IMPORTANT FEDERAL LEGISLATION RELATING TO URBAN TRANSPORTATION

1916  Federal Aid Road Act
Purpose was to "promote the general welfare."
First of a continuous series of acts authorizing federal funds for transportation.
_Bureau of Public Roads (BPR) established in the Department of Commerce._

1956  Interstate Highway Act
Established the National Interstate and Defense Highway System:
- 41,000 miles of highway
- 90% of costs covered by federal government

1956  Highway Revenue Act
Created the Highway Trust Fund, dedicating gas tax revenues to transportation.

1961  Housing Act
First federal legislation to deal explicitly with urban mass transportation.
Established small, low-interest loan program for acquisitions and capital improvement for mass transit.

1962  Federal Aid Highway Act
Mandated urban transportation planning.
Incentive was the 90% federal funding for interstate highways.
Established the "3C" planning process for states and localities:
- Continuing
- Comprehensive
- Cooperative
Recognized the importance of planning for all modes and long range planning.
Restricted the use of 1 1/2 percent of funds for planning only.

1964  Urban Mass Transportation Act
First real effort to provide federal assistance for urban mass transportation.
Authorized capital grants for up to two-thirds of construction and acquisition costs, but only 50% of costs if 3C process not completed.
Limited funds appropriated.

1966  _U.S. Department of Transportation created._
_BPR changed to Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)._  
_Urban Mass Transit Administration (UMTA) created._

1969  National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
Enunciated first broad national policy to prevent or eliminate damage to the environment.
Required Environmental Impact Statements for all major federal actions which affect the environment significantly.
1970 **Clean Air Act Amendments**
Created Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and empowered it to set ambient air quality standards.
Specified reductions in automobile emissions.
Authorized the EPA to require states to formulate implementation plans.

1970 **Urban Mass Transportation Assistance Act**
Landmark in federal financing for mass transportation: first long-term commitment of federal funds.
Established strong federal policy on transportation for elderly and handicapped persons.

1973 **Federal-Aid Highway Act**
Allowed states to spend federal-aid urban funds on urban mass transportation, for capital expenditures.
Allocated 1/2 percent of funds for urban transportation planning, to Metropolitan Planning Orgns.

1974 **National Mass Transportation Assistance Act**
Authorized for the first time the use of federal funds for transit operating assistance.

1978 **Surface Transportation Assistance Act**
First act to combine highway, public transportation, and highway safety authorizations in one piece of legislation.

1990 **Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA)**
Established air quality standards and designated non-attainment areas.
Required the implementation of control programs in non-attainment areas and revisions to State Implementation Plans (SIPs).
Increased sanctions to include withholding of approval of federal-aid highway projects.

1990 **Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA)**
Required any operator of fixed route transit system to provide paratransit or other special services to persons with disabilities.

1991 **Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA)**
Established new spending programs, with some flexibility to choose between transit and highways and to fund alternative kinds of projects.
Mandated new planning processes, including increased and improved public participation.
*UMTA changed to Federal Transit Administration (FTA).*

1998 **Transportation Equity Act (TEA-21)**
Continued most of the spending programs and planning requirements established in ISTEA; authorized $218 billion for 1998 to 2003.
Added a "minimum guarantee" for each state.
Included $9.4 billion for 1850 designated "high priority projects."

2005 **Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users**
Continues most of the spending programs and planning requirements established in TEA-21; authorizes $244.1 billion for 2005 to 2009.