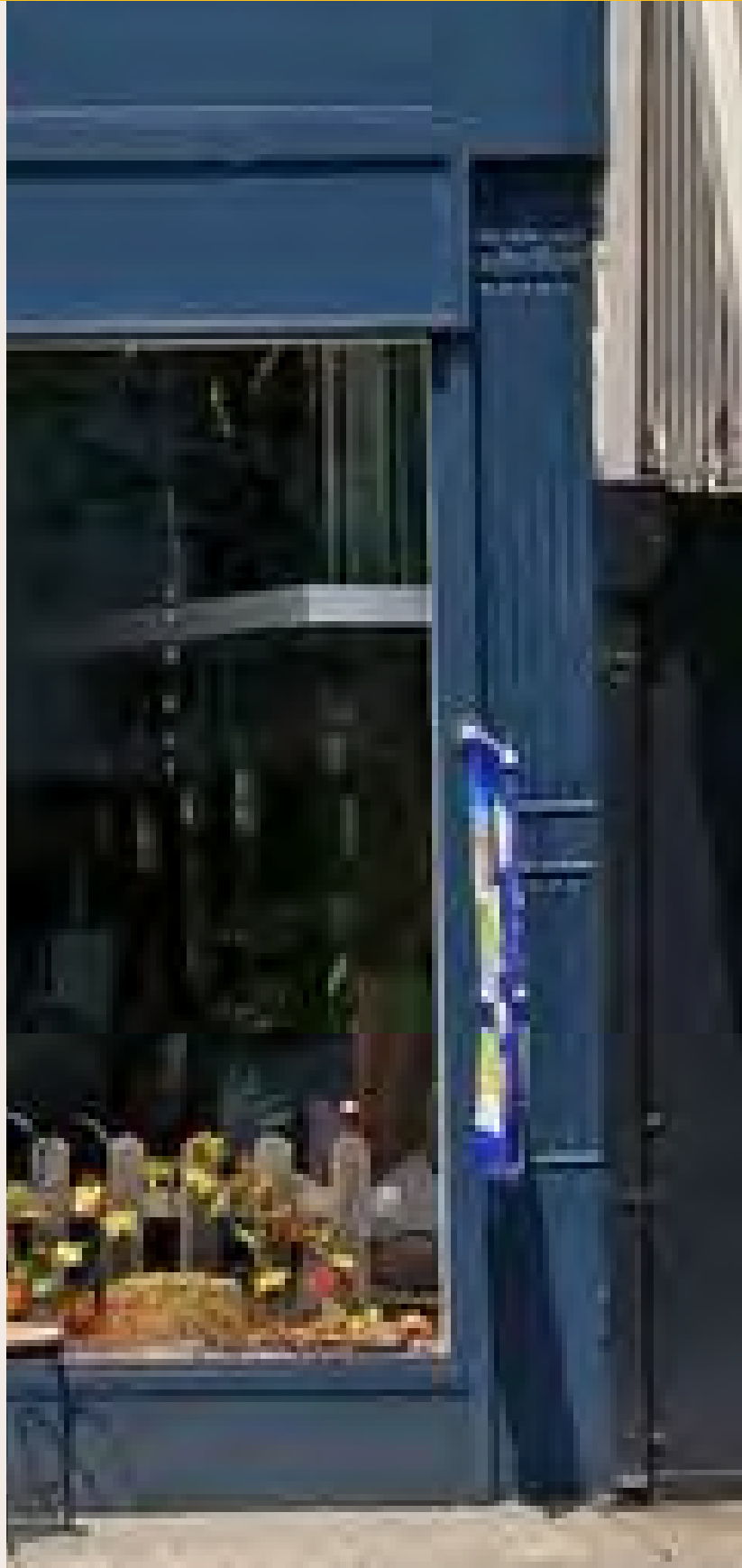
COLUMN

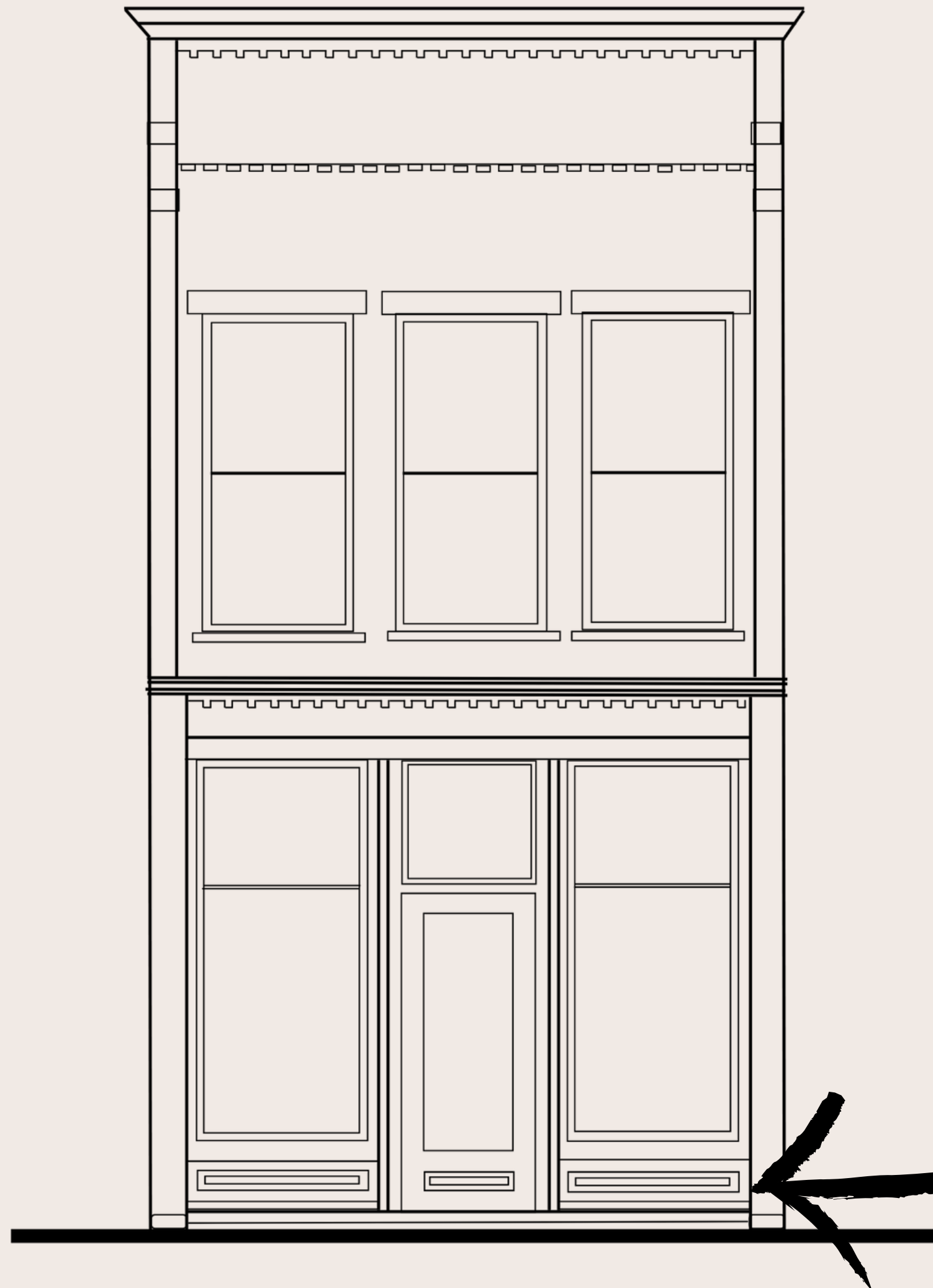
A vertical structural member.

PILASTER

An architectural element used to give the appearance of a supporting column and to articulate an extent of wall, with only an ornamental function.

COLUMN/PILASTER EXAMPLES



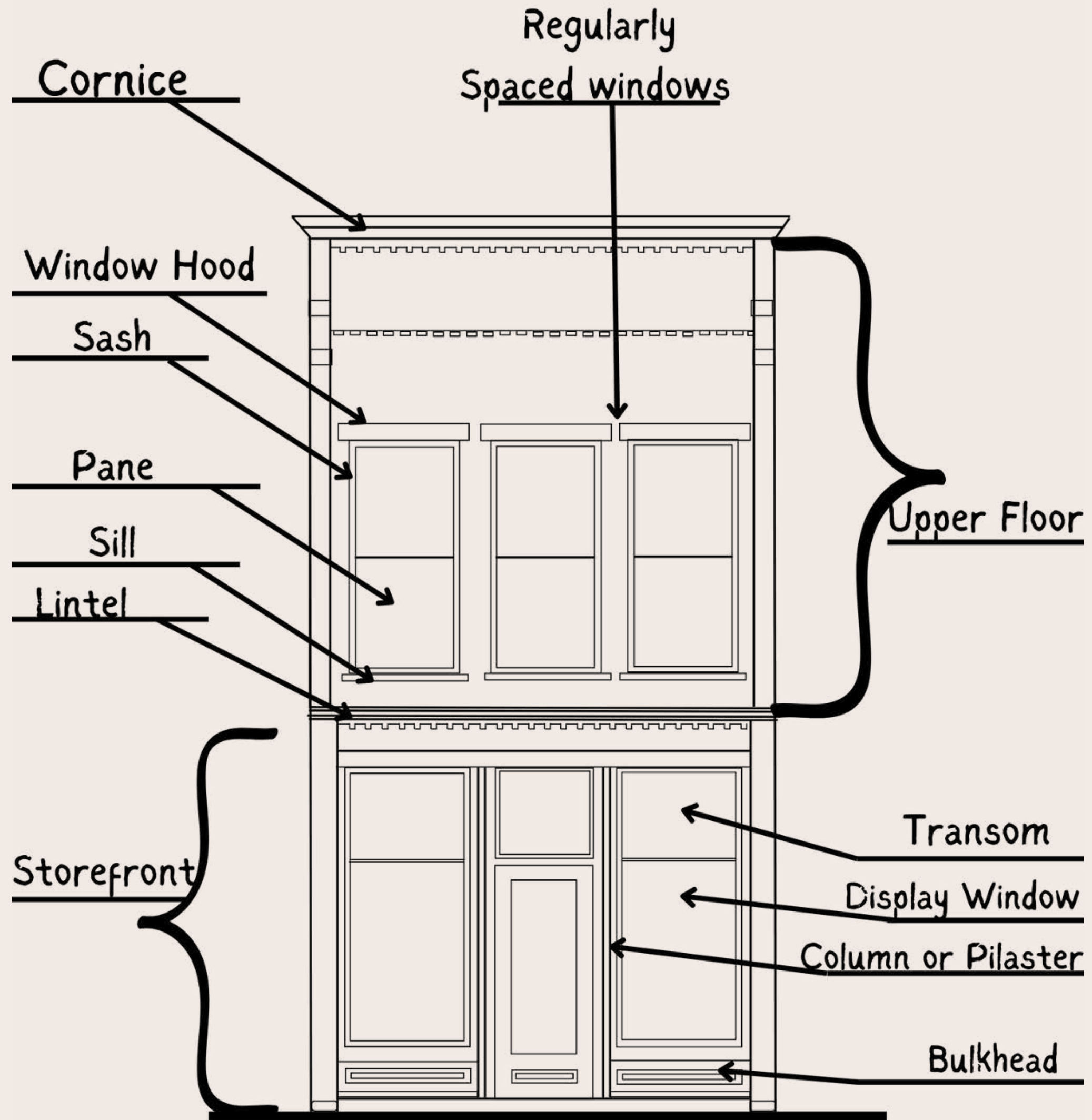


BULKHEAD

The area between the sidewalk and the display windows; can be wood, tile, or metal; or can be glazed.

BULKHEAD EXAMPLES





MID-CENTURY CHANGES

In the 1950s, downtowns declined and the suburbs explosion began. The marketing revolution after World War II dealt it a lethal blow.





THE RESPONSE

Mid-century storefronts were changed to represent the thinking of the day.

These designs were completed by some of the most talented architects and designers practicing in the United States.

NEW TECHNOLOGY

Architects applied war-related technologies to constructing buildings, rather than destroying buildings.

Companies that produced glass and aluminum promoted renovation away from the traditional.

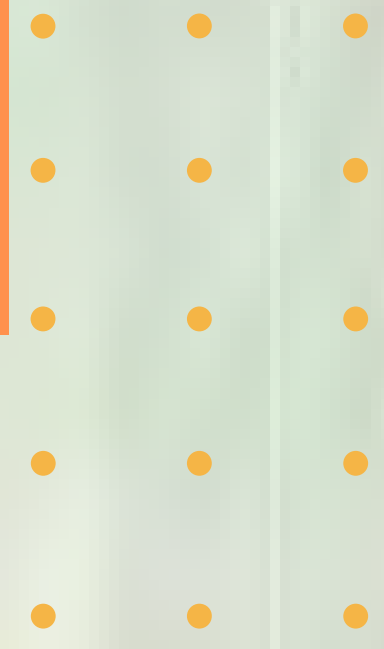
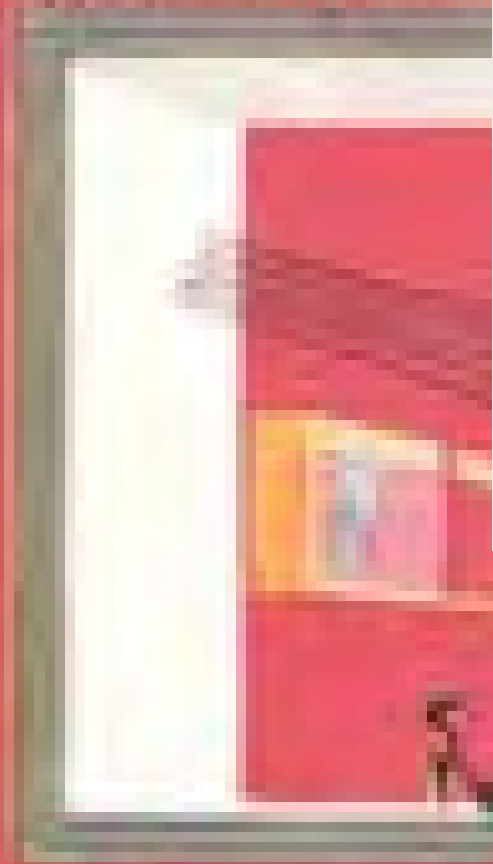
With new signs, shopfronts, display windows or slipcovers, Main Street became modern.



MID-CENTURY STOREFRONT DESIGN

MID-CENTURY STOREFRONT CHANGES

EDITED BY JIM
ESSAY BY STEVE





ASYMMETRICAL AND ANGLED STOREFRONT

Asymmetrical display windows and recessed entries provided room for additional displays and a small exterior lobby.



The angled front swiped buyers to the asymmetrical entrance door.

EXAGGERATED MASSING AND EXPERIMENTAL STRUCTURES



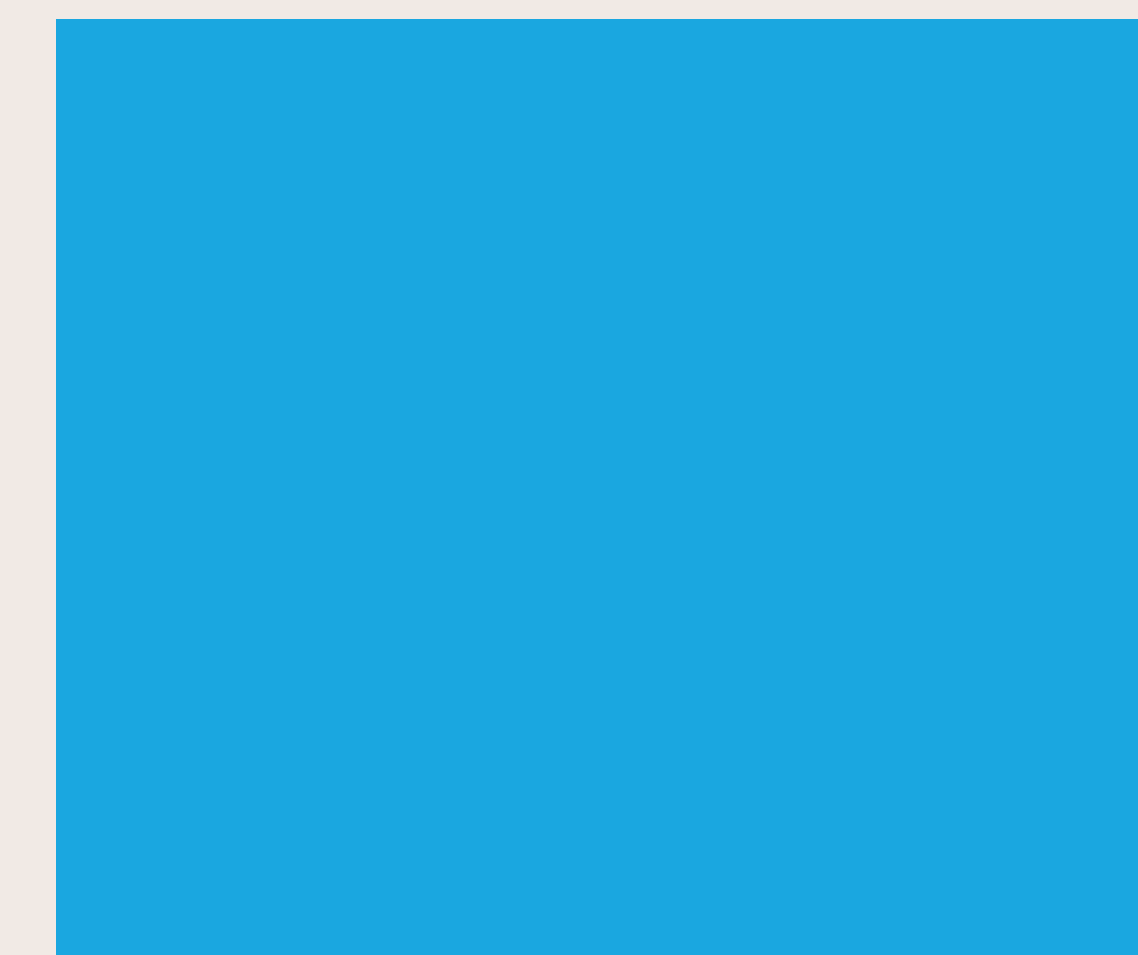
Signage was used in mass to further activate facades.

Some designers experimented with new technologies and mimicked space exploration.

CANOPIES

Canopies were added to front facades to project over the sidewalk to protect the exterior lobby and shop windows.

They replaced traditional fabric awnings. Some were supported by rods and columns. Others were steel and concrete and cantilevered with no visible supports.





AWNINGS

Fabric awnings were still used but fixed awnings became popular.



Some storefronts were shaded by fixed aluminum awnings.

DISPLAY CASES



Picture-framed display boxes showcased the latest goods. Sleek aluminum or steel surrounded the plate glass surface.

Other picture-framed display boxes were inset into the front or side walls of the storefront.



CANTILEVERED DISPLAY CASES

Cantilevered display windows projected beyond their base to further deconstruct the storefront plane.

This gave the display the allusion that they were floating.

SIGNAGE

Upper floors were closed off and whole facades became billboards for the store.

Giant signage stated the business name and was readable by fast moving automobiles.



NEON LIGHTING

Channel-set neon tubing was set within metal letters with the neon tubes left uncovered and visible

Reversed channel-set letters had neon tubing housed, or set behind, metal letters.



PROJECTING SIGNS

Also called blade signs, these were mounted above the sidewalk and perpendicular to the building façade, typically suspended with brackets.



SLIPCOVERS



Front facades were covered in metal or porcelain enamel to give buildings the full modernism treatment.

NEW MATERIALS

- Plate glass in sizes 10' x 24'
- Opaque structural glass like vitrolite and carrara
- Aluminum
- Glass block
- Terrazzo



RETAIN THE CHANGE



Many of the mid-century changes were profound. To ignore the built evidence of these changes seems inconsistent with preservation.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation states, "Number 3: Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved."



Building Inventory Form

Property Name (if any) _____

Address or Street Location _____

County _____ Town/City _____ State _____

Owner _____ Contact Information _____

Original Use _____ Current use _____

Architect/Builder, if known _____ Date of construction, if known _____

Description

Materials – Please check these materials that are visible

Exterior Walls: wood clapboard wood single vertical boards plywood
 Stone brick poured concrete concrete block
 Vinyl siding asbestos aluminum siding other _____

Roof: asphalt, single asphalt, roll wood shingle metal slate

Foundation: stone brick poured concrete concrete block

Other materials and their locations: _____

Alterations, if known: _____ Date: _____

Condition: excellent good fair deteriorated

Photos:

Provide several clear, original photographs of the property. Submitted views should represent the property from the public right-a-way (sidewalks and alleys). For buildings or structures, general setting, outbuildings, and landscape features. Color prints are acceptable for initial submissions.

Narrative Description of Property:

Briefly describe the property and its setting. Include a verbal description of the location (e.g., north side of Smith Street, west of Jones Road); a general description of the building, structure or feature including such items as architectural style (if known), number of stories, type, and shape of roof (flat, gabled, mansard, shed or other), materials and landscape features. Identify and describe any associated buildings, structures or features on the property, such as garages, silos, barns, pools, gravesites. Identify any known exterior and interior alterations such as additions, replacement windows, aluminum or vinyl siding or changes in plan. Include dates of construction and alteration, if known. Attach additional sheets as needed.

BUILDING INVENTORY

- This allows the committee and the organization to better understand properties located in the district.
- From there, they know which buildings/properties to target for projects and the availability for potential businesses.

STEP #1 BASIC INFORMATION



Building Inventory Form

Property Name (if any) _____

Address or Street Location _____

County _____ Town/City _____ State _____

Owner _____ Contact Information _____

Original Use _____ Current use _____

Architect/Builder, if known _____ Date of construction, if known _____

STEP #2 DESCRIPTION

Description

Materials – Please check these materials that are visible

Exterior Walls: wood clapboard wood single vertical boards plywood
 Stone brick poured concrete concrete block
 Vinyl siding asbestos aluminum siding other _____

Roof: asphalt, single asphalt, roll wood shingle metal slate

Foundation: stone brick poured concrete concrete block

Other materials and their locations: _____

Alterations, if known: _____ Date: _____

Condition: excellent good fair deteriorated

STEP #3 PHOTOS

Photos:

Provide several clear, original photographs of the property. Submitted views should represent the property from the public right-of-way (sidewalks and alleys). For buildings or structures, general setting, outbuildings, and landscape features. Color prints are acceptable for initial submissions.



STEP #3 NARRATIVE

Narrative Description of Property:

Briefly describe the property and its setting. Include a verbal description of the location (e.g., north side of Smith Street, west of Jones Road); a general description of the building, structure or feature including such items as architectural style (if known), number of stories, type, and shape of roof (flat, gabled, mansard, shed or other), materials and landscape features. Identify and describe any associated buildings, structures or features on the property, such as garages, silos, barns, pools, gravesites. Identify any known exterior and interior alterations such as additions, replacement windows, aluminum or vinyl siding or changes in plan. Include dates of construction and alteration, if known. Attach additional sheets as needed.

THE BUILDING AT 109 EAST MAIN (C. 1867) IS ONE OF THE FIRST ITALIANATE COMMERCIAL BLOCKS.) THIS YELLOW-PAINTED BRICK WITH DARK-RED TRIM, THREE-STORY BUILDING HAS A SLIGHTLY PITCHED ROOFLINE AND A PROJECTING CORNICE WITH FOUR PAIRS OF SUPPORTING BRACKETS. THE SECOND AND THIRD STORIES ARE THREE RANKED; THE RECTANGULAR 1/1 WINDOWS HAVE FLATTENED ARCHED HOOD MOLDS AND STONE SILLS. THE FIRST FLOOR HAS A MODERN RENOVATION WITH DARK RED CORRARA CLASS SURROUNDING A MODERN DISPLAY WINDOWS AND A RECESSED DOORWAY TO THE EAST. THE BUILDING SITS BETWEEN TWO TWO-STORY BUILDINGS THAT HAVE THE SAME ITALIANIATE STYLE.

LETS PRACTICE



A black and white photograph of a historic street scene, likely Main Street in Indiana. The street is lined with multi-story brick buildings. On the left, a prominent white building with classical architectural details is visible. Further down, a sign for 'DRUGS SODA' is mounted on a building. The street is filled with vintage cars from the 1930s and 40s, parked along the sides and driving in the distance. On the right side, more buildings are visible, including one with a sign for 'HARDWARE' and another for 'CLOTHING'. The overall atmosphere is that of a bustling, historic downtown area.

Thank you

Abby Huff

Indiana Main Street

Senior Program Manager

Email: ahuff1@ocra.in.gov