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Gateways and Routing in Software-Defined MANETs

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Publication Date

2018-10-09

Peer reviewed



US010098051B2

(12) **United States Patent**
Mosko et al.

(10) **Patent No.:** **US 10,098,051 B2**
(45) **Date of Patent:** **Oct. 9, 2018**

- (54) **GATEWAYS AND ROUTING IN SOFTWARE-DEFINED MANETS**
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- (*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 297 days.

(21) Appl. No.: **14/161,410**
(22) Filed: **Jan. 22, 2014**

(65) **Prior Publication Data**
US 2015/0208316 A1 Jul. 23, 2015

(51) **Int. Cl.**
H04W 40/02 (2009.01)
H04W 28/10 (2009.01)
(Continued)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC **H04W 40/02** (2013.01); **H04L 45/02** (2013.01); **H04L 45/64** (2013.01); **H04W 28/10** (2013.01);
(Continued)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**
CPC H04W 40/02; H04W 28/10; H04W 40/24; H04W 40/26; H04W 84/18; H04W 40/04;
(Continued)

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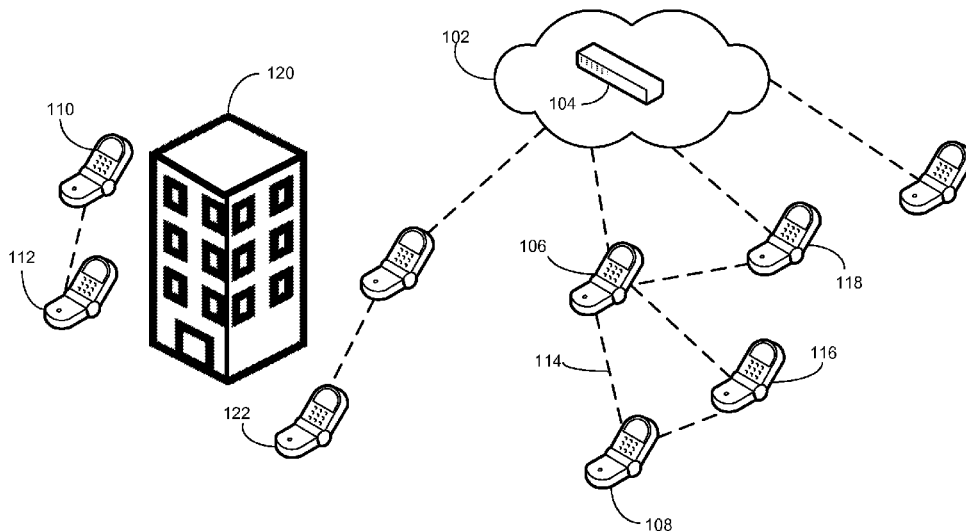
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Primary Examiner — Kwang B Yao
Assistant Examiner — Hardikkumar Patel

(57) **ABSTRACT**

One embodiment provides a mobile wireless network that includes a plurality of wireless nodes and a controller node which manages a weighted network graph for the plurality of wireless nodes. A local wireless node sends a route-request message associated with at least one destination node to the controller node, receives a path to the destination node, and routes a packet to the destination node based on the received path. The path is computed based on the weighted network graph. One embodiment provides a system for routing in a mobile wireless network that comprises a plurality of wireless nodes. The system receives a route-request message associated with at least one destination node from a source node, computes a path between the source node and the destination node based on a weighted network graph for the plurality of wireless nodes, and transmits the computed path to at least the destination node.

20 Claims, 13 Drawing Sheets



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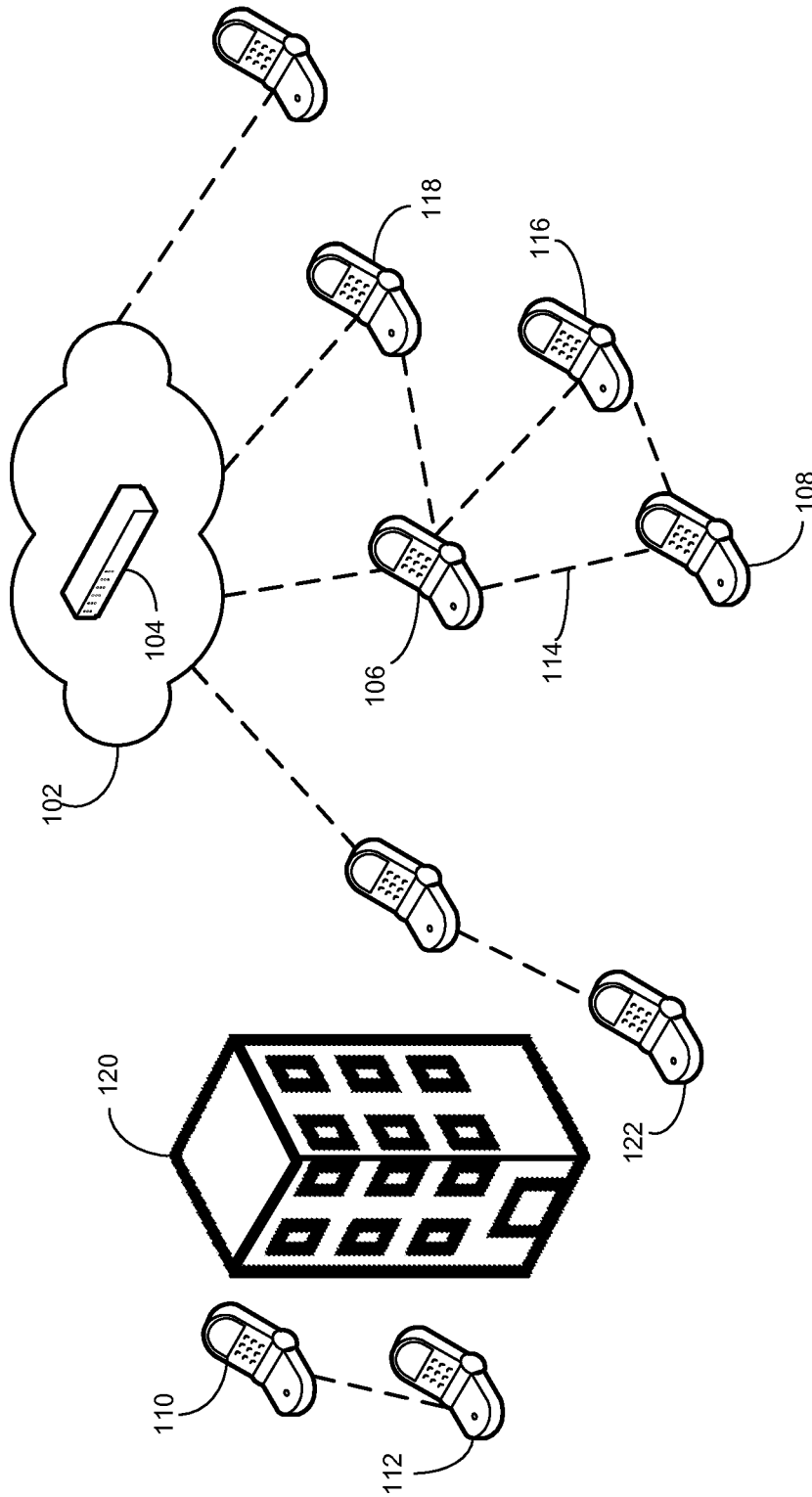
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100
FIG. 1

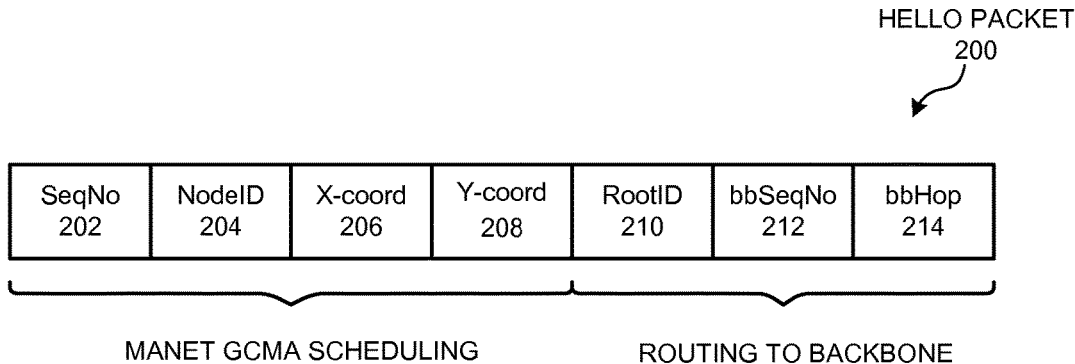
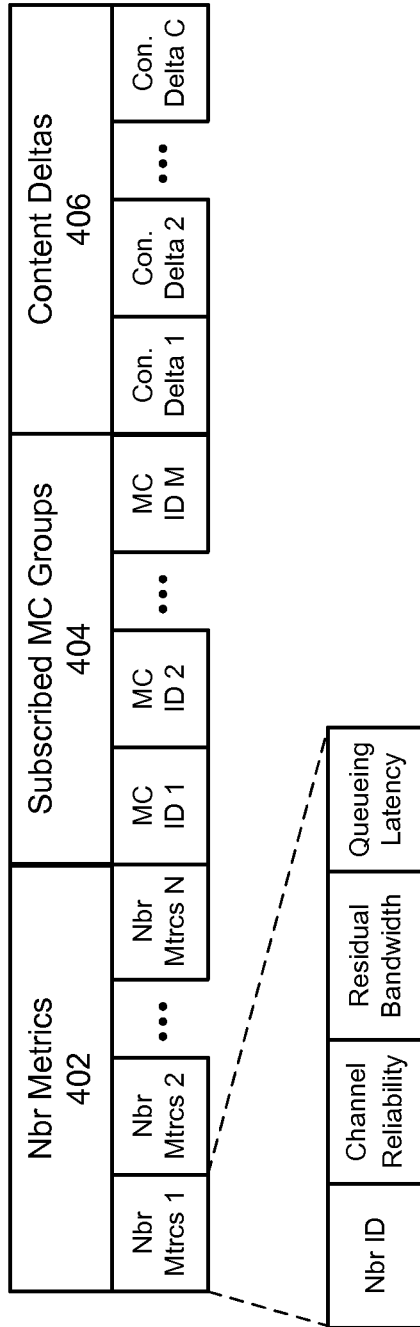


FIG. 2

```

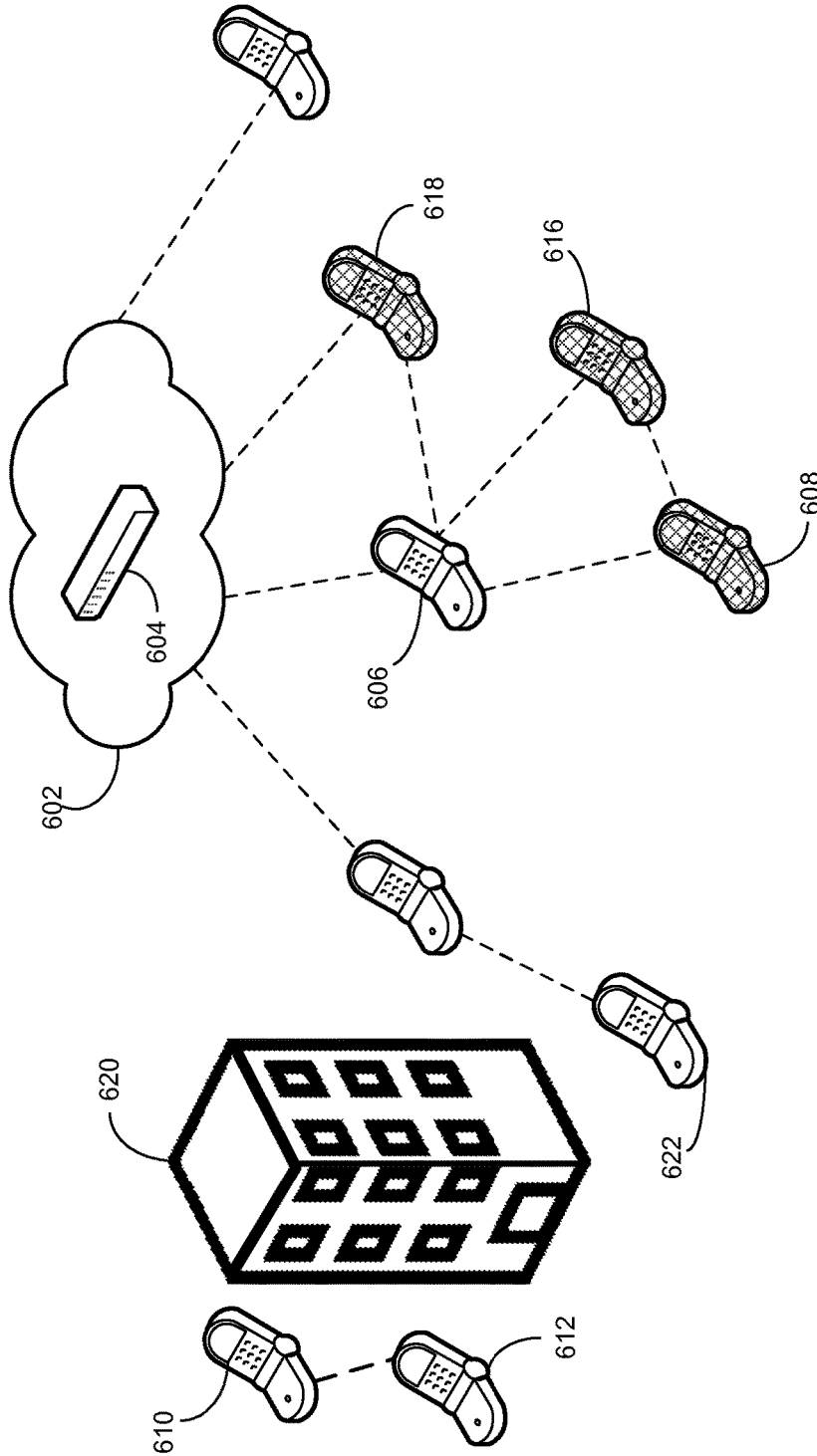
1: Let  $OHN_i$  denote one-hop-neighborhood of node  $i$ 
2: Let  $BBSeqNo$  be the sequence number of the latest backbone update
3: Let  $root$  be the root node ID of the tree connected to the backbone
4: Let  $bbHop$  be the number of hops from node to the root node
5: Let  $bbSeqNo$  be the sequence number at the node
6: Let  $nextHopToBB$  be the next hop node to the backbone
7: if node  $i$  is connected by one hop to the backbone then
8:    $root \leftarrow i$ 
9:    $bbSeqNo \leftarrow BBSeqNo$ 
10:   $bbHop \leftarrow 1$ 
11:   $nextHopToBB \leftarrow NULL$ 
12: else
13:   for all  $n$  in  $OHN_k$  do
14:     if  $seqNo < n.bbSeqNo$  then
15:        $root \leftarrow n.root$ 
16:        $bbSeqNo \leftarrow n.bbSeqNo$ 
17:        $bbHop \leftarrow n.bbHop + 1$ 
18:        $nextHopToBB \leftarrow n$ 
19:     else if  $bbSeqNo == n.bbSeqNo$  then
20:       if  $bbHop > n.bbHop + 1$  then
21:          $root \leftarrow n.root$ 
22:          $bbSeqNo \leftarrow n.bbSeqNo$ 
23:          $bbHop \leftarrow n.bbHop + 1$ 
24:          $nextHopToBB \leftarrow n$ 
25:       end if
26:     end if
27:   end for
28: end if
    
```

FIG. 3



BACKBONE UPDATE MESSAGE 400

FIG. 4



600

FIG. 6

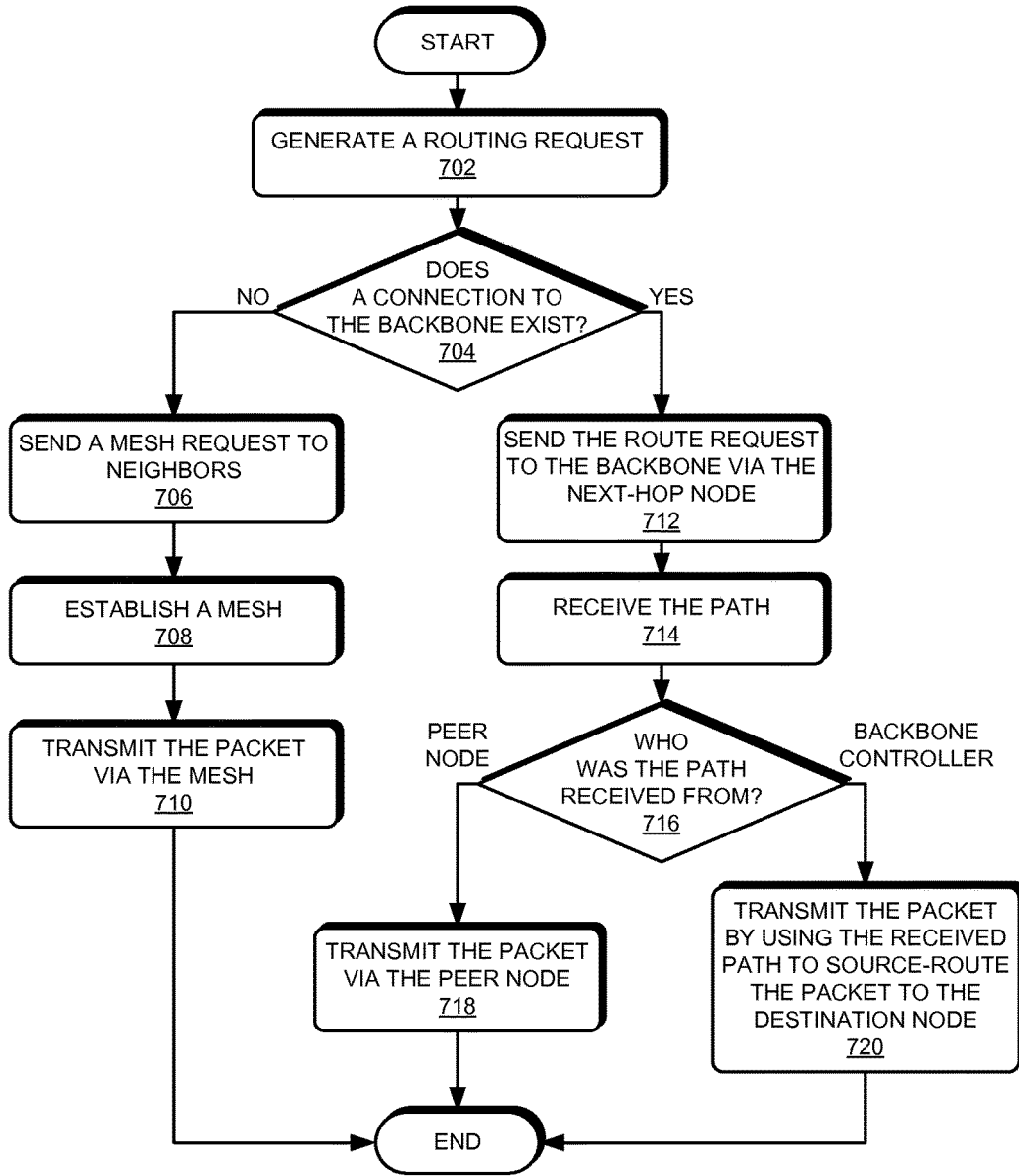


FIG. 7A

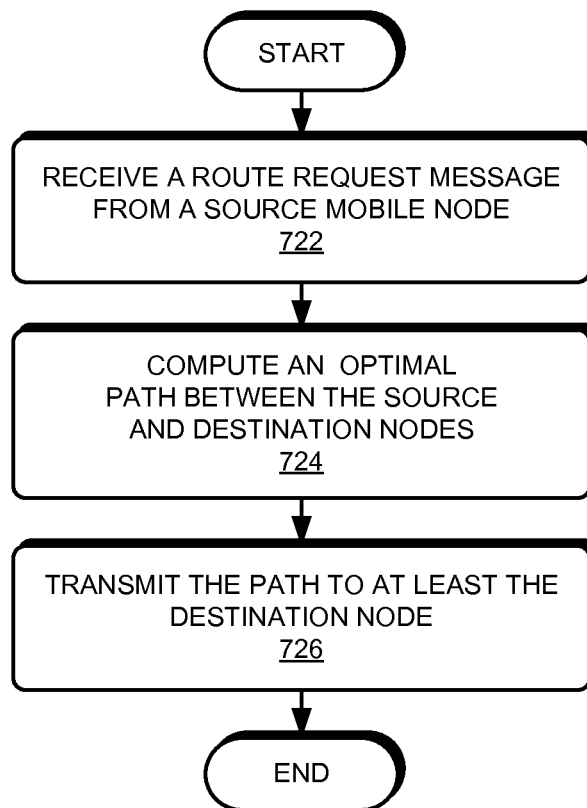


FIG. 7B

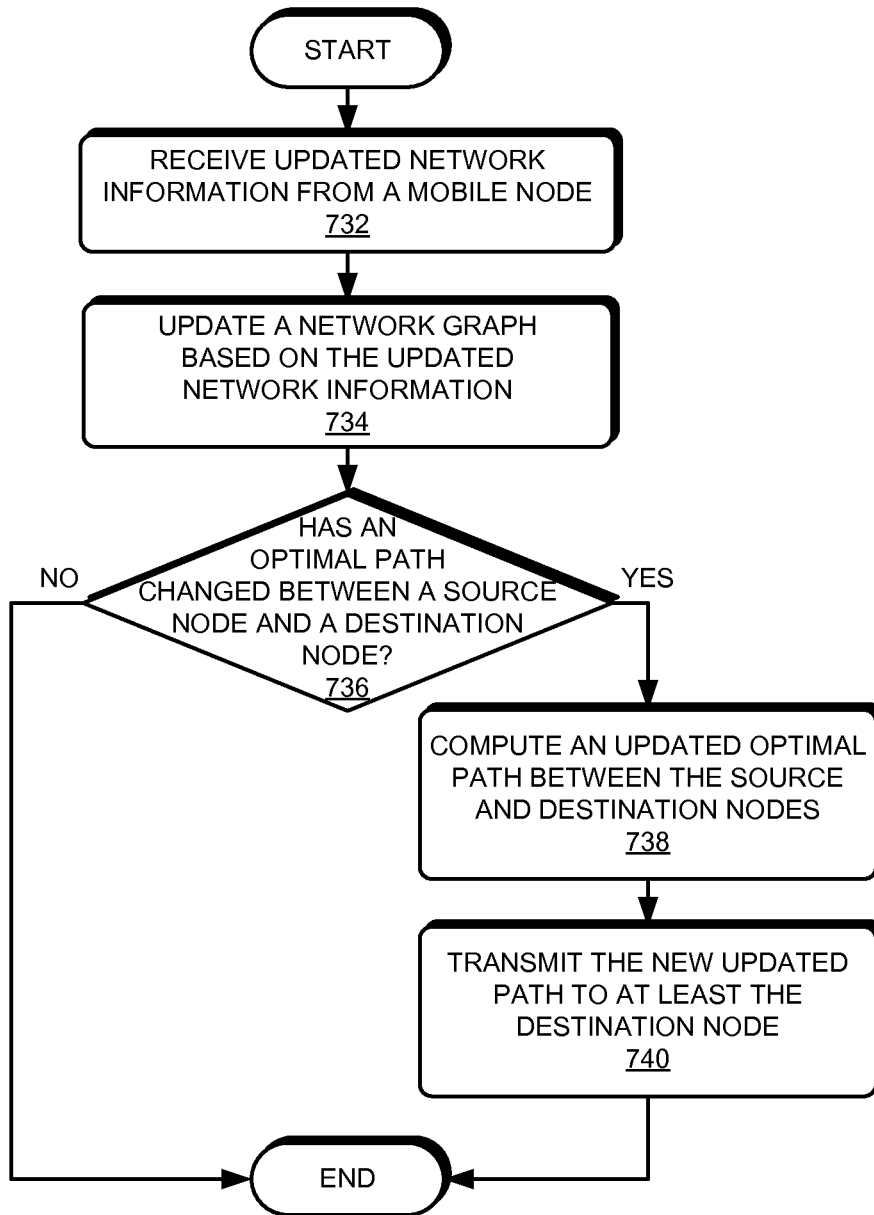
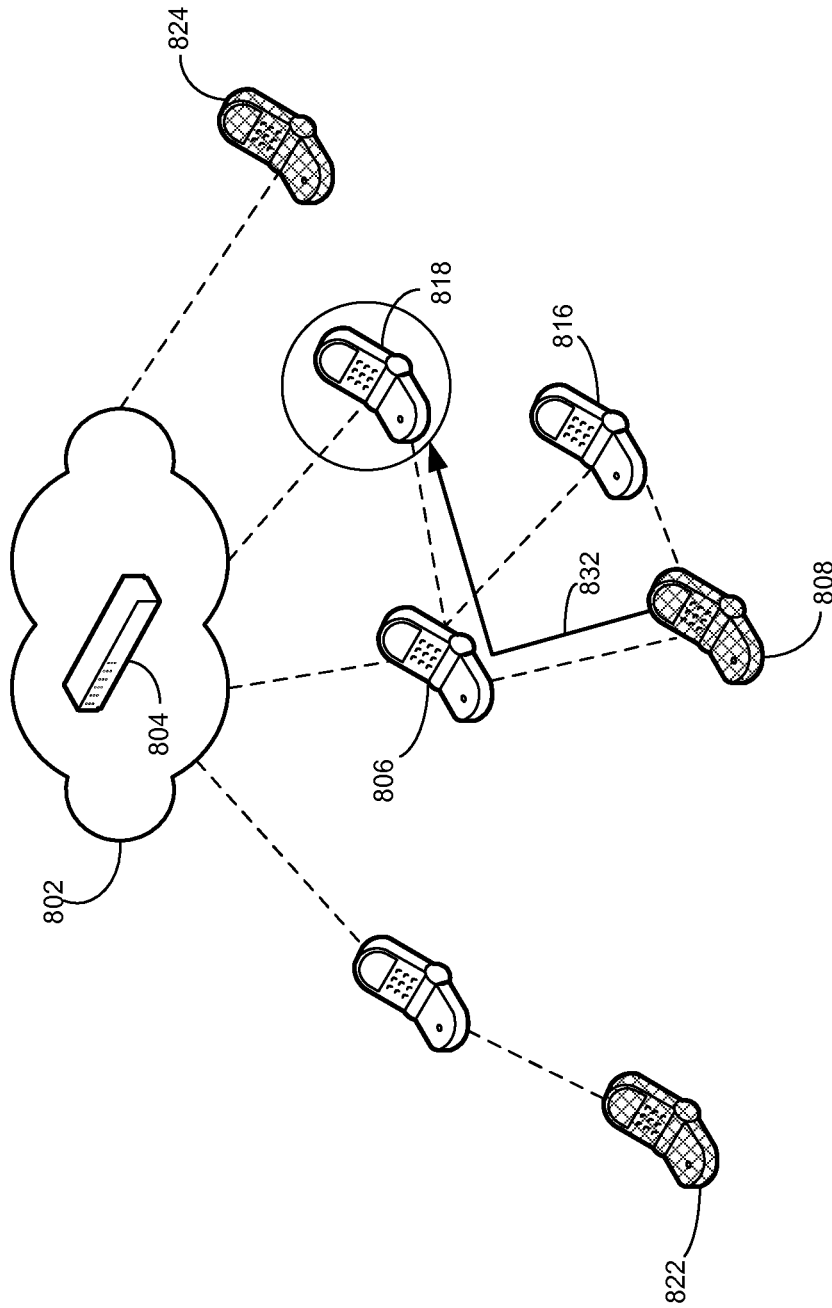
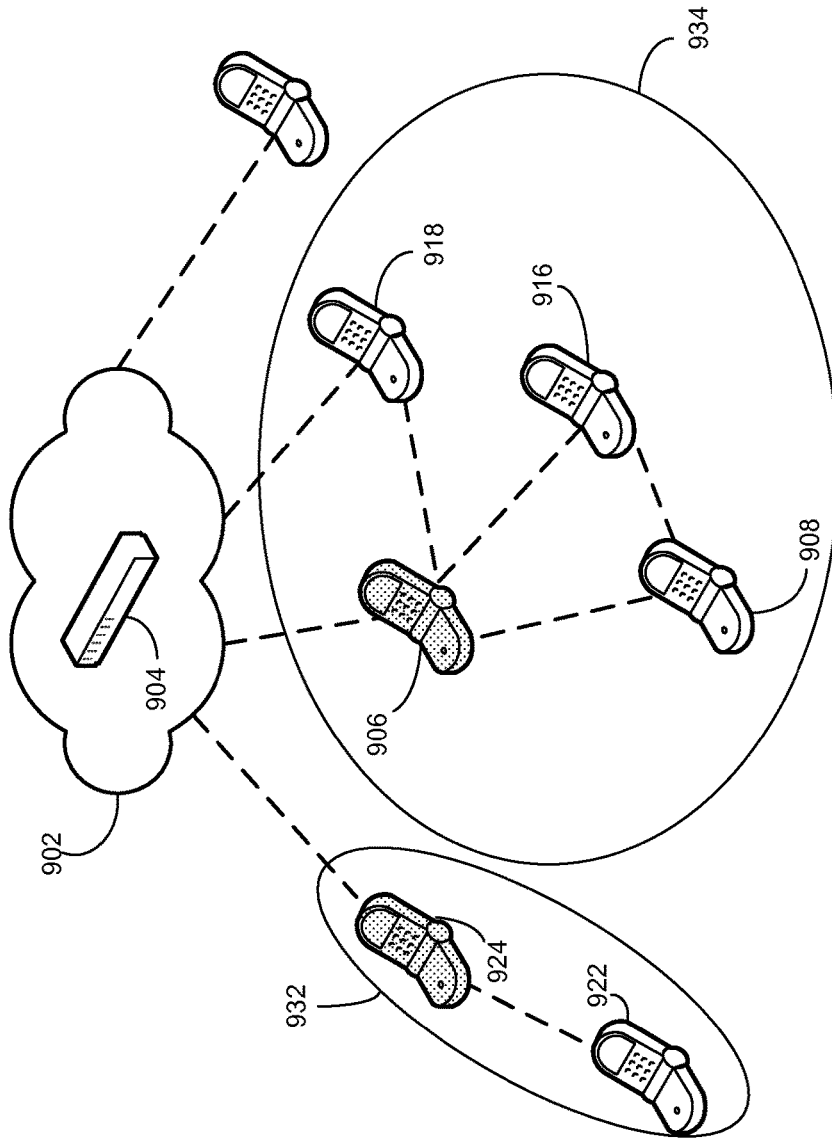


FIG. 7C



800

FIG. 8



900

FIG. 9

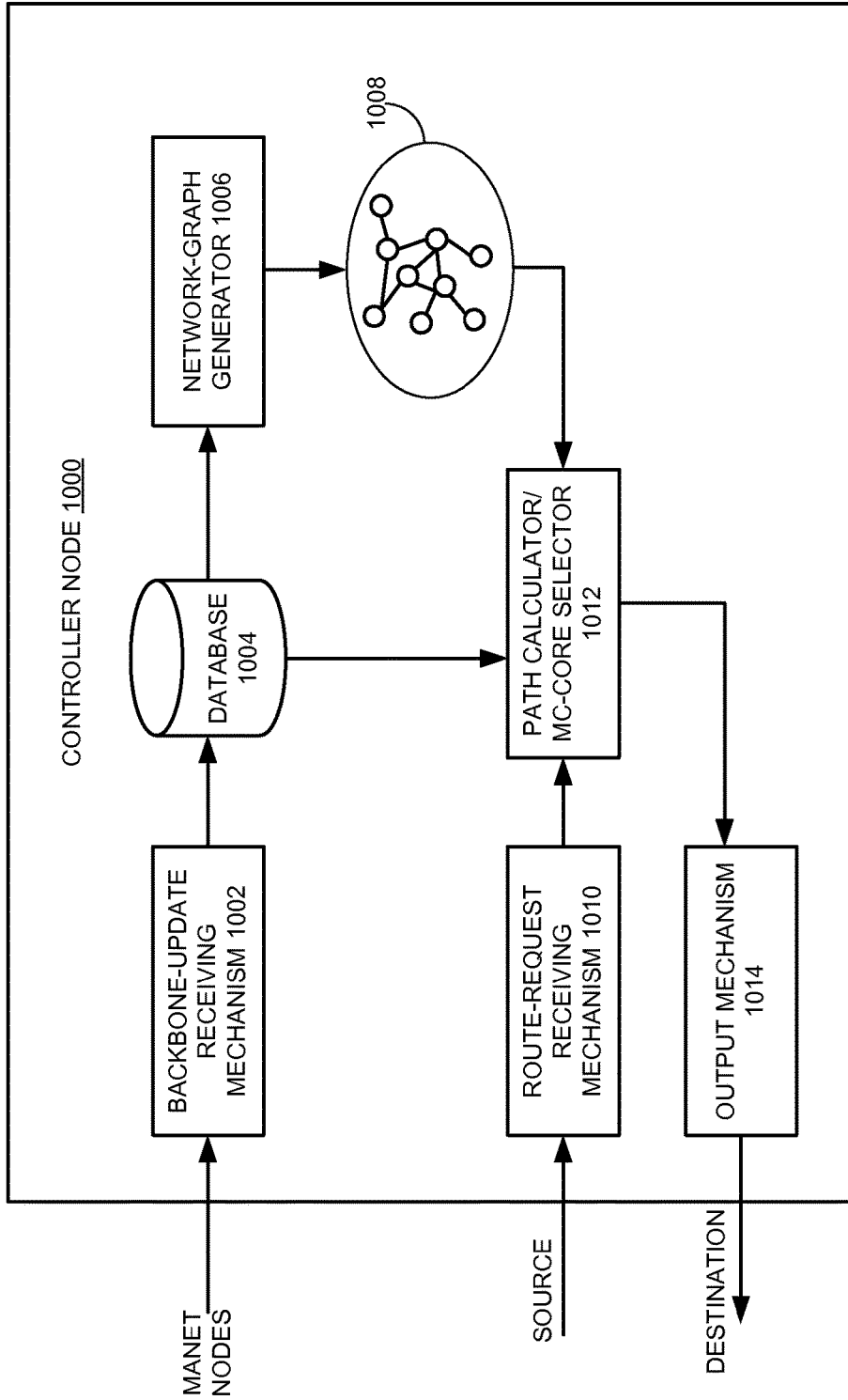


FIG. 10

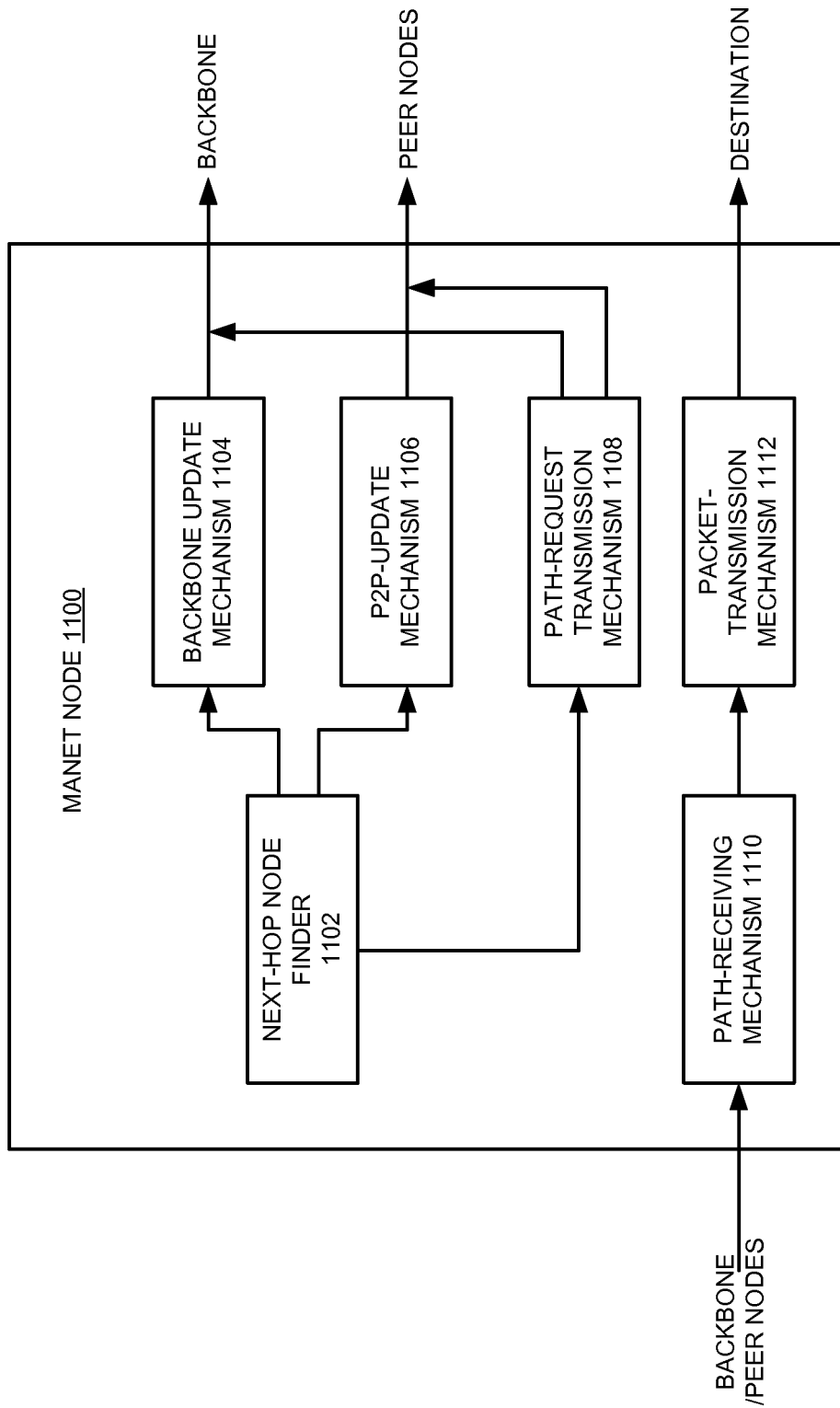


FIG. 11

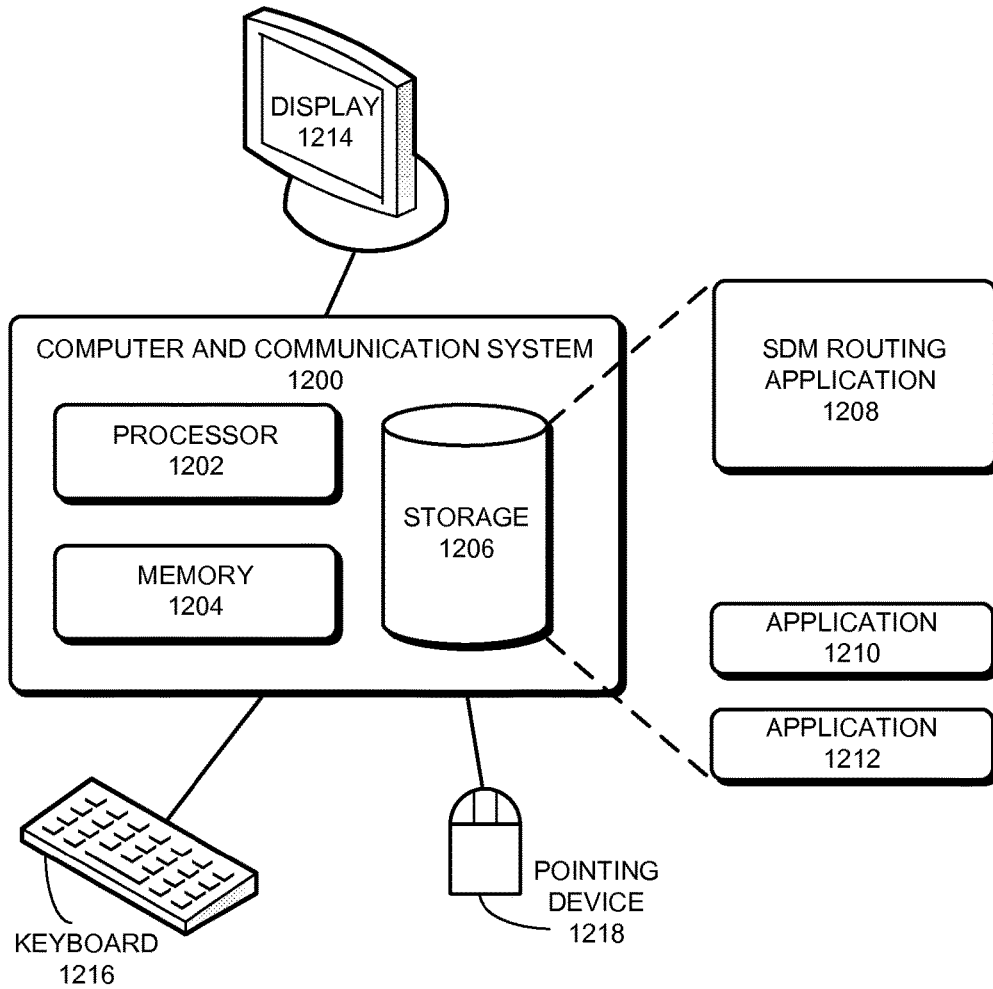


FIG. 12

GATEWAYS AND ROUTING IN SOFTWARE-DEFINED MANETS

STATEMENT OF GOVERNMENT-FUNDED RESEARCH

This invention was made with U.S. government support under Contract No. FA8750-12-C-0246(3743) awarded by the Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA). The U.S. government has certain rights in this invention.

BACKGROUND

Field

This disclosure is generally related to mobile ad-hoc networks (MANETs). More specifically, this disclosure is related to a software-defined MANET based on an intelligent backbone infrastructure.

Related Art

Typical ad-hoc communication systems oftentimes require independent mobile users that can communicate in a non-centralized and self-organized fashion. For example, mobile ad-hoc networks (MANETs) employ peer-to-peer a communication protocol to determine a path between two wireless nodes. Some key characteristics of MANETs include their ability to adapt to route changes due to mobility and the fact that they have no requirement for base stations or access points for node organization.

In theory, a MANET provides an ideal communication infrastructure to support disaster-relief and battlefield operations, emergency search and rescue missions, and many other mobile and distributed applications. However, these applications cannot be supported effectively in today's networks. This is mainly because the networks don't scale due to the excessive signaling incurred with an increasing number of nodes and applications. More specifically, MANET protocols distribute calculations (such as routing information) over many nodes hop-by-hop. To ensure protocol correctness and efficient operation, such as to avoid loops and excessive flooding, complex distributed algorithms are needed.

On the other hand, cellular systems use centralized resources (such as a set of networked cell towers) to service large areas, usually at much lower data rates than a MANET could achieve to nearby neighbors. However, compared to the distributed system, this centralized system allows much simpler routing and protocol operations due to the centralized nature of the system.

The centralized nature can also be seen in software-defined networking (SDN), such as the one based on the OpenFlow protocol. In SDN, the "control plane" and the "data plane" are separated, and at least two control routers are used to instantiate state on the controlled network elements. With SDN, the topology of the network is virtualized at the controller nodes, which compute routes from sources to destinations according to a network-wide view, and can instantiate the "flow-state" at each switch of the network. Unfortunately, current SDN implementations compute paths based on the network's flow-states, and thus cannot be applied to MANETs.

SUMMARY

One embodiment provides a mobile wireless network that includes a plurality of wireless nodes and a controller node which manages a weighted network graph for the plurality of wireless nodes. During operation, a local wireless node

sends a route-request message associated with at least one destination node to the controller node, receives a path to the destination node, and routes a packet to the destination node based on the received path. The path is computed based on the weighted network graph.

In a variation on this embodiment, the local wireless node receives the path from a next-hop node to the destination node. The path was transmitted by the controller node via the destination node to establish a route to the local wireless node.

In a variation on this embodiment, the local wireless node receives the path from the controller node, and routes the packet to the destination node by performing source-route to the destination node based on the received path.

In a variation on this embodiment, the local wireless node sends the route-request message to the controller node by: determining whether the local wireless node has an access to the controller node; and in response to the access not existing, sending the route-request message associated with the destination node to a peer network node that has an access to the controller node.

In a variation on this embodiment, the local wireless node further sends to the controller node a status update associated with the local wireless node.

In a further variation, the status update includes neighborhood metrics associated with the local wireless node. The neighborhood metrics include a list of neighbor nodes and connectivity metrics for each neighbor node, and the connectivity metrics include one or more of: a channel reliability, a residual bandwidth, and a queueing latency.

In a further variation, the status update further includes one or more of: a list of multicast groups to which the local wireless node is subscribed, and names of resource objects stored by the local wireless node.

One embodiment provides a system for routing in a mobile wireless network that comprises a plurality of wireless nodes. During operation, the system receives a route-request message associated with at least one destination node from a source node, computes a path between the source node and the destination node based on a weighted network graph for the plurality of wireless nodes, and transmits the computed path to at least the destination node.

In a variation on this embodiment, the system computes the weighted network graph based on neighborhood metrics received from the plurality of wireless nodes.

In a further variation, the system computes the weighted network graph by computing a cost function for each link within the wireless network based on the neighborhood metrics.

In a variation on this embodiment, the system selects a multicast core for a multicast group based on the weighted network graph, and computes best routes to the multicast core for each node within the multicast group.

In a variation on this embodiment, the system selects a gateway node within the wireless network, and schedules transmissions of the gateway node to enable the gateway node to communicate with nodes within a second wireless network operating at a different wireless channel. Scheduling the transmissions of the gateway node involves reserving one or more transmission opportunities for the gateway node to communicate with the second wireless network.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

FIG. 1 presents a diagram illustrating an exemplary software-defined MANET (SDM), in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 2 presents a diagram illustrating an exemplary frame format of a “Hello” packet sent from a node to its neighbor, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 3 presents an exemplary pseudocode for updating the next-hop node, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 4 presents a diagram illustrating an exemplary update message sent by a mobile node to the backbone, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 5 presents a diagram illustrating a unicast routing process, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 6 presents a diagram illustrating an exemplary multicast scenario, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 7A presents a flowchart illustrating an exemplary routing process performed by a source mobile node, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 7B presents a flowchart illustrating an exemplary routing process performed by a controller node in the backbone, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 7C presents a flowchart illustrating an exemplary route-update process performed by the backbone, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 8 presents a diagram illustrating an exemplary service-oriented routing scenario, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 9 presents a diagram illustrating an exemplary scenario for inter-MANET communication, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 10 presents a diagram illustrating an exemplary architecture of a controller node, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 11 presents a diagram illustrating an exemplary architecture of a MANET node, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 12 illustrates an exemplary computer system for routing in software-define MANET (SDM), in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention.

In the figures, like reference numerals refer to the same figure elements.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The following description is presented to enable any person skilled in the art to make and use the embodiments, and is provided in the context of a particular application and its requirements. Various modifications to the disclosed embodiments will be readily apparent to those skilled in the art, and the general principles defined herein may be applied to other embodiments and applications without departing from the spirit and scope of the present disclosure. Thus, the present invention is not limited to the embodiments shown, but is to be accorded the widest scope consistent with the principles and features disclosed herein.

Overview

Embodiments of the present invention provide a system for a software-defined MANET that solves the scalability problem of currently existing MANETs. More specifically, the system includes a centralized backbone service which maintains a weighted graph of a wireless network, and can compute shared multicast trees based on changes in the weighted graph. The wireless network includes a number of mobile nodes that can send status updates to the backbone service, for example, to report the link quality to each one-hop neighbor. The centralized backbone service can

update the weighted graph based on the status updates, and the mobile nodes can request an optimized routing path from the centralized backbone service. If a mobile node does not have a path to the backbone service, this mobile node can send a routing request or status update to its connected peer nodes to obtain peer-to-peer routing.

In some embodiments, routing within the wireless network is achieved based on Interest-defined mesh enclaves. A mesh includes a set of connected components of a MANET for unicast and multicast flows associated with a specific piece of data or service. The backbone service can activate or deactivate a mesh based on the presence or absence of interest in a destination or a service, and confines most of the signaling overhead within each region of interest (enclave). Here, the term “interest” generally refers to data traffic for a specific piece of data or a service. Also, under the context of information-centric networking (ICN), the term “Interest” or “Interest packet” refers to a packet that indicates a request for a piece of data by including a name (or name prefix) for the data. A data consumer can disseminate an interest packet across a named-data network, which ICN routers can propagate toward a storage device (e.g., a cache server) or a data producer that can provide a matching content object to satisfy the interest packet.

In some embodiments, the system can use flow-specific routing to enable QoS (quality of service). For example, the backbone service can collect neighborhood information reported by a set of wireless nodes, such as a channel reliability, a residual bandwidth, and a queueing latency. The backbone service can use the neighborhood information to determine an optimal route to the destination for a given flow.

The backbone service can also facilitate communication across two or more MANETs. Each MANET can include one or more nodes that act as gateways between two MANETs operating on different peer-to-peer channels, such as via different frequencies and/or different time slots for a given frequency. The backbone service can reserve time slots or airtime on the foreign MANET to ensure contention-free inter-MANET routing.

Network Architecture

The protocol stacks used in today’s wireless networks are inherently based on peer-to-peer signaling and are designed to operate with limited information. In these existing protocols, the control and data planes do not take into account much of the context within which user data are disseminated, and each packet specifies its own context in its headers; backbones are exploited only at the link level within the context of hierarchical network architectures used to cope with size.

SDN provides a simplified network operation that reduces peer-to-peer signaling, and reduces signaling from switches by configuring switches to only transmit updated neighborhood information to the controller. SDN also provides a backbone service that simplifies the configuration and management of the network, for example, based on neighborhood information from various wireless nodes. However, a typical SDN does not directly address scalability issues facing MANETs, because current SDN implementations are focused on wired network topologies operating in server rooms, where the controller is one link away from every switch and the signaling is performed solely on the network layer. In other words, typical SDN implementations do not facilitate dynamic placement of content and services.

Information-centric networking (ICN) has recently attracted much research attention. ICN implementations consist of publish-subscribe schemes in which content

objects have names (e.g., a hierarchical or flat name), and routing nodes can cache content objects to handle future requests locally. Each request that states an Interest in a specific piece of content is diffused in a way similar to route requests, and the nearest sites with copies of the requested content answer the requests. ICN implementations can dynamically adapt a network to the needs of an application by providing content and services to the application from the sites closest to the application.

However, limitations in typical ICN implementations do not allow a network to scale toward large-scale dynamic networks. First, these ICN implementations route packets on the basis of object names, which incurs excessive signaling overhead between network peers and requires an undesirably large computation overhead at each routing node. The signaling and computation overhead increases as the number of information objects requested by applications becomes far larger than the number of network nodes. Second, ICN implementations utilize routing nodes as caching nodes, which causes relaying nodes to incur an additional computation overhead to evaluate content requests (e.g., Interest packets) to determine whether the requested content is stored locally.

Some embodiments of the present invention provide a software-defined MANET (SDM), which uses the network backbone as a service. SDM integrates SDN, ICN, and utility-based cross-layering (including the integrating of routing states, channel states, and MAC (media access control) states) to implement very large-scale dynamic networks, without using predefined clustering or artificial network bounds.

FIG. 1 presents a diagram illustrating an exemplary software-defined MANET (SDM), in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. SDM 100 can include a backbone cloud 102 (which is hereinafter referred to as backbone 102) and a set of mobile network nodes. More specifically, backbone 102 can include one or more controller nodes, such as a controller node 104, which communicate with each other via a wired or wireless network. At least some of the mobile nodes can communicate with backbone 102 over a wireless network, either directly or via a multi-hop path. For example, mobile node 106 is coupled to backbone 102 via a one-hop link, whereas mobile node 108 is coupled to backbone 102 via a two-hop link through node 106. Also, some of the mobile nodes may not detect a path to backbone cloud 102. For example, mobile nodes 110 and 112 may not detect a path to backbone 102 when a large physical barrier 120 obstructs the communication channel to any device with a path to backbone 102. However, mobile nodes 110 and 112 may detect a network path to each other, and can communicate with each other via a default peer-to-peer routing protocol. In FIG. 1, the dashed lines indicate wireless links.

During operation, the mobile nodes that have a path to backbone 102 can monitor their neighborhood environment to periodically report local information and this neighborhood information to backbone 102. The neighborhood information reported by the mobile nodes to backbone 102 includes neighborhood metrics (e.g., a link quality to each one-hop neighbor based on received signals), and a set of multicast addresses used by the node. The local information can include a geographic location (e.g., global positioning system (GPS) coordinates) for the local node, and a change in the content cached by the local node.

The neighborhood metrics can include a list of neighbor nodes detected by the local node, along with the connectivity metrics for each neighbor. The connectivity metrics for each

neighbor can be gathered by a node at the MAC (media access control) layer. In some embodiments, the connectivity metrics for each neighbor include, but are not limited to: a channel identifier, a channel reliability metric, a residual bandwidth metric, and a queuing latency. The channel reliability metric can be computed by the signal-to-interference-plus-noise ratio (SINR), or by the rate of successful packet delivery.

In some embodiments, a network node measures the channel reliability of a link to its neighbor node by calculating the ratio of “Hello” packets (which we will describe in more detail later) received clearly at the local node to the total “Hello” packets sent by the neighboring node (as determined based on a sequence number attached to the “Hello” packets). In a further embodiment, the channel reliability is computed based on a packet success ratio calculated for both the uplink and downlink directions. The network node can compute the channel reliability metric by computing a product of the uplink packet success ratio and the downlink packet success ratio. The residual bandwidth metric for a link to a neighboring node is computed from the amount of bandwidth available across the link, and is calculated from the free timeslots available in a set of scheduled time slots. The node computes the queuing latency from the average time that packets spend in the MAC queue before they are transmitted. Backbone 102 uses these neighborhood metrics to determine the best routes to the destination node for a given flow.

The multicast-groups information indicates the multicast groups (as expressed in MAC IDs) that the network node has subscribed to at a given point in time. Backbone 102 can use multicast information to create and maintain the proactive multicast trees.

Each mobile node across network 100 can send the content-deltas information to backbone 102 to inform backbone 102 on changes in the content items cached by the network node. Sending content-deltas information to backbone 102 avoids redundant signaling, by omitting the names of content objects that backbone 102 is already aware to be cached by the network node. Note that sending content deltas to the backbone is equivalent to “publish” messages in ICN architectures.

Mobile nodes that do not have a path to backbone cloud 102, such as mobile nodes 110 and 112, do not report or update their local or neighborhood information to backbone 102. These nodes rely on a default peer-to-peer routing protocol where network nodes report or update their information directly to their neighbor nodes.

Note that, in conventional MANETs, the routing operations (unicast or multicast) is performed in a peer-to-peer manner, which can be inefficient and limits the network scalability. In contrast, in the example shown in FIG. 1, backbone 102 provides a centralized backbone service to a set of mobile nodes. The backbone service relieves most routing overhead from the MANET (which includes the mobile nodes) by using node information reported to backbone 102 to generate optimal unicast routes, and to compute shared multicast trees per multicast group.

In some embodiments, backbone 102 creates and manages a weighted graph of network 100 using a cost function that incorporates link reliability, queueing delays, scheduling delays, and residual bandwidth information obtained from mobile nodes of MANET 100. The backbone service can dynamically update the weighted graph each time backbone 102 receives information that indicates a change in MANET 100 (such as when a mobile node moves or changes its state). The cost function captures the estimates a

latency that may be incurred by using a link between two MANET nodes as a relay for data traffic. The cost function can be computed in various ways, depending on the underlying MAC protocol. For example, for a Wi-Fi network, the cost function considers the channel congestion and backoff experienced due to network contention over the MAC layer. For a scheduling-based MAC, the cost function considers the scheduling delay between transmission time slots and the cost of lost packets. In some embodiments, the backbone service computes the cost function as:

$$\text{cost} = [(queueTime + packetTime) \times \text{penalty}] \times \frac{1}{\text{reliability}} \quad (1)$$

In equation (1), queueTime is the average queuing delay for the neighbor's channel measured in microseconds, and packetTime is the time to transmit a 128 byte packet on the channel, also in microseconds. In some embodiments, packetTime is assumed to be no less than 1 microsecond. Penalty is a cost penalty incurred as the residual bandwidth approaches 0 (i.e., the node is using a high percentage of its available scheduled airtime). The factor 1/reliability increases as a link's reliability decreases to penalize unreliable neighbors that require a large number of transmission attempts for a successful packet reception. In some embodiments, the backbone service can compute the cost using the bi-directional link reliability given that the backbone service knows the two one-way reliability of a link based on information reported by each MANET node across the link. The backbone service can use the weighted graph, whose weighted values are dynamically updated using the cost function, to perform on-demand routing while accounting for real-time changes to MANET 100.

Protocols and Algorithm

Conventional MANETs often rely on running a unicast and a multicast protocol in parallel to support both point-to-point and many-to-many communication, and thus, is inefficient in bandwidth utilization. Moreover, existing on-demand unicast or multicast protocols often result in the network being flooded frequently with link-state updates, distance updates, route requests, or multicast updates. To solve these problems, embodiments of the present invention use an interest-based routing protocol that can be used to implement unicast and multicast routing. More specifically, this interest-based protocol establishes meshes that are activated and deactivated by the presence or absence of interest in individual destination nodes and groups, and confines most of the signaling overhead within regions of interest (enclaves) in such meshes. It has been shown that routes established in the interest-based protocol are free of permanent loops, and this protocol is more scalable than traditional multicast and unicast routing protocols.

The interest-based routing protocol establishes and maintains a routing mesh for each active multicast group (i.e., for each group with active sources and receivers) and for each unicast destination with at least one active source. The first source that becomes active for a given unicast or multicast destination sends its first data packet included in a mesh request (MR) that is flooded to peer mobile devices across a MANET up to a horizon threshold (which defines the scope of the dissemination of the MR). If the interest expressed by the source spans more than the single data packet, the intended receiver(s) of an MR establish and maintain a routing mesh spanning the active sources and the

destination. The destination may be a single node if the destination is unicast, or may be a dynamic set of nodes if the destination is multicast.

For a multicast flow, the receivers of the multicast group run a distributed election using mesh announcements (MAs) to elect a core for the group. Once elected, the core node is the only receiver that continues to generate MAs for the group. In some embodiments, when the backbone service is available, the backbone service proactively computes the shared multicast trees for each multicast group (e.g., in response to receiving updated information from a mobile node), and sends this information to the multicast group members so they always have the multicast groups' setup. In some embodiments, the backbone service dynamically elects a tree core for each multicast tree based on the core's centrality within the weighted network graph. No such election is needed for a unicast destination. An elected multicast core or unicast destination continues sending MAs with monotonically increasing sequence numbers for as long as there is at least one active source interested in it. When there is no active source detected in a flow, the destination or core of the flow stops generating MAs after a finite time, which causes the backbone and the associated mobile nodes to delete the routing information corresponding to the mesh of the flow. To confine control traffic to those portions of the network that need the information, the routing protocol defines an enclave (or region of interest) for an established mesh. Note that establishment of such an enclave involves both the backbone and the mobile nodes. The enclave is a connected component of the network, and spans all the receivers that can include the destination, the interested active sources, and the relay nodes needed to connect them.

Various MAC protocols can be used in the SDM. In some embodiments, nodes within the SDM communicate with each other using a MAC protocol derived from GCMA (Geographical Classification Multiple Access). Other possible protocols can include a context-aware protocol engine (CAPE), which relies on context-aware packet switching to disseminate information. In some embodiments, the backbone can implement GCMA to define collision-free transmission schedules using deterministic distributed algorithms based on the geo-spatial coordinates of nodes, together with their transmission and interference ranges. These algorithms require each node to know only the geo-spatial coordinates (which can be obtained from the GPS data for each node) of its immediate neighbors to derive correct transmission schedules, even in the presence of hidden terminals. The transmission frames in GCMA consist of the minimum number of time slots needed to avoid multiple access interference, given the transmission and interference ranges of the nodes.

Within a MANET, neighboring nodes can share a common channel. The channel is partitioned into a set of transmission frames, and each node is mapped into slots within the frames based on its 'x' and 'y' geographical coordinates and its slot number value. A mobile node can use a time slot to transmit one or more data packets. In some embodiments, a mobile node can use a time slot to transmit a "Hello" packet as a way to detect a set of next-hop nodes, for example, to find a next-hop node along a path to the backbone.

FIG. 2 presents a diagram illustrating a frame format of an exemplary "Hello" packet 200 sent from a node to its neighbor, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. "Hello" packet 200 can include a set of fields, some of which can be used for GCMA scheduling. For example, "Hello" packet 200 can include a sequence number

(SeqNo) field **202**, a node ID field **204**, an X-coordinate (X-coord) field **206**, and a Y-coordinate (Y-coord) field **208**. In addition, “Hello” packet **200** can include a set of fields that can be used to find the next-hop node along a path to the backbone. These set of fields can include, for example, a root ID field **210** that indicates the root of the tree connected to the backbone, a bbSeqNo field **212** that indicates the sequence number at the node, and a bbHop field **214** that indicates the number of hops from the node to the root node.

During operation, each node periodically (e.g., after every HelloInterval seconds) sends “Hello” packets to its neighbor nodes, and maintains a list of one-hop neighbors along with the data fields reported by each neighbor in its “Hello” packet.

In addition to GCMA-based scheduling, in some embodiments, a priority-based queueing system is used to handle signaling traffic, elastic data flows, and real-time flows. When a node is allowed to transmit over a time slot, the node transmits as many packets as possible during the time slot, for example, by selecting packets from its local transmission queues using a strict priority scheduler. In some embodiments, a node’s queues are FIFO (first-in, first-out), and are served using a priority-based algorithm.

In some embodiments, a mobile node can include more than one queue. For example, a gateway node may have time slots for two or more channels, each of which corresponds to a different flow. If a node has more than one nonempty queue with the highest priority, the node can iterate between these queues in a round-robin fashion. For example, network-layer signaling packets can have the highest priority (p_{ctr}), followed by data packets waiting in data queues. Data queues can be either elastic or real-time, and real-time queues are assigned higher priority (p_{RT}) than the priority given to elastic queues ($p_{elastic}$), given that jitter and latencies are not as important for elastic queues. A mobile node can transmit “Hello” packets with the lowest priority (p_{Hello}) if fewer than HelloInterval seconds have elapsed since the last time a “Hello” packet was transmitted. However, if more than HelloInterval seconds have elapsed, then the mobile node can refresh the neighborhood information; hence, the mobile node sets the priority of the “Hello” packet to $p_{Hello} > p_{ctr}$. Overall, during a time slot allocated to a node, the relationship among traffic priorities is:

$$p_{Hello} < p_{elastic} < p_{RT} < p_{ctr} < p_{Hello}$$

As described previously, mobile nodes can use information included in a “Hello” packet to find a valid next-hop node toward the backbone. This allows a mobile node to send update information to the backbone via its next-hop node. In the example shown in FIG. 1, mobile node **108** can identify mobile node **106** as its next-hop node to the backbone. Consequently, mobile node **108** can send its backbone update to mobile node **106**, which forwards the update to backbone **102** and stores the state information.

In some embodiments, a mobile node uses a simple version of distance vector routing algorithm to find the next-hop node to the backbone. More specifically, the mobile node can use the sequence number and root value of the “Hello” packets (as shown in FIG. 2) received from each of its one-hop neighbors to determine a distance of each neighboring node. The algorithm guarantees loop freedom in the routes from each node in the network to the backbone. FIG. 3 presents an exemplary pseudocode for updating the next-hop node, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. Specifically, when a mobile node receives a new “Hello” message, the node executes the algorithm shown in FIG. 3 to update its next-hop node ID.

Note that the mobile nodes communicate with the backbone using a channel that is different from the channel used for peer-to-peer communication. In some embodiments, a TDMA scheme is used to distinguish between the two channels. Each node having a path to the backbone sends periodic updates to the backbone. FIG. 4 presents a diagram illustrating an exemplary update message sent by a mobile node to the backbone, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

In FIG. 4, backbone update message **400** includes three data blocks, a neighborhood-metrics (Nbr Metrics) block **402**, a subscribed-multicast (MC)-groups blocks **404**, and a content-deltas block **406**. Neighborhood-metrics block **402** includes a list of neighborhood nodes (listed as Nbr ID) and the connectivity metrics (including channel reliability, residual bandwidth, and queueing latency) for each neighborhood node. Subscribed-MC-groups block **404** lists the multicast group ID of the multicast groups to which the node has subscribed. Content-deltas block **406** lists the names of the content objects the node has recently stored in its local cache. The backbone service can use information from backbone update message **400** to determine the best routes to the destination for a given flow, and to provide QoS support. The backbone service can also perform QoS-based routing, based on up-to-date information about link status, such as reliability, delay, and bandwidth. For example, while computing paths, a link that does not meet a mobile node’s QoS requirement would be considered inactive.

In addition, if the backbone service receives updated neighborhood metrics after determining and sending routes to mobile nodes in the network, the backbone service can generate and send reactive updates to the mobile nodes to change the data flow path based on the updated metrics. For example, once a mobile node detects a new neighbor, the mobile node updates the backbone with its new neighborhood metrics, which the backbone service then uses to compute an updated route. For multicast traffic, the backbone service also sends proactive updates to mobile nodes to maintain the core-based multicast trees.

Unicast and Multicast Routing

For unicast traffic, when a node has packets to send to a destination, it sends a RouteRequest packet to the backbone. In some embodiments, the RouteRequest packet includes the address of the destination, or includes an “Interest” to a piece of content. The backbone computes paths on-demand based on the weighted network graph, and sends the least-cost path to the destination node in a RouteReply packet. Note that, instead of finding a path with a fewest number of hops to the destination, the backbone can select an optimal path based on the link quality between hops. In the example shown in FIG. 1, if the link quality between nodes **106** and **108** is not satisfactory (due to signal interference or physical barriers), backbone cloud **102** may route traffic from node **106** to node **108** via node **116** instead of routing traffic directly from node **106** to node **108** via link **114**. In some embodiments, the backbone service uses Dijkstra’s algorithm to compute a path.

Upon receiving the RouteReply packet, the destination node sends MeshReply packets to establish the route. However, the destination node does not flood the MeshReply packets through the network. Rather, the destination node can perform source-routing using the path in the RouteReply packet to establish a route to the source node.

FIG. 5 presents a diagram illustrating a unicast routing process, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. In the example shown in FIG. 5, if mobile node **508** intends to obtain content objects or services from node

518, mobile node 508 can send a RouteRequest packet to backbone 502 as indicated by an arrow 532, which identifies mobile node 518 as the destination node based on the content updates sent from mobile node 518, and computes a path between mobile nodes 508 and 518 (for example, node 508-node 506-node 518). Backbone 502 then sends a RouteReply packet to mobile node 518 as indicated by an arrow 534. The RouteReply packet includes the computed path.

Upon receiving the RouteReply packet, mobile node 518 sends one or more MeshReply packets back to mobile node 508 via the received path to establish a route, as indicated by path 536. Once the route is established, the source (mobile node 508) can transmit packets to the destination node (mobile node 518) via the established route. In the event that the source node is not directly or indirectly connected to the backbone, the source node can send MeshRequest packets to its neighbors to activate a mesh, and perform peer-to-peer routing without direction from the backbone service. In the example, shown in FIG. 5, mobile node 510 can establish a mesh to send packets to a destination by sending MeshRequest packets to its neighbor node 512 (as indicated by an arrow 538) instead of sending a RouteRequest packet to backbone 502.

Even when the routes are established to a destination, the backbone service can continue to send gratuitous RouteReply packets to the mobile nodes, in case changes in a channel or network load produce a more optimal path to the destination. In the example shown in FIG. 5, if mobile node 508 moves closer to node 518 and becomes its next-hop neighbor, backbone 502 may send a gratuitous RouteReply packet to node 518, which notifies node 518 that a new least-cost route (node 518 to node 508) is now available. In some embodiments, the backbone service can calculate the changes in metrics as a weighted moving average to avoid sudden or transient changes in a mobile node's local or neighborhood information from causing frequent and unnecessary route updates. This way, the flows adapt to new and/or other optimal routes that remain stable over a period of time (as determined from a sequence of route replies), while ignoring transient optimal routes that remain stable for only a brief time instance.

For multicast traffic, the backbone service sends proactive updates to multicast group members in order to maintain a core-based tree even without any active traffic flows. For each multicast group, the backbone service chooses the most central node in the group, and designates this central node as the core for the multicast group. In some embodiments, the backbone service uses a centrality algorithm to select the core. The core of the group can change, for example, due to mobility among the group members. The backbone service can proactively update all nodes belonging to the multicast group at the time of the update with the best route to the core by sending MulticastRouteReply packets. Mobile nodes, in turn, send MeshActivation packets through the network in order to maintain the multicast tree proactively.

When a mobile node in the group generates multicast traffic, the node can forward the data along the multicast tree. If the mobile nodes do not have connection to the backbone, the mobile nodes revert their routing algorithm back to the MANET multicast routing mechanism, where the source node sends MeshRequest packets to its neighbor nodes.

FIG. 6 presents a diagram illustrating an exemplary multicast scenario, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. In FIG. 6, mobile nodes 608, 616, and 618 belong to a multicast group. Mobile node 616 is the core of

the group as calculated by backbone 602. During operation, backbone 602 sends MulticastRouteReply packets to members of the multicast group (e.g., mobile nodes 608 and 618) indicating the least-cost path to the core (e.g., node 616). Upon receiving the MulticastRouteReply packets, mobile nodes 608 and 618 send MeshActivation packets periodically to maintain the multicast tree. From FIG. 6, one can see that although mobile node 606 is not a member of the multicast group, node 606 can become a member of the multicast tree, and can forward data packets generated by other members of the tree.

FIG. 7A presents a flowchart illustrating an exemplary routing process performed by a source mobile node, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. During operation, a mobile network node generates a routing request (operation 702). The node (or the source node) then determines whether it can find a connection (either single-hop or multi-hop) to the backbone (operation 704). In some embodiments, a distance vector routing algorithm is used to find a valid next-hop node. If the node cannot find a connection to the backbone, the node sends a mesh request to its neighbor nodes (operation 706). In some embodiments, the mesh request is flooded up to a horizon threshold. In a further embodiment, the source node may send its first data packet included in the mesh request. The intended receiver establishes a routing mesh spanning the source node and the destination node (operation 708). The established mesh enables transmission of the packet (operation 710). On the other hand, if the source node finds a connection to the backbone by identifying a valid next-hop node, the source node sends a route request packet to the backbone via the identified next-hop node (operation 712). Based on the request, which may identify a destination address or the name of the requested content, the backbone computes a path to the destination. In some embodiments, the backbone uses a weighted graph of the network to find a least-cost path to the destination. The weighted graph can include neighborhood information (such as channel reliability, residual bandwidth, and queueing latency) for each node.

The source node can receive the computed path from the backbone (operation 714). In some embodiments, the computed path is included in a RouteReply packet. The source node then determines which node sends the RouteReply packet that includes the computed path (operation 716). If the path is received from a peer node, the source node transmits packets back to the peer node (operation 718). If the path is received from the backbone, the source node transmits the packet by using the received path to source-route the packet to the destination node (operation 720).

FIG. 7B presents a flowchart illustrating an exemplary routing process performed by a controller node in the backbone, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. During operation, the controller node receives a route request message from a source mobile node (operation 722), and computes an optimal path between the source node and the destination node (operation 724). In some embodiments, the optimal path is a least-cost path computed based on a weighted network graph. Subsequently, the controller node transmits the path to at least the destination node (operation 726).

FIG. 7C presents a flowchart illustrating an exemplary route-update process performed by the backbone, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. During operation, the backbone receives updated network information from a mobile node (operation 732), and updates a network graph based on the updated network information (operation 734). The backbone then determines whether an

optimal path has been changed between a source node and a destination node based on the updated network graph (operation 736). If so, the backbone computes an updated optimal path between the source node and the destination node (operation 738), and transmits the new updated path to at least the destination node (operation 740).

Note that FIGS. 7A-7C are examples of unicast routing. Multicast routing can be similar where the routing falls back to MANET routing when the source node cannot access the backbone service.

Service-Oriented Routing

In ICN, a node may request a piece of content or a type of service based on the name of the content or service. Upon receiving the "Interest" packet, a content holder can then send a content data packet traversing the path of the "Interest" packet. SDM can also facilitate similar content-based or service-oriented routing. In some embodiments, nodes within an SDM can provide named services, which can include content or computation services. A name in ICN is oftentimes location-independent and uniquely identifies a resource object, such as a content object or a service. A data-forwarding device can use the name or name prefix to forward a packet toward a network node that provides the resource object, regardless of a network address or physical location for the resource object.

In some embodiments, the name may be a hierarchically structured variable-length identifier (HSVLI). The HSVLI can be divided into several hierarchical components, which can be structured in various ways. For example, the individual name components `parc`, `home`, `ccn`, and `test.txt` can be structured in a left-oriented prefix-major fashion to form the name `"/parc/home/ccn/test.txt."` Thus, the name `"/parc/home/ccn/"` can be a "parent" or "prefix" of `"/parc/home/ccn/test.txt."` Additional components can be used to distinguish among different versions of the content item, such as a collaborative document.

In some embodiments, the name can include a non-hierarchical identifier, such as a hash value that is derived from the content/service object's data (e.g., a checksum value) and/or from elements of the content/service object's name. A description of a hash-based name is described in U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/847,814 (entitled "ORDERED-ELEMENT NAMING FOR NAME-BASED PACKET FORWARDING," by inventor Ignacio Solis, filed 20 Mar. 2013), which is hereby incorporated herein by reference. A name can also be a flat label. Hereinafter, "name" is used to refer to any name for a piece of data in a name-data network, such as a hierarchical name or name prefix, a flat name, a fixed-length name, an arbitrary-length name, or a label (e.g., a Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS) label).

In SDM, each node in the network registers its services or content pieces with the backbone. In some embodiments, each node periodically sends BBupdate (backbone update) packets to the backbone. The BBupdate packets can have a format similar to the one shown in FIG. 4. In some embodiments, a node sends a change in the content or service names available in the node to the backbone service to avoid redundant signaling. In some embodiments, some of the nodes may have been pre-populated with certain content pieces or services, and the backbone has been pre-populated with information associated with those content pieces or services. In such scenarios, the nodes do not need to re-register their content or service names with the backbone. However, if the content or service is updated at the node, the node can send updated information to the backbone via BBupdate packets.

A node can request a certain content piece or service by sending a ContentRequest packet to the backbone. Upon receiving the ContentRequest packet, the backbone identifies a group of nodes capable of providing such a content piece or service based on the name, and elects a node within the group with the least-cost path to the requester. In some embodiments, the backbone performs a Dijkstra algorithm to find the node with the lowest-cost path to the requester. Subsequently, the backbone can issue a ContentReply packet to the requester, so that the packet includes the path to the elected node. Upon receiving the ContentReply packet, the requester issues source-routed MeshReply packets to the elected node based on the path indicated in the ContentReply packet in order to establish a route to the elected node. Once the route is established, the elected node can provide the service or content to the requester.

FIG. 8 presents a diagram illustrating an exemplary service-oriented routing scenario, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. In FIG. 8, mobile node 818 is requesting a service "parc/home/ccn/foo" by sending a ContentRequest packet indicating such a name to a controller node in backbone 802 (e.g., controller node 804). Based on its maintained backbone update records, controller node 804 identifies mobile nodes 822, 824, and 808 are capable of providing the service "parc/home/ccn/foo." In addition, controller node 804 elects node 808 as the closest node for providing such a service, and sends a ContentReply packet to mobile node 818 indicating that node 808 would be able to provide the requested service. Mobile node 818 then sends a source-routed MeshReply packet to node 808 through node 806 in order to establish the route. Once the route is established, node 808 can provide the requested service or transmit the requested content to requester node 818, as indicated by an arrow 832. Alternatively, after electing the closest node 808 to provide the service, controller node 804 may send the ContentReply packet directly to the elected node 808, indicating the requested service and a path to requester node 818. In return, elected node 808 establishes a route with requester node 818 based on the provided path and provides the requested service.

Inter-MANET Routing

The backbone cloud may control multiple MANETs operating on different peer-to-peer channels, and inter-MANET communication can be achieved by activating one or more gateway nodes per MANET. Each gateway node can be configured to communicate with a foreign MANET on a reserved time slot (for TDMA) or airtime (for Wi-Fi).

FIG. 9 presents a diagram illustrating an exemplary scenario for inter-MANET communication, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. In FIG. 9, backbone cloud 902 controls multiple MANETs, each operating on a different peer-to-peer channel, such as a MANET 932 and a MANET 934. In some embodiments, the backbone cloud can assign a peer-to-peer channel to a group of nodes based on their geographic locations. The nodes in the group communicate with each other on the assigned peer-to-peer channel, forming a MANET. The term "channel" hereinafter refers to any communication channel. Depending on the transmission protocol, the channel can be a time slot (for TDMA), a frequency channel (for FDMA), or airtime (for Wi-Fi). Each node can send updates to the backbone on a different channel than the peer-to-peer channel.

In the example shown in FIG. 9, MANET 932 includes mobile nodes 922 and 924, and MANET 934 includes mobile nodes 906, 908, 916, and 918. During operation, backbone 902 can assign at least one node in each MANET as a gateway node, and schedules the gateway node in such

a way that the gateway node can communicate with nodes in a foreign MANET in order to relay outbound traffic to the foreign MANET.

For example, backbone **902** can activate node **924** within MANET **932** to act as a gateway node, and schedules its transmissions in such a way as to allow node **924** to participate the peer-to-peer communication in MANET **934** over the peer-to-peer channel assigned to MANET **934**. For example, backbone **902** can reserve certain time slots on gateway node **924** to ensure that node **924** can communicate with nodes in MANET **934** on those reserved time slots. In the mean time, no one in MANET **932** will communicate with node **924** on those reserved time slots. Similarly, if Wi-Fi is used, gateway node **924** may indicate to its peer node in MANET **932** (node **922**) that node **924** is currently sleeping while participating in peer-to-peer communication with nodes in MANET **934**.

Backbone **902** can also activate mobile node **906** as a gateway node for MANET **934**, and schedules its transmission in such a way as to allow node **906** to participate in the peer-to-peer communication in MANET **932** on certain reserved time slots or airtime. The establishment of the gateway nodes allows nodes in different MANETs to communicate with each other. In addition, exclusively reserving a time slot or airtime for the gateway nodes for inter-MANET communication only enables contention-free inter-MANET routing.

In the example shown in FIG. 9, if node **916** (located within MANET **934**) wishes to send a packet to node **922** (located within MANET **932**), it will send a route request to backbone **902**. While computing an optimal path, backbone **902** notices that these two nodes belong to two different MANETs, and notices that nodes **906** and **924** are gateway nodes for the MANETs. Backbone **902** then computes a network path accordingly. A computed path may include node **916** to node **906**, to node **922**. Accordingly, node **916** sends the packet to gateway node **906**, which forwards the packet to node **922** during a time slot that is reserved for inter-MANET communication. Alternatively, a computed path may include node **916** to node **924**, to node **922**. Accordingly, node **916** can send the packet to gateway node **924** (if such a data link is available) during a time slot that is reserved for node **924** to communicate with MANET **934**. Gateway node **924** then forwards the packet to peer node **922**.

Modules and Computer System

FIG. 10 presents a diagram illustrating an exemplary architecture of a controller node, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. Controller node **1000** includes a backbone-update receiving mechanism **1002**, a database **1004**, a network-graph generator **1006**, a network graph **1008**, a route-request receiving mechanism **1010**, a path calculator/multicast-core selector **1012**, and an output mechanism **1014**.

Backbone-update receiving mechanism **1002** is responsible for receiving backbone updates from MANET nodes that are associated with the controller node (or other controller nodes within the backbone cloud). In some embodiments, the backbone updates include the neighborhood metrics, a list of multicast groups that a node subscribed to, and content deltas held at each node. The received backbone updates are stored in database **1004**. Network-graph generator **1006** is responsible for generating a weighted network graph **1008** based on the received neighborhood metrics. In some embodiments, network-graph generator **1006** dynamically updates the weighted graph based on the received backbone updates.

Route-request receiving mechanism **1010** is responsible for receiving route request from an associated MANET node. The received request is then sent to path calculator/multicast-core selector **1012**. For unicast traffic, path calculator **1012** calculates the least-cost path to the destination based on weighted graph **1008**. Note that, if the route request includes a name for a piece of content or service, path calculator **1012** first identifies a closest content cache based on information (which can include content-delta updates reported by the mobile nodes) stored in database **1004** and weighted graph **1008**, and calculates the least-cost path to that content cache. For multicast traffic, multicast-core selector **1012** selects a multicast core based on weighted graph **1008**, and computes a best route to the core for each node within the multicast group. Once the paths are computed, output mechanism **1014** sends the computed paths to the destination node (for unicast traffic) or nodes within the multicast group (for multicast traffic).

FIG. 11 presents a diagram illustrating an exemplary architecture of a MANET node, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. A MANET node **1100** includes a next-hop finder **1102**, a backbone update mechanism **1104**, a peer-to-peer update mechanism **1106**, a path-request transmission mechanism **1108**, a path-receiving mechanism **1110**, and a packet-transmission mechanism **1112**.

Next-hop finder **1102** is responsible for finding a next-hop node to the backbone. In some embodiments, a distance vector routing algorithm is used by next-hop finder **1102** to find the next-hop node to the backbone. If a next-hop node to the backbone is found, backbone update mechanism **1104** sends backbone updates to the identified next-hop node, which then forwards such updates to the backbone. Otherwise, peer-to-peer-update mechanism **1106** updates various status of MANET node **1100** with other one-hop neighbors.

When MANET node **1100** intends to send a packet to a destination, path-request transmission mechanism **1108** transmits a route-request message to the backbone if a next-hop node to the backbone is available. Otherwise, the route-request is flooded to the peer nodes within a predetermined horizon. Path-receiving mechanism **1110** is responsible for receiving path information, either from the backbone or other peer nodes when the backbone is out of reach. Packet-transmission mechanism **1112** is responsible for transmitting the packet toward the destination based on the received path.

FIG. 12 illustrates an exemplary computer system for routing in software-define MANET (SDM), in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention. In one embodiment, a computer and communication system **1200** includes a processor **1202**, a memory **1204**, and a storage device **1206**. Storage device **1206** stores an SDM routing application **1208**, as well as other applications, such as applications **1210** and **1212**. During operation, SDM routing application **1208** is loaded from storage device **1206** into memory **1204** and then executed by processor **1202**. While executing the program, processor **1202** performs the aforementioned functions. Computer and communication system **1200** is coupled to an optional display **1214**, keyboard **1216**, and pointing device **1218**.

The data structures and code described in this detailed description are typically stored on a computer-readable storage medium, which may be any device or medium that can store code and/or data for use by a computer system. The computer-readable storage medium includes, but is not limited to, volatile memory, non-volatile memory, magnetic and optical storage devices such as disk drives, magnetic

tape, CDs (compact discs), DVDs (digital versatile discs or digital video discs), or other media capable of storing computer-readable media now known or later developed.

The methods and processes described in the detailed description section can be embodied as code and/or data, which can be stored in a computer-readable storage medium as described above. When a computer system reads and executes the code and/or data stored on the computer-readable storage medium, the computer system performs the methods and processes embodied as data structures and code and stored within the computer-readable storage medium.

Furthermore, the methods and processes described above can be included in hardware modules. For example, the hardware modules can include, but are not limited to, application-specific integrated circuit (ASIC) chips, field-programmable gate arrays (FPGAs), and other programmable-logic devices now known or later developed. When the hardware modules are activated, the hardware modules perform the methods and processes included within the hardware modules.

The foregoing descriptions of embodiments of the present invention have been presented for purposes of illustration and description only. They are not intended to be exhaustive or to limit the present invention to the forms disclosed. Accordingly, many modifications and variations will be apparent to practitioners skilled in the art. Additionally, the above disclosure is not intended to limit the present invention. The scope of the present invention is defined by the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A method for routing packets in a mobile ad-hoc network, comprising:

sending, by a local wireless node located in a first mobile ad-hoc network to a centralized controller node that manages a weighted network graph for a plurality of wireless nodes, a route-request message, which includes an interest to a content item;

receiving, by the local wireless node, a path from the local wireless node to a destination node located in a second mobile ad-hoc network via a gateway node located in the first mobile ad-hoc network and configured to communicate with the second mobile ad-hoc network, the destination node providing the content item, wherein the path is computed by the centralized controller node based on the weighted network graph;

receiving, by the local wireless node, an updated path to the destination node providing the content via the gateway node and computed by the centralized controller node based on update messages received from the plurality of wireless nodes, wherein the update messages include updates to neighborhood metrics associated with the wireless nodes and updates to content items stored on the wireless nodes, wherein the content items stored on the local wireless node include the content item of the interest; and

routing, via the gateway node, the interest to the destination node based on the received updated path.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein receiving the path or updated path involves receiving the path or updated path from a next-hop node to the destination node, wherein the path or updated path was transmitted by the centralized controller node via the destination node to establish a route to the local wireless node.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein receiving the path or updated path involves receiving the path or updated path from the centralized controller node, and wherein routing the

interest to the destination node involves performing source-route to the destination node based on the received path or updated path.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein sending the route-request message to the centralized controller node involves: determining whether the local wireless node has an access to the centralized controller node; and

in response to the access not existing, sending the route-request message associated with the destination node to a peer network node that has an access to the centralized controller node.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the neighborhood metrics include a list of neighbor nodes and connectivity metrics for each neighbor node, and wherein the connectivity metrics include one or more of:

a channel reliability;
a residual bandwidth; and
a queueing latency.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the update messages further include one or more of:

a list of multicast groups to which the respective wireless node is subscribed; and
names of resource objects stored by the respective wireless node.

7. A method for routing packets in a mobile ad-hoc network that comprises a plurality of wireless nodes, comprising:

receiving, by a centralized controller node from a source node located in a first mobile ad-hoc network, a route-request message, which includes an interest to a content item;

computing a path between the source node and a destination node located in a second mobile ad-hoc network via a gateway node located in the first mobile ad-hoc network and configured to communicate with the second mobile ad-hoc network, the destination node providing the content item based on a weighted network graph for the mobile ad-hoc network;

receiving update messages from the plurality of wireless nodes, wherein a respective update message received from a wireless node includes an update to neighborhood metrics associated with the wireless node and an update to content items stored on the wireless node, wherein the content items stored on the local wireless node include the content item of the interest;

updating the weighted network graph based on the received updated messages;

computing an updated path to the destination node providing the content item via the gateway node based on the updated weighted network graph; and
transmitting the updated path to the destination node.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein updating the weighted network graph involves computing a cost function for each link within the mobile ad-hoc network based on the neighborhood metrics.

9. The method of claim 7, further comprising:

selecting a multicast core for a multicast group based on the weighted network graph; and

computing best routes to the multicast core for each node within the multicast group.

10. The method of claim 7, further comprising:

scheduling transmissions of the gateway node to enable the gateway node to communicate with nodes within the second mobile ad-hoc network operating at a different wireless channel,

wherein scheduling the transmissions of the gateway node involves reserving one or more transmission opportu-

nities for the gateway node to communicate with the second mobile ad-hoc network.

11. A non-transitory computer-readable storage medium storing instructions that when executed by a computing device cause the computing device to perform a method for routing packets in a mobile ad-hoc network, the method comprising:

receiving, by a centralized controller node from a source node located in a first mobile ad-hoc network, a route-request message, which includes an interest to a piece of content;

computing a path between the source node and a destination node located in a second mobile ad-hoc network via a gateway node located in the first mobile ad-hoc network and configured to communicate with the second mobile ad-hoc network, the destination node providing the content item based on a weighted network graph for the mobile ad-hoc network;

receiving update messages from the plurality of wireless nodes, wherein a respective update message received from a wireless node includes an update to neighborhood metrics associated with the wireless node and an update to content items stored on the wireless node, wherein the content items stored on the local wireless node include the content item of the interest;

updating the weighted network graph based on the received update messages;

computing an updated path to the destination node providing the content item via the gateway node based on the updated weighted network graph; and

transmitting the updated path to the destination node.

12. The non-transitory computer-readable storage medium of claim 11, wherein updating the weighted network graph involves computing a cost function for each link within the mobile as-hoc network based on the neighborhood metrics.

13. The non-transitory computer-readable storage medium of claim 11, wherein the method further comprises: selecting a multicast core for a multicast group based on the weighted network graph; and

computing best routes to the multicast core for each node within the multicast group.

14. The non-transitory computer-readable storage medium of claim 11, wherein the method further comprises: scheduling transmissions of the gateway node to enable the gateway node to communicate with nodes within the second mobile ad-hoc network operating at a different wireless channel,

wherein scheduling the transmissions of the gateway node involves reserving one or more transmission opportunities for the gateway node to communicate with the second mobile ad-hoc network.

15. A mobile ad-hoc network (MANET), comprising: a centralized controller node that manages a weighted network graph for a plurality of wireless nodes; and a plurality of mobile nodes, wherein a respective mobile node located in a first mobile ad-hoc network comprises:

a processor;

a storage device coupled to the processor and storing instructions which when executed by the processor cause the processor to perform a method, the method comprising:

sending, to the centralized controller node, a route-request message, which includes an interest to a content item;

receiving a path from the respective mobile node to a destination node located in a second mobile ad-hoc network via a gateway node located in the first mobile ad-hoc network and configured to communicate with the second mobile ad-hoc network, the destination node providing the content item, wherein the path is computed by the centralized controller node based on the weighted network graph;

receiving, by the respective mobile node, an updated path to the destination node providing the content item via the gateway node and computed by the centralized controller node based on update messages received from the plurality of mobile nodes, wherein the update messages include updates to neighborhood metrics associated with the mobile nodes and updates to content items stored on the mobile nodes, wherein the content items stored on the local wireless node include the content item of the interest; and

routing, via the gateway node, the interest to the destination node based on the received updated path.

16. The MANET of claim 15, wherein receiving the path or updated path involves receiving the path or updated path from a next-hop node to the destination node, wherein the path or updated path was transmitted by the centralized controller node via the destination node to establish a route to the respective mobile node.

17. The MANET of claim 15, wherein receiving the path or updated path involves receiving the path or updated path from the centralized controller node, and wherein routing the interest to the destination node involves performing source-route to the destination node based on the received path or updated path.

18. The MANET of claim 15, wherein while sending the route-request message to the centralized controller node, the request-sending mechanism is further configured to:

determine whether the mobile node has an access to the centralized controller node; and

in response to the access not existing, send the route-request message associated with the destination node to a peer network node that has an access to the centralized controller node.

19. The MANET of claim 15 wherein the neighborhood metrics include a list of neighbor nodes and connectivity metrics for each neighbor node, and wherein the connectivity metrics include one or more of:

a channel reliability;

a residual bandwidth; and

a queueing latency.

20. The MANET of claim 15, wherein the updated messages further include one or more of:

a list of multicast groups to which the local wireless node is subscribed; and

names of resource objects stored by the local wireless node.