GAO Highlights

FEDERAL REAL PROPERTY

Funding and Other Challenges Have Hindered Progress Under a Temporary Disposal Process

GAO-26-108451 September 2026

A report to congressional committees

Contact: David Marroni at MarroniD@gao.gov

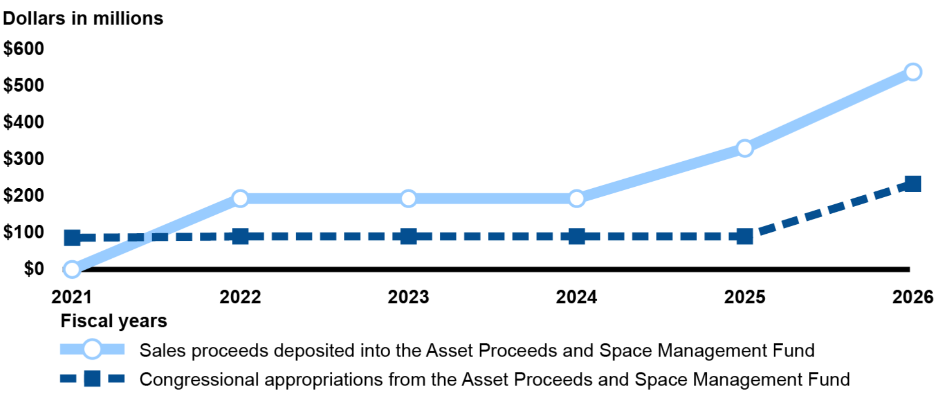
What GAO Found

The Federal Assets Sale and Transfer Act of 2016 (FASTA) established a temporary process to reduce the inventory of federal civilian real property and the time it takes to dispose of such property. FASTA created the Public Buildings Reform Board (Board) to recommend properties for disposal for approval in each of several rounds. Once approved, the General Services Administration (GSA) takes a primary role in implementation. FASTA also established a fund to help with disposal costs.

The last year of FASTA implementation is underway, with two approved rounds—2019 and 2025—and a final round expected to be released before the Board ceases operations in December 2026. As of August 2026, 14 properties (of 23 recommended and approved) have been disposed of for a total of about $576 million in sales proceeds. Most of these disposals were from the 2019 round. Timeframes for completing disposal on many 2025 round properties are not clear due to shifting cost and schedule estimates.

Stakeholders said that FASTA's main benefit is the potential for funding to offset disposal costs, but the uncertainty of accessing this funding has been a significant challenge. Proceeds from initial FASTA disposals are deposited into a fund—the Asset Proceeds and Space Management Fund—that can be accessed to cover the costs of future disposals, subject to congressional appropriation. While Congress appropriated $90 million from 2016 to 2022 for the fund, it did not provide additional FASTA appropriations from 2023 to 2025. Without this appropriation, GSA could not access the full amount of sales proceeds.

Timeline of Cumulative Amounts Deposited into and Appropriated from the Asset Proceeds and Space Management Fund



Source: GAO analysis of information from the Federal Assets Sale and Transfer Act and from subsequent appropriations acts. | GAO-26-108451

In 2026, Congress appropriated an additional about $143 million in FASTA proceeds. However, other longstanding disposal challenges remain. For example, stakeholders said relocating tenants is a challenge, particularly for the 2025 round, as most of these properties remain occupied by federal tenants. GSA and the Board suggested improvements to FASTA if it were extended beyond 2026, including greater access to FASTA sales proceeds.

Why GAO Did This Study

The federal government owns hundreds of thousands of buildings that cost billions of dollars annually to occupy, operate, and maintain. Disposing of real property that federal agencies no longer need—but continue to pay for—has been a longstanding challenge. The process for disposing of unneeded property may take years, with the federal government bearing the property costs until the disposal is completed.

FASTA includes provisions for GAO to review the Board's recommendations and selection process and annually review agencies' efforts to implement the FASTA recommendations. This report describes (1) the status of the FASTA disposal process and (2) insights from FASTA implementation as of the Second Round (2025).

GAO reviewed published reports, relevant federal laws and regulations. GAO interviewed officials from the Board, GSA, and four selected tenant agencies occupying properties recommended under FASTA. GAO also conducted site visits to four selected FASTA properties included in the 2025 round recommendations. In addition, GAO analyzed GSA real property disposal data from January 1, 2020, through August 5, 2025, to review the amount of time it takes to dispose of federal properties.

What GAO Recommends

GAO is not making new recommendations in this report. In prior reports on FASTA, GAO made recommendations to strengthen the process, including that GSA develop a process to collect, share, and apply lessons learned from FASTA implementation. GSA has taken steps toward implementing this recommendation, but it remains open as of August 2026.