

Executive Summary

Every day more than 100,000 New Yorkers take dollar vans – an informal transit method providing service somewhere between buses and taxis. Yet the city doesn’t have a good understanding of where and when they run; or why people choose them over the formal public transit infrastructure provided by the MTA. This makes administration and regulation of the dollar van industry difficult. for TLC and DOT, the agencies jointly

This report attempts to quantify the demand for dollar vans across the city and determine which characteristics of an area drive that demand. This was done by using the best available data about current dollar van routes and finding the salient features for the areas that they serve.

We built a predictive model to indentify other locations in New York City which are similar to places already served by dollar vans and could be good places to introduce service. The model correctly identifies about 90% of census tracts where dollar vans currently originate from, while indentifying about 20% of tracts currently no served by dollar vans as potential locations. Notable, a continuous area extending from Eastern Brooklyn into Western Queens as well as Northern Bronx.