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Obama hails beginning of new highway construction

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WASHINGTON - President Barack Obama says the new road-building initiative in his economic recovery program will create or save 150,000 jobs by the end of next year.

Detailing his plans for employees of the Transportation Department on Tuesday morning, Obama disclosed that some 200 highway construction jobs will start within the next few weeks. To cheers, he said "we are seeing shovels hit the ground."

The president said that thanks to the \$787 billion stimulus program that he signed into law last month, "hardworking families can worry a little less about this month's bills."

He said the number of jobs that will be created or protected in the highway building program will exceed the number of jobs lost in the last three years by Ford, Chrysler and General Motors combined.