NEW ORLEANS — Beginning next month, travelers will be using Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport. The name change became official Thursday when the City Council unanimously approved the honor proposed by Mayor Marc Morial. The change will take effect Aug. 2, two days before the late jazz great's 100th birthday.

Jazz buffs have complained for years that the city has never adequately recognized Armstrong. Council member Marlin Gusman said that at one time musicians were the only black Americans to grab national attention.

"The power of his genius, combined with his loving manner, forced whites to rethink their racism, whether they knew it or not, and whether they wanted to or not," Gusman said.

The airport, located in Kenner but owned by New Orleans, opened in the 1940s as Moisant Field, named after aviator John B. Moisant, who died in 1910 when his plane caught a gust of wind and crashed in the city. It became New Orleans International Airport in 1962.

"This is something that should have been done a long time ago," said councilman Oliver Thomas.