Why GAO Did This Study

VA has pressing infrastructure needs. The Communities Helping Invest through Property and Improvements Needed for Veterans Act of 2016 (CHIP-IN Act) authorized VA to accept donated real property—such as buildings or facility construction or improvements—through a pilot program. VA has initiated one project in Omaha, Nebraska, through a partnership with a donor group. VA can accept up to five donations through the pilot program, which is authorized through 2021.

The CHIP-IN Act includes a provision for GAO to report on donation agreements. This report (1) examines the extent to which the VA’s pilot design aligns with leading practices and (2) discusses what VA has learned from the pilot to date. GAO reviewed VA documents, including plans for the pilot program, and visited the Omaha pilot project. GAO interviewed VA officials, the Omaha donor group, and three non-federal entities that responded to VA’s request seeking donors. GAO compared implementation of VA’s pilot to leading practices for pilot design, organizational transformation, and cross-functional teams.

What GAO Recommends

GAO is recommending that VA: (1) establish pilot program objectives, (2) develop an assessment methodology and an evaluation plan, and (3) document roles and responsibilities and identify available and needed staff resources. VA concurred with GAO’s recommendations.