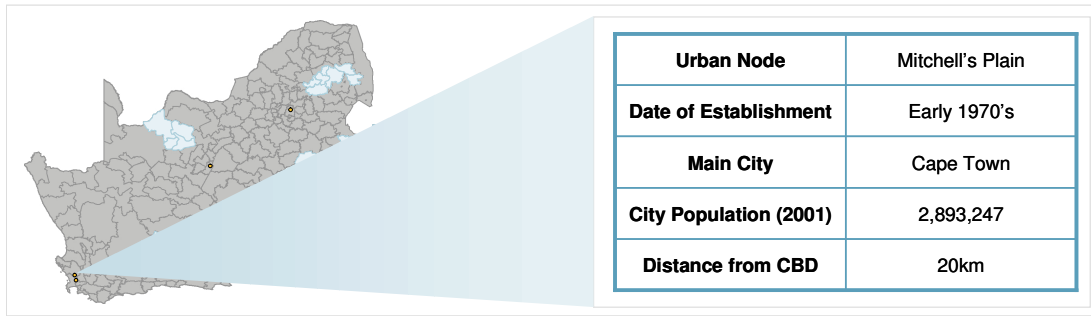


Economic snapshot: Mitchell's Plain, Western Cape



Base data (Based on the Stats SA 2001 Census, unless indicated otherwise)

<i>Population</i>	398,650	<i>Urban population</i>	100%
<i>Employment rate</i>	43% (average for urban nodes: 33%; average for SA: 33%)	<i>Min Grade 12 education</i>	24% of population aged 20+
<i>Potential labour pool*</i>	68% of total population	<i>Access to electricity</i>	82% (average for urban nodes: 74%; average for SA: 70%)
<i>% of people living below HSL**</i>	67%; average for SA: 65%		

* Percentage population aged 15 to 64; ** Household Subsistence Level is defined as earning an annual income of R19,200

Urban themes

Residential Although most households in this node live in formal houses, Mitchell's Plain faces a "hidden housing crisis", as overcrowding is endemic. Empty land is available for development and low-density settlements can be increased through infill housing. Income levels in Mitchell's Plain, combined with the robust property market, have generated some interest from potential developers of affordable housing. Sites that provide opportunities for housing development include Swartklip and various open areas in Westridge and Schaap Kraal. However, critical concerns remain with respect to town-planning approval timeframes.

Commercial Mitchell's Plain has by far the best commercial environment of all the poverty nodes; the community has reasonable disposable income, commercial developments are easily accessible, and limited spending leaves the area as most goods are found in the node. The area has two large shopping malls and is close to retail malls in the adjacent Khayelitsha. Innovative developments such as the Station Plaza have created commercial and employment opportunities for local businesspeople and should be replicated elsewhere. However, the high level of gang activity is an ongoing challenge for the area.

Linkages Mitchell's Plain is far removed from the fastest-growing areas of Cape Town; adequate public transport is available but it is uncoordinated and expensive. The node faces challenges in terms of integrating its residents into the circuits of Cape Town's economy. However, the establishment of FET colleges as well as the construction of Dreamworld Film Studios aims to improve Mitchell's Plain's "virtual linkages" with the rest of Cape Town.

Public sector performance: General observations

- Frequent political changes have resulted in some institutional instability and delays in decision making.
- The Mitchell's Plain CBD, developed and managed by the URP, is an example of a development that should be replicated elsewhere, as it has created commercial and employment opportunities for nodal residents.
- A gang-combating strategy has been developed, and the area is showing signs of improvement.

General actions

- The Metro Council should encourage investment in the south-east of the city.
- The city needs to address housing issues, in particular the high levels of overcrowding.
- Transport infrastructure needs to be coordinated in order to increase the efficiency of public transport.
- False Bay College would like to construct a permanent campus in Mitchell's Plain, but lacks the funding to do so.
- Social interventions are necessary to limit gang activity in the node.
- Informal businesses in Mitchell's Plain need to be educated about the benefits of formalisation.