The CPM Spotlight gives participants the opportunity to learn more about program peers. It includes some general information and fun facts about the featured jurisdiction or PC. Keep checking in. Your jurisdiction may be showcased next!

This month’s spotlight is shining on primary coordinator, Mary Morrison!

Mary Morrison works for the city of Tacoma, Washington, as an organization development manager. In this position, she has also served as Tacoma’s primary coordinator (PC) with the ICMA Center for Performance Measurement (CPM) since 2007. In addition, she has recently worked in coordinating contacts among the Puget Sound consortium participants, with the goal of developing more meaningful regional measures.

Mary says that “working for a better quality of life for the community” and the enjoyment she derives from making “the public interest a priority” is what drew her to a career in local government. To prepare for these responsibilities, she earned a B.A. in business administration from Seattle University and an M.A. in organizational leadership from Fielding Graduate University.

The task that Mary has found most challenging during her career has been developing business plans for all departments. It took five years from conception to implementation for the project to be completed. However, by the end of 2009, Mary’s goal was accomplished. Though this was a challenging project, she says it was very rewarding. The business plans that were created are now in place and are linked and aligned to Tacoma’s strategic plan, the city manager’s goals, and employee performance goals.

Currently, Mary is working on developing a more interactive citizen’s report on the city’s performance, and she is participating in efforts to reduce crime and clean up the city. The city of Tacoma’s “Safe and Clean” initiative challenges staff and community to work collaboratively to reduce crime by 50 percent and clean up the city.

“Gathering data for measuring performance is important, but even more important are the conversations we have about what the data means,” says Mary. She adds that performance
measurement is important in a difficult fiscal environment, because it “helps ensure we make decisions on resources that are consistent with the policies and directions set by [the] council”.

To learn more about Mary’s experiences as a PC or discuss performance measurement, contact her via email at mmorriso@cityoftacoma.org or phone at (253) 573-2318. For information about the city of Tacoma, please visit http://www.cityoftacoma.org.

If you would like your jurisdiction or your jurisdiction’s primary coordinator to be featured in the CPM Spotlight, send an email to cpmmail@icma.org.