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## **Fishers ‘Entrepreneurial City’ to take another step forward**

*Launch Fishers expansion; Ball State University partnership furthers entrepreneurial culture*

Fishers, IN – Today, Mayor Scott Fadness, together with Launch Fishers CEO John Wechsler and Ball State University, announced the next milestone for Launch Fishers and the budding entrepreneurial culture in Fishers. The proposed project includes the purchase of a building for Launch Fishers with the intention of creating the Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation in partnership with Ball State University. The partnership will further the Launch Indiana initiative and includes state-wide entrepreneurship mapping resources and peer-to-peer coaching.

“Launch Fishers has provided proof of concept for our entrepreneurial city,” said Mayor Fadness. “We are excited to take the next step to expand the scope and impact of Launch Fishers while creating economic development infrastructure for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.”

Ball State University, a national leader in entrepreneurial education, has committed to integrating Launch Fishers into its Entrepreneurship Program with both experiential learning for students and with a physical presence at the new facility. The partnership will bring real-world startup experience to students while giving Launch Fishers and member companies access to the university’s research, faculty and students. In addition, Launch Fishers and Ball State University will work together on a best practices mapping framework for entrepreneurial ecosystem development throughout the state of Indiana as a part of Launch Indiana.

“The key to any strategic partnership is recognizing and harnessing each entity’s strengths. Integrating Ball State’s entrepreneurial education expertise and our students into the real-world climate of startups that are housed within Launch Fishers will reap dividends for the university and Launch Fishers. It evidences Ball State’s commitment to being an entrepreneurial university and Fishers commitment to being a thriving, creative city. I can’t imagine a better opportunity for our students to learn about how to bring new products and services out into the world, and we’re honored to be a part of this,” stated Mike Goldsby, Director of the Entrepreneurship Center at Ball State.

Currently housed in the basement of the Hamilton East Library, Launch Fishers and the 485 members have outgrown the 16,000 sq. ft. facility. The proposed new location offers 51,571 sq. ft. and is located at 12175 Visionary Way in Fishers. Launch Fishers will operate the facility: selling memberships and leasing dedicated workspaces, small office pods and larger office areas. Ball State University plans to lease 3,010 sq. ft.

“The opportunity that exists with this partnership and new facility has me very excited for the future,” said John Wechsler, Launch Fishers CEO. “A sense of place where businesses want to grow and a collaborative environment is how you foster organic economic growth. This expansion accelerates the potential for new jobs and investment in Fishers.”

In addition to the expansion of Launch Fishers on Visionary Way, the City of Fishers submitted a Certified Tech Park application to the Indiana Economic Development Corp. earlier this April. The Certified Tech Park designation will invigorate Launch Fishers’ goal to further foster an entrepreneurial culture and create new companies—ultimately driving 21<sup>st</sup> century economic development for the State of Indiana.

The City of Fishers plans to purchase the building, formerly vacated by DECA Financial Services, for \$3.1 million, and lease the building to Launch Fishers. Building improvements are expected to cost \$400,000.

The City Council will consider the Launch Fishers expansion at the Monday, Apr. 20 council meeting at 7 p.m.

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