

SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR FLEXIBLE AND EFFICIENT PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

ABSTRACT

5 A public transportation system operates a vehicle fleet serving urban and suburban regions transporting multiple customers in a vehicle. The system operates according to a method having the steps of:

- (1) Receiving a service request from a prospective customer (PC) for transportation from the PC's pick-up location to the PC's desired destination location;
- 10 (2) Automatically selecting a suitable vehicle to fulfill said service request in dependence upon proximity of the vehicle to the origin location, current passenger capacity of the vehicle and whether the LTA for all the current passengers in the vehicle can be fulfilled;
- (3) Determining an Estimated Time of Arrival (ETA) and thus a Latest Time of Arrival (LTA) of the PC;
- 15 (4) Receiving an acceptance by the PC, such that the PC becomes a customer, and issuing a transportation command to the selected vehicle to transport the customer in accordance with the service request;
- (5) Executing the service request of the customer by means of the selected vehicle;
- 20 (6) Upon reaching the customer's destination location, determining the service fare, in dependence upon a stored fare basis and the actual Time of Arrival (TA) as compared to the ETA and/or the LTA; and
- (7) Receiving payment from the customer.

25

Figure 2 accompanies the abstract.