**Revitalizing the Rail Carload System**

There is an urgent need to reflect on and reinvent our rail carload system in light of the decline of coal shipments, reshoring and reindustrialization, new natural resource development, increasing population and freight demand, and urgent environmental, congestion, and financial challenges.

Core Question:

How can stakeholders work together to build a rail carload system that best supports the nation’s sustainable prosperity?

*Round 1*

1. How has the economic and transportation environment evolved since WWII, and how well has the rail carload system adapted to these changes?
2. What have been the trends in supply chain management, and how have they impacted carload service and economics?
3. What factors, e.g., volume, pricing, modal share, profitability, revenue/cost ratio, reliability, turn times, etc., need to be understood to define the current status of rail carload transportation?

*Round 2*

1. What current and emerging technological, economic, social, environmental, and/or demographic trends could impact supply chain dynamics, and how might they influence how we think about an optimal rail carload system?
2. How do we want the economic and supply chain environment to evolve over the next 5-10 years, and how well positioned is the rail carload system to meet these advances?
3. What are the benefits of an expanded rail carload transportation system?
4. When should alternatives to an expanded rail carload system be considered?
5. Under what conditions does a bimodal truck and rail transload solution make the most sense?
6. What are each stakeholder group’s desires, concerns, and needs for an expanded rail carload system?
7. What commercial, technological, financial, organizational, procedural, and regulatory breakthroughs/adjustments are required for stakeholders to collaborate to create the ideal rail carload system?
8. What specific innovations should be considered as potential elements of an optimized rail carload system?