



WHAT HAPPENED

The city's convention center opened for convention business in January 1985.



The convention center was a shelter of last resort during Hurricane Katrina.

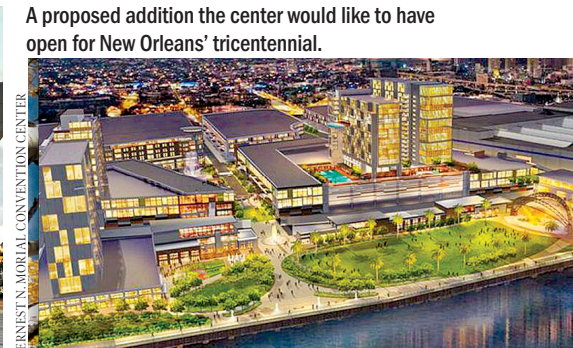
Though slowed down by Hurricane Katrina and the economic recession, the center hosted almost 1 million visitors in 2015. Its economic impact of more than \$1.8 billion is one of the main drivers of the local economy.

Planning for the center began in 1978, just 10 years after the city's first convention center, Rivergate opened. The new



ERNEST N. MORIAL CONVENTION CENTER

A \$52 million renovation that opened in 2013 features a grand entry hall and a 60,000-square-foot ballroom.



ERNEST N. MORIAL CONVENTION CENTER

A proposed addition the center would like to have open for New Orleans' tricentennial.

The Ernest N. Morial Convention Center has continually expanded, renovated and reinvented itself since opening in 1984.



The Essence Festival holds a conference and expo at the conference center during its annual event.

center was built along the riverfront to accommodate the 1984 World's Fair. It opened as a convention center in 1985. A second phase was opened in 1991, doubling the size of the center. The next year, it was named for former Mayor Ernest N. Morial, who pushed for the center. A third phase was opened in 1999 as attendance kept reaching new heights and demand for the center's space mounted.

The center was the third largest in the nation in the U.S. in 2000, but terrorist attacks the following year dampened travel and events, and attendance dropped from almost 900,000 to about 600,000.

The center has planned a new expansion, including more riverfront development, to open in 2018, but those plans have been slow to get off the ground.



THE HISTORIC NEW ORLEANS COLLECTION

The entrance to the convention center during the 1984 World's Fair held in New Orleans



The NBA hosted a four-day Jam Session at the convention center before its All-Star Game in 2014.

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