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**
Continued most of the spending programs and planning requirements established in TEA-21; authorized $244.1 billion for 2005 to 2009.

2012 **Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century – MAP-21**
Restructured many programs; new requirement for “performance-based planning”

2015 **Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act – FAST Act**
Continues most MAP-21 spending programs and planning requirements; authorizes $305 billion over 5 years, with $70 billion transferred to Highway Trust Fund.
Adds funding for freight projects and passenger rail; emphasizes “accelerating project delivery” and safety