In Vaidhyanathan's The Googlization of Everything, numerous global concerns are discussed about Google Maps' Street View. A common pattern highlighted is that seemingly each time Street View is implemented, the communities impacted have a number of concerns over privacy and safety. Despite the clear concerns, Google always defaults to the response that any concerning photographs could be reported to Google. Often, within hours, they could be removed or blurred to protect privacy. There are still significant concerns, despite that. Osamu Higuchi, for instance, brings up the "asymmetry of the gaze" inherent in the program. Traditionally, a person who breaches privacy has to physically put themselves in danger of being reported to authorities or being caught by residents. Street View has no such traditional safeguard and fundamentally changes the way privacy can be breached. Combined with the works of Floridi and Grimmelmann we can better understand these fundamental changes, see their harm, and imagine how they could be mitigated. In order to apply these insights in a more ethical realm, we can use an ethical theory, such as utilitarianism, to give us that insight. In this case analysis, I will argue that utilitarianism shows us that Google should have implemented an opt-in system and better protected residential privacy in order to reduce harm and promote good.

One important observation made in Floridi's work is the comparison between past societies and the modern global digital society of today. In the past, a small local village was often home to a large degree of inter-community transparency, but little intra-community transparency. Those in the community knew who everyone else was, but those not involved with the community would have little to no knowledge about anyone within it. The modern global community is seemingly reversed in its transparency. We no longer have nearly as much transparency between our local communities, but it's much easier to learn all manner of things about people or communities in far-flung areas across the globe. The consequences of these changes are not entirely framed as negative or something to be feared, though. In fact, it is stated heavily that new information and communication technologies give people more opportunity to control and protect their personal information. For every way that personal information can now be collected and exploited, there is also a new way it can be protected and defended. If one is looking to improve overall wellbeing and minimize the harm done to people in a utilitarian way, then it would stand to reason that these defenses and protections ought to be maximized and strengthened if possible. This could perhaps lead us to an outcome that harnesses the strengths of both modern and past systems of privacy and anonymity, while minimizing the harm of the two as well. Floridi's insights are further enhanced by his theory of the self-constitutive value of privacy. Floridi details how previous interpretations of the nature of privacy, such as the ownership or reduction models, are seemingly flawed, or at the very least lack explanatory value, when compared to his model. This model explains that each individual is composed of their information, so a breach of their informational privacy is akin to an attack on their very being and identity. Floridi then stresses the importance of not only defending privacy, but also creating applications that give users more choice in how they can control their privacy. In turn, this control would allow them to develop their very identity and person in accordance with the self-constitutive value of privacy. Floridi even addresses consequentialism directly, extolling its synergy with the self-constitutive value of privacy. What does this mean for Google Maps, then?

Since Google Maps is a part of this new group of information and communication technologies, it needs to be analyzed to see how it fundamentally changes how anonymity and privacy work when compared to the past. Floridi's model works very well at helping us make sense of how these changes work and how they can be addressed. Both defending and enhancing privacy, as recommended by Floridi, would allow the very identity of the actor to be enhanced and defended as well. In a utilitarian sense, then, this would be a very ethical thing to do, as benefiting a person's identity in this way would surely increase well-being and reduce harm. Thus, it would seem that giving consumers defenses and control over their data would likely bring about more wellbeing and less harm than the alternative. These insights, importantly, allow us to understand how to "smartly" apply good privacy measures that in turn increase wellbeing overall instead of what may seem like a good privacy measure on the surface. A less thought-out plan may imagine that the more private, the better, and thus advocate for no street view or mapping whatsoever. As we now understand, though, the changes to privacy through modern information and communication technologies provide positives for privacy in addition to the negatives, so simply cutting off from these technologies entirely would likely not lead to the maximum wellbeing and least harm possible. So, still allowing for street view to exist and potentially offer many of the same features would still be possible. It would seem, though, that changes could be made to enhance and defend privacy and, thus, enhance and defend well-being as well. While we could already likely offer some specifics on those changes now, the insights of Grimmelmann could provide more knowledge for a more informed course of action.

I believe that there are two concepts that Grimmelmann brings up that are especially relevant to the discussion. The first point is that consumers, despite their care for and desire for privacy, will not always make perfectly rational decisions to protect it. While Grimmelmann is discussing Facebook primarily in his work, the statements on customers and rational decision-making could also apply to the circumstances surrounding Google Maps and Street View. Grimmelmann outlines how, despite how attractive it may be to some that consumers will make rational cost-benefit decisions about their privacy online, the idea simply does not have validity. Firstly, it's very easy to misunderstand online tools and platforms such as Facebook or Google applications. Even in cases where there is more understanding of the platform, it's also easy to miscalculate the cost-benefit analysis of privacy and participation in the platform. A lot of times, even those who make every attempt to protect their privacy will still end up harmed. This all shows that consumers do not always act in a purely rational manner, and extra steps are taken by platforms and applications to systematically protect their privacy and thus increase their overall wellbeing and reduce harm. The second important concept, introduced into the discussion, is the application of product safety standards and discussions into the realm of privacy protection. Grimmelmann details how the lessons learned and developments made in product safety, which improve maximum wellbeing, could be fruitfully applied to the realm of product safety to potentially reach the same utilitarian goal. Numerous product safety tenets are explained by Grimmelmann and then contrasted with how systems like Facebook (or Street View) function in contrasting ways. For instance, one important tenet of product safety is that consequences should be predictable. Meanwhile, the potential consequences of a service like Street View could be extremely varied and wildly unintuitive. Another example is that product safety often takes into account consumer expectations and how they reasonably expect a

product to work. When street view does harm a person's privacy, however, it often does so in ways one would not reasonably expect or in ways that are warned about by the service. The most impactful point in this section, though, is the comparison between how product safety liability law is handled for products and how it is handled for online privacy. Largely now, manufacturers are considered strictly liable for their products and services. This means that when a product causes harm that could be prevented with better design and care, the manufacturer is tasked with making amends, as they are held liable. Meanwhile, Google Street View will automatically post all manner of privacy-breaching photos for millions to see, with the onus being on the consumer to seek out, find, and report the breach in enough time to have it taken down before damage is done. This system contrasts immensely with the systems of strict liability present in other areas. As mentioned above, technologies like street view do offer both potential positives and negatives, and simply stopping the system whole cloth would not lead to an outcome that leads to the most wellbeing and the least harm. It seems, however, that the current system in place could use improvements to better protect privacy and improve the control people have. This is why it would seem that an "opt-in" system for residential areas, as opposed to an "opt-out" system, would likely increase the overall wellbeing of those involved, and thus present a more ethical path. Instead of only allowing individuals to report breaches of privacy, which will then allow users to essentially opt out of that image, I believe users should first have to opt in to their residential and personal data being used within Street View. This will give users more freedom in how their data is used, allowing identity development and enhancement to occur, as explored by Florini. Certainly, individuals could still be harmed if they "opt-in" and still face a negative breach of privacy. However, the alternative of completely blocking street view would be shortsighted, as Florini's model detailed. Likewise, the other alternative, where Street View currently has too few protections for users, likely leads to more harm overall. This, to me, leaves an opt-in strategy as one that leads to the best possible outcome for overall well-being and the least harm done.

In summary, the current implementation of Google Maps' Street View could be made more ethical. Per utilitarianism, the better the outcomes for overall wellbeing, the more ethical it is. According to Florinis insights, the nature of modern information and communication technologies, like Street View, provides both positives and negatives. This means we should not seek to detach completely, but instead maximize the positives and decrease the negatives. Per Grimmelmann's insights, we may be able to do this by taking a page out of the field of product safety. A system could then be deployed where residential and personal Street View data would need to be opted-in by the user to be able to be used, while business and non-personal data would still be displayed like the current system. I believe this would lead to more security being protected, thus greater wellbeing, which in turn means a more ethical result. One flaw in this reasoning is that, due to how utilitarianism views ethics, the results matter more than any reasoning or theory. If, in the end, the opt-out system ended up narrowly providing better overall wellbeing (even if it led to significantly worse outcomes for a select few but a better overall outcome for the many), it would end up being narrowly more ethical. This means utilitarians must take great care and weigh all the options, especially in the modern day. As these works have shown, modern technology is intricate, and determining its impact on human life and how best to utilize it to maximize well-being for humanity is a grueling calculus.