CLAIMS

1. A method for searching or comparing at least one site using at least one description of travel within a transportation system between the at least one site and at least one place, the method comprising:

(a) receiving at least one representative, wherein each representative is a location included in the transportation system;

(b) receiving a request comprising the at least one place; and

(c) responding to the request with a result of searching or comparing obtained using the at least one description of travel;

the method characterized by:

(d) determining at least one partial description of travel and storing it in a database before the request is received, wherein each first partial description of travel comprises a part of a description of travel within the transportation system between a first site included in the at least one site and a first representative included in the at least one representative; and

(e) computing the at least one description of travel that comprises a description of travel within the transportation system between an endpoint site included in the at least one site and an endpoint place included in the at least one place,

wherein the computing comprises:

i. retrieving from the at least one partial description of travel at least one second partial description of travel, wherein each second partial description of travel comprises a part of a description of travel within the transportation system between the endpoint site and a second representative included in the at least one representative;

ii. determining a description of travel within the transportation system between the endpoint place and a location x included in the second partial description of travel; and

iii. determining a description of travel within the transportation system between the location x and the endpoint site.

2. A method for determining a description of travel within a transportation system from a source location to a target location, the method comprising:

(a) receiving at least one representative, wherein each representative is a location included in the transportation system;

(b) receiving a request comprising the source location and the target location; and

(c) responding to the request with the description of travel;

the method characterized by:

(d) determining at least one partial description of travel and storing it in a database before the request is received, wherein each first partial description of travel comprises a part of a description of travel within the transportation system between an endpoint location included in the transportation system and a first representative included in the at least one representative; and

(e) computing the description of travel using steps comprising:

i. determining at least one part P and at least one part Q, wherein the part P and the part Q are included in the transportation system, and wherein:

A. the part Q is the target location, and the part P is retrieved from the at least one partial description of travel wherein the endpoint location is the source location,

B. the part P is the source location, and the part Q is retrieved from the at least one partial description of travel wherein the endpoint location is the target location, or

C. the part P is retrieved from the at least one partial description of travel wherein the endpoint location is the source location, and the part Q is retrieved from the at least one partial description of travel wherein the endpoint location is the target location,

ii. determining a description of travel within the transportation system from a location x_P included in the part P to a location x_Q included in the part Q,

iii. determining a description of travel within the transportation system from the source location to the location x_P, and

iv. determining a description of travel within the transportation system from the location x_Q to the target location.